

# How to get your major project right

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10 COMMANDMENTS OF GOOD PROJECT MANAGEMENT

# Introductions

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# 1. Know why

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- ‘Major’ projects versus day-to-day repairs
- Know why you are doing the project before deciding what you are doing.
- Develop robust justification and reasoning by testing need
- How does this project fit with your mission and strategic aims?
- THEN work out what day-to-day repairs or problems might be fixed or solved within this wider project
  
- Resources: HLF good practice guidance –worth a look even if it isn’t a HLF funded project.
- <https://www.hlf.org.uk/apply/how-apply/guidance-applying>

## 2. Engage stakeholders and partners

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- Who is going to be affected by the project? Internal/ external
- Engage them early and make them a part of the concept phase
- Include the professional team
- Invite them to a workshop to discuss your big idea
- Identifying partners comes out of work the cathedral is already doing e.g. cross city partnerships
  - Internal: staff, volunteers, congregant members and worshippers, visitors those with longstanding events or services in the cathedral,
  - External: advisory bodies and special interest groups (e.g. The Victorian Society, AEC), community (neighbours, local businesses, funders (trusts and foundations; private donors...), the media, regulators (local planning officers, Historic England, CFCE)

# 3. Do a skills audit

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- Project lead needs to understand:
  - What skills will be needed for your project?
  - What skills do you have in your cathedral already?
  - What will need to be found from elsewhere?
- Ask your people –there will be experience there you might not know about
- Think about what internal resource will allocated to the project – don't underestimate what's required and plan for it
- Think about the best way to resource the gap –can existing staff members be seconded and their posts backfilled? What free help is available and what best practice already exists.
- Build a project team
- Resources: Voscur tool kit (designed for voluntary and social enterprise organisations)
  - [https://www.voscur.org/system/files/tna%20small%20business%20resource%20all%20steps%20Final%20%284%29\\_1.pdf](https://www.voscur.org/system/files/tna%20small%20business%20resource%20all%20steps%20Final%20%284%29_1.pdf)

# 4. Understand procurement

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- Be clear about procurement legislation and process – seek appropriate legal advice and follow it
- Be aware of the requirements of
  - Legislative minimums for ‘public money’ and the ‘public sector’
  - The requirements of funders (or potential funders)
  - Ethical standards
- Writing a ‘brief’
  - Brief: is a concise summary of what the project is about, i.e. ‘the elevator pitch’, what are you doing? What is the need? Cathedrals don’t need lots of context here –everyone knows who you are!
  - Scope of services –what you want the contractor to do. Start with the standard appointment docs and adapt as necessary.
  - Evaluation of responses –set word limits, think about scoring, preference detailing experience, egs. and refs.
  - Resources:

RICS appointment guidance

[https://www.isurv.com/downloads/download/287/rics\\_standard\\_form\\_of\\_consultants\\_appointment](https://www.isurv.com/downloads/download/287/rics_standard_form_of_consultants_appointment)

RIBA appointment guidance <https://www.ribaplanofwork.com/Toolbox.aspx>

# 5. Manage your budget

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- Establish wider project costs versus capital costs
- Include in-kind resource
- Role of the QS/ the fundraiser/ the internal finance manager and how they relate to the project lead or project manager
- Relate project budgets relate to wider business planning at the cathedral from the outset –how will the project impact financial projections?
- The dangers of imposing budgets on your contractors...

# 6. Identify risk

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- Proactively manage risk – From the outset, identify and mitigate
- You can keep this process simple at the outset!
- What might happen? (ask the whole team to think about this)
- What is the likelihood of it happening? (RAG)
- What can be done to mitigate it?
- This gives you a risk register which you can review at project meetings
- A risk register should be a live document –so it has to be simple enough that the whole project team can understand it- add and amend as the project develops.
- Cathedrals are unique sites so risks are different to on other projects

# 7. Creating a programme

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- All the things you have to do in the order you have to do them!
- How long is each thing going to take?
- Does one thing impact on another?
- Set realistic deadlines –ask the team (and listen to what they are telling you!)
- Review at every project meeting. Focus on the next six weeks. What is critical?

# 8. Communicate

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- From the outset think about how communication works at the cathedral and ask is this sufficient for managing the project.
- Communication is two-way: project <-> day-to-day operations, governors, sponsors, partners
- Key tools of project communication:
  - Weekly 'floor meeting' or 'huddle' to establish the impact of the project on day-to-day operations and vice-versa
  - Project meetings. Think about how this is going to relate to chapter meetings and the resource this will require. Project board? A standing item at chapter meetings?
  - Written updates and reports. These can be multi use. Think about who might get asked about the project.
  - Project comms. An opportunity.

# 9. Think about your day to day

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- Establish and mitigate the impact of Cathedral events and day to day operations – work closely with clergy, events staff, vergers, congregation and supporters groups to get and keep them on side, mitigate disruption, identify opportunities and create advocates for the project
- The value of the project does not necessarily relate to how disruptive the project is going to be.

# 10. And if it still all goes wrong...

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- Budget and programme are best guesses by professionals –they are going to change in the life of the project.
- Project management is about dealing with the unforeseens
- Someone else will have had this problem before.
- Lean on your professionals and solve problems as a team.
- Communicate openly.
- Do not get bogged down in blame –solve the problem first- save the reflection for later.

# Questions?

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