

February 2024

PROPERTY MATTERS

The Methodist Church 

Welcome to the February edition of Property Matters with a focus on property-related updates and guidance.

For the latest property guidance, please refer to the [Property pages](#).

[Meet the Property Support Team](#)

Housing for Homelessness

Wed, 8 May 2024 10:30am
The Church at Carrs Lane,
Birmingham

Tickets are now available for the first in person Housing and Homelessness

Gathering in a number of years. There will be a range of speakers from within the church and from the housing world who will provide you with inspiration and the knowledge on using church property for affordable and supported housing. The gathering is an opportunity to learn about how affordable and supported housing is delivered and how you can work in partnership with housing organisations. Meeting in person will also give you the chance to meet Methodists from other parts of the country who also wish to play their part in tackling the housing and homelessness crisis. You will also be able to hear about what Methodist churches are doing locally as part of our calling to serve the community.



The event is free. Tickets are limited so [click here to book now](#).

A Future for Your Church: Exploring Sustainable Futures

Thursday 18th April 2024, 10-11:30am
on Zoom, FREE

Heritage Trust Network and Historic Churches Scotland are joining forces to host the next event in this series for any group contemplating the future of their church building. At this event, Deborah Kent of Fife Historic Buildings Trust will present on a recent study that looked at future uses and financial models for three churches in Fife. Everyone is welcome.

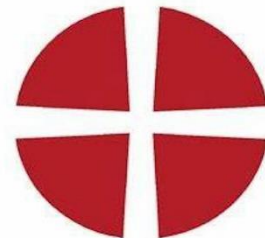
[Click here to register.](#)



Methodist Church Resources Facebook Group

Just to let you know the Connexional team have created a FB group called Methodist Church Resources. This is primarily for sharing news and info about our resources/ events/ webinars/ learning opportunities from the Connexional Team and frees up the other Methodist Church social media channels to concentrate more on posts other than events and sign ups.

[Click here to take a look.](#)



Balderton Methodist Church: Community Café and Redevelopment Project

In January 2020, the good people at Balderton Methodist Church (now the Wesley Centre at Balderton Methodist Church) formally applied for listed building approval to refurbish and alter their suite of buildings as part of their project entitled; Community Café and Redevelopment Project. Their clear Mission Statement stated:



We are a journeying Christian community, open to all, offering hospitality on the way, promoting community well-being, exploring spirituality and sharing the love of Jesus with all.

In order to put their vision into practice they wanted to create a warm, comfortable meeting place for all ages that had very few places to network/socialise with level access to all areas. They wanted to develop a modern, well-equipped space with comfy seating where they can provide an inexpensive coffee shop with homemade cakes and light lunches at affordable prices. This would include the provision of 'afternoon teas' for elderly folk (as part our continuing Befriending Network) as they recognised that in these days many elderly folk feel lonely, isolated and disenfranchised from their families and friends. With knowledgeable friendly volunteers the refurbished church would be a place to find gentle support at what can be a demanding and isolating time.

[Click here to read more.](#)

Every Church Counts - how you can make a difference

Churches, chapels and meeting houses are some of the UK's most important heritage. But, today, they are at risk as never before. 3,500 churches have closed in the last decade alone.

This is why we have launched [Every Church Counts](#). This six-point plan outlines how the UK Government, denominations and organisations can work together to secure the future of church buildings. Your ongoing support has been crucial in making this campaign possible.

But the work doesn't stop there. We want to keep the conversation going. And your voice can make a difference.

You can [read more about Every Church Counts](#) on our website, where you'll also find ways that you can help. Together we can save even more churches for generations to come. Thank you as ever from us all.



Consultation on the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme

Some of you (particularly those of you who look after Historic Buildings) will know of the Government's VAT grant scheme, which refunds VAT which has been spent maintaining or repairing a listed place of worship. The official name of the scheme is the [Listed](#)



[Places of Worship Grant Scheme \(LOPWGS\)](#). The DCMS, the Government Department which funds the LPOWGS has recently publicised the scheme's impact, and can be seen as a marker of the importance attached to historic buildings by the Government. [Click here to learn more.](#)

The Methodist Church inputs into the running of the scheme, and following the 2023 upgrade, would like to hear from you with any suggestions as to how to

improve the site or process. Please send any comments to the [Connexional Conservation Officer](#).

Also, if you have any comments on how the LPOWS plays into cash flow planning for larger projects then we would also like to hear from you. If you have within the last couple of years carried out a project to a listed place of worship of total cost of, say, £50k or more then we would be interested to hear from you. We'd like to know roughly the time gap between finalising your estimate of total likely cost, and the point when you completed your fund raising as well as the time gap between completing fund-raising and paying the final bill. Anything you say we will treat in confidence, not passing on any personal or location details. Just a brief summary at this stage please. Pass any comments to [Connexional Conservation Officer](#). Thanks in advance.

God For All

Have you ever wanted some inspiration of what could happen in your church? If so you may wish to sign up for the God for All newsletter. Last month's newsletter shared these highlights from pioneer Ali Mansfield's story, shared at Whole Hearted:

"I had no team and no plan. From the start I got to know those around me, visiting community groups, bringing people together and finding out who wanted to be part of this calling. We have come to love bringing people together without feeling the need to fix them. From spending time with three ladies in the park with a flask of coffee, we now see 20+ gathering each week in the pub where the landlord – well, at first, he really wasn't sure of me. It's been deep listening, sincerity, transparency and getting to know others without an agenda.



We are covered in prayer - there are many who aren't part of the community ministry but they feel called to pray for us, which is our bedrock. It took three years of prayer for our first gentleman. The unchurched are asking questions, people are coming to faith. And hundreds are watching from afar. There is a growing desire from others to know God, questions are asked, religion being stripped away, preconceived ideas about the church are being torn down. Three unique conversations and a stranger's Facebook post led to forming our grief group; someone's skill in baking led to a ministry in cupcakes and combating loneliness; a volunteer with a passion for cooking led to dinner church...these are just some examples of the GOD-incidences.

Today we have a growing faith community, [growing community groups](#) and a small established Dinner Church where we have more children than adults. We have people with faith and no faith all gathering around the table where Jesus fulfills our spiritual hunger. Is our ministry clear cut, mapped out, tracking growth? NO. It's messy, it's unpredictable, it's chaotic and at times it's disheartening... but is God in it? YES. The Holy Spirit left our building years ago - and we, who are out on the streets of the community, have front row seats to God being everywhere."

Is God nudging you to listen, trust and pray? Explore Methodist Pioneering Pathways and consider signing up for the Church Planting Intensive course.

[Click here to subscribe.](#)

Good news! Funding is available for Yorkshire's Churches

[The Yorkshire Historic Churches Trust](#) is welcoming funding applications from places of worship across the county for repair, restoration and maintenance work. Due to the generous donations and legacies received last year, the Trust is



actively encouraging churches to apply for the next round of funding.

The application deadlines for 2024 are **Friday 8 March** for consideration at the April grants committee and **Friday 23 August** for consideration at the October grants committee. For guidance and how to apply please clgo to:

www.yhct.org.uk/grants

Grants are available for repairs to the church fabric, the walls, roofs, floors, tower, bell frames, windows, stonework, repointing and rainwater goods. Grants are also available for the conservation of fixture and fittings, such as monuments, furniture and stained glass and repairs to bells, clocks and organs.

Applications are also welcome for investigatory work, eg where a cherry picker may be required to assess what repairs may be required. You can apply for this type of grant at any time of the year. Do contact Jonathan Stamp by email at grants@yhct.org.uk if you would like to discuss this.

The YHCT have no set funding amounts, but common grants range from £2000 - £10,000, depending on the size of the works. The Grant Committee looks at how much the total project is and how much effort has gone into fund raising locally, and which other funders have been approached or confirmed their grants. The YHCT ideally likes to be able to help a church or chapel who have neared the end of their fund raising and only have a shortfall of say £10 - £15,000 to be able to start their project. We look forward to hearing from you.

Methodist Insurance Updates

See who is funding churches in 2024

We've updated our list of funders that provide grants to churches and church projects.

Find your best match and use our fundraising tools [to write your grant application.](#)

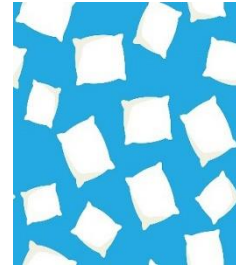
[List of funders](#)



Heated seat cushions

The safe use of lithium-ion batteries as part of any heated seat cushion is critical, along with the selection of seat cushions and fabrics that will deliver an appropriate level of fire performance for how and where they will be used.

[More on heated cushion safety](#)



Are you at risk of flooding?

As the New Year gets into full swing, it's the perfect time to start project planning. Benefact Trust's Methodist Grants Programme provides funding to support building development projects that focus on church growth, community engagement and accessibility.

[Could you benefit from a grant?](#)



Securing your church

When looking for ways to minimise security risks at your Methodist church, it's important to remember that each church is unique. Here are some tips to consider when creating a plan for your church.

[More security guidance](#)



Electrical fires

Following a recent surge in these unfortunate events, our risk team has written guidance to raise awareness of the risk of electrical fires in churches.

[Read the guidance](#)



What is accidental damage cover?

Accidental damage cover is an optional extra on our [home insurance policies](#). We've written a short article to help you understand if accidental damage cover is something you need. Find out what is and is not included on our home insurance policies.

[Find out more](#)



METHODIST INSURANCE

**HOME INSURANCE
CAN COUNT FOR
MORE THAN
JUST COVER.**

20%*
DONATED TO
YOUR CHOSEN
CHURCH OR
CHARITY

* Terms and conditions apply. Full details available on our website
methodistinsurance.co.uk/charitydonation

HSE Update

HSE's 'Asbestos – Your Duty' campaign targets those responsible for managing asbestos in buildings (dutyholders)



To support dutyholders, we recently updated our [web pages for the duty to manage asbestos in buildings](#). This includes guidance on:

- what the legal duty is and the steps required to comply with the law
- who the dutyholder is, depending on the type of building etc, and what they must do
- new templates of an asbestos management plan and an asbestos register with a site plan
- [answer a few simple questions](#) to check if you have a legal duty to manage

First aid at work: the basics

Our 'basics for your business' webpages offer health and safety advice, whatever industry you work in.

The [step-by-step guide on first aid at work](#) explains how you must have the right arrangements, including:

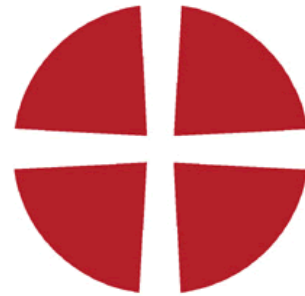
- a first aid kit
- training workers
- first aid for homeworkers
- appointing first aiders

Property projects on the Consents website

Are all the projects listed on the Consents website still active?

If managing trustees decide that they are not going to progress a property project, then it should be abandoned. Managing trustees should make sure that all projects that are not going forward have been marked as abandoned on the Consents website. The Abandon Project button can be found on the Project Summary form at the bottom of the Project Details list.

[Click here to view further guidance on this.](#)



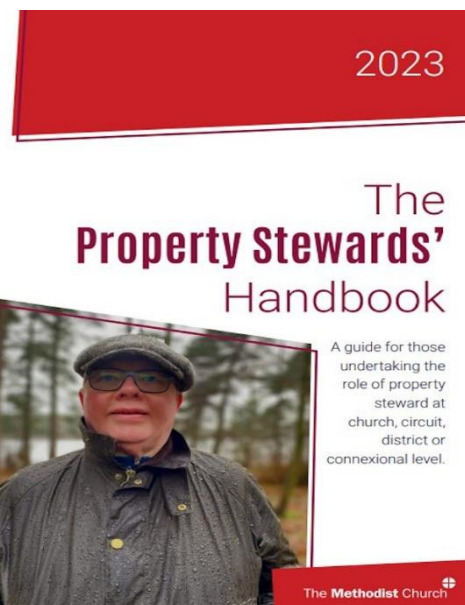
Property Stewards' Handbook

We are pleased to announce the launch of the Property Stewards' Handbook!

This handbook is design to be an across-the-board information resource for property stewards at a church, circuit and district level.

It includes the Top 10 Essentials of being a property steward as well as other useful information and links.

[Click here to download a copy.](#)



Energy Buying Update

Business Solutions Made Simple!

Proud Partners of the Methodist Church



As Christians we are called to care for God's creation and to work for justice in the world. We are currently living in a climate emergency which threatens much of the life on earth and disproportionately affects those people who did least to cause it.

The Methodist Church in Britain has set a target of net zero by 2030. This will require action in a number of different areas and contexts, but crucial to achieving this aim will be ensuring that the energy we use is green, renewable energy. Moving to using green electricity not only ensures that the energy we use does as little as possible to contribute to the climate emergency but also allows us to demonstrate collectively that we, as a Church, want to see the building of greater capacity for renewable energy.

As well, we are aware of the concern that churches have regarding rising energy costs. One possible option for managing trustees to consider would be to get in touch with an energy broker who may be able to fix your rates for a period of time. Although it is not always guaranteed that the rate is cheaper, there is a level of security of having a fixed rate. Managing Trustees could also contact other churches in their circuit and/or district to see if they might be interested, as sometimes brokers can offer deals for a cluster of churches. Here is a message from [Switch365](#), the new energy partner for The Methodist Church:

Our goal is to streamline the energy renewal process for all Methodist Churches. Whether your current contract nears expiration or extends into the future, we invite you to reach out.

Our account managers can explore tailored plans designed to meet your specific needs and to introduce sustainable energy practices for your church. Together, we can embark on a journey towards a greener and more cost-effective energy future. [Click here to fill in an online enquiry form.](#)

Listed Building Advisory Committee (LBAC) Meeting Dates:

- **23 April 2024** - Deadline for paper is 22 March 2024
- **16 July 2024** - Deadline for paper is 14 June 2024

Supporting the Methodist Connexion

Methodist Insurance has been protecting the property of the Methodist Church since 1872. We are a Public Limited Company owned by shareholders and independent of the Methodist Church. The company operates like a mutual by returning most of our profits back to our community in the form of a significant financial contribution to the Methodist Connexion. [Find out more.](#)



Property Matters is a monthly newsletter focused on giving updates on property related guidance and legislation as well as providing information and links to related subjects. To view the most current content, please refer to the [Property pages](#) on the website. We cannot know about everything that's going on, so please do [email us](#) if you have any feedback or ideas for items to include.

Methodist Church House, 25 Tavistock Place Road, London, WC1H 9SF 020 7486 5502
methodist.org.uk
Registered charity no. 1132208

[Unsubscribe](#)
[Subscribe to other newsletters](#)
[Change your details](#)
[Click here for a PDF version](#)