

PROPERTY POINTS

2010 Part 2

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Dear friends,

This edition of *Property Points* provides updates on a number of important issues, including the newly launched IT Consents process for property projects, and carbon reduction.

It also includes the two registration projects, 'Charity' and 'land'. The update includes vital messages that are significant for all Methodist trustees in fulfilling their responsibilities and keeping within the law.

On a personal note, this is my final editorial for *Property Points*. I retired from the Connexional Team on 31 August and I would like to express grateful thanks to all Methodist trustees who have worked alongside the staff of the Resourcing Mission Office over the years when dealing with their development projects and general responsibilities.

With every blessing,
Alan Pimlott, former Connexional Property Secretary


The **Methodist Church**

RADIO MICROPHONES

Ofcom has announced the details of a compensation package for users of licensed wireless microphone systems whose equipment may be made redundant following changes to spectrum allocation, due to take effect in 2012.

This is likely to affect large churches and cathedrals currently using Channel 69, which tend to be those using four or more wireless microphones, or those in dense urban areas which have experienced problems with interference in the use of unlicensed channels.

Compensation of up to 55% of the cost of replacement equipment, or modification costs up to the same amount are likely to be available if the church held a valid Channel 69 licence during 2008. **It is vital that such churches register with the scheme administrator between now and December this year, in order to be eligible for the compensation.**

For more details on how to register, see Ofcom's website for more information. Your PA installation company should also be able to help with further advice.

Source: *C of E Communications* - 6 August 2010

LISTED BUILDINGS

Despite numerous reminders over many years in Property Points, there are many people who are convinced that only part of their listed church building is listed. This is not correct. All of the building, inside and out, and any buildings attached to it are listed. This means that formal consent is needed for any alteration. This covers such matters as the installation of secondary glazing, video screens and stone cleaning.

Where repairs are proposed you need to send the specification to the Resourcing Mission Office so that it can be checked. The use of the wrong materials can damage buildings and be expensive to correct.

If you are unsure about how to proceed with proposed alterations or repairs do not hesitate to contact us.

Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme

Many of our listed chapels have benefited from the refund of VAT on works of repair and maintenance through this scheme.

The scheme escaped the comprehensive Government spending review axe and will continue beyond 31

March 2011. Works to clocks, bells, pews, organs and professional fees will, however, be excluded, continuing the interim measure introduced in October 2010.

Without this grant it is likely that essential repairs will be delayed or put off indefinitely, thus storing up greater problems and expense for the future. If you want to see this invaluable grant stream continue please write to your MP asking for their support. You could also write to Jeremy Hunt, the minister responsible at the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. To learn more go to www.lpwcheme.org.uk or www.savetherefund.info

Heritage News

Along with your *Property Points* you will have received a complimentary copy of the new connexional publication, *Heritage News*. Since getting Conference backing in 2008, the Methodist Heritage team have been exploring new ways of using and promoting Methodism's heritage for mission, as well as conserving it for future generations. In the next edition, the Heritage team hope to unveil plans to offer listed chapels the opportunity to showcase their historic importance.

If you would like to receive *Heritage News* in the future, please subscribe today. *Heritage News* is free and will be published twice a year. It can be sent to you as an email attachment or printed copies. Visit www.methodist.org.uk/heritage or contact Jo Hibbard, Methodist Heritage Officer, on 020 7467 5257 or email hibbardj@methodistchurch.org.uk

Financial Reporting within the Connexion

A number of changes have been proposed and accepted this year that will increase efficiency and reduce bureaucracy. The Conference endorsed the proposals which were implemented from the financial year end 31 August 2010.

The changes are as follows:

The Standard Forms of Accounts and Reserves Policies will be reported from 2009 /2010:

- 1) Via treasurers, rather than property officers
- 2) By local churches to the circuit treasurer (only)
By circuits to the district treasurer (only)
By districts to the designated Connexional Office (from this year the Finance Office)

It will no longer be necessary for local church and circuit forms to be sent to the connexional office via the district.

These revised arrangements will continue to be compliant with the requirements of the Exempting Regulations (Statutory Instrument No.2655 of 2007) and will apply to both registered and excepted charities. By reporting in this way the trustees satisfy the requirement in the statutory instrument to report their accounts to the Conference, or other body as designated. **Otherwise, these changes in the reporting process do not affect the standard forms themselves. Ofcourse if your Charity is registered you will also need to report to the Charity Commision.**

HOPE IN GOD'S FUTURE

CONFERENCE SIGNED UP TO A SERIES OF CARBON REDUCTION COMMITMENTS at the Conference on 29 June 2010

The annual energy bill to the Church and individual ministers is around £19 million a year. Cutting the carbon footprint has the potential to free up money that can be used for mission.

Earlier this year, a pilot survey was carried out to determine practical ways in which churches and manses can reduce carbon emissions and save both energy and money. The working group presented a progress report to the Conference in July.

The 12 representative churches and the 12 manses that were audited varied in size, age, usage and heating systems. The site surveys provided examples of good practice but showed that further action can be taken, often at minimal cost, to achieve a significant reduction in energy consumption and carbon footprint.

It is good news that several examples of good practice were found:

- notices reminding people to turn lights off when not in use and to keep radiators clear
- internal glass secondary entrance chamber to the chapel
- separate heating circuits for chapel and hall
- double glazing and secondary glazing
- insulation on the chapel boiler pipes
- occupancy and daylight controls on external lighting

- zoning of lighting
- lighting and heating to match occupancy needs
- an exit notice for the people who are 'last to leave' reminding them to switch equipment off and that the building is secure
- paper recycling bins
- heating demand override switching
- a note asking people not to adjust the heating time clock

The results of the site surveys will be available on the Methodist Church website soon enabling your church to easily identify with one of the examples and to realise how simple some of the energy saving actions are. Until then, you are encouraged to check Technical Guidance T15 'Environmental Audit' www.methodist.org.uk/static/rm/T15_Environmental_Audit.pdf for assistance.

The Conference directed circuits to use Model Trust money to put high standards of energy efficiency in place. Methodist Standing Orders will be amended so that energy performance and energy efficiency requirements become mandatory for church buildings and manses. It is also planned to launch a carbon reduction service, which will save money through bulk energy purchases. The money saved can then be used to fund further energy reduction purchases, leaving churches with a smaller carbon footprint and lower energy bills.

Team Focus Review of the Resourcing Mission Office (RMO)

An external review of the RMO in Manchester earlier this year that had been approved by the Methodist Council has been declined by the Conference.

After much debate and discussion, the proposals in the report that recommended closure the Manchester office of the Connexional Team (and in its place create a smaller number of new posts with three in Manchester and eight in London) were turned down and Council has been asked to review its decision on the closure. A notice of motion was tabled, and as a result of these decisions the RMO will continue to operate until the Council has agreed to new or revised proposals for the future of the work by the Connexional Team in this area.

Resourcing Mission Forum 2010

The 2010 forum had been postponed until the outcome of the RMO review is known. In its place, a smaller forum was held for District Grants Officers. The Connexional Team is very conscious of the value placed on the Forum, and whilst the RMO Review has still not been finalised, it has been decided to go ahead with the RM Forum for District Officers. Plans are now in hand for this to be held on 19 and 20 May 2011. If you have any topics you would particularly like to be included please let the RMO Office know as soon as possible.

Charity Registration - UPDATE

The first main phase of charity registrations in compliance with the Charities Act 2006 has now largely been completed and the total number of registered charities in the Connexion is (including the earlier registrations in Scotland in accordance with the separate requirements of The Charities & Trustee Investments (Scotland) Act 2005) as follows:

	Completed	Submitted
CHURCHES		
Scotland & Shetland	61	
England & Wales	242	59
	303	59
CIRCUITS		
Scotland & Shetland	8	
England & Wales	245	12
	253	12
DISTRICTS		
Scotland & Shetland	1	
England And Wales	26	
	27	
TOTALS	583	71

We are aware that some churches and some circuits may not yet have completed this process and this is a final reminder that those trustee bodies are in breach of the Act. Registration applications should be submitted immediately to ensure that the trustees' responsibilities are being fulfilled. In extremis, they may face the removal of their charity status, and all of the implications that entails. There is no definitive connexional database of registrations required so it is essential that the charity trustees themselves take responsibility for the process.

The main category of registrations now underway is for Local Ecumenical Partnerships (LEPS). To date, 16 have been completed and another 30-40 are expected for single congregations and, in some cases covenanted partnerships. There will also be a small number of united areas seeking registration. Please contact the Resourcing Mission Office if guidance is required.

Special Projects

A number of churches and circuits have projects that are separately registered as charities. In other cases, a project will be included within the local church or circuit registration. Application for separate registration will be determined by the governance arrangements of the project, and whether or not the activity and its management report to the church or circuit trustees. If guidance is required, please contact the Resourcing Mission Office.

The Methodist Church of Great Britain

Charity registration was completed in October 2009. The members of the Conference are the charity trustees, and The Methodist Council Consolidated accounts the funds reported. These include the main connexional funds and other entities for which the Council are responsible.

Please note that the charity number for the Methodist Church of Great Britain is only applicable to the connexional body and does not apply in the case of local churches, circuits or districts. Each trustee body is a charity in its own right. If annual income exceeds £100,000, registration is required and the church or circuit will need to obtain its own separate charity registration number.

Otherwise, all other charities in the Connexion remain excepted charities which do not have their own separate charity number but who should quote the HMRC Gift Aid number when asked to provide their charity number.

Use of Charity Number

(This article is reproduced by kind permission of the Charity Commission.)

Trustees of **registered** charities with a gross income of £100,000 or more in the last financial year must state on a range of official documents that they are a **registered** charity.

The documents on which the statement must appear include notices, advertisements, material placed on websites, and other documents issued by or on behalf of a charity intended to persuade the reader to give money or property to the charity. This includes the solicitation of membership subscriptions.

Any of the following language would be acceptable:

- A **Registered** Charity
- **Registered** Charity No (followed by the charity's number)
- **Registered** as a Charity
- **Registered** with the Charity Commission

The statement must be made in English and in legible characters. We recommend that charities consider the needs of people with less than perfect vision by using a font and point setting that is easy to read.

Scotland and Shetland

Charities in Scotland and Shetland should note that they will also need to provide this information on their letterheads, notices, advertisements etc though in Scotland the regulatory body is The Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR).

Information on this can be found at www.oscr.org.uk/PublicisingyourCharitableStatus.stm.

Registered Charities Reporting Requirements

Each year churches need to complete an Annual Return and Report. The Charity Commission will expect this to be submitted within ten months of the year end.

Annual Return

The Charity Commission requires an Annual Return of the details of all registered charities.

A copy of the annual return is available on the Methodist website at www.methodist.org.uk/static/rm/trustee_annual_return_2009.pdf

To enable you to minimise the amount of changes required to the information at the year end the Commission allow you to update the record at any time. You can enter using your charity number and your password. Trustees details can then be changed whenever necessary. Changes made to your record on the Charity Commission website will appear the next business day. When the return is requested churches will then only need to check the details and click submit. If you have submitted your registration application via a paper application and do not therefore have a password you can apply for one, the link to the Charity Commission website is www.charitycommission.gov.uk/officeforms/CCPortal.ofml?0137a75d3a98

Annual Report

This is an essential part of the Annual Return and models for completing such a report are available on the Resourcing Mission pages on the Methodist website. www.methodist.org.uk/index.cfm?fuseaction=churchlife.content&cmid=2863

The Charity Commission commentary on a model Trustees Annual Report and accounts to demonstrate public benefit is available at www.charitycommission.gov.uk/Library/arstempb.pdf

The Charity Commission have an excellent frequently asked questions area and this can be accessed on http://charitycommission.custhelp.com/cgi-bin/charitycommission.cfg/php/enduser/std_alp.php

Fund for Property and Connexional Priority Fund property grants

The Resourcing Mission Office coordinates the connexional grants for property projects.

Application to both the Fund for Property and the Connexional Priority Fund is made on the Property Consent website. Once you have created your project, you need to click 'yes' to the offer of funding advice, then answer all the questions on the project summary and funding tabs.

Once you have provided all the information online, a project assessment is carried out by the Mission Projects and Funding Team. All the information is then submitted to the Property Grants Stream, which consists of four people from across the Connexion, who make the final decision on whether to award a grant. Projects are submitted to the Property Stream at the beginning of every month.

Grant Time Limits

The three-year time limit on Fund for Property and Connexional Priority Fund property grants will now be based on the date when confirmation of the grant is given, (the date on the letter or email you receive from the Connexional Team confirming the grant). This time limit took effect from 1 January 2010, in line with the full roll out of the Property Consent website. All grants approved under the previous approval system will continue to be limited in time for three years from the date of the original approval.

Grants and Funding Update

Fund for Property and Connexional Priority Fund property grants should only be drawn down after all other available sources of funds have been used. Payments should be requested using the payments tab on the Property Consent Website.

Please note that Fund for Property and Connexional Priority Fund property grants should be drawn down for the full amount in one payment.

If you are embarking on a project and want further guidance on grants available, or need help on requesting the payment of a confirmed grant, email the Mission Projects and Funding Team at mpfo@property.methodist.org.uk or call on 0161 236 5194.

Fundraising - UPDATE

External Funding Guidance

The Mission Projects and Funding Team will continue to provide guidance on external funding for churches and circuits. The main aspect of our funding service involves researching potential grant sources. We can also provide useful tips on communicating the key selling points of your project, proving the need for the work and shaping your business plan.

The team will automatically undertake funding research for you if you have indicated the need for funding advice on the Property Consent website. However, we are at the end of the telephone or an email if you want to discuss funding options for any type of project. Contact us at mpfo@property.methodist.org.uk or on 0161 236 5194.

Don't forget about the Landfill Communities Fund

This is reminder that Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (TMCP) continues to be a registered Environmental Body. TMCP can act on behalf of Methodist churches applying for grants through the Landfill Communities Fund.

The administration of the Environmental Body is carried out by the Mission Projects and Funding Team in the Resourcing Mission Office on behalf of TMCP. They work with churches throughout the application process providing useful guidance and feedback when churches are completing application forms together with communicating with the landfill operator and coordinating payment requests. The MPFO's Landfill Communities Fund work is audited annually by Entrust (the Government's regulatory body), so if your application is successful, a member of the team will visit the site before the work starts and following completion to take photographs and produce a report.

For further information contact the Mission Projects and Funding Team.

Property Consent Website

It has now been eight months since the Property Consent website was rolled out across the connexion. The site now has nearly 2,000 registered users and the Consent Support Team is working hard to support them.

We have been listening to users and collating the feedback from churches, circuits and districts in order to update and make improvements to the website. By the time you read this the Consent Support Team will be testing the latest version of the website before it goes live. If you are a registered user of the website we will be sending out a newsletter by email giving information about the additions and improvements.

Property Consent Website Authorisations

In our last newsletter to users of the website we included information about a recent change in relation to user authorisations. We thought it would be useful to mention this again in Property Points.

We have discovered a problem on the website which allowed a district user to give project authorisation at all three levels. This problem has now been rectified but as a result now means that superintendent ministers can no longer give project authorisation on behalf of both local church and the circuit. We were made aware in some cases that there may not have been anyone available to use the website on behalf of the local church and in the initial stages of the rollout of consents, some flexibility was in place to cater for this.

From now on the superintendent minister will need to give church permissions to someone else, possibly in the circuit, to use the website and to give permission on behalf of the local church or managing trustees. The superintendent minister can then continue to use the website and give permission on behalf of the circuit meeting. We hope these changes do not cause too much inconvenience. The Consents Support Team are happy to discuss any individual concerns arising from these changes.

District Consent – TMCP working alongside the Connexion



As you are probably aware the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (TMCP) is a body of trustees incorporated by the Methodist Church Act 1939 to be the legal owner of all Methodist property held on the Model Trusts of the Methodist Church Act 1976.

TMCP is not involved in the daily management of properties such as manses or chapels, and does not comment on policy decisions. However, it does have a duty to ensure that managing trustees have acted in compliance with Charity, Trust and Methodist Church law.

During the development and rollout of the Consents Process, TMCP had regular discussions with our colleagues in the Resourcing Mission Office in Manchester, the Connexional Team and representatives from around the Connexion. TMCP is extremely grateful that it has been included to this extent; however it recognises the continuing need to help Managing Trustees through any of the key processes which involve the finance and legal sections of TMCP. TMCP shall be reviewing its in-house systems to establish ways in which it can work in partnership with all parties to help with the smooth running of our processes.

Land Registry

The project of logging the registered Title Information Document has progressed and presently there are 19 Districts already registered and 5 Districts in the process. TMCP are ensuring that as many Methodist Model Trust properties as is possible are registered. A considerable number of individual circuits have also approached TMCP and asked to be registered in advance of being invited to do so under the district arrangements. We have agreed to this in every case.

TMCP have prepared a very helpful fact sheet explaining the registration procedure and answering several frequently asked questions. This has been sent to all managing trustees and solicitors who enquire about the project; copies are available from TMCP's website.

We anticipate that the majority of the project will have been completed by the end of 2010. It was recognised that the deadline for the collection of deeds for first registration of Methodist properties is 31 August; however, with the success and progress of the scheme, the Land Registry have extended the date until the end of the financial year, March 2011. This will ensure that as many Methodist Model Trust properties as is possible are registered correctly.

ANNUAL SCHEDULES

These are now available on the Methodist website for downloading.

At this time of change we thought it might be useful to give information on what these forms are for:

Schedules

A Checking your Church, Property, Trust and Legal matters

This form reminds trustees of a whole range of their responsibilities as they relate to property.

Part 2 of the Schedule facilitates an annual inspection of the premises giving useful reminders about what to check.

C Checking your Circuit Property, Trust and Legal Matters

This form enables the circuit to carry out similar checks on manses.

D Summary of Schedules A and C

This is primarily an exception report so that the Circuit Meeting/Property Committee are aware of matters for report.

E Quinquennial Inspection for manses

The inspection certificate and summary of reports for manses or other circuit property.

G Quinquennial Inspection for chapel and ancillary premises

The inspection certificate and summary.

These are to be used as a tool to enable churches to ensure that they are complying with government legislation and standing orders.

These forms should help us to be good stewards of our property, and not caught out by unexpected property repairs.

Annual schedules are available on the Methodist website in PDF and Word formats. If you have Word on your personal computer you can update your copy from year to year. These forms when completed are forwarded, in the case of the church to the circuit and in the case of the circuit to the district. They reflect the fact that the managing trustees are responsible for such matters.

VAT

The updated *Value Added Tax and the Churches: a Note* is now available on the Churches Legislation Advisory Service website www.churcheslegislation.org.uk/files/publications/VAT_guide_Sept_2009.doc.

Organ Advisory Service

Whilst many good organ builders will give useful advice to churches it should be remembered that the Organ Advisory Service will always provide an objective view.

The Organ Advisory Service is not only concerned with the preservation of historical instruments: its members are always available to give impartial, informed advice on all matters connected with musical instruments in worship.

For further information contact Mr Phillip Carter, 50 Bayham Road, Bristol BS4 2DR or see the ArtServe website www.artserve.org.uk

This newsletter is aimed at

- Local property officers
- Church treasurers
- Superintendents
- Ministers
- Circuit stewards
- Circuit property officers
- Circuit treasurers
- District property secretaries
- District treasurers
- District chairs

Further information

Please contact The Resourcing Mission Office, Central Buildings, Oldham Street, Manchester M1 1JQ. Tel: 0161 236 5194
Email: enquiries@property.methodist.org.uk

This newsletter is available on the Methodist website: www.methodistchurch.org.uk/propertypoints