

#### **42.39/24**

#### **Further details from the Additional Rebuilding Act of 1670**

As well as dealing with the rebuilding of churches and St Paul's Cathedral, the Act also covered other areas. Here is a selection:

1. The widening of additional streets, such as Warwick Lane, Cannon Street, Threadneedle Street, Wood Street and Thames Street
2. The building of the Royal Exchange, Guildhall, Session House at the Old Bailey and the City prisons
3. Compensation for loss of land due to improvement works, such as street widening
4. The complicated issue of rebuilding multiple-occupancy houses and what should be done in cases of disagreement
5. Houses fronting any street should be fitted with gutters and pipes to take rain water down to street level
6. Thames Street and streets leading from it to the Thames should be raised to prevent flooding and to ease the steepness of the streets
7. The continuance of the Fire Court until 29 September 1671 (though it was due to expire by 1670). Several pages are devoted to complicated legal issues surrounding the court and the cases which could be brought before it
8. The coal tax was to be continued and increased to cover the cost of public building works, which were higher than expected in the first Rebuilding Act of 1667. From 1670 to 1677 the tax will be an extra 2 shilling per ton on top of the 12 pence stipulated in the original Act. From 1677 to 1687 the tax will rise to 3 shillings per ton
9. Three-quarters of the 1670-1677 coal tax revenue will be spent on rebuilding churches and the remaining quarter spent on public works, such as streets and wharves
10. Half the 1677-1687 coal tax revenue will go towards the rebuilding of churches and the rest on public works
11. One-quarter of the church funds will be spent on the rebuilding of St Paul's Cathedral

12. The land alongside the Thames from London Bridge to the Temple will be used for a wharf 40 foot wide
13. The channel from Bridewell Dock to Holborn Bridge (the Fleet River) will be made deeper so as to be navigable and between 100 to 120 feet wide. The City authorities are permitted to charge a toll for the use of the channel to pay for its upkeep
14. The water house at Broken Wharf is exempt from the rebuilding regulations – it is permitted to be made from timber as building it from brick or stone is declared ‘impossible’
15. Landlords who demanded rent on houses **pulled down**, rather than burnt down, in the fire are directed to take their cases to the Fire Court if they are in disagreement with their tenants. The cases will be dealt with as if the houses **had** burnt down
16. All temporary shelters and sheds built by the homeless on fields around London are to be taken down by September 1674. They are diverting trade from the City and discouraging people from rebuilding

### **Rebuilding the churches**

Although the original Rebuilding Act of 1667 specified the number of City parishes to be reduced to 39, this Additional Act sets the number at 51. Many parishes had to be united, such as the parishes of Allhallows Bread Street and St John the Evangelist. The church of Allhallows Bread Street was chosen for rebuilding and was the parish church for the new united parish. There are 6 pages in the Act which list the parishes to be united and the churches to be rebuilt.

Any dues that the parishioners traditionally paid to their local clergy, such as tithes, went to the new parish church. The church plate from disused churches also went to it. Disused churches were to be demolished, the land enclosed by walls and converted to cemetery space (unless it had already been leased as market space or any other purpose approved by the City authorities).

Clergymen were exempt from the usual penalties for not rebuilding their properties within the three-year time limit (e.g. that their property would be seized by the City authorities and sold off). They were also let off paying any dues to the king or church authorities until they started to make a profit from their rebuilt churches. Furthermore, ministers would not be punished for not preaching the elements required by law, such as the 39 Articles, until their new churches were completed.