

## Mission and Buildings - Being a Good Client

Every successful building project needs a good builder, a good architect and a good client. How can the client be “good”; surely they are the customer in receipt of the product?

The design needs to be imaginative and achievable within reasonable cost, providing a useful facility that will serve for many years. There are of course very many other design criteria. The builder must construct a building that is sound, meeting all standards and regulations and it must be achieved within a reasonable time and budget.



*Clients need to fully understand designs and be able to champion them to others.*

The client's role is to provide a clear brief, articulating their needs so that the design can be developed to meet them. As architects, we sometimes help clients to define their needs more clearly and show how the brief can lead to a design that will benefit the client's core business.

The larger client body needs to delegate authority to a trusted individual or small team of 2 or 3 people who can make quick decisions when necessary. This team can be enlarged if needed for more fundamental decisions but should not be more than 7 or 8 people. In many cases, fundraising exercises are proceeding at the same time as the initial design work and particular skills are needed to describe the benefits that the project will bring to the work of the church, encouraging the process of financial commitment.

The client needs to consider designs presented, questioning anything that is not clear and make timely decisions to approve each stage allowing progress to be made. Establishing a good rapport with the architect is vital. Being able to advocate the scheme to the larger church membership and, if necessary to neighbours may also be needed.

Finally of course the client needs to be in a position to financially commit to a building construction contract and be able to make staged payments to the building contractor on a monthly basis, representing the value of work completed as certified by architect.

[This article](#) on our website describes the experience of a client project leader at the conclusion of a project.

Next time: Enabling development and fundraising.

*“Making Property Serve Mission” has been receiving independent media reviews:*

**Church Times (UK)**

*This book ... would be a great source for a larger congregation considering revamping their space to suit changing communities.*

**The Tasmanian Anglican**

*This is an enormously useful book for anyone thinking of building a new church or altering an old one.*

**The Melbourne Anglican**

*This book...challenges us to think creatively, think big and think mission.*

**Crosslight (Uniting Church)**

*Strongly recommended, not just for decision-makers on committees but for any member of the congregation facing change.*

**Essentials (EFAC)**

*I keep wanting to describe this as ‘a great little book’, except that it is not little. It is comprehensive, rich in Biblical and theological perspectives.*

