

June 2023

PROPERTY MATTERS

The Methodist Church 

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

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

If you have any feedback, please email the [Property Support Team](#).

Making Buildings Accessible

The Methodist church is committed to being inclusive and making sure that disabled people can use our buildings is a fundamental part of this. In addition to our calling to be a growing, evangelistic, inclusive church of diverse people, we have legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments to make our buildings accessible for disabled people. To assist with this, the [Making Buildings Accessible guidance](#) as well as the [Building Access Audit](#) are now available on the website. [Click here to learn more.](#)



Finding Funding for an Accessible Church

Disability charity [Through the Roof](#) has created a webpage to show churches and ministries where to find funding for building work to improve disabled access. [Click here to view.](#)



Katie Mobbs from Through the Roof shares: *"I'm a Christian, and a wheelchair user. It can be challenging to access some church buildings in*

my wheelchair, as many have steps, heavy doors and fixed pews that limit access. Many churches want to open up their buildings more for disabled people but are not sure where to start. That's why I'm excited about our webpage about funding for access improvements! I'd love all churches to know there are funding bodies that want to help – so please do visit the webpage and tell others about it."

Making your church more accessible is a journey – you don't have to get everything right straight away. Just get started and remember that small things can make a big difference. Here are some key tips from the webpage about finding funding:

1. There are many different funding organisations for churches such as the [National Churches Trust](#) or [the Benefact Trust](#) – many offer advice as well as sources of funding.
2. If your church building is used for community activities, ensure you flag that to funders – many more funds are available for community-used buildings than for church-use alone.
3. Building work to provide access for disabled people is zero-rated for VAT – make sure you get an appropriate certificate to give to your builder so you don't pay VAT. [Click here to learn more.](#)

Methodist Insurance Updates

Dialogue online

Read the latest issue of Dialogue, the twice-yearly newsletter from Methodist Insurance.

Dialogue brings together our latest news and helpful advice for you and your church.

[Read Dialogue](#)



Raising fund for community projects

UK funders often aim to support projects that strengthen communities in times of need and many churches play a huge role in this.



Focusing your fundraising narrative on these objectives can open up a wider range of donors. See how you can strengthen your case for support by focusing on what you do for your community.

[Raising funds - all faiths and none](#)

Award winner stories

We marked our anniversary in 2022 in a special way, by giving 15 awards of £1,500 – one for every decade since our foundation – to church and community ventures that are really making a difference to those around them.



Six months on we see how two of the churches are using their donations.

[Bridgeway Hall Methodist Church](#) [St Ives Methodist Church](#)

Come to stand 19 at Conference 2023

Proudly sponsoring this year's event.

Visit us to find out more how we help to enhance the mission and ministry of the Methodist Church, holding Methodist values at the heart of everything we do and providing peace of mind for you and your community.



[See you there](#)

Check your church for common causes of fire

Fire can cause devastating damage to a church. It is important to ensure electrics are checked for safety on a regular basis and waste is not stored close to the building. Any hot works should also be suitably managed.



[Fire safety guidance](#)

95% of customers are very or extremely satisfied

In a survey of our [church](#) and [home insurance](#) customers, 96% were very or extremely satisfied with their claims experience.

The results are based on responses 147 from customers who have had their claims settled in 2022, thank you to everybody who took the time to give their feedback.



[Read our claims promise](#)

Over £1m to the Methodist Church

Benefact Trust has awarded grants over £1m to the Methodist Church in Great Britain, through the Methodist Grants Programme. This funding will give a huge boost to a range of significant Methodist projects.

[Find out more](#)



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**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

Asbestos and You: new resources available



HSE's Asbestos and You campaign urges tradespeople working in construction to be aware of disturbing asbestos. Two new free resources have been launched for workers to test and enhance their knowledge about asbestos and the risks associated with it:

- find out if you know enough to protect yourself and others from exposure to asbestos fibres by [taking the Asbestos and You quick quiz](#)
- HSE recently held a webinar in partnership with The Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH), which is now [available to watch for free on YouTube](#)

To access more resources and find out more about the campaign, [visit HSE's Asbestos and You website](#).

Help bust the myths on portable appliance testing

Portable appliance testing (PAT) is the examination of electrical appliances and equipment to make sure they are safe to use.

There are many common myths about PAT - [HSE's frequently asked questions](#) to find the facts about inspecting and testing this type of equipment.

The leaflet [Maintaining Portable Electric Equipment in Low-Risk Environments](#) is free to download and sets out simple and sensible precautions you should take to prevent danger from portable or movable electrical equipment. Further [guidance on electrical safety at work](#) can be found on HSE's website.

New guide: Introduction to managing health and safety

HSE has developed a new online guide to help you quickly find and understand what your business must do to comply with health and safety law.

The [step-by-step guide](#) will help you:

- understand what managing health and safety means
- find the right guidance for your workplace
- use the Plan, Do, Check, Act approach to manage health and safety in a way that is simple and proportionate to your risks, while still complying with the law

There is also guidance on [common workplace risks](#) where you can find specific advice for your workplace.

Event Safety this summer

Good planning and organisation are essential to putting on an event that is both safe and enjoyable. You can get started with [HSE's guidance for organisers](#) on how to plan, manage and monitor your event. It will help you make sure workers and the visiting public are not exposed to health and safety risks.

Whether you're an organiser, venue owner or volunteer, [find out more about your responsibilities](#). Depending on the size of your event, you may also need to take extra steps in order to [manage crowds safely](#).

Grants Available from National Churches Trust

The National Churches Trust (NCT) have several grant programmes, including funding for repairs, available to churches throughout the UK. These include:



- **Small Grants** of up to £5,000 for **urgent maintenance and small repairs** costing up to £20,000, and small investigative works.
www.nationalchurchestrust.org/get-support/grants/small-grants
- **Medium Grants** of up to £10,000 for repairs costing between £20,000 and £80,000, or for project development. www.nationalchurchestrust.org/get-support/grants/medium-grants
- **Large Grants** of up to £50,000 repair projects costing over £80,000, or kitchen and toilet projects costing more than £30,000.
www.nationalchurchestrust.org/get-support/grants/large-grants

Launching this year, our new **Cherish project** will help boost skills, resources and funding across Scotland, Wales, and the Northwest of England (Greater Manchester, Lancashire and Cumbria). In partnership with the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the project will offer a wide range of support including a dedicated Support Officer for each area and some small grants. Read more on www.nationalchurchestrust.org/cherish.

Action for Children are looking for property

[Action for Children](http://www.actionforchildren.org.uk) are on the lookout for suitable property which may support its development of additional residential care homes for children and young people. The homes will provide housing and care for children who have experienced complex trauma and multiple placement breakdown.



[Click here to read a recent blog](#) from The Revd Graham Thompson, President of the Conference about his visit to the Action for Children Early Child and Family Service in Norwich.

The Need

[At present, one in four children in care experience two or more placement moves across two years.](#) With Action for Children's heritage in providing excellent care and housing for children and young people, the charity continues to build upon the [legacy of Reverend Dr Thomas Bowman Stephenson](#), meeting the needs of children across the UK. One way of doing so is acquiring and renovating suitable property to provide children and young people with a place they can call home.

What is Action for Children looking for?

The residential growth team at AFC are constantly looking for large detached residential properties, usually with at least five bedrooms. AFC will gladly consider other property types that can be repurposed into residential-type dwellings. An ideal property would include:

- A good-sized front or rear garden with ample off-road parking for at least five vehicles
- Bedrooms with en-suites are desirable.
- At least two living / reception rooms.
- Private, enclosed garden space.

AFC is looking to acquire properties across the North West and South West of England yet will consider properties in other regions should the property be appropriate. Ex-manses or other similar properties may fit the bill, so please do forward anything to AFC so they can consider whether a property can be repurposed. The image above is an example of a property currently being refurbished to required standards and will soon be open to four children and young people in need of a home. Please [contact Charlotte Betts](#) should you wish to explore whether AFC may benefit from considering a property currently under your management.

East Molesey Methodist Church's Journey Towards Net Zero

The story of East Molesey Methodist Church's journey to become Net Zero is one of determination and commitment in the face of obstacles and financial constraints. The church started its Net Zero journey in 2015 and is now working towards a silver award in the A Rocha award scheme.

[You can read their inspiring story here.](#)



TMCP Updates

Data Protection Annual Checklist 2023

Further to our article of 10th February 2023 which reminded you of the deadline for the Data Protection Annual Returns, we are now approaching that deadline of 31st May 2023 for submission to your Districts. [Click here to read more.](#)



Free Business Support from the Plunkett Foundation

With funding from the Benefact Trust, the Plunkett Foundation has extended its programme of funding until the end of 2023. The Foundation continues to offer free business support and grants to help community groups and active Christian places of worship across the UK to explore co-location. It can provide free adviser support on everything from engaging with your community to legal structures. There are also grants up to £5,000 available to help with feasibility and development work. The Foundation can be contacted on info@plunkett.co.uk or 01993 630 022. [Click here for more information on the Plunkett's website.](#)



Methodist Heritage Survey

Spring is bringing about change and rejuvenation for [Methodist Heritage](#). We'd like to take this opportunity to learn more about you - in particular, the type of heritage content from around the Connexion you want to read and find interesting. Please consider filling out the brief questionnaire below to help us tailor the Methodist Heritage newsletter for you. Rest assured your responses will be used for these purposes only & will be securely and appropriately stored. [Click here to access the questionnaire.](#)



Lego Exhibition at St John's Methodist

On the 10th and 17th August 2023, [St John's Methodist Church in Llandudno](#) will host an annual Lego Exhibition, which is curated by Alan Gordon, caretaker at the church. Alan's creations are incredibly impressive and include Lego animals of considerable size and models of famous buildings. This includes such examples as a Panda, Golden Eagle and the Eiffel Tower. Last year the exhibition included a range of subjects such as buildings from Hogwarts, Tower Bridge, a Saturn V rocket, Minions and R2-D2, it attracted a number of visitors and raised over £6,000 in donations for the church. We wish to commend Alan on his patience and attention to detail and hope this inspires others to think 'out of the box'.
[Click here to watch a video about the exhibition.](#)



The Missing Pieces Project

Historic England has launched [The Missing Pieces Project](#), which invites people “to share their pictures and stories of the unique, significant and memorable places on the National Heritage List for England”.

With over 400,000 protected places across England, Historic England “wants to learn

about and document their hidden histories and reveal overlooked stories” and

suggests that faith groups could use this as an opportunity to raise the profile of places of worship (and other buildings that they use) as beautiful, special places.

Places of worship are an important element of the listed buildings in England – the Church of England alone has about 13,000, and there are about 15,000 in total.

Anything that might raise their profile is probably worth doing.

[Click here to learn more about the project here.](#)



Missional Property Enabler Vacancy

The Yorkshire West Methodist District are seeking to appoint a Missional Property Enabler to work as part of the District Team. The person appointed will be responsible for:

- Assisting churches and circuits across the District in the management and development of their properties to enable them to further their missional plans.
- The purchasing, selling and leasing of property on behalf of those churches and circuits who seek this support.
- Helping with the implementation of the District Climate Change Policy where it relates to properties.
- Overseeing the Property Consents System in the District.
- Managing District properties.



Applicants will need to hold a degree and a relevant professional property qualification (or have previous relevant experience). [Click here to learn more.](#)

Listed Building Advisory Committee (LBAC) Meeting Dates:

- **18 July 2023** - Deadline for paper is 27 June 2023
- **10 October 2023** - Deadline for paper is 12 September 2023
- **23 January 2024** - Deadline for paper is 31 December 2023

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.

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