

Wendy Matthews
Head of Mission, Pastoral and Church Property
Church of England

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Dear Wendy,

GS2934 Mission and Pastoral Measure
GS2935 Mission and Pastoral Measure Regulations

We write, in advance of Friday's discussion at General Synod, about the proposed changes to redundancy procedures within the Mission and Pastoral Measure and related Regulations. The SPAB has a long history of involvement with the protection and care of historic churches, including that as a consultee within the system of the faculty jurisdiction. We have an interest in any proposed changes to this system and its potential impacts.

We offer a respectful reminder that the exemption must offer protection for listed ecclesiastical buildings equivalent to that of the secular system. There is no direct parallel to the redundancy process in the secular regime, but we feel that any lessening of early expert input at national level, during the redundancy process, would be to the detriment of the exemption.

The SPAB understands and accepts that there is a need, from time to time, to review mechanisms and procedures. The possibility of increased church redundancy offers reason to explore the procedures involved, including where and how specialist advice is obtained. Nevertheless, we see great value in the advice currently offered at national level by the Church Buildings Council and its Statutory Advisory Committee. Our concern is that their role in the redundancy process could be diminished by the changes currently proposed. Any lessening of this expert input would seem detrimental. We question whether DACs or their consultants would have the skills and resources, in all cases, to provide early advice of equivalent quality?

If General Synod decides that the changes to the Measure and Regulations can proceed we would welcome the opportunity to comment further, along with the other National Amenity Societies. We understand the issues the Church of England faces with potential redundancies, and future use of historic churches, and would welcome opportunity to talk constructively about re-use solutions as well as procedural mechanisms.

With kind regards,



Matthew Slocombe
Chief Executive

cc DCMS; Historic England