

May 2024

PROPERTY MATTERS

The Methodist Church 

Welcome to the May 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](#)

Caring for God's creation

Church volunteers have a big part to play in helping their buildings become sustainable, and this can sometimes feel overwhelming. However, help is at hand. Over the next few months, we will be sharing lots of opportunities for you to promote sustainable practices in your church building and community. Hamish Leese, the Action for Hope Officer, has created a short video on 5 brilliant ways to help your church become more sustainable. [Click here to view](#)



There's an online webinar, [Eco Church: Baby Steps to Bronze](#) taking place on Tuesday 21 May for those who are looking to respond to the climate emergency and want to take their first steps towards becoming an Eco Church. [Click here to register.](#)

You can also sign up to the [online Mission Planning Conference](#) which is taking place on 13 July where you can discover how creation care and mission planning are about good news for all creation. [Click here to register](#)

What can church land do for nature?

[A Rocha UK](#) is working hard to support churches to care for God's creation on their own land or neighbouring land as part of their core mission. Many Eco Churches and Partners in Action are blazing a trail for others to follow. Church land, from local church yards to the extensive farming and woodland investments owned by church bodies, can play a huge role in addressing the biodiversity crisis. [Click here to view resources](#) available from Eco-Church



This webinar, led by A Rocha CEO Andy Atkins, looks at the fascinating question of what church land can do for nature. There will be stories and case studies from Eco Churches and other partners lead the way on this important issue. [Click here to register](#) to join this free webinar on **Tuesday 4th June from 2-3pm.**

Love Your Burial Ground Week

Caring for God's Acre annual [Love Your Burial Ground and Churches Count on Nature](#) week has been set for **8th - 16th June 2024** and there is a focus on the brilliant wildlife to be found in churchyards and chapel yards. It is a joint initiative promoted by Caring for God's Acre, the Church of England, the Church in Wales and A Rocha UK. [Click here](#) to find information on how to sign up as well as resources. Over 27,000 wildlife records have been submitted during this dedicated week over the past two years,



and many recorders are continuing to submit records through the burial grounds project on [iNaturalist UK](#).

Additionally, Caring for God's Acre are offering free webinars on the following topics:

- **Wednesday 22nd May** - Knowing your Ant from Your Alder with Harriet Carty
- **Monday 11th June** - Planting your Tree in the Communion Forest with the Rt Revd Graham Usher, Bishop of Norwich
- **Tuesday 11th June** - Your church - Your Swifts with Edward Mayer
- **Wednesday 12th June** - Ancient Yew Trees with Chris Knapman and Russell Ball
- **Thursday 13th June** - Solitary Bees with Brigit Strawbridge
- **Friday 14th June** - Blueing the Church: Exploring the Oceans Through Science and Faith with David Curry

[Click here to register](#) for a webinar.

Funding for Energy Audits (England)

Community Energy England offers funding for energy audits as well as some funding for implementing the recommendations.

[Click here to learn more.](#)

As well, churches in Greater London can apply for energy audit funding through City Bridge

Foundation and can then apply for up to £150,000 to fund the recommendations.

[Click here to learn more.](#)



Stories from around the Connexion

How vegetable oil heated a Cornish village

A Methodist Church in a Cornish village has been part of a trial using vegetable oil as fuel. The church converted its relatively new boiler at minimal cost and now has a much more responsive and cost-effective heating system.



The district's environment advocate Andrew Geake says: *"This renewable fuel can do the same job as existing heating oil whilst saving nearly 90 per cent CO2 emissions. So in one easy step, this brings this Church very close to achieving the Net Zero target."*

[Click here to read more.](#)

Community cafe see big success

BBC News went along to visit the Wesley's Community Café and Larder. The café, based at Church Road Methodist Church at St Anne's in the Lancashire District, started eight years ago and has been going strong ever since. *"Everybody eats free, everybody eats together. The social atmosphere is tremendous."*

[Click here to read more.](#)

Community driven movement for sustainable living

On Saturday 27 April 2024, the first Greening Mortimer happened within the Southampton Methodist District. The event is aimed at bringing together local people concerned about climate change and to share with the local community steps they can take to be greener. *"Our approach is to break it down into accessible steps and focus on the little changes we can make locally in our community – whether it's conserving energy, reducing waste, or nurturing our local environment."* [Click here to learn more.](#)

Renting manses to refugees

Since 2016 the [York Circuit](#) has been using manses that were not currently needed for ministers to house refugee families. Two manses are currently occupied by families who arrived in the UK under government schemes designed to



resettle vulnerable people from Syria and Afghanistan. This project initially grew out of the Circuit's response to the war in Syria and the 'Refugees Welcome' campaign which encouraged churches to consider what they could do to show God's caring love to those seeking safety from conflict and hardship.

[Click here to read the rest of the story.](#)

The Importance of a good Quinquennial Inspection

Quinquennial Inspections are the bedrock for maintaining a church building as they are designed to alert managing trustees to any immediate defects within the building as well as plan ahead for larger works, such a roof repair.



The Baptist Union has produced this helpful video on [5 Reasons to get a Quinquennial Inspection.](#)

[Click to find further guidance and templates](#)

Vandalism Threat to Heritage Sites Amid cost of Living Crisis

A new report from Historic England and the National Police Chiefs' Council reveals a worrying increase in theft, vandalism and antisocial behaviour at the nation's historic sites. Incidents – like graffiti, or the theft of York stone – expected to continue rising due to inflation's impact on commodity prices. The report urges better police recording of heritage crimes to grasp the full scale of the problem. [Click here to read the report](#)



Additionally, research commissioned by Ecclesiastical Insurance reveals UK heritage organisations suffered a rise in graffiti, anti-social behaviour, and verbal abuse last year. Crime is a top concern for heritage organisations: six in ten (57%) are expecting an increase over the next year, and seven in ten (69%) are more concerned than ever before. [Click here to read the article.](#)

For churches who have experienced heritage crime we urge you to report this to the local police so that research can be undertaken and measures can be put in place to prevent it. [Click here to learn more.](#)

New Research shows that Heritage boosts your well-being

The analysis demonstrates that Grade II listed buildings, which represent 92% of England's historic places on the National Heritage List for England, are the main drivers of life satisfaction increases. This suggests that it is proximity to a wealth of everyday local heritage – rather than the presence of rare, exceptional historic places – that is responsible for driving a higher life satisfaction. [Click here to read.](#)



To pew or not to pew?

The church at [High Street, Harpenden](#) (Grade II listed) is embarking on a wholesale pew removal scheme, which could be controversial, and as part of the project development of this, the church has produced a webpage dedicated to the project and is inviting people to engage, through consultation, with it. It could be a resource that others can learn from in terms of messaging and production when embarking on a major scheme or as part of the development of a community hub.



Car Parking License Available

TMCP is often contacted by Managing Trustees in relation to concerns or queries in relation to car parking arrangements. TMCP is in the process of producing some website guidance on some of the common questions we are asked by Managing Trustees when they are approached by third parties wanting to use Methodist car parks.

[Click here to learn more.](#)



Methodist Insurance Updates

NEW property owner insurance policy

Insurance for residential property owners including sole traders, small and medium enterprises. It's intended for those who own relatively small or simple premises or simple property portfolios and rent it to third party tenants.

Contact us on **0345 606 1331** if you would like a quote.

[Read more about the policy](#)



Church Events

Learn how to reduce the common risks at your next event.

You'll find detailed guidance on specific risks, from food safety to slips and trips, in the documents section.



[Safety at church events](#)

Raising Funds for Community Projects

Community projects can be an opportunity to bring together diverse local groups, people of different generations and other local businesses for a common cause that benefits all.

Focusing your fundraising narrative on community impact can also open up a dialogue with a wide range of donors.



[Community projects](#)

Your home insurance in the current climate

According to the ABI, home insurance claims for weather-related damage reached a [record £573 million in 2023](#). Though these claims were mostly due to the succession of storms including Babet, Ciaran and Debi, the ABI also reported a rise in the cost of accidental damage, theft and water leak claims associated with the cost of living crisis.

Some general maintenance can help to protect buildings from damage and spring is a good time to carry out some checks and repairs. It's also important to check your sums insured are adequate to cover the cost of replacement items should you need to claim.

- [Water leaks](#)
- [Storm safety](#)
- [Contents checklist](#)

Funding Methodist Projects

Benefact Trust's Methodist Grants Programme, funded by donations from Methodist Insurance PLC, seeks to enhance the mission and ministry of the Methodist Church in the UK and Ireland.



The programme provides grants to Methodist churches to run building development projects that focus on church growth (both numerically and spiritually), community engagement and improving accessibility. Grants are also available for repair and maintenance projects that are essential for the ongoing mission and ministry of an organisation.

[More about grant-giving](#)

Conference

We are delighted to be the main sponsor of the 2024 Methodist Conference, on Thursday 27 June until Wednesday 3 July in Leeds at the Royal Armouries and New Dock Hall Armouries Way.



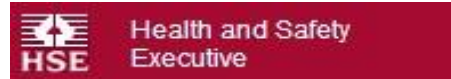
On our stand, you will find lots of useful information, advice to help with the smooth running of your church.

[More about Conference](#)

HSE Update

Asbestos and You campaign

HSE's Asbestos and You campaign urges tradespeople to stay aware of hidden asbestos and protect themselves and others from exposure to asbestos fibres during their work.



Every tradesperson is likely to carry out work in a building that contains asbestos at some point. Those doing repairs or refurbishment are at a higher risk of disturbing asbestos, especially when working in houses built before the year 2000.

For more information about what to look for and what to do when you come across asbestos, download our updated [quick guide for trades](#). Other resources you can access include:

- [A worker's guide to asbestos safety](#)
- [Asbestos essentials task sheets](#)

Make sure you are working safely at height

Falls from height continue to be the most common cause of fatal accidents to workers. [HSE's statistics](#) show that falls from height were the main cause of

worker fatalities in 2022/23, with 40 workers killed. Between 13 and 17 May, the No Falls Foundation is launching its first ever [No Falls Week](#), a campaign dedicated to promoting safe working at height.

[Visit HSE's website for more guidance](#), resources and information on working at height.

Mission Planning Surgeries

Get Help with Mission Planning

Perhaps you are not sure how to get started with mission planning. Or you have started working on a plan, but got lost along the way. You may have a plan in place, but you've struggled to put it into action. Or perhaps you need to review your plan so that it fits where you are right now.



The Evangelism and Growth Team, in collaboration with the Learning Network, offer monthly 'mission planning surgeries'. Circuits and churches can book a two-hour slot during which they receive input tailored to their particular context. You could use this time to help you think through a knotty issue, to ask for specific guidance, or to find out about people and resources in your local area who can continue to accompany you in your mission planning. Ideally a few representatives from a circuit or church team would attend together so that the input from the surgery would be shared among the team.

[Click here to sign up.](#)

Chubb Fire Extinguisher Contract

The contract with Chubb for fire extinguishers has been renewed and the details below can be found on the [A-Z Property Guidance](#). Any new premises wishing to participate in this agreement must apply through the below address, via post, telephone or email. The **UPDATED** contact details as follows:

Account Manager: Nicola Eaton, nicola.eaton@chubbfs.com

Chubb Fire & Security Ltd
National Accounts
United Technologies House
Shadsworth Business Park
Shadsworth Road
Blackburn BB1 2PR
Email – UK_service@chubbfs.co.uk
Tel - 0344 879 1773

If the following details could be provided to enable them to add your premises to the Churches contract:

- The full name and address with postcode for the invoice
- The name and telephone number of the contact to arrange access to site
- The name and address of the site that is to be serviced
- The due month in which the service is required

On receipt of this correspondence they will arrange to visit your premises. Subsequent to each annual service carried out, any recommendations for replacement or additional extinguishers will be forwarded to you for your approval.

Churches should ensure that when dealing with Chubb they are on the National Account Contract as agreements with Chubb's local offices can be more expensive. [Click here](#) for further information on fire safety that can be found on the Methodist Insurance's website.

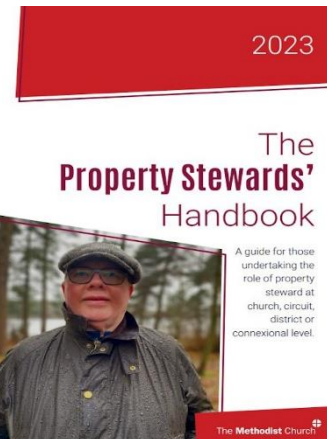
Property Stewards' Handbook

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.](#)



Listed Building Advisory Committee (LBAC) Meeting Dates:

- **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 legalisation 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.

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