

PROPERTY MATTERS

ISSUE 9 – December 2014



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PROPERTY MATTERS

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INTRODUCTION

Dear readers,

Welcome to the Christmas edition of *Property Matters*. This edition includes an article from an inspirational lady who was homeless, and having been helped, is now helping others (page 10). Churches may be thinking about how they can help homeless people and Methodist Insurance have provided some guidance on night shelters (page 11). Look out for information on the seven roadshows being facilitated by the Joint Property Strategy Group (page 5) – all are welcome to attend, but book early to avoid disappointment. Finally watch out for yellow buses in Calderdale (page 16).

Many thanks to all of our contributors. I shall be leaving the Connexional Team in January to work for the Anglican Church. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for the work you do, and for the joy you have brought to my time in the Connexional Team.

I wish you all a blessed and happy Christmas and 2015.



[Julie Robinson-Judd](#), Mission Resources Manager, 0207 467 3524

Front page photographs: Methodist Heritage

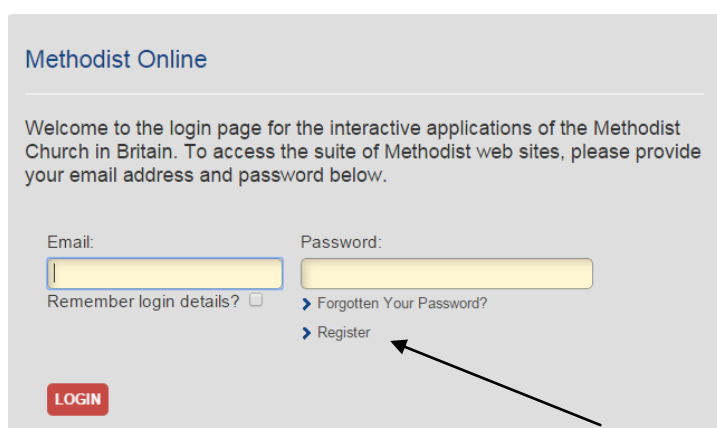
CONNEXIONAL TEAM UPDATE

CONNEXIONAL PROPERTY GRANTS: Towards a paperless application process (update)

The development of the consents site to include all relevant information and additional documents for Connexional grant funding is progressing well. It is scheduled for completion by 1 September 2015.

This means that we will not be able to accept any further paper applications. **All applications must be submitted via the consents website: online.methodist.org.uk**

> PROPERTY CONSENTS



If you are new to the process, click on *Register* and follow the instructions. Your circuit office and/or your superintendent will be notified of your registration.

online.methodist.org.uk/login/login

Once a project has been created, the appropriate managing trustee can tick the box requesting connexional funding. Reloading the webpage will bring up a new grants tab, where further information relating to the project will need to be entered.

The district will need to approve the application by completing the District Support box in the grant section. Please note that in doing so the district is not giving consent to the project, but is demonstrating that it agrees to you applying for a connexional property grant towards it, shown by 'in principle' support from your District Grants Officer/Property Secretary/Chair.

The Connexional Grants Committee awards grants based on the missional impact of proposed projects. As the current online form does not include any questions on mission, the Connexional Grants Officer will send a request with two more questions to be answered when confirming the receipt of the application. From September 2015, those questions will appear in the online grants tab.

It is important that when applying for connexional funding, both the criteria and advice notes are read together, especially in relation to section A3 on the Church's mission and vision and section C on reasons for undertaking the project and the potential impact.

To ensure we are aware of your application, please send a notification of submission and associated papers to grants@methodistchurch.org.uk.

The next closing date for grant applications for over £30,000 is **12 noon on 2 March 2015**. Applications for up to and including £30,000 may be submitted at any time. Processing such an application normally takes around six to eight weeks.

Sourcing funding for your property project

Comprehensive information on how to fund your project can be found within the FUNDING & PAYMENTS section at the bottom of the *Property Consent Help & Guidance* page propertyconsent.methodist.org.uk/guide.

It includes list of recognised organisations that could offer funding as well as free sources for funding advice. If you have any further questions relating to specific funding organisation or trusts, please contact our Fundraising Team on fundraising@methodistchurch.org.uk.

Funding for Local Ecumenical Partnerships (LEPs)

A proposed property project relating to a shared property used by an LEP will need to get advice and the approval of the Connexional Ecumenical Officer (The Revd Neil Stubbens: stubbensn@methodistchurch.org.uk / 020 7467 3520) prior to submitting an application for a property grant to the Connexional Grants Committee.

All applications will need to meet the relevant criteria for Connexional funding found here: www.methodist.org.uk/ministers-and-office-holders/connexional-grants/what-do-we-fund/property-grants

The Connexional Grants Officers will be able to give advice and guidance on the application and criteria once approval for submission has been given.

ANNUAL RETURNS: update

We have just submitted an update for the annual returns to our developers. It includes updates to the way the reporting works; it allows you to see previous years' entries, and is generally more robust in the information that it contains.

For example, if you wish to see a list of issues that churches had upon submitting their returns the previous year, you will now be able to do this by clicking on "Property Issue Summaries" and selecting the appropriate year (see figure 1)

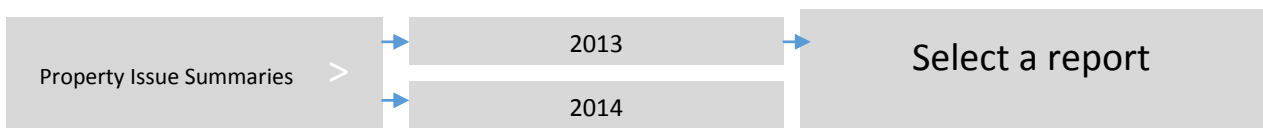


Fig. 1 – Selecting a report year

Also, you can see a complete report of a previous return by going into the church return (for example), clicking *Church Council* and selecting the year (see Figure 2).



Fig. 2 – Selecting a trustee report year

Contact returns@methodistchurch.org.uk for more information.

LANDFILL: landfill grant applications

We are pleased to welcome Claudia Demuth, who has been appointed as temporary Landfill Grants Officer. Claudia will be working with us for the next three months and should be contacted if you have any queries regarding landfill applications. Claudia is based at Methodist Church House and can be contacted on landfill@methodistchurch.org.uk.

METHODIST ONLINE: Standard form of accounts

From 1 January 2015, the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) for charities will be changing. This will mean that the Methodist standard form of accounts (SFA) will also need to change. Taking the opportunity of this change, we will be integrating the SFAs in to the online suite of applications (Property Consents, Statistics for Mission and Annual Returns), with an expected go live date of **January 2016**. The first financial year affected by this change will therefore be the Connexional year from 1 September 2015 to 31 August 2016. Further information about development and consultation will appear at a later date.

JPSG ROADSHOWS: **People, Places, Possibilities...**

The roadshows are aimed at local church officers, circuit/district property officers and those with an interest in mission within their communities and will be designed to encourage participants in the creative use of church buildings, motivate those already engaged or willing to engage in this work, show models for change and also to enable a wider discussion in terms of mission within the community.



These events will take place in 2015 and the dates have now been confirmed. Please visit methodist.org.uk/ministers-and-office-holders/property/the-joint-property-strategy-group for more information on dates and venues (see also *Dates for the Diary* on page 18 of this newsletter), and for a downloadable flyer which can be shared with your churches. Online registration is now open via the following website: www.JPSGroadshows.eventbrite.co.uk.

For further information contact Kim Medford-Vassell, Executive Support Officer (Property): medford-vassellk@methodistchurch.org.uk.

LEGAL MATTERS: Requesting a replacement project

The consent of Louise Wilkins, Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice is required when Managing Trustees wish for a property project to be classed as a **replacement project** under Standing Order 973(1).

If the project satisfies the criteria for being a replacement project as detailed in the replacement project guidance, found at www.methodist.org.uk/media/1342480/replacement_projects_july2014.pdf and is approved as a replacement project then part, or all, of the sale proceeds, depending on the cost of the replacement project, will be exempt from Connexional Priority Fund Levy ("CPF Levy").

If Managing Trustees want to request a project is classified as a replacement project this has to be done via the Property Consents website. The way to do this is by adding “CPF Levy Refund” as a funding type on the project record of the project which is to be the replacement, eg the purchase, new build, refurbishment etc. There will be a note on the website immediately after the “Project Funding” section header which will read as follows:

“If you feel this project qualifies as a replacement under S0973, and will therefore be part funded from a CPF Levy, please ensure you include a funding type of ‘CPF Levy Refund’ with the anticipated levy amount.”

Once “CPF Levy Refund” has been selected and an estimated levy amount inputted, Louise Wilkins will be informed electronically of the request. A decision will be made or Louise will liaise with the Managing Trustees should further information be required. If the replacement project is confirmed an email will be sent to the Managing Trustees notifying them of this. Managing Trustees must be aware however that even if consent is given the figure approved is only an estimate and that the actual amount will not be known until the proceeds of sale have been received. If there are any surplus sale proceeds CPF levy will be taken on this amount.

TMCP Finance will be aware of projects that are confirmed as a replacement project and will then be able to process the sale proceeds accordingly.

If Managing Trustees do experience any difficulties requesting a replacement project then they should contact Mr Tom Lee, the Consents Support Officer, at Methodist Church House on the following email address: consents@methodistchurch.org.uk.

Previously TMCP Legal would facilitate any request for a replacement project by liaison with Louise Wilkins. TMCP Legal no longer needs to be involved in the process of requesting a replacement projects, but the Legal Officers will continue to assist the Managing Trustees in confirming whether or not “other costs incurred by them” can be deducted from the sale proceeds in accordance with Standing Order 916(1)(i).

LEGAL MATTERS: Disposals of land with a designated purpose

(This article was published by the Churches' Legislation Advisory Service (CLAS) newsletter no 18 and is reproduced with their kind permission)

The Charity Commission has updated its guidance on land and property to clarify the regulations that apply to disposing of property designated for a particular purpose (otherwise known as designated land or specie property). The guidance now states that if the property is designated for a particular purpose, such as a recreation ground, then trustees must be sure the sale or lease does not go against this.

This is one of the issues that the Law Commission will be looking at in its forthcoming review of the regulations relating to the disposal of charity property, scheduled to begin in February 2015. The secretariat attended a meeting with Professor Elizabeth Cooke, the commissioner responsible for that area of work, and her colleagues to discuss the general issue of the regulation of disposal of charity land. It is clear that this will be a genuine consultation: the Commission is starting from first principles and does not see itself as bound by the Hodgson Review's recommendations about deregulation.

For the full information, see www.gov.uk/charity-land-and-property.

(Source: Charity Commission website – 24 September)

CONSERVATION & HERITAGE



Joanne Balmforth, Connexional Conservation Officer, and Jo Hibbard, Methodist Heritage Officer, regularly receive enquiries that should have been sent to the other one – two Joannes dealing with the Church’s historic assets understandably gets confusing. So Jo Hibbard, with Sarah Friswell, Chair of the Heritage Committee, and some members of the wider Methodist Heritage network are going to be contributing regularly to Property Matters from now on to give you a feel for their focus, and the help and resources the Heritage Team offers.

Next, Sarah Friswell, the Chair, introduces the **Methodist Heritage Committee**.

Being the Chair of the Methodist Heritage Committee (MHC) has brought me into discussions on topics such as funding agreements, insurance policies, promotional leaflets, creating heritage centres, and archives. The remit is wide and one which I balance with my ‘day job’ as PR, Pilgrimage and Visits Manager at St Edmundsbury Cathedral in Suffolk. I was delighted to be offered the role of Chair because I think that the Methodist Church’s approach to heritage as mission is refreshing and exciting, and offers a real chance to open the Church up to growth.

In recent months, I have also given presentations on the new collections management policy and a proposed five-year development strategy for Methodist Heritage, which will take forward our work with a particular focus on localisation – encouraging a much wider understanding that heritage can be a tool for mission not just at ‘honeypot’ Methodist heritage sites, but right across the Connexion.

At the October meeting of the MHC, our agenda included items on ten other heritage site developments: from progress at Mt Zion Chapel, Halifax (see below under *Good News from the Connexion*), to the potential of the Keelman’s Hospital, Newcastle, in the north, and plans for Tolpuddle, Dorset, and Cornish chapels in the south. We heard about the events and exhibitions around the re-opening of the renovated City of Edinburgh Methodist Church and the celebration in Brecon of the life of the Revd Dr Thomas Coke, founder of Methodist overseas missions. We received reports from the four key heritage sites, all of whom continue to put in place plans for development and improvement. There was an update on the renegotiation of the agreements with the two main repositories of Methodist archives, and we began to plan a conference to be held in July 2015 for all those engaged in Methodist Heritage, either as volunteers as sites, archivists, historians or academics.

The Heritage Committee is accountable to the Methodist Council and works on its behalf with the key objective of protecting, advocating and advancing the interests of Methodist Heritage throughout the Connexion. The 13 members of the committee bring diverse skills in order to fulfil all our objectives. The current Committee includes people with specific expertise in:

- archiving and record management
- libraries
- tourism
- scholarship
- historical research
- the World Church.

Although the Committee only meets formally twice a year, our work is constant and the commitment of the Committee members is significant. Further details on the Committee members can be found at www.methodistheritage.org.uk/heritagecommittee.html.

Among the members of the Committee is Philip Thornborow, Liaison Officer for Methodist Archives. He is appointed by the Council to advise the Church on archiving and record management; his role on the Committee is ex officio. Philip's role, though voluntary, is huge; his recent work has included advising and providing online guidance on retention and storage of personal and church archives; negotiating new agreements with the John Rylands Library, University of Manchester, and the School of Oriental and African Studies Library, University of London; helping with the planning of a training day for local Methodist archivists, and he even had time to write a book based on his long experience of public enquiries (*A Methodist in the Family? Answers to ten frequently asked family history questions* priced £4.99 +P&P from Methodist Publishing).

The Committee wishes to appoint a new officer to take on the role of Liaison Officer for Historic Objects.

This involves being a point of contact for enquiries about artefacts – vital for churches that are confronted with the issue of what to keep, what to conserve and what to throw away. If you think you know of someone who might be interested in knowing more about this role, do get in touch with me (sarah.friswell@btinternet.com) or Jo Hibbard (hibbardj@methodistchurch.org.uk) to discuss the role in detail.

The Committee, together with Jo Hibbard, Methodist Heritage Officer, is there to encourage the whole Church to think seriously about the role of heritage. Not as an optional 'extra', but rather as part of the ongoing mission of the Church today. Do please get in touch if you want to find out how your church/chapel/circuit can get more involved.

HERITAGE SITE: Wesley's Chapel and Museum refurbishment project

The Museum of Methodism and John Wesley's House, the house in which Mr Wesley lived between 1778 until his death in 1791, explore the story of Methodism from its origins in the eighteenth century to the present day. The museum re-opened last year in May (2013) following a major investment which allowed for conserving and improving the historic structure of the building and re-display of the museum's most significant objects.



Located in the eighteenth-century crypt of Wesley's Chapel at City Road (close to Old Street), the space had originally been turned into a museum in 1984. At the time, its design was progressive, even cutting edge. However, by 2012 the space looked tired. The interpretation required revision and many objects needed a rest after years of light exposure. Wesley's Chapel and the museum (the museum forming an integral part of the Chapel) were incredibly fortunate, in that they received a large donation from a sister Methodist Church in South Korea for the museum refurbishment. This made it possible to approach other UK grant funding bodies and embark on our ambitious project.



Chapel and museum were keen to emphasise the original Georgian architecture of the building. The refurbishment returned the Chapel to its original outline, revealing wooden columns and ceiling beams as well as emphasising the very interesting floor consisting of nineteenth-century grave markers.

The new display was organised thematically, with individual themes presented in clearly separate areas yet linked both spatially and intellectually with one another. Where possible, the display cases were arranged around the periphery of the space, to emphasise the architecture, facilitate a more open plan space and create interesting vistas throughout the museum. In order to draw attention from the comparatively low ceiling, ambience lighting was installed in the showcases at the top and bottom, most discernible around the museum's periphery walls. In this way only a few ceiling spotlights to highlight important objects were required, and display cases now appear weightless, as if floating in space.

Following the refurbishment visitors can explore the history of the building complex on site, look at the early development of Methodism through a display case on preaching and publishing and another on the first Methodist chapel in London, the so-called 'Foundery'. (Wesley's first London chapel was housed in an old cannon foundry.) They can learn more about the Methodist chapel building 'boom' of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and the lives of important twentieth-century preachers, as well as the social and political causes Methodism has supported over the years. There are displays on John Wesley, the principal founder of the Methodist movement, augmented by a number of important eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth-century paintings. For those who would like to explore Wesleyan hymns or sermons, as well as the burial records of the Chapel and archival material from the museum's collection, such as old leases, letters and other documents, there are the museum's new Apple iPads. At the centre of the museum, a five-screen audio-visual presentation brings alive the story of John Wesley, the site and the development of Methodism and ties together all parts of the museum experience.

Funding is still required to put in place one more showcase and an interactive table display. These will then complete the refurbishment. The showcase will



investigate John Wesley's 'World Parish', in keeping with Wesley's comment that "the whole world" was his parish, and trace the development of Methodism overseas in the US, Africa, Asia and the Pacific. The tabletop interactive will augment the display and shall enable visitors from all over the globe trace the story of Methodism in their part of the world.

Wesley's Chapel and the museum are still seeking funding; donations are very warmly encouraged and gratefully received.

Have you visited the museum yet? It provides the ideal base from which to start exploring the Chapel above and John Wesley's House, as well as the other attractions on site. Go to www.wesleyschapel.org.uk/museum.htm for further information.

Author: Christian Dettlaff. Originally from Germany, Christian studied at Oxford University and University College London. He has worked in the museum sector since 1999, including The Victoria and Albert Museum and is now curator at The Museum of Methodism and John Wesley's House.

Homelessness: time to change



I am Rachel Holliday and I used to be homeless. After a journey through homelessness and poverty I was blessed in the year 2000 with a team of people who not only provided me with somewhere to live, but also secured me some voluntary work and encouraged me to reskill. That was 15 years ago. Today I own my own home and I am married with two wonderful children. I believe that investing in homeless people works.

Left: Rachel in 1999

Last year I set up a community interest company called the Time to Change (West Cumbria) project. I called the company Time to Change as I believe it is time to change our society's outdated and misguided views on homelessness and unemployment. I felt a productive way of tackling the prejudice faced by homeless people in our community was to speak publicly about my experience.

In Copeland we have a significant homeless problem. We may not have a 'cardboard city', but we have hundreds of people in vulnerable situations with nowhere of their own to live. Neither do we have a hostel, somewhere safe for people to go until permanent accommodation can be found. My mission was to provide a safe, abstinent environment for those who have become homeless and do not meet the council's 'priority need' criteria.

On my journey I have discovered that one fifth of our homeless population are ex-military. It seemed shocking that in 2014 we have servicemen and women who have served our country, yet have nowhere to live. We agreed to prioritise ex-military to ensure no-one returning from the forces would find themselves with nowhere to live in Copeland.

After months of searching for a premises which could accommodate the amount of rooms we needed, I had a fortunate meeting with a member of the Cumbria Police and Crime Commissioner's office. They liked my idea and could see the potential in what I was trying to achieve. They had a building which was surplus to their requirements and we negotiated a 25 year lease for £1 a year peppercorn rent. This building is magnificent and exactly the right size for the project.

To date, we need to secure £383K for this project to go ahead. We have so far secured £251K and wait with anticipation to see if we have been successful with other funding applications.

The moral of my story is this: I believe I am living proof that investing in homelessness works. Without the kind people who invested in me when I was a very troubled individual, I would not be here today as valued member of society. I believe everyone has skills that can be utilised. I do hope that the remaining funding is granted and we can open the doors of Calderwood House to enable brighter futures for all.

Right: Rachel today

Rachel will be speaking at the 2015 Resourcing Mission Forum.



METHODIST INSURANCE

Night shelters on church property

A number of churches have contacted Methodist Insurance to say that they are thinking of running a night shelter during the winter. This might just be a warm place of shelter but often will provide meals, washing facilities and advice and support on housing, debt, domestic violence and job hunting.

Make sure you appoint a project coordinator. They will need to ensure the shelter runs smoothly and policies and procedures are effectively managed. This will include seeing that there are enough volunteers and proper handovers take place between them and that the facilities are adequate. Homeless people are not automatically classed as 'vulnerable adults' and therefore volunteers do not necessarily need to be Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checked. [See guidance from the Safeguarding Adviser below]

It is useful to keep a log book each day with:

- details of guests who did and did not arrive and any incidents, including 'near misses' or actual accidents (even if they were minor)
- emergency telephone numbers; including project coordinator, doctor, police, all-night chemist and local minister of your church
- copies of important policies including guest agreement, health and safety, violence, alcohol/drugs and confidentiality policies.

All volunteers and guests should be aware of where the fire exits, first aid kit, accident book, evacuation procedures, telephone and list of emergency numbers are. You should secure areas in the church or hall you don't want guests to use. Consider providing a safe area for volunteers' belongings and guests' valuables (which should be logged with a volunteer responsible for giving them back).

Night shelters fall under the following legislation:

- Food Hygiene regulations – the Food Act 1990 and the Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2006.
- Health and Safety legislation – you need to have conducted risk assessments and have a policy in place.
- Charity Law – to receive charitable donations, a shelter needs to have charitable status – this is usually the church's charitable status but if a shelter has its own identity, it needs charitable status in its own right and its own insurance.

There will be a small annual charge for churches holding night shelters to cover the cost of insurance. These premiums apply at renewal and remain on the policy until we are told the church is no longer a member or provider of a night shelter.

For more detailed guidance, see www.methodistinsurance.co.uk/nightshelters or call 0845 606 1331. For further information, go to www.housingjustice.org.uk, who also offer consultancy in running a night shelter.

Guidance regarding Safeguarding

It depends on the role description as to whether the volunteers are eligible for a check.

If the role includes assistance with personal care (eating, drinking, bathing, oral care, care of skin, hair or nails) if assistance is given with cash, bills or shopping, then the volunteer and their manager would be eligible for an enhanced check with barring information. Most night shelters are unlikely to be doing this, but some might.

If the night shelter provides

- treatment, therapy, training, teaching, instruction
- care of any description or assistance provided to an adult by reason of age, health or any disability (not necessarily the case in night shelters)

then the volunteers are eligible for an enhanced check without barring information.

If the night shelter management wished to carry out checks on volunteers, basic checks could be applied for via Disclosure Scotland. It is advisable to check with the District Safeguarding Officer (DSO)/Connexional Safeguarding/CAS.

This activity would be covered by the church's safeguarding policy. It would be wise to review this policy to ensure that any potential safeguarding issues, which might arise because of the church undertaking this specific activity, are covered.

I would suggest that it be made clear to whom volunteers can speak if they have a safeguarding concern. This may not be necessarily to do with anything that has happened in the night shelter (though it could be) but also other experiences that the homeless people may have had.

My advice regarding training would be that the volunteers should have done the Foundation Module and the leader the Leadership Module.

Hilary Walker, Interim Safeguarding Adviser

Public liability insurance cover for groups using church premises

What do you, as a church, need to do about insurance when 'other' people use your building?

It's important to think about who is going to be using the premises. If they are a group which is under the oversight of the Church Council (such as a mother-and-toddler group run by church members, or the church youth club), then if you are insured by Methodist Insurance, your church shield policy already covers them – and all your other activities as a church.

Groups, organisations or individuals who don't come under the Church umbrella are termed 'outside users' – regardless of whether they pay you rent or give you a donation for use of the building and its facilities, or if you let them have it for free.

Outside users have some very specific insurance implications for a church because if something happens while they are using the church hall – such as an accident or damage to the premises –

they need to have their own insurance to pay for it. If damage is caused to the premises or someone is injured, liability for putting things right really belongs to the outside user and they should have their own public liability (sometimes called 'third party') insurance to cover it.

Before letting a group use the church hall, trustees should ask to see their insurance certificate and take a copy to keep on file. If the group only uses the hall up to three times a year and does not have its own insurance, then, if the church is insured by Methodist Insurance, it can be covered under the church's own church shield policy. Methodist Insurance would need to know if the activity was potentially hazardous (martial arts, for example).

The really important thing for churches is not to rent the hall to groups or individuals who are uninsured or have not shown you proof of insurance.

If a group wants to use the hall more than three times a year but does not have insurance, Methodist Insurance may be able to provide them with a policy. You can read more about outside users on the Methodist Insurance website: www.methodistinsurance.co.uk/products/church-shield/outside-users/index.aspx.



CASE STUDY

Council challenge to tax on Church-owned empty property

Since 2013, local authorities have had some flexibility on whether to give discounts for council tax on empty properties. Many councils have reduced or withdrawn discounts in order to make up the shortfall in funding for housing benefit by central government. The changes are also intended to discourage properties from being empty for too long.

There are still a number of discounts which local authorities must give. One of these is the Class B exemption which gives an exemption from council tax of up to six months for empty properties owned by charities where it was last occupied in furtherance of the objectives of the charity. Trinity (Methodist/United Reformed) Church in Golders Green has a flat built as part of the premises for a caretaker, which we now let out to help fund our work – particularly the upkeep of the premises. The flat was empty for a few months earlier this year when we refurbished it to bring it up to a better standard.

Our local authority initially refused to give the church the Class B exemption and we had to argue our case that by using the income for the upkeep of the building, we were furthering the objectives of the charities. Indeed, we argued that we could not use the income for any other purpose. After numerous emails, the council eventually granted us the exemption.

It is worth challenging a decision if you believe it is wrong. Managers might have more discretion in assessing eligibility than staff who make the initial decision. If all procedures are exhausted, then it is possible to take the complaint to the Ombudsman. It is free to use and local authorities often wish to avoid it.

Elected councillors are also there to help and can be an advocate for your case. One of our councillors was very helpful and we have continued to build upon our contact with him.

**The Revd Shaun Sanders
Minister of Trinity (Methodist/United Reformed) Church, Golders Green**

GOOD NEWS FROM AROUND THE CONNEXION



**Transforming Churches and Communities –
A support service to Churches and Church activities**

Churches today are expected to have a greater level of professionalism when engaging in work with local communities. Transforming Churches and Communities (TCC) is a registered charity that helps them to meet the requirements necessary in setting up and running activities at a local level. We have a range of services in our portfolio but initially, we visit churches; speak to church councils, circuit leadership teams, etc and suggest ways TCC can assist in transferring ideas into practical plans. TCC does not come in and take over; we come to support, enable and up-skill local teams to manage and operate their own activities. TCC can manage entire projects for churches if required – but TCC would only do so if requested by the Church Council or Circuit Meeting and look to hand over the activity as soon as possible.

TCC helps churches and circuits to work towards making vision a reality. For example, property projects can sometimes have a momentum of their own. Large sums of money can be expended before anyone asks the question – what is the missional purpose underpinning this project? Is this the best use of our limited resources? Is everyone on board with this project?

What can start off as a “Let’s upgrade the accessible toilet” (if you have one) can become “We may as well redecorate the vestry at the same time” and then “Why not completely knockdown the church and rebuild?” in the space of a two-hour meeting. You then have a further three or four meetings; new people come to each meeting with their own ideas, and the initial £10,000 upgrade turns into a £1,000,000 new build with all the bells and whistles you could imagine!

What can prevent this from happening? The value in having someone from outside the church asking the awkward questions you know need to be asked (but you are afraid to for fear of offending someone) is that there can be a greater sense of scrutiny and clarity. TCC is there to serve. Essentially our role is not to make decisions for you but to help you make the best decisions, for the right reasons with the professional support that you need.

What/who is TCC?

TCC is a registered charity set up to provide information, advice and guidance in the areas of – project management; promoting good governance; identifying sources of funding and facilitating applications; encouraging strategic partnerships; and trying to be a critical friend. We have national coverage but mainly work in the North West.

The board of directors are currently from three of the Methodist Districts in the North West, (made up of presbyters and lay people). We have one full-time member of staff, John Wareham, who coordinates the work of TCC. TCC also engages a number of associate consultants, ‘experts in their field’, when the need arises. TCC has experts available from within the voluntary, community, faith and business communities, who bring a wide range of experience and skills to our work with Methodist churches and church organisations.

As we have indicated, TCC also helps to identify and complete application forms for funding. Please check out our monthly eBulletin for information on funding and what is happening in the wider world!

We charge for our services, although some districts, circuits and churches have become members to reduce the cost. Please get in touch if you feel that TCC may be able to help you now or in the future.

For more information: www.churchandcommunity.org.uk
john.wareham@churchandcommunity.org.uk

heathack

Churches and computer hackers join forces to fight the cold!

As autumn chill descends upon Edinburgh, two churches have joined forces with scientists, engineers and computer programmers in order to bring warmth to cold buildings across the city. HeatHack is a computing and electronics club formed by the City of Edinburgh Methodist Church and Christ Church Morningside (Scottish Episcopal Church).

The club will set up temperature and humidity monitoring in buildings, time lapse photography (for gas meters and boilers), public displays and phone apps that help communities understand their buildings – plus some special engineering challenges like how to find out whether a pump is operating correctly and where the heat actually goes.



Many community buildings in Edinburgh are old and expensive to heat - and costly to the environment - but this new 'hacker-space' is being formed to understand how to make the best use of the energy that is put in.

HeatHack was launched on 28 September, where people could see the technology in action. It now meets regularly on Tuesday evenings, as well as for special events. They welcome anyone with an interest in electronics, computer programming, or an interest in how these old buildings are maintained and kept at their best for their use by the community.

Jean Carletta, a researcher at the University of Edinburgh's School of Informatics, is the originator of the 'heat hack' concept and has been actively involved in improving comfort and reducing energy use at Christ Church Morningside. She says, "Victorian buildings are fascinating, but complicated. The internet makes it possible to monitor heating systems and check their performance remotely. HeatHack will speed up improvements by bringing together property owners, users, students, and volunteers to share data and understand their heating problems." Lou Davis, pioneer minister at City of Edinburgh Methodist Church, added, "I'm very excited about the possibilities for HeatHack. Not only will we be finding solutions to people's problems, but we'll also be learning lots and having a great deal of fun along the way. I'm really keen to get a soldering iron in my hands and make something!"

Contacts:

Email: info@heathack.org; website: www.heathack.org

Jean Carletta: 07873 249 010 and Lou Davis: 07905 121 733

Busoasis Project, Calderdale Circuit, West Yorkshire

My name is Sharon Lawrance and I am the lead worker for the Busoasis project in Calderdale Circuit, West Yorkshire, I am 48 years old, and have 2 children aged 12 and 19. My background is in highways and I am also a qualified counsellor. I worship at Illingworth Moor and my office base for Busoasis is based there too. I am a hands-on person and am passionate about sharing the love of God!



Busoasis is big yellow double decker bus, equipped with Internet access, hot and cold running water, four TVs with games consoles, laptops and tablets plus comfy seating areas! It is used for mission: to build relationships between the Church and the community of all ages by going out “into the field” to meet a need by sharing God’s love.

Since I started my post in June 2013, the major part of the work has been to network with a wide range of agencies and promote the project across Calderdale. This has been done by attending various meetings (including the Circuit Meeting) and giving short talks about the project, attending various coffee mornings in different churches, giving a talk during Sunday morning service, and attending a dozen or so galas and summer fairs. I have also done a couple of radio interviews on local Christian stations, along with the Revd Paul Welch (who had the Busoasis vision). There was also a glimpse of the bus on a recent episode of *Songs of Praise*! The response has been 100% positive from all areas of the community. Interest from churches both within and outside the circuit has been limited, but I am beginning to see some changes now the project is more established.

Our biggest piece of work to date has been to be a partner in operation HEELSTOKE, a West Yorkshire police-led operation to tackle anti-social behaviour in Halifax, in and around the area of the bus station where young people gather. We worked very successfully with others such as YFC (Youth For Christ) and the HYP (Helping Young People) project and the local council. We parked the bus at the rear of the bus station once a week for five weeks for three-hour sessions. Young people (16 – 25) were welcomed aboard, free hot and cold drinks were available or they could make themselves some toast, have a chat or chill on the games consoles whilst the HYP workers were there to help wherever was needed. One week the youth workers provided burgers and hot dogs, which went down a storm!! Another week, ice pops! During the time of the operation the police reported that anti-social behaviour dropped by 25%! The Police Commissioner has noted our work there.

We are still going there on a regular basis as good relationships continue to be built. Questions are now being asked by some of the young people (“why are you doing this?”). This opens up conversations. Just remembering their names, we find, has a real positive impact on them and they always mind their Ps and Qs! We have also worked with Happy Days Homeless Charity in trying to find accommodation for one the young lads.



Young people enjoying themselves at the bus station

A lot of these young people would be written off or not given a chance. They are hurting, lonely and damaged; all they need is a little love!

Since this successful work, I have been contacted from other areas of Calderdale wishing to try something similar.

- Another big project we are working towards is partnership working in Hebden Bridge with the police, council and Teen Challenge to address drug and alcohol issues in the local park.
- I am also looking forward to working with CICS (Christian Initiative in Calderdale Schools) by using the bus to provide a prayer space as part of the curriculum, and supporting their after school club Ignite. Also looking forward to working with the Alzheimer's Association, with Sure Start again, and with many more organisations too many to mention here!
- Busoasis has successfully run a six-week IT awareness course, and a four-week tablet course, both on the bus and in a community centre in the Southowram area. This proved very successful and indeed IT interest appears to be an area which there is a definite need, especially from older people. Fresh links are now being made with other churches of other denominations across Calderdale. We do not charge for using the bus but we do accept donations.
- Running alongside Busoasis is a project at Illingworth Moor church called Cafeoasis. We run a café that is open once a week for two hours, where affordable light lunches are served. It has been well supported by members of the church and others. People sit and chat and someone is on hand for help and support should it be needed. People are being blessed though this and the proceeds from the café have enabled us to buy an iPad and a Samsung tablet to use on the bus to provide training. Through this, 'unchurched' customers are offering their time free of charge to help on the bus with beauty and flower arranging!
- Work is not just confined to the bus. We are also working with the lovely ladies of Blackburn House in Ovenden, a sheltered housing complex, and have helped with a little IT and flower arranging.
- We work in partnership with the food and support drop-in at New Ebenezer (Saturday gathering) one Saturday each month. Parents and children come onto the bus whilst they wait for the food pack to be processed. We hold activities on board and serve snacks, tea and coffee. Users have said how much they enjoy having a safe place to wait instead of in the centre, away from people they would prefer not to be around.

All in all it has been a very busy and exciting first 18 months in post as you can probably gather. Give us a wave if you see us around; you can't miss us!

If you are in the Calderdale Circuit and feel we can help you in your outreach (or are interested in being part of this fantastic mission to spread God's love and word), you can contact me on staff.busoasis2013@gmail.com or 07770246734. Give us a 'like' on Facebook (www.facebook.com/busoasis) to keep updated with all we are up to! You can also follow us on Twitter (@Busoasis1) and check our website www.busoasis.org.uk.

Please would you/your church consider setting up a regular prayer meeting for us as God leads us into new areas of ministry. Thank you.



From the past into the future

Mount Zion Methodist Chapel held its last official service on Sunday 2 November. The membership of Mount Zion had dwindled to around eight people. They felt that the time had come where they as a congregation could not continue as they were and so something new was about to come to birth. Throughout the Bible we see the themes of death and resurrection and this is the case with Mount Zion. Whilst the membership of the church is now transferred, the chapel is in the hands of a management group made up of people from the Calderdale Circuit, West Yorkshire District, the Connexional Team and one or two others with expertise in various areas.

One of the main aspects of the New Beginning of Mount Zion is the work with schools, who we invite to visit and experience a 'Victorian Sunday'. During this day the pupils will dress up in



clothes as worn in the Victorian period, play traditional 'quiet' games, do a treasure hunt in the church and make something to take away with them. We have already piloted this with three schools, who all had an enjoyable experience. We also have a John Wesley puppet and we are very soon taking delivery of some metal detectors as part of local history and numeracy as part of the day.

The building is still able to be used as a wedding, funeral venue and will hold a number of services throughout the course of the year, such as Easter, Christmas and Harvest. We will continue to have open days through the summer and do concerts, organ recitals, exhibitions, planned walks, historical talks, heritage tours etc. We are able to use the cottage for retreats and quiet days as well as serving refreshments throughout the course of any further activities we have planned. We are always looking for volunteers who have an interest in local/Methodist history or people who can help to serve refreshments or be on a rota to help on school visit days (hopefully one per week).

We house the Hird Pottery Collection and have many other items of interest displayed around the chapel. There is also Irene's Garden and the cottage where both John and Charles Wesley stayed overnight on their visits to Halifax.



For a further in-depth feel of what we are doing and regular updates, have a look at our website www.mountzionhalifax.org.uk or our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/pages/Mount-Zion-Heritage-Chapel-Ogden-Halifax/1378971745700342). Alternatively you can contact Paula Prosser (paulaprosser@blueyonder.co.uk) or the Revd Paul Welch (revpwelch@blueyonder.co.uk) for a more comprehensive account.

For a one-off donation, you will receive a copy of *the Dial* magazine when you become a 'Friend of Mount Zion'. Or perhaps you might like to give a regular donation that helps us to tell the continued story of Mount Zion, the Methodist story and the Christian story.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

25 December – 1 January	Methodist Church House Christmas closure
31 January	Closing date for statistics for mission data entry
2 March	Closing date for the next round of grant applications
14-16 April	Resourcing Mission Forum , Kings Park Conference Centre, Northampton



JPSG Roadshows

Date	Location	Church
16 May 2015	Edinburgh	Duke Street URC
23 May 2015	Newcastle	Brunswick MC
6 June 2015	Birmingham	Carrs Lane URC/MC
20 June 2015	Cambridge	Michaelhouse CofE
4 July 2015	Manchester	Hale MC
18 July 2015	Plymouth	The Church of St Peter's RC
25 July 2015	Surrey	Woking URC

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Anyone is welcome to receive a copy of *Property Matters*. To subscribe and to access previous editions, please go to www.methodist.org.uk/ministers-and-office-holders/property/forms-schedules-and-publications/property-matters. The newsletter is free to download and available in both a colour version to read online and as a printable black and white version. Please encourage the wider circulation and ensure that new church officers are made aware of it.

This document is being sent to the following roles within the Connexion who are registered on the Connexional Database:

- ✓ District chairs
- ✓ Superintendent ministers
- ✓ District property secretaries
- ✓ Circuit property secretaries
- ✓ Church property secretaries
- ✓ District treasurers
- ✓ Circuit treasurers
- ✓ Church treasurers

If you are aware of other people who may not have access to the Internet, email or a computer, could you please provide them with a copy of this document.

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