



**CHAWTON
HILL** CHARTERED
SURVEYORS

ECCLESIASTICAL



CONTENTS

3. Foreword
4. About Chawton Hill
5. Is it Important to Look After Your Church Fabric?
6. St Patrick's Church, Wallington
7. Inclusive Design
9. A new Church building for Caterham, Surrey
10. St Mildred's, Lee – New Church Hall
11. RAAC Surveys & Remediation for Schools, Churches
12. Changing Your Church Layout or Use?
14. How Much Will A New Church Building Cost?
16. Quinquennial Inspection Reports
17. How much? Tackling Material Price Fluctuations in
19. Public Consultation

CHAWTON HILL

Chawton Hill's years of ecclesiastical experience has helped us to successfully deliver multiple projects such as church halls, extensions and community buildings. Whether working within conservation or greenbelt areas, we have a refined strategy that works within the ecclesiastical sector. Let us support you with project management, cost control and quinquennial or planned maintenance surveys.



This brief guide provides some insight into how we assist people in the ecclesiastical sector and selected examples of past work. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch.



DAVID EDWARDS

Managing Director
david.edwards@chawtonhill.com
01372 360663



JAMES MATTHEWSON

Director
james.matthewson@chawtonhill.com
01372 360663



ABOUT CHAWTON HILL

At Chawton Hill ecclesiastical projects form a significant part of our business.

Our years of ecclesiastical experience has helped us to successfully deliver multiple projects such as church halls, extensions and community buildings. Whether working within conservation or greenbelt areas, we have a refined strategy that works within the ecclesiastical sector.

Our approach to sympathetic design & use of innovative techniques and materials minimise the impact of new or redeveloped premises.

Among Chawton Hill's team are experts in planned maintenance and Quinquennial Inspection Reports. These provide a graded and prioritised list of any required church repairs and planned maintenance. They cover areas such as the general repair of the building, maintenance, sustainability, safety of the structure, unsafe floors and access.

Key Experience and Services:

Church buildings, church halls, extensions and community buildings.

You can be confident working with Chawton Hill that we have experience working with projects in your sector to the very highest standard.

Client commissions range from minor alteration works and building condition surveys and schedules of condition, to the design and project management of new buildings and sensitively detailed extensions or adjustments and refurbishments.



Is it Important to Look After Your Church Fabric?

Someone once said that priests and clergy, like anyone, are more skilled in some areas than others. Some are good with money, some better with pastoral care, some better at preaching. Wherever the skills lie, a thing that's sometimes overlooked by priests and people alike, particularly on heritage buildings is the need to care for the church fabric itself.

The Heart of A Church

The people are at the heart of a church, of course, but looking after the church fabric will ensure the people of the church have a focal point for worship. The church community can come together in comfort in a warm, well-maintained building. A well-maintained building can also help contribute to the life of the wider community. It can serve as a venue for events, meeting place for groups like scouts and guides, and much more. The adage 'a stitch, in time, saves nine' is completely true when it comes to building maintenance.

So what are the key things to remember when maintaining a church building?

The Key Areas of Church Fabric Maintenance

The Churches' trust cite three key areas:

- Inspection
- Maintenance
- Minor repairs

Inspection is where Chawton Hill can help. The team of expert surveyors we work with can provide detailed and clear reports to help you identify what tasks to prioritise in terms of maintenance and repair. The team can provide you with a prioritised list of elements of repair, identifying when and what needs doing, to ensure you have a manageable programme and help you budget works. Working to a schedule, we help you ensure your church fabric stays in top condition and is fit for generations to come.

Chawton Hill's experience also means we can help you with design, and finding the best, most efficient and economical suppliers to carry out work where needed.



St Patrick's Church, Wallington

We were delighted to be invited to the opening of the new hall at St Patrick's church in Wallington, Surrey. Chawton Hill acted as Employer's Agent and QS on this project. The goal being to create a new church hall for St Patrick's church in Wallington.

The church identified that their old church hall served them well, but after many years, was showing its age! More than that, it didn't provide the room and facilities needed to take the church to the community. The project involved the demolition of the old hall. We then levelled the site and constructed a new, two-storey building to provide a new building with multiple spaces for use by different church and community groups in the years to come.

The aim was to deliver the hall in time for late 2022, which we achieved, by working closely with both the client and contractor.



Successful delivery of the project saw us overcoming a number of challenges. These included material/supply chain shortages and cost increases. We worked closely with the contractor, Hystar to minimise cost and supply chain disruption, through sourcing alternative suppliers and materials.

Read more about the project on the [church's website](#). If you need help ensuring the successful and cost-effective delivery of a similar project, [get in touch](#) today.



Inclusive Design

When it comes to designing a new building, or retrofitting an old one, you'll understand the importance of putting inclusive design principles at the heart of what you do. It is no longer enough to add a wheelchair ramp to the front entrance and assume your job is done. Whilst a ramp will make the building accessible for wheelchair users, accessibility does not always equal inclusivity.

Accessible design meets the minimum mandatory requirements for access and facilities for those with disabilities. These are covered in the Government's statutory guidance document Access to and use of buildings: Approved Document M.

Inclusive design looks beyond this, creating spaces that work for the needs of everyone. The aim is to enable and empower those that use a building going beyond a one-size fits-all solution. A helpful starting point here is the RIBA's Inclusive Design Overlay.

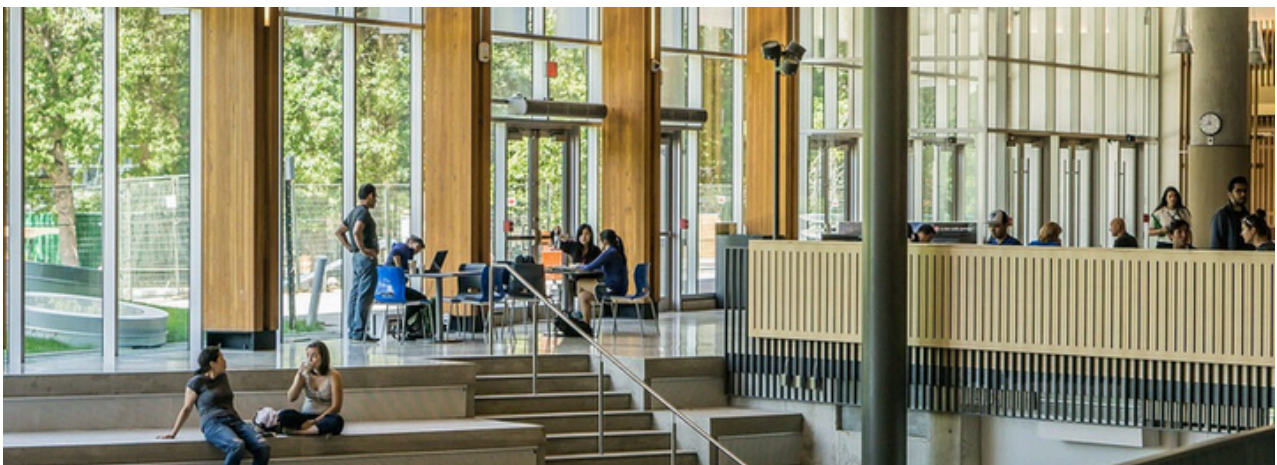
In this article, we'll cover some of the ways the built environment can embrace inclusive design principles.

What's Covered

By its very definition, inclusive design needs to cover the needs of the population. It can be tricky to pin down exactly where to focus efforts, in order to design a building that works for all. However, most design approaches agree there are three main areas to consider:

- **Abilities:** This covers a wide scope of physical and intellectual abilities, plus factors such as age, body type, medical conditions and physical fitness.
- **Gender & Sexuality:** Male/female and LGBTIQ+ identities.
- **Faith & Culture:** Covers differing cultural and religious needs.

The first step is to understand the demographics of your users (and potential users) and what their varying needs may be. For example, if there is a large Muslim community in your area, you may consider designing spaces that can be used as prayer rooms. If you expect your user base to be elderly, or less steady on their feet, handrails may play an important part in the design.



Inclusive Design

The Principles

1. A people first approach:

By putting users at the heart of your designs you can remove barriers and improve access for all. It is important to include as many people as possible in the design stage. Having a diverse team can help us see issues we may not have considered.

2. Acknowledge diversity and difference

The environment needs to meet as many needs as possible. This can be tricky, but identifying barriers early in the design process can help. Think beyond accessibility requirements and consider what barriers may be experienced by people with learning difficulties, mental ill health, visual impairments and hearing impairments.



3. Offer Choice

It is not always going to be possible to design one solution that suits all users. Even within one group, users will not be homogenous and their needs may vary. Avoid aiming for the minimum targets and consider the variance across your user base.

4. Flexible Use

The best way to achieve this is to truly understand how the building will be used. Consult with the client and end users, discover what happens now and what the space might be used for in the future. Consider design changes which can serve multiple purposes. For example, ramps instead of staircases can make buildings more accessible for wheelchair users, those pushing prams and carrying large luggage.

5. Convenient and Enjoyable

By removing barriers, you can create an environment that is easy to use for everyone. How will users move around the building? Is signage sufficient? Give users the confidence in your space and they will be able to make effective, independent choices about how they use it.

If you apply these principles to your designs, you'll find your buildings become accessible for more users.

A new Church building for Caterham, Surrey

At a cost of £32 the land in Francis Road (then known as Elizabeth Road, Caterham) was purchased on 12 May 1894 for a new church building to be called Oak Hall. The church building was completed in July and August at a cost of £206 and opened on Thursday 13 September 1894.

Fast forward 125 years and Oakhall has a new church building in the heart of the Caterham community which has been shortlisted for a [2019 South East LABC Building Excellence Award](#).

Chawton Hill undertook the roles of Project Manager, Quantity Surveyor and Principal Designer calling on over 18 years of ecclesiastical experience to deliver another exceptional church building. A building that invites people in to a large multi-use auditorium, office space, cafe, classrooms and nursery complete with generous new parking areas.

The project involved the demolition of derelict offices, a local eyesore for many years, removal of foundations and reworking of ground levels, erection of a new steel framed building over clad with a variety of materials including textured blockwork, through-colour rendering, brickwork and glazed curtain walling.

The new church is striking in appearance due to the variety of roof levels with varying pitches, interesting and varied façade treatments and large glazed areas. Inside the building the finish is of high quality, including hardwood joinery, acoustic folding partitions, various flooring types and excellent sanitary & services provisions. These are all highlighted by the vast amount of natural light afforded by the clever use of large glazed elements.

Chairing client briefing and design team meetings, we were able to effectively coordinate design requirements and balance aspirations within the project budget. Regular collaboration between the client and consultant teams, and latterly the Contractor's team helped facilitate the delivery of a project that everyone who was involved can be proud of and achieves high levels (EPC B rating) of energy performance and sustainability. For example PV panels and a heat recovery system for the meeting rooms and the crèche were used to maximise energy efficiency and carbon reduction.

“a fabulous building which is already making an impact” is how Peter Thompson (former Operations Director) describes the [new Oakhall church building](#).



St Mildred's, Lee – New Church Hall

Project Details

St Mildred's old church hall was constructed in the 1960s. It served the church and the community for many years. The hall was forced to close in 2019 due to its serious structural deterioration. When it became clear that a new hall would eventually be required. The effort to replace the hall was launched in 2009 with the creation of a fund.

Since 2019, the St. Mildred's Sunday morning children's programme has been taking place on two converted double decker buses.

Delivery and design

We are pleased to announce that Chawton Hill have been appointed as the project manager on the proposal to replace the old church hall. The new structure will be open to everyone and is intended to blend in with the church's architectural style.

It will offer 600m2 of adaptable, naturally lit space with a kitchen, toilet facilities, meeting rooms, a huge hall area and a flexible open foyer. The proposed multi-use project will enable St Mildred's Church to continue serving the local area and provide an important community facility.

Outcome

Assuming the required funding is acquired, the plan is to begin construction on the new facility next year.

We are very excited to work on and see the final outcome of this project. Keep an eye out for more updates on the St Mildred's project [here](#).

Should you need support with project management on your project, don't hesitate to [get in touch today](#).



RAAC Surveys & Remediation for Churches & Other Buildings

Reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) is a lightweight 'bubbly' (i.e. 'aerated') form of concrete. It was mainly used in flat roofs in the UK from the mid-1950s to the mid-1990s. Whilst it exists in buildings in both the public and private sectors, it is more prevalent in schools, hospitals and public buildings such as theatres.

RAAC was seen as a cheaper and easier alternative to concrete. However, it is less durable and, typically has a lifespan of around 30 years. There is therefore a risk it can fail, leading to structural collapse. As a result the government were jolted into action to mitigate the dangers.

What is the current situation? And what is being done to the buildings that are affected?

Schools

On 8 February 2024, the government confirmed plans to permanently remove RAAC from all schools and colleges in England. It also advised that all work to remove RAAC will be funded through grants or the School Rebuilding Programme.

There are over 22,000 schools and colleges in England. From those, 234 have confirmed RAAC so far. The DfE has indicated that 119 of these schools will need one or more buildings rebuilt or refurbished. There are 110 schools and colleges where work to remove RAAC will be less complex and extensive. A further five educational institutions have alternative arrangements in place.

Hospitals

The NHS in England put in place a rolling programme to identify RAAC in hospitals after the RAAC alert issued by The Standing Committee on Structural Safety (SCOSS) in 2019. As of 17 October 2023, there are 42 hospital sites with confirmed RAAC in the programme.

The Department of Health and Social Care states that the programme is backed with significant additional funding of £698 million from 2021 to 2025 for trusts to put in place necessary remediation and failsafe measures.

What you need to do if you suspect RAAC?

The first thing you need to do is arrange for a survey of the building to determine whether RAAC is present. At Chawton Hill, the team have been carrying out widespread surveys to identify RAAC.

If RAAC is found, we can help find an engineer to come and assess its severity and identify the next steps. In the event it is deemed low risk, then it will just need monitoring. If it is more serious, then remedial action might be needed, and work may need to be carried out. We're always happy to help where we can.

Changing Your Church Layout or Use?

Increasingly churches are realising they have a valuable community asset that can be used not only on a Sunday or a few days a week. They can provide value to the community throughout the week. Not only that, but allowing differing uses can also raise valuable income to help support and maintain increasingly expensive buildings and estates. Changing your church layout and use can bring a new lease of life to the church, but what are the practical things to think about?

Examples of things we have come across in recent years include the addition of cafes and coffee shops, the opening of nursery facilities, night shelters or even offices for start-up businesses. Each of these will come with its own considerations. They range from safeguarding to licensing and health / safety issues.

In this article we'll focus on the construction elements, but there are some helpful guides to the more spiritual and practical aspects at this page from the Church of England.

What should you consider if thinking of flexible uses for your church? What are the main risks and pitfalls to avoid?

Changing Layouts

If you're considering changing the use as well as the church layout, you may need to consider changing the layout or design of your building. From a construction perspective there are a number of elements to think about. Depending on whether your church is part of an organisation like the Church of England or not, you may firstly need to think about what restrictions your organisation has in place such as faculty requirements, etc.

Next, is your building subject to any heritage restrictions, such as listings or conservation areas? Usually you will be aware of these. If not, your local authority will keep details of all heritage buildings and conservation areas in the area. Special consideration and advice will be needed if any of these issues apply.

Design: It pays to have someone experienced in design working with you. A qualified architect or designer will be aware of the numerous options for materials and suppliers. Most importantly, they will be able to look at the spatial design of your assets. They will help you make the most of the space you have available, regardless of shape or size.

Assessing What You Have

Consider the existing church layout and materials before starting work. A surveyor can identify issues like asbestos or RAAC roof planks. Early professional advice helps reduce the risk of unexpected costs later in the project.



Changing Your Church Layout or Use?

Efficiency and Sustainability

If making changes to your building fabric, you may wish to think about ensuring any changes incorporate the latest features for sustainability and minimising waste. The materials used (or re-used) can make a big impact on the environment in which we live. Construction remains one of the most damaging activities we do as humans, so the more sustainable we can be, the better.

Again, a qualified surveyor / project manager can help to ensure costs are controlled and projects are delivered in the most effective way to minimise the impact on the environment. From ground source heat pumps to assessing the 'embodied carbon' in a building – there are many things to consider here.

Changing Layouts

If you're considering changing the use as well as the church layout, you may need to consider changing the layout or design of your building. From a construction perspective there are a number of elements to think about.

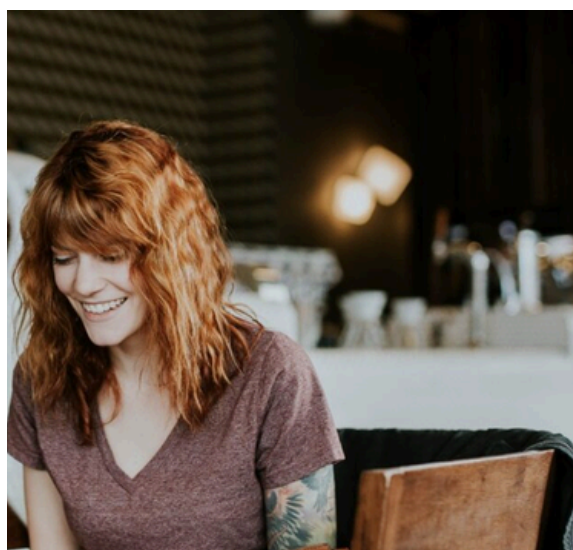
Classic examples of considerations for a church might include:

- Lighting: is it sufficient and efficient? Can it be easily maintained without need for a tower scaffold or multiple people to undertake maintenance.
- Heating: again, will it be efficient and is it practical for the building?
- What is access and egress like? How will people circulate around the building if different uses are required?

- Can regular activities such as funerals, services, etc continue unhindered if weekday use changes?
- Power sockets: are there enough – why are there never enough?!

Funding

- Funding may be a challenge. Many people fear the dreaded thermometer of fundraising, used by so many churches in the past! There are many options for funding.
- Funders may range from generous benefactors and bequests to lottery funds, to your own church body. It's worth doing the research and putting the applications in. Again, surveyors are often well-versed in helping clients apply for funding for projects, just get in touch and we'll be glad to advise.



How Much Will A New Church Building Cost?

The Costs of New Church Construction Projects

Construction in the UK ranks amongst the most expensive in the world. Our strict safety and quality regulations mean construction projects tend to be delivered well and to a standard that is the envy of the world. In addition, land values are consistently high. However, that level of safety and quality comes at a price. London is second only to Geneva in terms of construction cost in a recent survey. But what are likely church building costs? We take a look...

Before you undertake a church project such as a new church hall, you will need to be fully aware of the likely costs and risks. As luck would have it, Chawton Hill can assist with those! We've assisted clients across the ecclesiastical world. Those projects range from general building maintenance and quinquennial surveys to full management of new buildings.

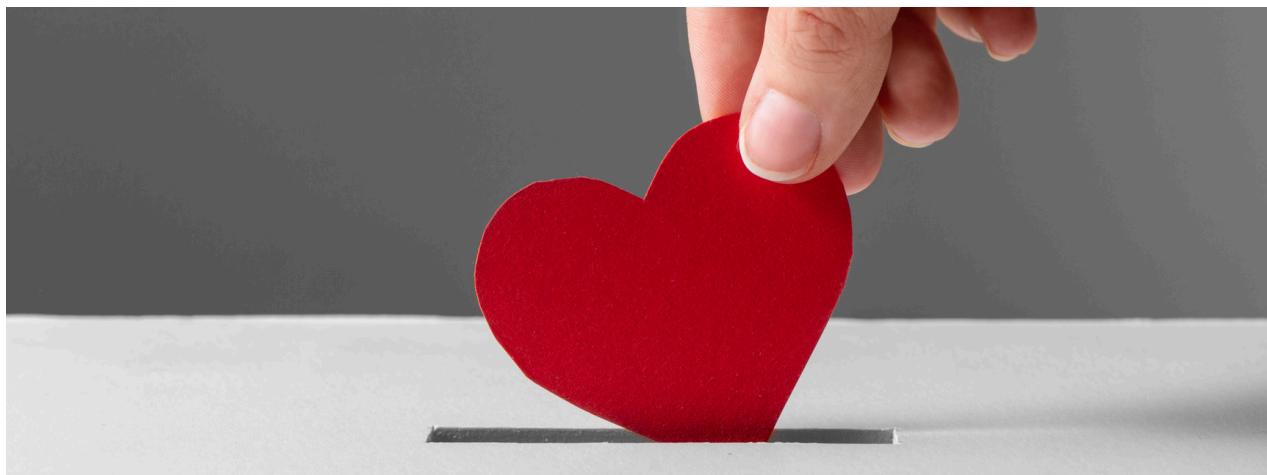
Key Costs in Church Building Projects

So what are the likely costs? A recent church hall we helped deliver cost the church £2.9m. One of the biggest challenges in 2023 is the continuing uncertainty of material costs and availability. The COVID pandemic, followed by the Ukraine war and challenges created by new border controls with the EU have brought new challenges to construction. We have had to adapt and become more creative in helping clients keep costs under control.

Some factors in costing a project can include:

- Planning consent – c.£462
- Architects fees (hourly) – c.£100
- Stained Glass window repairs – c.£500 each
- Roofing (daily) – c.£250 a roofing project can cost upwards of £8500.

These are just a handful of the many costs to consider.



How Much Will A New Church Building Cost?

Other Cost Considerations

There are more considerations yet. In the past, construction using concrete and steel would have been a simple choice, quick and cheap to procure, built to last a long time.

These days, the trend is to use cross laminated or other forms of timber construction where possible. There are serious considerations here around insurance. Though you may be surprised to find that it is not the risk of fire, but water that insurers are most concerned about.

There are critical choices to be made when selecting heating and energy systems. Gas is now being phased out as an option for heating buildings, with air or ground source heating replacing it.

Energy sources such as solar, wind and others are strong considerations. Given the large expanse of space on many church roofs, solar (or Photo voltaic) panels may well be a good choice for that long, South-facing elevation!

Reducing energy use and ensuring sustainable construction is important. But this must be balanced against budgets. Sadly, the most sustainable options are not always the most economical.

A Good Surveyor

And of course, with all of this, good advice is key. A good surveyor can help keep costs down by sourcing alternative materials and suppliers. Chawton Hill's team have great links to a vast range of suppliers and experts across a range of religious buildings. As a result, they are well placed to help minimise the risk of cost and maximise the success of any church project.

Finally, whether you're looking for advice on planned maintenance or are considering a full construction project, we can help, please get in touch today.



Quinquennial Inspection Reports

Our Quinquennial Inspectors are highly experienced in Quinquennial Inspection Reports for a wide variety of Church building types including Grades 1 & 2 listed buildings.

We take the time to understand your needs whilst offering a rapid response that details & prioritises building defects.

We also offer a full range of consultancy services to help maintain and improve your church facilities for future generations.

The Chawton Hill Quinquennial Inspection Reports includes;

- Repair of the building; maintenance; sustainability; safety of the structure; unsafe floors and access assessments
- Digital Image Schedules
- Issues graded according to the urgency
- Free initial consultation
- Free detailed quotations

Under the Inspection of Churches Measure 1955, as amended by the Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1991, all consecrated buildings of the Church of England must by law be inspected once in every five years by a registered architect or chartered building surveyor (the 'Quinquennial Inspector' or QI).

Most other denominations and many secular organisations responsible for historic buildings now adopt a similar approach to inspections.



How much? Tackling Material Price Fluctuations in Construction Projects

Nobody working in construction over the past few years can have failed notice price fluctuations and huge cost increases, particularly around materials. As project managers and surveyors we keep a close eye on the cost of our clients' projects. It is our role to do our best to ensure the project delivered is the project commissioned, not only in terms of time and quality but also cost.

We have heard of suppliers who will only fix the price of materials for a few hours. Yet Employers will almost always want to manage the risk of cost over a project period which could be several months or years. These price fluctuations can be incredibly challenging. In some cases, it can be the difference between a successful project and a financial disaster.

So: What solutions are available then, to tackle these huge increases in cost, when very often we are required to commit to a project cost at the outset?

There are some contractual options available. Most of the main forms of construction contracts have a 'fluctuation' clause or option in them. This can allow for a price 'index' for an item that will allow for the fluctuation of that item over time. However, selecting the correct index is key to success. It's important to bear in mind that price indices may work in either party's favour over the course of a project.

Solutions:

Some other possible solutions include:

"Cost Plus".

Here the Contractor works to the cost of the materials, plus a percentage or margin to cover profit and overheads/preliminaries. This, unfortunately, is unlikely to be popular with many Employers!



How much? Tackling Material Price Fluctuations in Construction Projects

Two-Stage Procurement:

Allowing for a second stage of procurement spreads the risk across the project period. The contractor will be appointed to carry out the first stage of the works. They will then generally be appointed later for the second stage. At the second procurement point, an updated cost tender can be submitted. This in turn avoids committing to a fixed cost at the earliest stage.

Early Orders:

It may be possible to place an order early, thereby fixing the price of the item. However, this may be an issue if delivery is then made and storage is needed. A project we know of in London, ended up storing 1000s of kitchens in a warehouse during the pandemic, just to ensure they could deliver them as required by the contract.

Alternative Specifications / Value Engineering:

This is a process we are very familiar with at Chawton Hill. Substituting identical or similar materials and supplies for those specified, by agreement with the employer can prove a very helpful solution. It helps with the challenge of materials that either escalate in cost or become unavailable. This was a technique we successfully employed on a recent project in Surrey.

Ultimately it may not be possible to do much about cost increases. But there are ways of mitigating the risk of the huge fluctuations we've seen in recent years. By using an experienced advisor with a strong network of suppliers and good industry knowledge, it's possible to minimise risk. In some cases, it's possible to completely avoid risks.



Public Consultation

As with all our building projects, consultation with local residents, end users and key stakeholders so they can provide their views and feedback on a proposal, is always a central part in refining the final project.

We've carried out numerous events, whether to gather feedback from local residents on a school extension or end users' thoughts on a multi-million pound New Build.

In each case we aim to follow a set of key principles;

Clear and Concise – e.g. the use of plain English and avoiding acronyms. Being clear what questions we need to ask and avoiding lengthy documents.

Consultations Purpose – what feedback are we looking to gather.

Consultation Information – provide enough information to ensure that those consulted understand the issues and can give informed responses.

Proportionate Consultation – too long will unnecessarily delay a project whilst consulting too quickly will not give enough time for consideration and will reduce the quality of responses.

Targeted Consultation – e.g. who is affected by the project? Who may have an influence on the final decision? Who knows about the subject matter? Who has an interest in the project?





**CHAWTON
HILL** CHARTERED
SURVEYORS

chawtonhill.com

01372 360663

info@chawtonhill.com