

Neutral Citation Number: [2026] ECC Swk 1

IN THE CONSISTORY COURT OF THE DIOCESE OF SOUTHWARK

IN THE MATTER OF ST ANNE'S CHURCH, WANDSWORTH

AND IN THE MATTER OF A PETITION BY REVD CECILE SCHNYDER, MS KAREN MAYNE AND MR ANDRW MACINTOSH

JUDGMENT

1. This is the petition of Revd Cecile Schnyder, Ms Karen Mayne and Andrew MacIntosh, the Vicar and Churchwardens respectively of St Anne's, Wandsworth. The proposal that the petition asks me to consider is to replace the three existing gas boilers in the church (which provide it with heat) with one new gas boiler.
2. The petition is urgent because, the existing boilers having failed, it is currently too cold for services to be held in the church (I think that they are currently being held in the church hall). The single new boiler will provide sufficient heat although it might not be satisfactory as a permanent provision.
3. The proposal is unopposed and is recommended by the DAC which has also certified in due form that the parish's consideration of the net zero issue arising has been adequate.
4. Ideally the parish would like to replace the boilers with heating provided by heat pumps. However this is not practicable at the moment because it does not have the money to do so; and the need is immediate. Accordingly the proposal is that the new boiler should be temporary; the parish intend to progress a proposal to install heat pumps as soon as practicable.
5. I am entirely satisfied as to the good faith of the parish in this; they have over a number of years been pursuing the achievement of net zero by the Diocesan target date of 2035, including preliminary work as regards heat pumps.
6. The downside to what is proposed is the expenditure of £33,000 on a temporary solution. Obviously it would be better if this money were spent on a solution that was permanent; and (if a faculty for its installation be granted) the sooner the new boiler is replaced, the less good value (in purely money terms) it will prove to have been.
7. There is nothing to be done about this. I guess that by the time the boiler is replaced the parish will have got a reasonable return on its money (looking at the matter in these terms). The important thing is the evident commitment to replace it as soon as possible.
8. In these and similar circumstances, it is not my practice to impose a condition on a faculty that the parish should make offsetting payments to reflect the fact that the church will continue to have a carbon footprint (albeit a smaller one than hitherto). Apart from anything else, to do so is likely to make it more difficult to raise the money for the heat pumps.
9. The DAC raised the question as to whether planning permission might be needed for the new flue that is required. It represents very minor work and will be below the general ground level of the church. Against this background, the Church's Inspecting Architect has

advised that planning permission is not required. My experience (which perhaps may not be replicated in Wandsworth LBC) is that planning departments are reluctant to give informal planning advice. I do not in this case require that the parish go to the expense of obtaining a formal determination. There is perhaps a small risk that the planning authority might take the view that planning permission is required but the work is on any view minor as well as being apparently unobjectionable. It is also necessary for the safe functioning of the boiler. I think it highly unlikely that any point on the flue will be taken after its installation.

10. I direct that a faculty should issue subject to the following conditions:

- (i) the specification (including make and model) of the proposed new boiler shall be agreed with the DAC before its installation; in the event of disagreement the matter to be referred back to the Court;
- (ii) the detailed design of the flue shall be agreed with the Church's Inspecting Architect before its installation; in the event of disagreement the matter to be referred back to the Court;
- (iii) the work is to be completed to the reasonable satisfaction of the Church's Inspecting Architect.

PHILIP PETCHEY

Chancellor

23 January 2026