

Re Holy Trinity, Rusholme

Manchester Consistory Court: Tattersall Ch, March 2012

Re-ordering – pews

A faculty was sought for the re-ordering of a Grade II* listed church to create more flexible worship and meeting space, including replacing the pews (which had unusual terracotta pew ends) with chairs. The church was one of three ‘terracotta’ churches built by the same Victorian architect in the diocese. The Victorian Society and English Heritage opposed, although did not formally object to, the removal of the pews, arguing that their terracotta features had intrinsic value and made an important contribution to the character of the interior and its terracotta architecture. The faculty was granted as the wholesale retention of the pews was not merited and the petitioners had proved necessity for the proposed changes. The chancellor observed that the pews were of little significance in their own right but had an intrinsic heritage value in their historic environment. It was a condition of the faculty that some pews would be preserved *in situ* as rare examples of pews with terracotta features finished to resemble timber. [Catherine Shelley]

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Re St Nicholas, Pevensey

Chichester Consistory Court: Hill Ch, March 2012

Grave – reservation – churchyard – right to burial

The petitioners, a married couple, sought a faculty for the reservation of a grave-space for themselves. They lived outside the parish but one of them had been on the electoral roll for several years (the other more recently) and they were seeking to move into the parish. They had a long association with the parish, including the wife serving as an acolyte, involvement in the Sunday school and choir, and support of fundraising and maintenance activities. Family weddings, baptisms and funerals had taken place in the church. The PCC and incumbent supported the petition. The churchyard was likely to be full within about two years. In refusing the faculty, the chancellor acknowledged that there were many factors in this case that might favour the granting of the faculty. However, the particular position of the established Church created rights for all parishioners regardless of their religious affiliation and where space was limited there could be no presumptive priority for a certain class of individuals such as those who were regular attenders at church or who supported its ministry by financial giving or in other ways. In these circumstances, the granting of a faculty was not just or appropriate. [RA]

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