



Scottish Episcopal Church

General Synod of the Scottish Episcopal Church

Scottish Charity No SC015962

Building and Repair of Church Property Assistance from Provincial Funds

Notes on completion of Application

- 1 Grants and loans may be made from Provincial Funds for building costs relating to churches, church halls, Episcopal residences, rectories or any other houses occupied by stipendiary clergy or lay workers. The works concerned may be new building (including purchase of land or property), renovation or repairs of a major or emergency nature. Routine maintenance is the responsibility of the diocese or congregation concerned. Quinquennial Inspections are an essential routine requirement for all buildings and adequate provision should be made to meet the costs of such Inspections. Grants will therefore not normally be given towards the cost of Quinquennial Inspections. Attention is drawn to Canon 35 regarding alterations to church buildings and to the requirements in the Digest of Resolutions for Quinquennial Inspections. Grants will not be given towards works costing less than £1,500. **Grants will not normally be awarded towards lighting, the repair of organs or stained glass (unless such glass is recognised as being of major historic or artistic significance), or for decoration.**
- 2 The Building Grants Group administers the Building Grants Fund and the Building Loans Fund on behalf of the Administration Board:

Building Grants Fund

There is no fixed limit to grants but they will be subject to the availability of cash and will not normally exceed 50% of the total cost. The Building Grants Group will consider applications at each of its meetings and will seek to allocate funds to both small and large projects – with a preference to providing a larger number small grants rather than a smaller number of large grants. The total available to distribute each year is in the region of £200,000. (Assistance can normally be given only on property that is wholly church owned.)

Building Loans Fund

Applications for loans can be submitted to any meeting but those which require urgent action can be considered between meetings if required. Loans are made for a maximum period of 5 years, except in very exceptional circumstances, and at an interest rate of 3% per annum, payable half-yearly. Repayment of principal is expected in equal annual instalments. Consideration will also be given to shorter term loans to assist in funding project costs prior to receipt of agreed grants from other grant making bodies.

Dioceses are required to consider and support all loan applications, and to be accountable for monitoring and guaranteeing repayments. (Loans will normally only be given on property that is wholly church owned.)

3 Procedures

- a) Dioceses or congregations seeking grants and/or loans should complete the common application form and submit it, with supporting papers, to the appropriate diocesan committee.
- b) Dioceses are required to subject all applications to a detailed review. Any applications gaining diocesan approval should be submitted to the General Synod Office with a covering **Letter of Support** explaining the nature of the review undertaken and detailing the diocese's endorsement. (In the case of a loan application the Diocese should also confirm it is willing to underwrite the loan.) The Letter of Support should detail any issues or concerns raised by the Diocese in relation to the proposed works during its review and how they were resolved. Issues that the dioceses should consider in their review include:
 - Review of Quinquennial Inspection and confirmation that required works are being attended to.
 - Review of quotations submitted with application and comment on suitability of preferred contractors for the work. If fewer than three quotations provided comment on explanation provided by congregation.
 - Review of accounts and comment on financial position of the congregation to fund the proposed works and, in the case of a loan application, ability to fund interest and capital repayments. If the congregation's investments are large in comparison with its income (investments greater than twice annual income) an explanation as to why a provincial grant is thought to be appropriate.
 - A comment on the congregation's ability to manage and fund future building repairs.
 - Consideration of any impact funding the works might have on the congregation's ability to continue to pay stipend and related costs.
 - Consideration of the missional aspects of the proposed works – particularly for larger projects.

Supporting documentation, other than the Quinquennial report, must be submitted with the application to the General Synod Office.

- d) Applications **must** be received by the General Synod Office at least **3 weeks** before the next meeting at which they are to be discussed. The Building Grants Group will generally meet three times a year:
 - Late March / early April
 - Mid August
 - Late November / early December

Dioceses will be advised of actual meeting dates in the Autumn of the preceding year. Potential applicants are advised to contact their Diocesan Office to ascertain the deadlines for submission of applications to the Diocese for its consideration.

- e) The Treasurer will inform applicants of the Group's decisions as soon as possible after the Group's meeting. Diocesan offices will also be advised of the Group's decision.
- f) Grants and loans will be earmarked for a maximum period of three years, subject to annual review.

4 **Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme – repayment of VAT**

Certain categories of work to Listed Buildings will be eligible for grants from the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme. (In effect these grants pay all the VAT on eligible works.) Further information can be found at www.lpwscheme.org.uk or by writing to: Topmark (LPOW), 160 Bath Street, Glasgow, G2 4TB, (Tel No: 0845 013 6601)

Applicants are required to confirm that they have considered whether the works for which Provincial Funding is sought are eligible for LPW grant assistance.