

Revaluation 2026

Public Buildings Committee

Practice Note 24 Valuation of Places of Worship

1.0 Basis of Valuation

- 1.1 Subjects covered by this Practice Note are valued on the Contractor's Basis. Where a subject covered by this Practice Note has the characteristics of an office, retail or industrial building and/or is located within an established location for those types of properties, prevailing rental levels for that type of property may provide the best evidence of Net Annual Value.

2.0 Survey and Measurement

- 2.1 Building areas should be calculated on a Gross External Area (GEA) for each main floor. Attic floor accommodation should be calculated on a Gross Internal Area (GIA) excluding any area under 1.5 metres in height.
- 2.2 Where a subject is of older construction e.g., stone, and has thicker than normal walls, the area should be adjusted on a floor by floor basis with reference to SAA Valuation of Contractor's Basis Subjects, Areas Adjustment, External Works' Costs Practice Note to adjust the floor area to the modern equivalent.
- 2.3 Site area should be calculated together with the areas of any car parks, roadways and other paved or landscaped surfaces. Measurements and details of boundary walls, fences and any other items in the nature of external works, civil works or plant and machinery should also be noted.

3.0 Building and External Works Costs

- 3.1 The available cost evidence was analysed in terms of SAA Contractor's Basis Valuations Practice Note.

4.0 Valuation

- 4.1 Valuations should be carried out with reference to SAA Contractor's Basis Valuations Practice Note.

4.2 Recommended unit cost rates excluding professional fees for buildings are noted below.

4.3 For external works reference should be made to section 5.4 below.

5.0 Estimated Replacement Cost (ERC)

5.1 Unit Cost Rates (Buildings)

The following unit cost rates per square metre should be applied to adjusted GEA in accordance with the different categories described.

Purpose built traditional stone or modern places of worship with special architectural features or finishes.

Unit Cost Rate - £3,000/m²

Purpose built non-traditional place of worship of good quality, generally of brick construction and good internal finish.

Unit Cost Rate - £2,300/m²

5.2 For a non-traditional place of worship of lower quality or finish, prefabricated/utilitarian subjects, reference should be made to SAA Valuation of Halls, Art Galleries & Museums etc Practice Note for assistance with unit cost rates.

5.3 In cases where buildings are of the highest quality such as Cathedrals or Mosques, the rate may be enhanced. If actual costs for such buildings are available, these may provide the best evidence.

5.4 Unit Cost Rates (External Works)

External Works should be valued with reference to SAA Valuation of Contractor's Basis Subjects, Area Adjustment and External Works' Costs Practice Note.

5.5 Adjustments to ERC

Adjustments in respect of contract size and additions for professional fees should be with reference to the recommendations contained in SAA Contractor's Basis Valuations Practice Note.

6.0 Adjusted Replacement Cost (ARC)

6.1 In applying age-related obsolescence allowances, reference should be made to guidance in SAA Contractor's Basis Valuations Practice Note and SAA Valuation of Contractor's Basis Subjects, Areas Adjustment and External Works' Costs Practice Note. Table E at Appendix 1 of the Contractor's Basis Subjects Practice Note should be used for buildings.

- 6.2 Further allowances of a functional and technical nature should be considered with reference to SAA Contractor's Basis Valuations Practice Note and SAA Valuation of Contractor's Basis Subjects, Areas Adjustment and External Works' Costs Practice Note.

6.3 Buildings Without Lifts Provision

Buildings or affected parts of the buildings without lifts may be granted an allowance as indicated in the table below.

2 Storey	-5%
3 Storey	-10%
4 Storey	-15%
5 Storey	-20%

If, in the case of buildings of two storeys or above, a particular floor such as attic is significantly smaller than the main floors or consists of a basement of poorer quality, then such a floor should be excluded from the determination of an appropriate lift allowance to be applied to the whole building in the table above.

6.4 Functional Obsolescence

Disabilities which restrict general use on some subsidiary floors, or parts thereof, may require allowances to be applied to the parts affected, e.g. –

Basement/Lower Floors

Poor quality finish/inferior light	-5% to -30%
Poor cellar quality etc	At discretion

Attic Floors

Poor quality finish	-5% to -35%
Inferior access	-5% to -10%
Poor access	-10% to -20%

Galleries/Balconies

Inferior access and/or sight lines	-10% to -20%
Poor access and/or sight lines	-20% to -35%
Very poor and largely disused	-50%

6.5 Other Allowances

Disabilities, which affect the whole property, may require allowances overall.

No toilets	-10%
No heating	-10%
Principal Floor at 1 st to 3 rd floor	-10% to -30%

- 6.6 The above allowances should not be aggregated but applied in sequence to provide the Adjusted Replacement Cost of a particular item.

7.0 Plant and Machinery

- 7.1 Buildings' unit cost rates above are inclusive of service plant typically found in subjects covered by this Practice Note. Rateable items of plant and machinery not already reflected in these rates should be dealt with in terms of the Valuation for Rating (Plant & Machinery) (Scotland) Regulations 2000 (as amended) and valued with reference to the Rating Cost Guide Scotland.

8.0 Land

- 8.1 Land value should be determined by reference to local evidence and SAA Contractor's Basis Valuations Practice Note.

9.0 Decapitalisation Rate

- 9.1 The appropriate statutory decapitalisation rate should be used.

10.0 End Allowance

- 10.1 Any factors or circumstances which might affect the value of the occupation of the lands and heritages as a whole should be reflected at this stage. An adjustment under this head should not duplicate adjustments made elsewhere.
- 10.2 Prior to applying an allowance for redundancy (if applicable), consideration should be given to the location of the subject with the attendance of all the religious establishments in that locality averaged to determine a notional average attendance for that locality. Once the notional average attendance has been determined the following allowances can be applied. Care should be taken where attendance figures are inflated due to members attending more than one weekly service.

Average Attendance	Allowance
Over 60%	None
60% to 40%	-15%
40% to 25%	-30%
Less than 25%	-50%

(Based on recent average attendance figures) Interpolate between points.

10.3 Redundancy

If there are sharp contrasts between the capacity of buildings and the membership and/or attendance of the organisation, for example where a place of worship is linked to another and is not in regular (daily or weekly) use, then an allowance of -10% may be added to the other relevant allowances, subject to a maximum resultant allowance of -50%. Such

allowances should only be applied where it is deemed suitable in the circumstances. In particular, consideration should be given to other uses of the subject referred to at 12.1.

11.0 Community Hall/Place of Worship

- 11.1 If a hall serves as a place of worship or vice versa the whole building should be valued as a Hall (see SAA Valuation of Halls, Art Galleries & Museums etc Practice Note) with adjustments to take account of any special features. However, if the overall appearance, layout and quality is that of a place of worship it should be valued as such.

12.0 Other Facilities

- 12.1 Where areas have been adapted within places of worship for other uses, such as bookshops, creches, nurseries restaurants etc. cognisance should be taken of the extent of the alterations and adaptations together with any relevant letting and valued accordingly.