

Property Points

2002 Part 1

Dear Friends

Greetings from the Methodist Property Office.

As Spring arrives there will be new opportunities to look at our buildings and carry out routine maintenance work.

If your Church Council decides to carry out some structural alterations this year you will need to complete a Schedule to seek the appropriate approvals. We will do all we can to guide you in that process.

This edition includes good news about listed buildings with the launch of our new grant scheme 'A Stitch in Time'.

*We have also inserted several financial items in the separate section at the back which we have now called "Treasurers' Tips". It is really tips **for** treasurers but much of what we include arises from the experience of local treasurers telling us about their concerns.*

With our good wishes

Alan Pimlott
Connexional Property Secretary

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Connexional appeals for financial support

Occasionally a local Church embarking on a major property scheme makes enquiries about launching an appeal for support from the Connexion.

Managing trustees should be aware that such appeals are not permitted under Standing Orders without permission from the Methodist Conference. They are agreed only exceptionally as last year for Cliff College.

When you take into account that the Methodist Property Office approves almost one thousand schemes each year it is clear that if only half of these churches seeking approval launched a Connexional appeal every Superintendent would be inundated with mountains of paper.

However, it is possible to donate monies to another Church or Circuit scheme locally using the appropriate porting Schedule.



The Friends of War Memorials (FoWM),

The Friends of War Memorials (FoWM), is the charity concerned with the identification, care and maintenance of this important part of our national heritage. We have been sent details of a scheme promoted by FoWM asking for information to assist work carried out by the Experience Corps, a volunteer body that is helping tidy, repair and maintain the setting of war memorials. Full details of the scheme are set out below:

The Experience Corps and Friends of War Memorials

The Experience Corps is a new body set up by the Home Office earlier this year to encourage people in the 50 -65 age group to share their skills and experience through volunteering, and to provide opportunities for volunteers to get involved with projects in their area.

Friends of War Memorials (FoWM) is the charity concerned with war memorials of all dates and types countrywide, their condition, significance and care. (FoWM) has been asked to assist the Experience Corps in identifying suitable war memorial sites for the project's launch in November 2001, and beyond.

The Experience Corps is seeking

external war memorial sites which would benefit from volunteers' practical assistance with tasks such as gardening and planting, tidying hard landscaping (e.g. levelling and weeding paving), tending trees and flowerbeds, repainting gates and railings, basic repairs to surrounding walls etc. It is not intended at this stage to involve volunteers in work such as cleaning or conservation of war memorials themselves, as this usually requires specialist input or supervision. There may be opportunities for volunteers to get involved in helping schools with research and recording projects focusing on war memorials.

If you know of war memorial sites in your area (regardless of ownership) where the type of work

described would be of benefit, FoWM would be very glad to hear from you. Please let us have details of the location, the condition of the memorial and a local contact (such as the Parish Council Clerk, Minister, Royal British Legion Branch Secretary or similar). Thank you.

*Contact: Maggie Goodall,
Conservation Officer, Friends of War Memorials, 4 Lower Belgrave Street,
London SW1WOLA,
Tel 020 72590403 Fax 020 72590296*

E-mail: fowin@eidonet.co.uk

*For more information see Friends of War Memorials website:
www.war-memorials.com
and the Experience Corps website:
www.experiencecorps.co.uk*

A Stitch in Time – for Listed Buildings

“A Stitch in Time” is a new discretionary fund specifically geared to giving extra financial assistance to congregations who have the responsibility for maintaining a **listed building**.

When funds are limited it is all too easy to skimp on proper repairs, but prompt action can prevent far more expensive problems. Lack of adequate maintenance is frequently a major contributory factor in church closure.

This new fund is intended to encourage congregations to look at wider issues than just repair. We hope it will give an impetus to the development of general schemes of improvement.

A leaflet setting out the scope of the fund will be issued shortly to all eligible churches but will also be available on demand. It will deal with the topics set out below:

*Do you have problems maintaining your **listed building** to an acceptable standard?*

*Are you aware that, even though the building is listed, you **can** make changes, subject to detailed approval?*

*Would you like **additional** help to get your building into good order to further the purposes of worship and mission?*

“A Stitch in Time” may be for you if :

- your place of worship is a listed building
- you have not carried out a scheme in the last ten years
- your latest Quinquennial inspection has identified problems you feel are beyond you
- you would like to get your building into good order and improve facilities

Write to **Ian Serjeant** Methodist Property Office, Central Buildings, Oldham Street, Manchester M1 1JQ

Repair Grants for Places of Worship 2002-2005 English Heritage

English Heritage has issued details of the new grants scheme which replaces the former Joint Scheme arrangements originally in place with the Heritage Lottery Fund. Our understanding of the new scheme is as follows:

Major Changes

All listed church buildings are eligible to apply for English Heritage grant aid. Previously it was only grade I and II* buildings.

The limitation to priority areas is now removed. All areas of the country are now eligible. Assessment will be on the basis of urgency, financial need and viability. If it is necessary to prioritise further it will be on the basis of, 1) areas that have benefitted less in the past and, 2) where there is economic or social deprivation.

Schemes of Repair

All listed church buildings are eligible to apply for grant aid for repairs-only schemes, subject to the following criteria:

- a single project, normally to be carried out in a single contract
- urgent structural repairs and/or repairs to historic fabric at risk of imminent loss
- generally, the upper limit will be £200,000

This is **not** Lottery funded.

Wider Refurbishment Schemes

This includes the following:

- non-urgent repairs
- conservation work to contents
- provision of additional facilities (kitchen, toilets, community facilities)
- improvements to access
- urgent repairs which cannot be separated from the wider refurbishment

This **is** Lottery funded.

Timescale

Applications for grade I and II* buildings must be made before 30 June. The deadline for grade II buildings is 30 September.

Further Information

For applications forms and full details, write to:
Joint Grant Scheme, English Heritage Conservation Department, 23 Savile Row, London W1X 1AB
or phone 020 7973 3267

Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme - - Government

The Government grant scheme, in lieu of a VAT reduction, was finally launched on 4 December 2001. The main features are as follows:

- it applies to repairs and maintenance of listed buildings that are used principally as places of worship
- it applies throughout the UK
- it covers work carried out on or after 1 April 2001 and for which VAT receipts are available
- it only accepts applications made after the work has been carried out
- it uses the difference between VAT paid (normally 17.5%) and 5% to calculate the grant allowed

Full details of the scheme giving definitions of which buildings and type of work are eligible are available -

- by ringing 0845 601 5945
- by writing to the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme, PO Box 609, Newport NP10 8QD
- from the Scheme Website - www.lpwscheme.org.uk

In terms of procedure for Property Office approval, it will be necessary for Managing Trustees to complete and submit a Schedule 1 in the usual way because it is a grant from an external source. Where it is known that an application is to be made in the future, we will also need to see a specification for the work which should be submitted **before** the work is commissioned.

Up to date Schedules

If you are proposing to do any new work to your building or indeed sell, purchase or lease part of your property please make sure that you have the most up to date Schedule.

Changes to grant policy or Government legislation could mean that any information leaflets or Schedules you have put by could be out of date.

Contact the **Methodist Property Office Central Buildings Oldham St Manchester M1 1JQ**

Doing it on line

Did you know that the Methodist Church website (www.methodist.org.uk) can help you? Did you know that it gives up to date news about the Church?

- Space for personal prayer and ideas for public worship
- Latest announcements and news
- Resources, publications and advice
- Getting in touch
- Getting involved, locally and beyond
- With an A-Z of the whole site:

From Adult Learning to Art Collection;

from Church Planting to Communion;

from Racial Justice to Resourcing Mission;

from Wesley's 300th Anniversary to World Action

In addition **Sharing News** the Methodist News Service is available to magazine editors; the **Connexional Link** provides ideas, posters and resources for office holders; the **Methodist Resources** catalogue promotes a wide range of useful publications; and **Our Calling** – resourced with exhibition material, banner posters, bookmarks and much more – is a vision for the Methodist Church at the start of the 21st century.

Further details: kitchin@methodistchurch.org.uk

Chris Kitchin, Head of Communication, Methodist Church House, 25 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5JR

Dicennial Statistical Returns for Methodist Property

Every ten years the Methodist Property Office publishes up to date information about all Methodist Chapels and manses supplied by the managing trustees themselves.

The 2000 Returns (as at 31 December 2000) are now available. Copies of the full statistical returns will be sent to the Methodist Publishing House, Archives and a number of other interested bodies. Each District will receive a copy of the returns for their own District.

We have decided not to distribute the information to every Circuit as we recognise not every Circuit will wish to have a copy.

However those Circuits that do may obtain details for

Links with Creative Arts in Methodism

What is the place of the arts in our property schemes and use of premises? Do our plans reflect scope for creativity (eg. space for drama, movement, installations)? Will your architect be working with artists or sculptors?

In the same spirit as the 'Look and See' booklet (Property Division, 1987) with its accompanying 'Baker's Dozen' worksheets, some new resource material for congregations has been produced by Creative Arts in Methodism. 'Exploring and Developing Creative Arts' is a user-friendly, loose-leaf pack filled with practical ideas, information and group discussion material. Sections include 'Creative Awareness – Buildings, Furniture and Worship', 'Starting to use Banners' and 'Flowers in Church'. Price £15 plus £2.50 p&p from the address below.

To help churches with commissioning art in 'schemes', links are being developed with the Council of Care for Churches who hold a register of artists and craftspeople. It is hoped that this will eventually become an accessible database for Methodist churches, but in the meantime please address queries to Rev Graham Kent, Connexional Visual Arts Secretary, GMCT, St Peter's House, University Precinct, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9GH. Email: sph.gmct@man.ac.uk

There is also a helpful pamphlet called 'New Art for Church Buildings' (Church House Publishing, ISBN 0-7151-7580-7).

A growing number of churches are seeing the value of using their premises as galleries or arts centres – as a way of being open to the community, participating in community festivals, offering an entry point to conversations about God and faith.

For further information about this, or the wider work of Creative Arts in Methodism (free newsletter, District contacts) please get in touch with **Sarah Middleton, Coordinator of Creative Arts in Methodism, Methodist Church House, 25 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5JR.**

Email: middletons@methodistchurch.org.uk

Disability Discrimination Act

A revised British Standard has just been published BS8300:2001 (available from BSI tel 020 8996 9001).

their own Circuit by enquiring at the Methodist Property Office. (Address and email information on the back page of Property Points)

Treasurers' Tips

Schedule B returns for LEP's

Local Ecumenical Partnerships sometimes create difficulties for managing trustees preparing Schedule B. For their benefit the following is our present guideline:-

- Methodist money must be accounted for
- If it is not possible to extract specifically Methodist money for Schedule B purposes the LEP annual accounts may be used and the full account details extracted to go on Schedule B
- Alternatively a copy of the LEP annual accounts may be attached to Schedule B which should be signed in the usual way on the Declarations page and a suitable reference made to the attachment.

As and when we receive any further clarification on the matter from the Charity Commission we will let you know.

Scrutiny of Annual Accounts – Independent Examination

An audit by a registered auditor is required when gross income **or** total expenditure exceeds £250,000.

Below that figure an **independent examination** is required. The Charity Commission recommend that if gross income exceeds £100,000 the independent examiner should be a qualified accountant.

In all other cases the choice of an independent examiner by the managing trustees must be subject to criteria set out in the publication Managing Trustees and Methodist Money. In basic terms the criteria are as follows:-

An independent examiner must not be:-

- a member of the Church Council (or Circuit Meeting in the case of Circuit accounts) or any of its sub committees.
- an employee or person who receives benefit or support from the Church Council
- a close relative, business partner or employee of any of the above.
- a major donor to the Church

Methodist Charities outside England and Wales

Methodist Charities outside England and Wales sometimes ask the question “As we come under a separate jurisdiction to Churches in England and Wales does that mean we do not have to comply with Schedule B requirements?”.

Answer: *Methodist Churches in the Isle of Man, Jersey and Guernsey and Scotland are not subject to the requirements of the Charities Act 1993 and are not covered by SORP requirements. They must complete their Annual Accounts as required under their separate legislation.*

Nevertheless Methodist Charities are required to observe the Exempting Regulations under Statutory Instrument No 180 of 1996 (as amended by Statutory Instrument No 260 of 2001) and so they are required to complete Schedule B as a vital part of that process.

Summary

Completion of Annual Accounts	Subject to own Jurisdiction
Completion of Schedule B	A Methodist requirement of their excepted status

VAT

It is the clear policy of the Methodist Property Office that we do not give advice to managing trustees who should always seek professional advice locally, whether that be from an architect, surveyor, solicitor financial advisor or any other professional advisor.

That same rule applies with VAT. However, local trustees should also be aware that in progressing property schemes the Methodist Property Office will from time to time, when appropriate, suggest that managing trustees seek professional advice from a VAT consultant. That person may be someone locally or we can provide a name.

Treasurers' Tips cont/d

Charity Registration: Excepting Regulations -negotiations suspended

The following is an excerpt from Written Answers in Hansard for the House of Lords of November 6 2001

Lord Howie of Troon asked Her Majesty's Government:

What is their decision on the review of the criteria for the voluntary registration of charities. [HL 1172]

Lord Rooker: *My right honourable friend the Prime Minister announced on 3 July that he had asked the Performance and Innovation Unit (PIU) of the Cabinet Office to undertake a broad-ranging review of the legal and regulatory framework for charities and the wider voluntary and community sector. Subsequently, the PIU confirmed that the position of charities excepted from registration with the Charity Commission was one of the areas that was to be looked at as part of its review. The work by the Home Office and the Charity Commission on the way forward has therefore been discontinued pending the outcome of the PIU review. The PIU is expected to complete its review early in 2002.*

Update: Methodist representatives are to attend a first meeting about the review at the Performance and Innovation Unit on 13 March 2002.

Some information about the review is available on the cabinet-office.gov.uk/innovation/charity website pages though it is not too easy to access without using their own search engine.

Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (TMCP) Update

Interest Payments

The Board of TMCP have agreed that commencing 1st September 2002, the interest on their Trustees Interest Fund (TIF) will be credited to the trusts monthly instead of every six months as at present.

The database has now been updated with the latest details of the Treasurer, Correspondent, Bank or CFB account details from the "Database Update forms" returned to us.

Whenever there are changes locally, it is imperative TMCP is notified of these changes by completing a new form which should then be returned via the Minister (or in the case of Circuits the Superintendent Minister) so that the correct details are always held in the computer data base.

Management Charge

The TMCP – Management Charge is to be maintained at 0.155% for the second year, subject to confirmation by the Board. (Year commencing 1 September 2002)

Endowments

Have you got an endowment which yields a small income and you feel you could do better by spending the capital? You may be able to do so using the provisions of the Charities Act 1993. Contact Amanda Flynn at TMCP for further details.

Data Protection Act 1998

TMCP have now produced a booklet in relation to the above Act. The previous scheme for registration with TMCP has been discontinued and replaced by a scheme whereby TMCP notifies the Information Commissioner on behalf of all Methodist Churches provided their data protection activities fall within the categories set out in the booklet.

Copies of the booklet are available from TMCP on request.

Payee information

In

There have been instances recently, where cheques have been received by TMCP with varied payee details resulting in the cheques having to be sent back thus delaying crediting the trust.

Please ensure all cheques sent to TMCP have "**Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes**" as the payee.

Out

The safest and quickest method of receiving payments from TMCP is by requesting that the payment is made to the Church's Central Finance Board deposit account or the bank account by electronic transfer. This, in addition is cheaper thereby reducing the annual management charge.

The CDM Regs (the Construction Design & Management Regulations).

We all dislike yet more administration, but despite these regulations having been in force for several years, it is apparent from many of the schedule 1s submitted to us, that many do not understand this requirement.

The CDM Regulations impose considerable obligations on Church Councils, designers and contractors concerning health & safety matters. Construction is one of the most dangerous industries to work in - last year, there were 106 deaths and over 4600 major injuries in the industry. Many of these were avoidable, and it is generally considered that many accidents are 'programmed in' to the work, that is, the design or construction process was such that an accident could easily happen.

The CDM Regs require the client (that is, for most Methodist churches, the Church Council) to ensure that health and safety issues are properly considered from the earliest stages. Ignorance of the law is no excuse! Church Councils need to be aware that serious penalties can be imposed on individuals in the event of an accident (for instance, a fine of several thousand pounds was recently imposed on an employee of a public organisation, as well as a fine on the company itself).

Every project is subject to the CDM regs, although the scale of the project will determine how many of the regulations apply. The situation is complex and your architect or surveyor should be consulted for detailed advice, and much published information is available (from the Health & Safety Executive, one of the most useful documents is their 'Approved Code of Practice', available from bookshops or tel 01787 881165).

Generally speaking:

- a health and safety plan is needed for *all* building work; this should be kept with the log book. For most projects this plan will be compiled by one of the professionals involved with the project (probably the planning supervisor).
- a planning supervisor and principal contractor must be appointed for all projects (with certain minor exceptions, for instance on small projects where there is no demolition and there are less than five workers on site).
- where no planning supervisor is appointed, the Church Council needs to agree with the architect, surveyor or builder who will compile the health and safety plan.
- the Church Council is required to make available all information that might affect health and safety, and must ensure that only competent people are appointed to the project.

We have come across schemes whereby Church Councils wish to divide a large project into smaller phases to avoid the need to apply the full regulations. This is extremely unwise as it is of dubious legality, and we are surprised that some Church Councils consider health and safety to be of such little importance.

If there is any doubt about the application of these regulations, then your architect or surveyor must be consulted.

Rosehill Furniture

A number of cases have been brought to the attention of the Property Office involving Methodist managing trustees contracts with a company called Rosehill Furniture.

Where there has been concern about the work of the company some cases have had to be resolved in Court. Some cases have been won by the Methodist Trustees, others lost.

This is a report of factual information for managing trustees.

Further information

Please contact the Methodist Property Office, Central Buildings, Oldham Street, Manchester M1 1JQ
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Insurance

Churches should now have received their copy of the new Church Insurance Policy "Church Shield" recently issued by Methodist Insurance.

If you have not received your policy pack please contact Methodist Insurance direct.

The policy pack contains a "plain English" policy wording and various guidance notes on issues such as health and safety, security, fire precautions and the Disability Discrimination Act.

Who has been sent copies

Superintendents	?	???	Circuit Property Officers	?
Ministers	?		Local Property Officers	?
Circuit Stewards	?		Treasurers	?