

Methodist Heritage Committee's Draft Report to Conference 2009/10

Basic Information

Contact Name and Details	Jo Hibbard, Methodist Heritage Officer, CCEA Cluster, Connexional Team Tel: 020 7467 x5257 E: hibbardj@methodistchurch.org.uk Rev Lord Griffiths, Chair, Methodist Heritage Committee Tel: 020 7253 2262
Status of Paper	Draft
Action Required	To approve resolutions 2-6 below and approve resolution 1 for forwarding to the Conference
Draft Resolutions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Conference approves the theology of Heritage and Mission presented by the Methodist Heritage Committee. 2. The Council approves amendments to the Terms of Reference of the Methodist Heritage Committee to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appoint the Methodist/Connexional Archives Liaison Officer to the Committee <i>ex officio</i> and broaden the skills required of the Committee to include Methodist historical research • increase its maximum membership to 13 • designate a Team Secretary (or his/her delegate) as the Connexional Team representative 3. The Council appoints the Methodist Heritage Committee members proposed. 4. (i) The Council approves the Methodist Heritage Committee's recommendations for the restructure of relevant groups and responsibilities (including the transfer of delegated responsibility for the oversight of the relationship with the John Rylands University Library of Manchester and the Library of the School of Oriental and African Studies of the University of London) to the Methodist Heritage Committee, to ensure continued Connexional oversight of the Church's historic records and support for its modern record management (in conjunction with the Connexional Team). (ii) The Council directs the Methodist Heritage Committee to prepare (with collaboration and prior scrutiny of the Law & Polity Committee) final revisions to relevant changes to Standing Orders for presentation to the 2010 Conference. 5. The Council notes the request in paragraph 4.1.23 regarding long-term funding and will seek to respond to the Methodist Heritage Committee as soon as is practical. 6. The Council approves the Methodist Heritage Committee's remit for the Heritage Grant Stream as set out in Appendix 1.
Alternative Options	None

Summary of Content

Subject and Aims	Draft report of the Methodist Heritage Committee to the Conference (February 2009–March 2010), with particular reference to progress and proposals in four key areas of policy requiring Council's support and the approval of Conference.
Main Points	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Summary of operations in 2008–10 2. Theology of heritage and mission. 3. Proposals for, and the implications of, incorporating the skills and activities of

	<p>the Archives & History Committee into the Methodist Heritage Committee.</p> <p>4. Developments in making Connexional grants to 'Heritage & Mission'.</p> <p>5. Concerns and proposals in relation to ensuring financial stability for the key heritage sites.</p>
Background Context and Relevant Documents (with function)	The 2009 Conference approved the 'Interim Report of the Shadow Methodist Heritage Committee' (Paper 34) and agreed that during 2009-10 the Committee should develop its theology and consult on policy developments for organisational restructuring and on financial matters, including grant-making, and report to the 2010 Conference.
Consultations	<p>Theology: Faith & Order Committee/Rev Dr Martin Wellings; Rev Dr Tim Macquiban</p> <p>Structural organisation and SOs: Archives & History Committee and Executive; Revd Dr Mark Wakelin; Mrs Susan Howdle on behalf of Law & Polity Committee.</p> <p>Grant-making: Chair of Connexional Grants Committee.</p>

Summary of Impact

Standing Orders	Drafting of revisions and new Orders in progress, but further work and approval by Law & Polity will be required depending to the decisions of the Council on the organisational restructuring proposed in this paper. Changes will be required to SO 015 Archives (1A); SO 212 Particular functions [of the Methodist Council] (11); SO 337 Archives and History; SO 473 Archives; and SO 936 Historic Artefacts
Faith and Order	Rationale connecting Methodism's heritage to the mission of the Church has been approved by F&O.
Financial	Work will require ongoing investment and support.
Personnel	Seeking funds to employ archivist to deal with archiving backlog of MMS archive, with the aim of recruiting and training further London/Southeast volunteer archivists.
Legal	None at present.
Wider Connexional	District Archivists (also Circuit Archivists and/or Administrators undertaking archiving where appointed), managing trustees of heritage sites and listed chapels.
External (e.g. ecumenical)	Seeking to develop and/or enhance relations with Church and secular tourism and heritage bodies, including CofE Church Buildings Division; RC Patrimony Sub-Committee; Historic Chapels Trust; Churches Tourism Association; Heritage Alliance; English Heritage.
Risk	Without appropriate interventions key Methodist heritage sites will be forced to close and be lost to the Church as national and international mission tools.

Methodist Heritage Committee's Draft Report to Conference 2009/10

1. Methodist Heritage Committee – one body with responsibility for the preservation of the Methodist Church's heritage and its use for mission

1.1 'Methodist Heritage & Contemporary Mission' – Heritage at the 2008 Conference

1.1.1 In 2008, the Methodist Conference approved recommendations made in Paper 34, 'Methodist Heritage & Contemporary Mission'. While Methodism's historic places of interest, and four 'key' sites¹ in particular, were recognised in the paper as potentially valuable resources for the mission of the Methodist Church, the lack of promotion, poor coordination and financial instability of these places were also highlighted. The paper proposed tackling these issues by setting up a Methodist Heritage Committee, accountable to the Methodist Council, and appointing a Methodist Heritage Officer to the Connexional Team. It was proposed also in the 2008 paper that the existing Archives & History Committee 'would report to the new committee on a regular basis' (para 5.4) and should be (para 5.5) 'reporting to the Conference and Council through the Methodist Heritage Committee with revised terms of reference'. A budget of £250,000 was approved for 2008/9: 'during the summer [of 2008] the greater part' to be made 'available to the major sites'.

1.1.2 The Methodist Heritage Officer was appointed and the first Heritage Committee meeting was convened with its initial 'shadow' membership in February 2009. The Committee has met three times since. Initial Terms of Reference were approved by the Conference in 2009.

1.1.3 The first Heritage grants made from the 2008 Conference approved budget (£25,000 to each of the four key sites, plus two £750 grants to smaller sites) were administered as part of the handover of this initiative from its Steering Group and the Connexional 'Projects' team to the shadow Methodist Heritage Committee. Applications for 'Heritage & Mission' grants made in 2008/9 were handled by the shadow Methodist Heritage Committee and in 2009/10 this process has been handed on finally to Connexional Grants Committee and the new Heritage Grants Stream, as directed by the Conference in 2009.

1.2 Broadening the scope of 'Heritage'

1.2.1 The development of the Methodist Heritage Committee has taken place in parallel with that of the Connexional Grants Committee (whose report can be found elsewhere in the agenda of this Council), and in conjunction with the Review of Committees (whose report can be found elsewhere in the agenda of this Council), which has resulted in the continual evolution of the Methodist Heritage Committee's membership over the past year and has emphasised and encouraged the broadening in scope of the Committee's remit to being responsible for the whole historic 'landscape' of the Methodist Church, and not just its historic sites.

1.2.2 In order to fulfil the remit approved for the Methodist Heritage Committee by the Conference, it is necessary and good for the Committee to have a broader vision and for there to be integration and not compartmentalisation, for example of those with interests in the

¹ 'Key' Methodist heritage sites are: Wesley's Chapel, House & the Museum of Methodism, City Road, London; John Wesley's Chapel/The New Room, Bristol; The Old Rectory, Epworth, Lincolnshire/S Yorks; Englesea Brook Chapel & Museum of Primitive Methodism, near Crewe, Cheshire.

Connexional archives and of the heritage sites.

1.2.3 Two factors in particular have highlighted the implications of this shift in emphasis: (i) the assertion that the budget approved by the Conference in 2008 for Heritage should fund existing work in this area, in particular funding the budget of the Archives & History Committee, and (ii) the concerns of the Archives & History Committee about that Committee's future role and relationship to the Methodist Heritage Committee.

1.2.4 The Archives & History Committee welcomed warmly the creation of the Heritage Committee, having played an active part in the processes that led up to it. However, concerns were expressed by the Archives & History Committee about the remit that the Methodist Heritage Committee was given in 2008. The Archives & History Committee considered its long-standing role as much wider than heritage (understood as historic buildings and artefacts, their preservation and interpretation) and was concerned that the equally important specialised areas of archives and history may be overlooked or diminished in the restructure approved by the Conference in 2008.

1.2.5 It was not the understanding of the Chair and members of the Methodist Heritage Committee and of the Archives & History Committee that the Conference in 2008 expected the £250,000 budget allocated for Heritage in 2008/09 (or any budget thereafter) would fund existing work relating to archiving and historical research (c£40,000 in 2008/9), before providing for the new work of making grants to the heritage sites and for the employment and work of the Heritage Officer, for example.

1.2.6 Bringing the funding for all of this work under one Connexional Team budget heading and the management of the Heritage Officer, while logical operationally, reduced the total budget available to archiving, history and heritage, and reinforced the dependent relationship of the Archives & History Committee as proposed by the 2008 Conference paper.

1.2.7 The Methodist Council accepted the concern of the Archives & History Committee that insufficient consultation had been undertaken before proposing this future reporting and financing structure and agreed that further consultation was in order before changes to Standing Orders were made.

1.2.8 Wide consultation – with both formal meetings (including involving the Connexional Team Secretary for Internal Relationships) and informal conversations – has been carried out under the auspices of the Review of Committees in response to the concerns of the Archives & History Committee. As a result of which the Methodist Heritage Committee has reviewed composition of its membership. Proposals for the future structure of the Methodist Heritage Committee, suitably skilled to deliver the remit approved by the Conference in 2008 and the necessary amendments to the Terms of Reference for the Committee and the expectation of relevant changes to Standing Orders in relation to both Committees are presented at section 3.

1.3 **Developing collaboration, identity and a promotional strategy**

1.3.1 Heritage Site Managers' Practitioners' Forum

1.3.1.1 While dealing with these dilemmas about funding and structure, to push ahead with work that addressed the Methodist Heritage Committee's original purpose – to better coordinate and promote Methodism's heritage for mission purposes – the Methodist Heritage Officer convened the first of a regular 'Practitioners' Forum' meeting to bring together the salaried main heritage site 'managers' (role title varies) from the four key heritage sites plus Central Hall Westminster to encourage collaboration and improved

communication by sharing good practice, combining their knowledge and resources and receiving training in agreed areas for development.

1.3.1.2 At their first meeting, the Heritage Officer facilitated a workshop where the site managers were asked to share details of their visitor profiles and aspirations for audience development, and to propose common 'brand values'. They considered: why does the heritage of Methodism matter? What is unique about Methodist heritage? What makes the history of 'the people called Methodists' distinctive?

1.3.1.3 These questions were also posed to the Methodist academic community. (The full transcript of the outcomes and responses to both activities are available on request from the Methodist Heritage Officer.) However, they universally highlighted the value of heritage in shaping identity and linking the Church's contemporary mission to its historic concerns and theological direction: as Dr John A Hargreaves, General Secretary of the Wesley Historical Society, responded, '[Methodism] has been and remains both an inspirationally global and an intensely local movement, sustained by both clerical and lay involvement, embracing both political activism and devotional piety, recognising the role of both men and women, young and old, and embracing a wide cultural, social and ethnic diversity.'

1.3.1.4 At their second meeting, the Heritage Officer arranged for colleagues from Cancer Research UK and specialist museum consultancy, Retail Matters, to support the Site Managers to begin to explore the challenges of museum retail and potential improvements that can be made to their retail offers in order to generate increased visitor income (see section 4). Future meetings may consider topics such as volunteer management, and mission-focussed heritage interpretation.

1.3.2 Methodist Heritage branding

1.3.2.1 Out of the work of the Heritage Site Managers' Practitioners' Forum, a design brief was created and a new brand identity and logo for 'Methodist Heritage' commissioned by the Heritage Officer. The visual identity uses text, colours and textures reflecting the 18th century in modern designs.

The logo echoes the Methodist Church's 'orb and cross' by putting the Methodist cross – and by implication, Christ – at its centre, within a ring of blue, green and gold triangles. The triangle shape is a subtle reminder of John Wesley's preaching journeys (between London, Bristol and Newcastle upon Tyne), while the colours are intended to recall that Methodism's roots in itinerancy and outdoor preaching.



1.3.3 Methodist Heritage Handbook

1.3.3.1 The 'Methodist Heritage' brand identity has driven a redesign of the *Methodist Heritage Guide* – the first tangible output of the Methodist Heritage Committee. The content of the *Methodist Heritage Guide* has been developed and edited for over 10 years by Dr Peter Forsaith, Research Fellow at the Oxford Centre for Methodism and Church History, Westminster Institute of Education, Oxford Brookes University, and Convenor of the Heritage Forum of the Archives & History Committee Heritage Task Group. The Heritage Committee and Officer wish to bring this important piece of work to the attention of the Council and Conference, and express their grateful thanks for this strong foundation upon which to develop the *Methodist Heritage Handbook*.

1.3.3.2 The additional resources made available to the Methodist Heritage Committee by the Conference have allowed for more detail to be added by the Heritage Officer to the content provided in the *Guide*, both historical background and visitor information, and for 10k copies of this new, full colour booklet to be produced, designed according to the branding developed for Methodist Heritage. The *Guide* has been renamed as the *Methodist Heritage Handbook*, and the Committee are proud to acknowledge the endorsement of it by author and BBC TV presenter, Professor Diarmaid MacCulloch.

1.3.3.3 The Heritage Officer is leading on a marketing plan for the Handbook. This publication will be freely distributed via the historic sites themselves, tourist information centres and hotels (in particular those sponsoring the booklet: the MIC Hotel & Conference Centre, London, Christian Guild Hotels, and Raven Hall Hotel, Scarborough) and made available for all interested Methodists through promotion to the churches, for example via the electronic mailing, *E-news*. However, the main new way in which these booklets will be distributed will be to the travel trade and potential heritage visitors through a number of tourism trade shows and Christian exhibitions throughout 2010. The official launch of the *Handbook* was at the Best of Britain & Ireland Show at London with the MIC Hotel & Conference Centre, London, and Christian Guild Hotels, so that a package of destinations and accommodation/refreshment venues were offered – a relationship that all parties expect to develop in the next 12 months into a ‘group tours’ offer.

1.3.4 Methodist Heritage website

1.3.4.1 Redevelopment of the Methodist Heritage website, to complement and extend the content of the *Handbook*, is underway, and to be launched in September 2010 at the Group Leisure Travel Trade Show at the NEC, Birmingham. The website will also include updated and developed sections on, for example, Methodist history, archiving across the Connexion, making group visits to the heritage sites and information about the Methodist Heritage Committee and its work. Partnership support is being sought for a second phase of online development in 2010/11 for a ‘Listed Chapels’ website to offer all of the Church’s Grade I, II* or II listed chapels the opportunity to showcase their architectural features, historical background and visitor facilities.

1.3.5 Heritage Content Network

1.3.5.1 ‘Heritage’ has come to be the ‘shorthand’ around the Connexional Team for all matters concerning the Church’s history, and it is as ‘Methodist Heritage’ that the Methodist Heritage Committee will be promoting its activities across the Connexion. It is widely acknowledged that there should be a symbiotic relationship between the places that tell the stories of the people called Methodists down the centuries and the artefacts and archives that evidence them. However, ‘history’ and ‘heritage’ are not always ‘comfortable companions’, particularly in academic contexts, where heritage may be seen as the ‘dumbed-down’, popularised and even sensationalised version of the ‘true’ history: history made engaging for tourists rather than nuanced for scholars.

1.3.5.2 Therefore, a new *Heritage Content Network* will be convened to consider (largely communicating electronically) the content of publications (for example, those produced centrally for sale in the heritage sites’ gift shops) and of displays etc produced by ‘Methodist Heritage’ on behalf of the Methodist Church, including those created for the heritage sites or other heritage bodies. This group will include historians and theologians with the aim of ensuring interpretations are historically accurate, consistent and appropriately evangelistic in focus.

2 A theological rationale for Methodist heritage

2.1 The 2008 Conference paper, 'Methodist Heritage & Contemporary Mission', did not include a detailed theological rationale for the value of Methodism's heritage to the Church's mission, although some work had been undertaken in this area.

2.2 It was agreed by the 2009 Conference that this matter should be addressed fully in this paper.

2.3 We gratefully acknowledge the contribution of Revd Dr Tim Macquiban and Revd Dr Martin Wellings and the support of the Faith & Order Committee in developing the underpinning theological rationale that follows. (NB References for texts referred to in section 2 are given at paragraph 2.10.)

2.4 Connecting Methodist heritage and contemporary mission

2.4.1 Some people think the preservation of old buildings has nothing to do with mission and may be counterproductive because it focuses attention on 'a sacred space' rather than making people aware that God is present everywhere (Sheldrake, pp61–3). However, a robust and effective rationale, that is both theological and practical, can be made for linking heritage and mission.

2.4.2 For many years the Methodist Church's Resourcing Mission Office has enabled the good news to be told of Methodists serving the present age through countless schemes for adapting our buildings. Significant sites, in places as diverse in location and scope as The Old Rectory, Epworth, Wesley's Chapel in City Road, London, the New Room in Bristol, Mount Zion Chapel, Halifax, Tolpuddle Methodist Chapel in Dorset and Englesea Brook Chapel and Museum, near Crewe, attract many thousands of visitors each a year. These comprise pilgrims from the World Methodist family, secular tourists interested in local and family history or the place of religion in our national heritage, and casual passers-by drawn in from the world of work and commerce. In these places there are life-changing and life-enhancing possibilities for the Church to engage in an evangelism that counters the effects of modern consumerism and moral confusion by offering an alternative which is distinctive and desirable. They can become oases of spirituality for searchers, resting places for the weary and troubled, places of challenge as the stories of the People called Methodist point to gospel values and reveal signs of God's kingdom through those who have gone before.

2.5 God and History: Heritage and Mission

This is the time, no more delay
This is the Lord's accepted day
(*Hymns & Psalms*: 460)

2.5.1 History is dynamic, not static. It is not merely a matter of the recitation of bare facts to be appropriated for today or assimilated to the present. At every turn God does something new. In a significant chapter of his *Witness to the World*, David Bosch contrasts and critiques two missiological models of history, the 'evangelical' model, accentuating the discontinuity between God's activities and our own, and the 'economic' model, in which the continuity between the two stories is emphasised and God's salvation is identified with our own social and political liberation within the world. Bosch warns against an unhealthy dualism, urging that we must recognise the sense of provisionality which is at the heart of our being Church in a world full of contradictions. That 'God is active in the world is something discernable only by the eye of faith' (Bosch, p239). For Bosch, mission is the focus for God's involvement in world history. There is thus a never-

ending tension between the static and the dynamic, which is reflected in the story of the Church.

2.5.2 There is a danger when we divorce church history from mission history and view the history of the Church in the light of the master narrative of Christendom, the Western European and 'establishment' tradition of Christianity since Constantine. The danger is that this history becomes 'commodified, packaged and sold to a consumer population of tourists and in the process history as the authority of tradition and our contextual identity becomes subverted' (Irvin, pp.5-8). Tradition, moreover, can fossilise the dynamic nature of religious movements and ossify them in static structures.

2.5.3 For Methodism, there are two main points to discern from these arguments.

2.5.3.1 One concerns the *interpretation of key events*. To what extent, for example, if we are to be faithful witnesses to the Aldersgate story, do we allow Wesley's own interpretation of his heart-warming experience to take primacy over the interpretation of others or our own reading in the light of the social and theological context of his time? And to what extent do we allow the predominant motif of Wesleyanism to determine our reading of Methodist theology and practice?

2.5.3.2 The other question relates to the question of *Methodist identity*. Can we allow the different voices of Methodism, often from the margins, to challenge the 'establishment' view? The recovery of different stories questions a false universality, which would seek to create a homogenous Methodist identity, which in fact was rarely present. Too often the voices of lay people, of women, of the young, of ethnic groups within Church, of those of different understandings of sexuality, of the poor, have been subsumed by the dominant. Any faithfulness to our heritage and the total Methodist story must own up to the ways in which that story has sometimes been distorted in the past.

2.5.4 Within the last thirty years Methodism in Britain has focused upon the anniversaries of the Methodist Missionary movement (1986), the Aldersgate experience (1988) and the death of John Wesley (1991). The tercentenary of the births of John (2003) and Charles (2007) Wesley and the Primitive Methodist bicentenary (2007) have provided more recent opportunities to re-tell the story of Methodism. But to what extent do such celebrations, sometimes marred by folksy trivialisation, focus upon the founders and the predominant strain of Wesleyanism exported to the world without necessarily acknowledging the diversity of the movement and its dependence on the voices at the margins? Tradition, when it dominates heritage, can become static dogma, which stifles the voices of experience and reason and contradicts the gospel imperatives. What is needed for the present age is a healthy engagement with tradition which recognises the place of different strands of revivalism, pietism and renewal which have formed Methodism here and elsewhere, nurturing a vital prophetic faith which contains new voices from the margins demanding to be heard. Such handing the faith on to the next generation will be an effective tool for mission as it acknowledges the diversity of the gifts of God's people, whether in Methodism or in other groups of Christians.

2.6 Mission for today

2.6.1 On the basis that a church that lives in and communicates to a society which is now made up of a mosaic of cultures, it should have a mosaic of ways of expressing its life in that community, Methodist Heritage sites should be in the business of discovering their important role as inviters in the rich mosaic of fresh expressions of being the Church in the world. To do theology, whether of history or of mission, or both, is to open ourselves up to the understanding of God at work in God's world. It challenges the Church to become what she should be by discovering what in Christ we already are and working through discipleship in vocation and work on the task on

missionary faithfulness. History enables us to interpret again the Bible and the stories, sayings and contexts of Jesus for today in the light of our own stories, sayings and contexts. Thus, engaging in God's mission we become part of this salvation history. But more than that. For mission is not just about our salvation, but the 'total task God has set for the Church for the salvation of the whole world' (Bosch, p.16).

2.6.2 So where does this understanding of mission leave us in assessing the role of people and events, places and artefacts, in Methodist Heritage? It encourages us to present a picture which is faithful to this sense of provisionality and does not, as so often in the past it has, present a picture of a 'what wonders God hath wrought' view of Methodism raised up providentially in judgement over others whose worth is devalued. We do so at a time when the recovery of this understanding of God's mission challenges the meta-narrative of a Christendom, which has collapsed. This is to be welcomed rather than the subject for anxiety. It also encourages Methodist Heritage to give equal concern to the twin foci of mission, of evangelism and social action, as both part of God's mission.

2.6.3 Evangelism is not primary, nor is social justice, for both are servants of God's work in the world through Christ and in the power of the Spirit. It can be the bringing of the good news, which brings conversion (*metanoia*) in individual lives. But equally, it can be the elimination of poverty and discrimination, of disease and unjust structures that oppress, in social, economic, physical and psychological thraldoms around the world. The sanctification of individuals and the transformation of society are twin mandates of mission. A Methodist Heritage which focuses only on stories of changed lives and not on the changes in environment and society or presents places that speak only of worship in the sanctuary and not service in community is a distortion of the theology of mission as we have come to understand it.

2.7 Relationship to *Our Calling* and *Priorities*

2.7.1 *Our Calling* then is to respond to the gospel of God's love for all and live it out in worship and mission. Mission Statements, which local churches produce in relation to this central statement of the Methodist Conference, are responses arising out of the collected memories of the Church and where it has come from. All living institutions struggle with some sense of continuity and history, of being true to the past and at the same time living fully in the present, so as to be hope for the future. Methodists at this particular time are invited to re-examine who we are and what we can offer, linking the places where we are, where we worship and serve, and the personal faith and experiences we share.

2.7.1.1 Just as appreciating heritage requires understanding, so does worship. **Worship** is to do with the character of Christianity: it connotes a celebration that is at the heart of life. A test of Christian heritage is that it conveys that celebration. When we see groups from around the world stand where the Wesleys stood, and recite words 'I felt my heart strangely warmed' or sing 'O for a thousand tongues to sing, My great redeemer's praise' we feel we are achieving something in helping people express something of their wonder and experience of God. The significance of this experience for Methodists from many parts of the World Church can hardly be over-estimated.

2.7.1.2 **Learning and caring** are key features of Methodist history. When Methodism has been at its best, they have been at its heart. The secret of Wesley's success was not his preaching – others did that better – but his organising of cell communities and his education programme. His travelling preachers built up the societies, their saddlebags stuffed with books. The interpretation of the past in educational programmes that shares the story in its contemporary context helps equip the saints for ministry and mission today.

2.7.1.3 **Service**, too, is integral to a Methodist understanding of the Christian faith. Learning, caring and service are activities of a historic denomination operating in contemporary society: they are heritage in action. Heritage sites need not therefore be regarded merely as museums but places of encounter for and service to the wider community.

2.7.1.4 The character of **evangelism** can be understood in a narrow way. But our heritage can speak most powerfully of what we are about. Sometimes it is more articulate than feeble humanity. The power of place and of the past can be the power of the living God. Where are the finger-holds? Where are the nooks and crannies where those who may have no notion of religion can interact with the body of Christ? Where do we meet them? In the context of heritage, three of the key points are *family history*, *spirituality* and *architecture*. How do we deal with them? Might not discovery about great-grandfather's faith lead to questions about who am I? Looking at beauty articulated through architecture in its simplicity and in its grandeur can bring grace to the human soul in a place where souls can be nourished of those who come as visitors and leave as pilgrims. We need to engage with the contemporary interest in spirituality, re-appropriating the gifts we have to offer here.

2.7.2 The challenge that Methodist Heritage presents is to discover through our historic sites and museums, our stories and artefacts, our people and places, new ways of being Church, where Christ is made known in fresh expressions of mission embodied in story and place connected through modern methods to contemporary society.

2.7.3 For many this will be a life-transforming experience as we re-discover what it means to be Methodist for today, to 'revisit and re-envision what it means to be the People called Methodist' (Atkins). Telling the story and using the resources of the past is a charism, which speaks directly to our cultural context in a powerful way in what can be described as an *engaging evangelicalism* rather than a mere antiquarianism. Heritage is a tool for delivering one of the *Priorities* in helping us return to the founding charisms of Methodism.

2.7.4 The power inherent in historic places is primarily vested in people: people of the past, the present and the future: the people who have invested their lives in witnessing in those places; the hundreds of volunteers who act as heritage guides today to tell the story for the present generation and provide a welcome to strangers in spaces made holy by their place in the salvation history of the people of God; those who will follow them take up the mantle of our Methodist expression of mission. Our calling is to be the people of the love of God in our generation. Heritage can and should be a tool for that, in evangelism and in social action. In such a way, the Church can fulfil the tasks to which it is called:

- the prophetic task of speaking to our society in a critical way, taking no power or privileges;
- the evangelistic task of being a visible witness to society and offering a place of welcome and communication of a different dimension, through the web and in the media;
- the servant task of being a place for society to find a different quality of life and the spiritual dimension of who we are using our church premises for sacred and secular purposes.

2.8 Methodist Identity or Identities: the patchwork of people and places

2.8.1 The choice we make of which of our buildings to conserve and make use of in the mission we share with God, through the people whose stories we choose to celebrate, will shape the identity or identities of modern Methodism, itself diverse and pluralistic despite the attempts

of twentieth century Methodists to cohere around a united Church. Methodist Union of 1932 only makes sense if we own and celebrate the three (or more) strands of Methodism that came together (and others which did not). The Connexional principle cannot be allowed to reduce Methodism to its lowest common denominator in the interests of unity and uniformity whilst remaining true to the spirit of a system that fiercely resisted congregationalism from the beginning.

2.8.2 We have seen that Aldersgate has acted as the hermeneutical key for the larger historical experience, particular events and experiences that point to what it means to be Methodist. In this, the way in which the Methodist Church engages in mission is crucial as a former of identity. Our story becomes the story of how we have been saved and are being saved and from what and for what we are being saved. The participation in salvation history invites us to share our experiences and our service with the community. Our buildings and our stories are both problems and opportunities. Stories too when imbued with the hagiographical triumphalism of a past age which saw the expansion of Methodism worldwide as a vehicle for an enlightened and benevolent colonialism are recipes for the distortion of the true marks of church as pilgrim people moving on in hope rather than setting up temples for some static expression of the gospel.

2.9 The value of Methodist Heritage

2.9.1 So what value should we place on Methodist Heritage in the context of a Church seeking to manage, fund and maintain a wide range of responsibilities, initiatives and activities in order to fulfil its mission? In such circumstances, the need to spend money and effort in attending to our ageing stock of buildings might seem just one task too many. And why bother with the story of a Methodism whose story of revival and growth seems strangely out of fashion, along with the heroics of the Wesleys, their preachers and missionaries?

2.9.2 But remembering and the value of heritage to the faith journey is a deeply rooted Biblical principle, which John Wesley endorsed. The Old Testament writers remembered who they were to help shape their identity and discern their vocation at times of testing. Defining our identity continues to be a prime motivator in maintaining our heritage.

2.9.3 In his sermon, 'The General Spread of the Gospel', John Wesley asserted: 'As God is one, so the work of God is uniform in all ages. May we not then conceive how he *will* work on the souls of men in times to come by considering how he *does* work now? And how he *has* wrought in times past?' Re-telling the story of the early and later Methodists' personal piety and social witness helps to re-envision these for today, making our memories uncomfortable and even dangerous. They can stimulate again the Methodist movement for evangelization and transformation of individuals and society today.

2.9.4 We must retain a 'charismatic' memory that stands at the centre of our church life and gives us patterns of meaning and identity. It has been observed that without memory we become imprisoned in an absolute present. This challenges the Church to take up this interpretative task of letting the past speak to the present, educating us and enabling us to speak with our own voice in our own distinctive way.

2.10 **References and Selected Bibliography for 'A theological rationale for Methodist heritage'**

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| Atkins, M. | <i>Resourcing renewal: shaping churches for the emerging future</i> , 2007 |
| Bosch, D. | <i>Witness to the World: the Christian Mission in theological perspective</i> , 1980 |
| Bosch, D. | <i>Transforming Mission: Paradigm shifts in Theology</i> , 1992 |
| English Heritage | <i>Power of Place</i> report, 2000 |
| Irvin, D. | <i>Christian Histories, Christian Traditions: Rendering Accounts</i> , 1998 |

RESOLUTION

1. The Conference approves the theology of Heritage and Mission presented by the Methodist Heritage Committee.

3 Reviewing the Committees – a proposal for the structural organisation of Methodist Heritage

3.1 Consultation with the Archives & History Committee, as directed by the Methodist Council in April 2009 and in the context of the ongoing Review of Committees, and which has involved the Secretary for Internal Relationships, has resulted in the following proposals for the restructure of governance and management of the Church's heritage.

3.2 It is proposed that from the beginning of Connexional year 2010/11, the Archives & History Committee will cease to exist as a separate body, requiring changes to all relevant Standing Orders. The Chair and members of the Methodist Heritage Committee wish to thank the Chair and members (past and present) of the Archives & History Committee, on behalf of all those across the Connexion with interests in the history, archives (modern and historic records) and heritage of the Methodist Church, for their concern, and detailed and considered work, over many years, and to express the hope that many of them will be willing to accept new roles within the revised structures now being proposed to the continued benefit of the Connexion and the mission of the Methodist Church.

3.2.1 It is proposed that key skills and activities previously vested with the Archives & History Committee are integrated into the remit of the Methodist Heritage Committee with appropriate revisions to Terms of Reference to amend the membership composition and, acknowledging the importance and extent of records management across the Connexion, by convening a new sub-committee focused on the care and promotion of the Church's historic archives and its management of modern records: a Records Practitioners' Forum.

3.4 A key concern about the Methodist Heritage Committee giving strategic oversight to all Methodist historical work was the emphasis in the Shadow Committee's membership on the trustees of the heritage sites. The reshaping of the Methodist Heritage Committee, already undertaken under the existing Terms of Reference and those proposed here, to include individuals with appropriate skills in archiving and with historical expertise, is recognised by the Archives & History Committee to have done much to address their previous concerns.

3.5 In order that the Methodist Heritage Committee is equipped to make strategic decisions about the Church's entire heritage, the portfolio of skills offered by the Committee's members has been augmented with expertise hitherto found in the Archives & History Committee through additions to the membership of the Methodist Heritage Committee in line with the Terms of Reference for the Committee approved by Council in April 2009.

3.6 To allow additional skills to be incorporated within the Committee, it is proposed that the maximum number of members of the Methodist Heritage Committee be increased in the Terms of Reference to 13.

3.7 As the Methodist Church remains committed to the faithful and meticulous recording of its decision-making and activities, it is proposed to amend the Terms of Reference to require archiving expertise in particular and it is proposed that the 'Connexional Archives Liaison Officer' be invited *ex officio* to join the Methodist Heritage Committee to provide skills and professional, impartial advice on record management and archiving matters. This is an important, voluntary role, noted in Standing Orders and currently linking the Connexional depositories at the School of Oriental &

African Studies of the University of London and at the Methodist Archives & Research Centre at the John Rylands University Library of Manchester, to the Connexional Team's officers with relevant responsibilities for modern and historic records and to the Archives & History Committee, District Archivists (see SO 015/1) (and Circuit Archivists, where appointed, and/or Circuit Administrators), County Records Offices and wider Connexional libraries and archives (for example, within the Methodist training institutions and historic sites). It is proposed to re-title the role as Methodist Archives Liaison Officer, to indicate a role much broader than just the 'Connexional archives' held at the John Rylands Library.

NB Supportive advice is offered via the Methodist Heritage website by the Connexional Archives Liaison Officer to those researching their family tree. The new Methodist Heritage website to be developed during 2010 will present enhanced information on this subject. However, without a permanent Connexional Team Archivist it is impossible for the Methodist Heritage Committee, even with the support of a Methodist/Connexional Archives Liaison Officer, to commit to offering any greater help to individuals undertaking this fascinating, but incredibly time-consuming, research.

3.8 During the discussions concerning amalgamating the skills of the two Committees, it has been agreed to request a further change to the Terms of Reference so that the Connexional Team member on the Methodist Heritage Committee should be the Team Secretary presently sitting on the Archives & History Committee, or his/her delegate (rather than the Director of Communications & Campaigns as at present). The heritage of the Church underpins every area of Church activity and this work would benefit from the overview and wide promotion that a Team Secretary provides.

3.9 The members of the Methodist Heritage Committee for 2010/11 proposed for appointment by the Council are:

- **Chair: The Revd The Lord Griffiths of Burry Port**, Superintendent Minister of Wesley's Chapel, City Road, London
- Trustee representative of The New Room and SW sites: **Mr Gary Best**, also Warden of The New Room and previously Headmaster of Kingswood School, Bath
- Trustee representative of Wesley's Chapel and SE sites: **Revd Jennifer Potter**, also Minister of Wesley's Chapel
- Trustee representative of The Old Rectory, Epworth, and NE sites: **Revd David Leese**
- Trustee representative of Englesea Brook Chapel & Museum of Primitive Methodism and NW sites: **Mr John Bell**, previously VP of the Conference
- **Revd Dr Stephen Hatcher** –independent member: Chair of the Heritage Forum representing the smaller sites and offering extensive experience of developing a Methodist heritage site, particularly for educational use
- **Mr J Keith Cheetham** – independent member, and tourism adviser
- **Dr Deborah Gaitskell** – World Church history
- **Revd Dr Tim Macquiban** – Methodist history and theology
- **Revd Dr Martin Wellings** – Secretary of the World Methodist Historical Society (British Section) and currently Chair of the Archives & History Committee
- **Methodist/Connexional Archives Liaison Officer** – archiving (to be recruited, post vacant from September 2010)
- **Connexional Team: Team Secretary** for Internal Relationships, Revd Dr Mark Wakelin

NB The Methodist Heritage Officer is the convener but not a member of the Committee, being a member of the Connexional Team, and administrative support is also provided from within the Team.

3.10 The Methodist Heritage Committee is pleased to acknowledge also the presence as an occasional observer at its meetings of Revd Dr Robert J Williams, General Secretary of the General Commission on Archives & History for the United Methodist Church.

RESOLUTION

2. The Council approves amendments to the Terms of Reference of the Methodist Heritage Committee to:

- appoint the Methodist/Connexional Archives Liaison Officer to the Committee *ex officio* and to broaden the skills required of the Committee to include Methodist historical research
- increase its maximum membership to 13
- designate a Team Secretary (or his/her delegate) as the Connexional Team representative

3. The Council appoints the Methodist Heritage Committee members proposed.

3.11 The Archives & History Committee has operated recently with three 'Task Groups': (i) Connexional Records, (ii) Local Archives & Oral History, and (iii) Sites & Museums. It is proposed that from the start of Connexional year 2010/11 the functions of these groups will be managed as follows.

3.11.1 The work of the Sites & Museums Task Group was transferred largely to the Methodist Heritage Officer's job description in 2008/9 (for example, convening a 'Methodist Heritage Forum' and editing the *Methodist Heritage Guide/Handbook* – see paras 1.3.6–1.3.9) or to the Heritage Committee and Grant Stream (i.e., considering applications and making grants towards heritage conservation and mission – see section 4.2). The Methodist Heritage Committee wishes to thank the members of this Task Group for their service and immense support of the heritage sites in past years.

3.11.2 The need for a network of heritage experts to support the Heritage Committee and Grants Stream, and the Connexional Team, particularly in relation to matters of conservation (for example, of paintings, stained glass and ceramics) and to give curatorial (and potentially acquisition) advice is fully recognised. Acknowledging and wishing fervently to retain the expertise of former members of the Sites & Museums Task Group for the benefit of the Connexion, it is proposed to convene with them and others a **Conservation Experts Network**.

3.11.3 The Methodist Heritage Forum, chaired by The Revd Dr Stephen Hatcher, invites annually any and all of those involved with Methodist Heritage sites to meet together to share news, plans and aspirations. In line with the nomenclature proposed by the Review of Committees, this group will be re-named the **Methodist Heritage Sites' Network**, and consultation will be undertaken with the membership and new contacts recently established for the smaller sites to determine how the value of this meeting might be enhanced.

3.11.4 From September 2010, it is proposed to publish a bi-annual *Methodist Heritage Newsletter*, which will be made available online, via email, or post where necessary, to encourage more regular communication among all those worldwide with an interest in Methodist Heritage, but particularly across the members of the *Heritage Sites' Network*.

3.11.5 In order to improve the segue between modern record management and historic archiving, and to strengthen the relationships and accountability between the two main Connexional depositories and the Connexional Team and the management of records across the Connexion, it is proposed that the Methodist Heritage Committee convene a **Records**

Practitioners' Forum, which will replace in relation to their archive-related work the Connexional Records and Local Archives & Oral History Task Groups.

3.11.6 The membership of the *Records Practitioners' Forum* will include relevant Connexional Team members (i.e., currently the Heritage Officer, Administration & IT Co-ordinator and World Church Relationships Team Leader), the Methodist/Connexional Archives Liaison Officer, at least one other member of the Methodist Heritage Committee, and two or more co-opted individuals with skills and experience in the use and/or management of archives.

3.11.7 It is proposed that the Methodist Heritage Committee becomes the body delegated by the Council to review, evaluate and recommend the programme of work to be undertaken by the Connexional depositories under the terms of the Church's Service Level Agreements with them (in development), which will be kept under review, and which will be the concern of the Records Practitioners' Forum. Also key to this group's role will be the promotion of engagement with the archive collections and research based upon them, in collaboration with the relevant institutions. The group will seek to make the Connexional Team, heritage sites and churches aware of the records held and their value for mission. The Records Practitioners' Forum will support the District Archivists (and Circuit Archivists where appointed and/or Circuit Administrators acting as archivists), tasked with conserving local historic records and keeping today's District records safe. This broader group will be named the ***Methodist Archivists' Network***.

3.11.8 Modern Records Management will continue to be supported from the Connexional Team's Support Services Cluster to ensure consistent advice and support.

3.11.9 The relationship between the Church's records and historical research, ranging from academic theses to searches for family ancestry, is mutually vital and thus was the second area of responsibility for the Connexional Records and Local Archives & Oral History Task Groups.

3.11.10 A review of the projects around the Church's history, some of them particularly long-standing, will be undertaken by a Methodist Heritage Committee resource group, to determine how they may be best supported and promoted in future and how new historical research may be encouraged.

3.11.11 The Archives & History Committee has a constitutional relationship to the World Methodist Historical Society (WMHS), and has a long-standing inter-relationship with the Wesley Historical Society. The Archives & History Committee is also the Committee of the WMHS British Section: the Chair of the Archives & History Committee is WMHS British Secretary (the incumbent also currently being WMHS President).

3.11.12 Going forward, it is the intention of the Methodist Heritage Committee to recognise and foster these relationships, as well as encouraging wider use and promotion of the Connexional archives through high quality academic research into the Church's history. The Terms of Reference for the Methodist Heritage Committee already allow for a member of the Archives & History Committee and so, initially, it is proposed that this relationship with interests in the Church's history be facilitated by inviting on to the Methodist Heritage Committee from the beginning of the 2010/11 Connexional year, the current Chair of the Archives & History Committee who is also Secretary of the WMHS (British Section).

3.11.13 Changes to the following Standing Orders are required to reflect the structural amendments proposed. Proposed new and amended Standing Orders will be presented to the Conference according to the organizational changes approved by the Council:

SO 015 Archives (1A)

SO 212 Particular functions [of the Methodist Council] (11)

SO 337 Archives and History

SO 473 Archives

SO 936 Historic Artefacts

RESOLUTION

4 (i) The Council approves the Methodist Heritage Committee's recommendations for the restructure of relevant groups and responsibilities (including the transfer of delegated responsibility for the oversight of the relationship with the John Rylands University Library of Manchester and the Library of the School of Oriental and African Studies of the University of London) to the Methodist Heritage Committee, to ensure continued Connexional oversight of the Church's historic records and support for its modern record management (in conjunction with the Connexional Team).

(ii) The Council directs the Methodist Heritage Committee to prepare (with collaboration and prior scrutiny of the Law & Polity Committee) final revisions to relevant changes to Standing Orders for presentation to the 2010 Conference.

4 Heritage finance – fund-raising and grant-making

4.1 Developing financial stability

4.1.1 While recognising the potential value of the Church's heritage resources as mission tools, the 2008 Conference paper 'Methodist Heritage & Contemporary Mission' also identified this potential as unrealised, and recognised Methodism's heritage as under-resourced and under-performing. The Strategy & Resources Committee of the Methodist Council had acknowledged previously concerns and commissioned research to explore the financial instability of the Methodist Church's key heritage sites. This research informed and supported the need for urgent intervention as proposed to Conference in the 2008 paper and approved by them, with an initial commitment of funding for the Methodist Heritage Officer, central co-ordination and promotional works and grants to the heritage sites according to demonstrable need.

4.1.2 The 2008 Conference paper highlighted among its recommended guiding principles (at section 5.3) the need for a co-ordinated approach which enables sites to operate more co-operatively within the Connexion, and the need for structured financial support for sites in difficulty, which avoids the sites becoming competitors with each other.

4.1.3 At their October 2009 meeting, the Methodist Heritage Committee's trustee members representing the four key sites agreed to share their financial data and funding strategies. Subsequently, representatives of the four major sites met to share and compare their income and expenditure patterns. This analysis revealed considerable variation in both, and that at each site the annual surplus/deficit can vary considerably, thus contributing to anxiety over cash flow. Success in acquiring one-off grants is intermittent and, in such old buildings, costs of repairs and maintenance may fluctuate year on year. The annual accounts also contained income and expenditure on special one-off projects.

4.1.4 The draft Heritage budget for 2010/11 aims: to build on the initial strategic work carried out on promotion and also seek to develop work that would support the key sites to

improve their income streams for themselves (for example, through improvements to their retail offer) and help them to access external sources of additional funding, where possible.

4.1.5 The Methodist Heritage Committee considered there should be four elements to the 2010/11 budget:

- improving the financial sustainability of key heritage sites through core funding
- maintaining the role and capacity of the Heritage Officer
- investing in the heritage sites to support the increase in their visitor income through improvements to retail, new interpretation materials, and training programmes to help skill volunteers (from the heritage sites and listed Methodist churches across the Connexion) to tell the story of Methodism and present the Christian Gospel, as well as continuing with central promotion via the *Methodist Heritage Handbook* and development of the website
- providing a modest grant fund to which the trustees of individual Methodist heritage sites, collections or archives may bid competitively to support specific development, interpretation or conservation projects (see SO 212/11).

4.1.6 While the four key sites receive income from admission (entry charges [Old Rectory only], fees for tours or visitor donations) and via their retail outlets, all are dependent annually on fundraising and/or securing Circuit, District or Connexional grants to cover their operating costs, as well as funding development work from Church or secular grants. Moreover, these are all fixed term grants, or annually renewable, and therefore do not provide long-term secure funding to cover basic operational costs. In common with Government-funded museums and galleries, their self-generated income is neither sufficient nor the cash flow consistent enough to meet their needs. Short of presenting full and comparable summaries of each site's accounts for recent years (three use the Methodist year and one the calendar year for accounting), it is difficult to convey the diverse nature of the financial challenges each faces. Suffice to say that (i) at Epworth Old Rectory, a serious shortfall was avoided in 2008 by the receipt of the Methodist Heritage Committee's grant of £25,000; (ii) at Englesea Brook, the five-year grants from Connexional and District funds (average of £26,000 per year) both expire at the end of August 2011; (iii) the Wesley's Chapel church/Circuit funds subsidise the Museum by £20,000 per year, without which its financial base would collapse, and (iv) at the New Room in Bristol, essential District grants of £10,000 cease in August 2010. Moreover, Wesley's Chapel currently cannot afford to employ an urgently needed curator for the House and Museum.

4.1.7 In order to survive, the four key sites are all immensely well supported by volunteers, as well as their paid staff, who work tirelessly to generate income from many sources other than grants, retail and visitors. All receive direct, personal donations, though of widely different magnitudes; two have property that brings in some letting income; Bristol New Room benefits from coffee morning income and Englesea Brook organises book sales that net around £6,000 per year.

4.1.8 The table below summarises the percentage income deriving from retail (net of costs) and visitors at each site in 2008/9. The table shows considerable variation (between 15% and 40% at the four sites) since the retail opportunities and policy for encouraging visitor donations differ between the sites. The income from other general donations is also shown and it varies widely too. Three sites generate about 40% of income from these sources, whereas Englesea Brook makes just under half of that.

	Epworth Old Rectory	Bristol New Room	Wesley's Chapel, House & Museum	Englesea Brook & Chapel Museum
Listing	Grade I	Grade I	Grade I	Grade II
Visitors per year	3,000	23,000	10,200	5,000 ¹
% income ² from retail	3.2%	10.3%	21.0%	12.2%
% income from visitors ³	16.7%	5.8%	17.8%	3.4%
% income from general donations	22.3%	21.2%	2.2%	3.4%

Notes:

- (1) This excludes school groups (those visiting and those encountered through outreach by museum staff to schools), and those attending Heritage Services.
- (2) Total Income excludes the £25,000 received by each site in 2008/9 from the Heritage Committee
- (3) Best estimates of visitor charges and donations, as opposed to general donations which are shown in the next line

4.1.9 In *Museums and Galleries in Britain: Economic, Social and Creative Impacts* (2006), figures presented by Tony Travers (London School of Economics) suggested that it was difficult for museums and galleries to rely on donations and sponsorship as a continuous and predictable income source and that it would not be possible to rely on them for much more than 10–15% of museum income. He found that these institutions were earning a 'solid' income from trading services, averaging a contribution of around 10% of gross income, and that this represented a rise of over 100% between 1997–8 and 2005–6 as many museum or gallery coffee shops and restaurants had become elegant and attractive features that, because of their association with culture, are able to offer an alternative to more traditional locations. However, he made the point that it was 'important to state that museums and galleries also exist for rather different purposes than running catering and other trading facilities'. That caution has been echoed by the Public and Commercial Services Union, which said that one feature of the impact of inadequate Government funding to the museum sector 'is that in developing an income stream, space has been taken from exhibiting to give yet more space for retail or catering functions.'

4.1.10 While the Methodist Heritage Committee wishes to support the development of retail opportunities (which is, therefore, included in the 2010/11 budget proposals) and catering at the key Methodist heritage sites to increase their revenue earning, it is clear from the national experience, that this income will be insufficient alone to maintain our heritage sites, and over concentration on trading activities may distract them from mission-focused interpretation and delivering the message and ministry that is intended.

4.1.11 Grant funds are usually available to heritage sites from outside bodies for capital 'projects', though church heritage projects may struggle to make successful applications if they are perceived in any way to be promoting faith. Some funders will support the associated revenue costs of a project (such as a project manager), but in either case this is usually money for some new work that also furthers the aims of the grant-giving body such as increased access to culture for a particular group of society. Charitable trusts rarely make grants for the routine operating costs of the applicant organisation. Indeed, the applicant's financial stability is often a pre-requisite of application, and notably will be specifically investigated in future Connexional Grant Committee processes.

4.1.12 All four key Methodist heritage sites are exploring major and innovative improvement projects requiring separate fundraising. For example, 'Greening the Broadmead' is a project to create a green oasis in the courtyard of the New Room in the middle of Bristol's recently-built multimillion pound Broadmead shopping development. The Old Rectory at Epworth are seeking planning permission, with a view securing significant financial commitment to the build from the Heritage Lottery Fund, for a new visitors' centre and intend to restore the presentation of the house to c.1716.

4.1.13 Absolutely vital to the key Methodist Heritage sites' appropriate curatorial management and improvement in promotion and interpretation – and most critically to becoming and retaining MLA 'accredited museum' status – is the employment of a professional manager. Each site incurs routine administrative and travel costs for their manager, volunteer trustees and stewards, and each site has essential maintenance costs to keep the building open (particularly relating to insurances), presentable and safe (such as servicing heating systems and making running repairs), as well as a rolling programme of bigger works. Ideally, each site should also be maintaining a reserve to meet unforeseen major repair costs.

4.1.14 Connexional grant funds have tended to be seen by the heritage sites as a way of 'topping up' income and 'covering the deficit'. This is a 'church' model and not how other heritage 'parent' bodies relate to their satellite museum organisations, for example regional museums to Government.

4.1.15 The Methodist Heritage Committee proposes that a consequence of the Conference taking a positive and mission-focused view of Methodist heritage in general and the four key heritage sites in particular should be to commit to annual essential operational funds being approved for five years for the key heritage sites (in addition and separately to the Connexional Team budget for the employment of the Heritage Officer and the centrally delivered promotion and development of the heritage offer and other support across the Connexion for archiving and historical research overseen by the Heritage Committee).

4.1.16 This would ensure a firm financial foundation upon which to grow these centres of Methodist heritage and mission, with an expectation of continual monitoring and a detailed review of progress beginning in Year 3. These funds should support the costs identified at 4.1.13, amounting to approximately £50,000 per site (or £200,000 in total) per year.

4.1.17 The Methodist Heritage Committee recognises that this is a substantial proposal in the current economic climate, but emphasises the vital need for each site to receive significant support at least towards its essential operating costs, ie the greater proportion of the funding needed for a site manager/curator or at least £25,000 per year per site.

4.1.18 The Methodist Heritage Committee and managing trustees of the four key sites fully accept that the Council and Conference will wish to confirm sound business planning and management of these funds at each site and accept the need to submit to and report against both qualitative and quantitative measures of performance in response (for example, increases in visitor numbers and encouragement to repeat visits, greater volunteer participation and stronger income generation and reports of improved management practises).

4.1.19 Freed from the concern and responsibility of fundraising for survival, these properties will be in a position to concentrate energy and resources on developing their mission through improved visitor services, interpretation, events (such as imaginative tours,

retreats and heritage services) and educational programmes; on increasing audiences, for example by making appropriate links regionally to increase profile and exploit the available marketing opportunities (often free or at little cost to partners in appropriate tourism partnerships, for example); and by focusing making grant applications and leading fund-raising initiatives for development and improvement. These 'projects' may be appropriate for consideration by authorities for Circuit and District or local and regional secular grant funders.

4.1.20 This is a change from the 'church model' of funding, building up from locally-raised funds:

'Top up' Circuit/District/Connexional grants – applied for competitively
Secular 'project' funds, e.g., from HLF
Site fundraising
Site income

To:

Project grants – secular and Church sources (regional then Connexional) competitively acquired
Site fundraising
Site income
Local grants, e.g., District support for property considered as a District resource
Essential ministry operation Connexional funding – equitably distributed with agreed indicators of performance

4.1.21 Need has required the Methodist Heritage Committee to seek financial support for the operation of three of the four key sites in 2010/11, ahead of presenting this request for essential and on going funding to be considered by the Council and Conference. For these three key sites, this is emergency aid while agreeing a longer-term plan for their future financial security through Conference. They are also all agreed that securing (or in the case of Wesley's House and Museum, recruiting) a curator is their highest priority, and are very concerned about the implications of not being able to do so; specifically, their ability to gain (in the case of Wesley's Chapel) and retain 'Accredited' status. As a national standard, this has become a benchmark for funding bodies. So as well as putting the ability of our sites to function in jeopardy, it will critically affect their opportunities to bid for external funds in the future.

4.1.22 The Methodist Heritage Committee is grateful that a request for £80,000 for grants in 2010/11 is being considered as part of the Heritage budget (i.e., £25,000 for each of the three Wesleyan key sites to secure the salary of their manager/curator and £5,000 for urgent conservation grants). (Englesea Brook is currently in receipt of District and Connexional funding that will cover this need for one more year.)

4.1.23 However, in order to achieve the vision for the key sites, long term financial stability is paramount, and the issue of securing operational funding (at the level outlined in paragraph 4.1.16, or at least 4.1.17) from September 2011 remains to be addressed. The Methodist Heritage Committee requests guidance on the means by which it may realistically present such a proposal to Council and Conference during the next year, bearing in mind the Conference's earlier decisions committing to mission through heritage and also the financial pressures currently being felt by the whole Church.

RESOLUTION

5. The Council notes the request in paragraph 4.1.23 regarding long term funding and will seek to respond to the Methodist Heritage Committee as soon as is practical.

4.2 Heritage grant-making – a draft remit for the Heritage Grants Stream

4.2.1 In 2009/10, there was a transition period where the Methodist Heritage Committee acted initially as the Heritage Grants Stream to consider grant applications, but this role and the relevant Connexional Team budget was passed over to the Connexional Grants Committee as soon as the members of the Heritage Grants Stream were recruited. The Methodist Heritage Committee's recommendations were taken into consideration when the applications were considered and the grants awarded by the Heritage Grants Stream/Mission in Britain Sub-Committee.

4.2.2 Since the Methodist Heritage Committee was still very new in September 2009 and the news about the new grant money was still being communicated across the sites, it was agreed that any unspent Heritage budget from 2008/09 could, for one year only, be rolled forward and added to the Connexional Team budget allocation for Connexional Heritage & Mission Grants in 2009/10. Any grant money not allocated for grants by the end of this Connexional year will not be rolled forward again. Further applications are being encouraged to the Heritage Grant Stream to be considered in 2009/10.

4.2.3 From 2010/11, applications for 'Heritage & Mission' grants will be made to the Connexional Grants Committee and considered by the Heritage Grant Stream/Mission in Britain Sub-Committee/Connexional Grants Committee, depending on the level of funding being sought. The Methodist Heritage Committee will be asked to consider and make recommendations concerning the applications, but will not make decisions on the awards. It is understood by the Methodist Heritage Committee that, as well as any funds allocated in and designated to Heritage grants in the Connexional Team budget and/or held by the CGC that are designated/restricted for Heritage, a proportion of the MiB General Fund will be allocated annually, assuming there are funds available, by the Methodist Council to the six Grant Streams, including for Heritage applications.

4.2.4 As agreed by the Conference in 2009, the Methodist Heritage Committee has developed in collaboration with the Connexional Grants Committee (CGC) and Transitional Grants Officer criteria for grant-making (which will be presented to the Council and Conference by the CGC, whose report can be found elsewhere in the agenda of this Council) and also a remit for the

Stream, outlining its preferred approach to the distribution of 'Heritage & Mission' grants (see Appendix 1). In the future and as agreed by Conference in 2009, the Methodist Heritage Committee may annually propose to the Heritage Grant Stream in addition a particular theme or priority to its grant-making, in order to support the implementation of heritage policies and developments across the Connexion, eg to support access for disabled people to Methodist Heritage.

RESOLUTION

6. The Council approves the Methodist Heritage Committee's remit for the Heritage Grants Stream as set out in Appendix 1.

4.3 Future fundraising for 'Heritage & Mission'

4.3.1 The designation of the Methodist Church's Funds limit their application to historic properties of Connexional significance – particularly if they are also not flourishing chapels, engaged in a local ministry that is immediately recognisable as nurturing a community and congregation. The designation criteria of only two of the Church's Funds allow for grant making to Heritage currently (Epworth and CPF annual budgets, once the ring-fenced part is spent). In a competitive bidding arena and without any Connexional recognition of the value of the Church's heritage alongside other mission opportunities, it is unsurprising that heritage has not been a regular recipient of Connexional grants in the past.

4.3.2 In relation to financial matters, the Methodist Heritage Officer was tasked initially with supporting the sites to realise their own potential through encouraging best practice in individual fundraising, and, with the Methodist Heritage Committee, to assist sites with applications for grants. In addition, the 2010/11 Heritage budget includes a moderate request for money (for which matched sponsorship will be sought) to be 'invested' in developing the retail offer of the sites, eg for improved stock and merchandising, to support their own income generation.

4.3.3 However, it is now recognised that a *central* strategy for 'Heritage & Mission' fundraising is also needed and will be developed by the Methodist Heritage Officer and Methodist Heritage Committee, especially the representative members from the four key heritage sites, with Connexional Team colleagues from the Finance, Fundraising and Grants teams during 2010/11.

4.3.4 The development of a Fundraising Strategy for the Methodist Church by the Fundraising Co-ordinator (whose report can be found elsewhere in the agenda of this Council) offers the Methodist Heritage Committee a welcome opportunity to establish, in partnership with the Fundraising Co-ordinator, the processes and procedures necessary to raise funds for Heritage & Mission grants, to supplement those allocated through the Connexional Team budget or from otherwise designated Funds. A 'Methodist Heritage Fund' has been designated within the Mission in Britain funds, to be distributed by the Heritage Grant Stream in response to suitably mission-focused Methodist heritage grant applications (where heritage may include, for example, historic sites, artefacts or archives, appropriate special events and exhibitions, or research into the Church's history).

4.3.5 It is anticipated that this Fund may attract donations from a wider constituency than the Methodist Church, where 'heritage' rather than 'mission' may be the motivator to contribute. Donations are being encouraged initially via an appeal in the new *Methodist Heritage Handbook* and a 'Just Giving' link has been created for the Methodist Heritage website to allow online giving. In justification of this Fund, we are delighted, and very grateful to the donors, to be able to bring to the Council's attention unsolicited donations that were received while the fund was being set up: a Circuit service collection and from the UMC's General Commission on Archives & History,

recognising that making a donation to this fund for centralised distribution is a fairer way to support British Methodist heritage.

APPENDIX 1

Methodist Heritage Committee's Proposed Grant-making Remit for Heritage Grants Stream

1. What is Methodist Heritage?

1.1. Methodist heritage is more than Methodist history; it is the sum of all the Church's past that makes Methodists what they are today and will become tomorrow. It helps the Methodist Church to define its identity and articulate and justify its beliefs, values and culture. For the Methodist Church in Great Britain today, the purposes of the Church are summarized in *Our Calling to*:

- Worship
- Learn & care
- Serve
- Evangelise

1.2. Methodist heritage shows how, and explains why, John Wesley encouraged the early people called Methodists to gather into societies, initially in fields, halls and at hearth-sides, to worship God and listen to itinerant preachers expound the Word of God. It encapsulates creed and tradition in song, and reflects a very deep human need for 'relics' through artefacts, paintings and ceramic memorabilia. It records through journals, plans and photographs how Methodists have served and continue to serve through social justice, including in prison reform, the abolition of slavery and in establishing unions, and how they have sought to educate through Day and Sunday Schools and church Class Meetings and overseas missions. And, through the building of chapels and churches, Methodists have made tangible and permanent their desire to promote Jesus Christ's Gospel of salvation and service within their communities.

2. Why does the Methodist Church fund 'Heritage & Mission' projects?

2.1. All this change, insight and activity has been recorded, celebrated and handed down to this present time through letters, journals and publications, buildings, pictures and ceramic 'Wesleyana' etc, resulting in a rich and varied archive, in collections of artefacts and in historic sites. However, for the Christian church, the value of heritage lies in its relevance to the commission of Jesus Christ to make disciples (Matthew 28: 18-19).

2.2. In 2008, the Methodist Church Conference approved the convening of a Methodist Heritage Committee and appointment of a Methodist Heritage Officer. Their role was to develop and implement strategies for the conservation of Methodism's heritage and to support innovative ways of developing wider awareness of, and increased footfall to, the Methodist Church's historic sites and collections. However, this was always to be achieved with the intention of seeking to present the Gospel message as a result, helping people to become and be disciples of Jesus. The Committee was described in the 2008 Conference paper *Methodist Heritage and Contemporary Mission* (Para 5.4) as: 'one body... [with] the Church's responsibility both for preserving its heritage and for using it for mission.'

2.3. The New Testament Gospel writer, St John, says of his own writing, in the middle of recounting the appearances of Jesus after his resurrection:

³⁰ Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book.

³¹ But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

John 20: 30-31 (NIV)

2.4. St John had not set down the story of Jesus' life and miracles, death and resurrection, simply as an historical record, but so that it might inspire others to embrace the beliefs in which he has come to trust and so be saved. If the conservation of Methodist records, publications, artefacts or property cannot be justified by, and used in the future for, relevant and contemporary mission, then the Church's financial support through the Heritage Grants Stream may not be appropriate.

2.5. In applying for a heritage grant from the Methodist Church, applicants must commit to more than preservation according to the best possible modern museum curatorial practice, although this is also a requirement. However unique and intrinsically valuable an object may be or how big an audience a promotional event may draw, the Heritage Grants Stream, in order to approve any grant, must be satisfied from the application how conserving this object or staging this event, will allow it to tell its story and support the mission of the Church:

- What past time or activity does it tell us about and in what ways may that resonate with us today?
- How will that story be told and how will the widest possible audience be ensured, particularly beyond the regular church community?
- Have 'hard to reach' audiences and engaging the interest of a range of cultures and faiths been considered? (Many visitors from overseas, for example groups from churches in Asia, Africa or the US, have more knowledge of Methodist history and missionary zeal than our local communities, and families with roots abroad may also have links and interest in ancestors from Britain or missions overseas.)
- Does the grant application incorporate plans (including for additional funding) to promote and educate others, especially young people, about Methodism and Methodist heritage?
- In what ways do you believe that this project will further mission in the Church?

2.6. Size and intrinsic financial value are not necessarily the key factors in determining what will be considered for funding: Methodist heritage sites, for example, range from a plaque at the foot of a tree to an historic house and all its contents. The concept of 'Connexional significance' is important, however, to what can be funded and why. The spending of limited Connexional financial resources will necessitate prioritising the items to be conserved. This may involve extremely difficult decisions, which will need to take into account historic significance, the cost of conservation and audience appeal/mission value.

2.7. It is acknowledged, and expected, that the value of something to the mission of the Church and what was or are considered 'contemporary issues' changes. The Heritage Grants Stream should be mindful that, as a result, acquisition and conservation policies shift. It may be that we would not make a certain collection today, but its content was considered worthwhile or of interest in the past (which may be relatively recent as the pace of change increases) and so the Heritage Grants Stream should not dismiss continuing to preserve it today – that change of emphasis is interesting in itself. Likewise, the Stream should recognise that while social inclusion, community cohesion and interfaith issues or the demands of the National Curriculum for schools, for example, could be significant drivers to Methodist heritage conservation policies today, they may not be so pre-eminent in the future.

3. **Linking heritage with mission**

3.1. The places and objects in the Church's collection have much to say about the human condition and may be of interest for artistic and architectural, spiritual or even ecological reasons. It is acknowledged – even encouraged – that the Christian message may not be the starting point in trying to engage visitors with them.

3.2. An experiential and sensory encounter should be the aim, as well as relating the features of any place, its people and stories to the experience and condition of likely visitors, for example, exploring issues of loss, class struggle, and social justice, 'green' issues or childhood reminiscence. Underpinning all projects should be a positive, Methodist Christian interpretation.

3.3. Applications to support innovative and creative mission activities/events responding to or promoting Methodist heritage (as well as applications to support conservation and/or providing information linking heritage to mission, for example) are to be encouraged. For example, young people's art projects, heritage worship services or real-life reconstructions, erecting memorial plaques, or developing educational programmes should be considered.

3.4. Applications to develop text-based interpretation (booklets and display panels, for example) should be granted on condition that the opportunity is given, in reasonable time, for content to be scrutinised by experts supporting the Heritage Committee and Connexional Team to ensure accurate, consistent and mission-focused resources are produced, that do not perpetuate the 'myths of Methodism' and seek to link the Church's past to its present activities and future hope.

4. Some 'Heritage & Mission' grant-making principles

4.1 Small sums, for example for emergency conservation of artefacts, should be simple to apply for and need an accordingly speedy agreement process. Connexional funds (currently of £5,000pa) are requested and allocated annually from the Connexional Team budget to the Heritage Grants Stream for conservation applications under Standing Order 212/11.

4.2 Properties and collections that are identified as part of Methodism's heritage are owned at a variety of 'levels' within the Connexion. Applicants should be expected to seek the appropriate local financial support of the relevant Circuit and/or District before applying to the Heritage Grants Stream for Connexional funds, unless the application concerns a matter of clear Connexional significance. In this case, a direct application to the Heritage Grants Stream may be appropriate, but should have the written support of the Circuit/District and justification as to why the Circuit/District cannot or will not fund the project.

4.3 It is not the expectation of the Heritage Committee that the Heritage Grants Stream can be the sole funder of major and long-term projects. It is our understanding that the Heritage Grants Stream should be viewed largely as a source of 'seed' or 'match' funding to encourage the creation of funding packages and sustainable business plans. It should be recognised that receiving funds from the Heritage Grants Stream may be used as evidence to confirm the Methodist Church's commitment to a particular conservation or development Methodist heritage project, and as such it may be important for these funds to be assured before other applications will be considered and a funding package confirmed.

4.4 'Heritage & Mission' grant applications may be made for capital or revenue funding, over a maximum period of five years, though it is understood by the Heritage Committee that most grants for three or more years will be made usually on a 'decreasing' basis, as it is assumed and encouraged that other outside funds will be sought as the project establishes and/or a sustainability plan will be developed.

4.5 Applications made for sites and collections that are not in Methodist ownership should be considered, providing clear evidence of significance to Methodism and importance to Methodist heritage is presented. For example, applications should be welcomed from independent, English Heritage or National Trust property teams seeking to develop and promote their Methodist connections (when we would recommend collaboration with their local Methodist

District Archivist – for whom contact details are available via the Methodist Heritage Officer – and encourage liaison with any other nearby Methodist heritage sites). The opportunity to place the Methodist Christian story in these contexts should be valued, though a less overtly mission-focussed interpretation will probably be required.

4.6 For larger projects, the Heritage Committee recommends that a grant be offered as initial funding in order to encourage the contribution of other funders by grants, loans or sponsorship (ie demonstrating the Methodist Church's commitment to this work), or may be applied for as 'matched funding' required to secure outside support.

4.7 A Heritage Grant may be applied for to facilitate the use of Methodist heritage for mission (essentially as a wholly separate but clearly linked project), to ensure the development of the visitor experience and/or to add innovative interpretation, in support of a significant building improvement (for example, adding toilets) or conservation project that has received funding already via other sources. This may be pertinent especially for elements of a project where bringing in a spiritual rationale for funding would not have been appropriate. For example, to provide spiritually-focused interpretation panels (such as a prayer walk) for a building conserved and developed primarily for some community use. Also, some 'secular' funders may be comfortable to make grants to develop the community use of spaces or to conserve artefacts with a strong local connection, but not be willing to support educational initiatives that promote the project for the purpose of Methodist mission. The Heritage Committee encourages the Grants Stream to consider support for the mission aspects of a project that may be unattractive to other funders. Also, funds accessed for a building project, for example, may not cover carrying out the mission for whom the building has been developed: the Heritage Committee also encourages the Heritage Grants Stream to consider supporting the delivery of the innovative mission uses intended for recently restored Methodist property.

5 The role of the Heritage Committee

5.1 The role of the Methodist Heritage Committee in relation to grant-making for 'Heritage & Mission' by the Heritage Grants Stream is to scrutinise applications made to the Connexional Grants Committee for funding for one-off projects from sites with demonstrable Methodist heritage or trustees of relevant collections of artefacts or archives and offer its opinion.

5.2 Neither the Methodist Heritage Committee nor the Heritage Officer make grant-making decisions, but in collaboration with the Connexional Grants Committee and Grants Officers will seek to give appropriate support to develop potentially successful applications.

5.3 Projects which the Methodist Heritage Committee will recommend for grant support through the Heritage Grants Stream of the Connexional Grants Committee, should:

5.3.1 Identify the place or item (or event) concerned and establish its value to Methodist heritage: What is its age and provenance (it is acknowledged that not all Church heritage is old)? ...its relevance to the historic development or propagation of Methodism?

5.3.2 Outline an action plan for its care, use and development, for example, for conservation and future display and promotion?

5.3.3 Be supported by a clear plan to develop audiences for mission purposes, which it is desirable (but not essential) includes evidence of seeking out and working with local partners. It is hoped that applications for ecumenical and interfaith projects would be encouraged.

5.3.4 Include the following financial information:

5.3.4.1 A clear outline of all the costs and planned income (with proposed sources) to achieve the project, indicating which, if any, money is already secured.

5.3.4.2 For large (eg property development related projects) the most recent year's accounts of the organization concerned, if appropriate, and those of the Church, or other, body owning the place or object, if different, for example for the Circuit or District concerned.

5.3.4.3 If the application concerns a project that will result in significant new ongoing costs to an organization,, for example for running the new visitor facilities at a heritage property or following the conservation and display of an important painting that may result in significantly increased insurance premiums and require monitored security systems, *realistic* forecasts are required to show the increased financial benefits (either example should encourage more visitors and increase income) and/or new or ongoing costs that it is expected will result from this project, and the plans for financial sustainability in these changed circumstances for at least the next three, and preferably the next five, years.

5.3.4.4 All conservation plans must be supported by an independent, expert assessment and advice, and a quote for the work. For works over £2,500, three quotes for the work would usually be required with justification as to the preferred choice of contractor (and/or why less than three quotes have been submitted). The Heritage Committee recommends to the Heritage Grants Stream that price should not be the only factor determining this decision – for example a more expensive quote may be preferred if urgent works are required and can be facilitated.

5.3.4.5 Where possible, and particularly for larger projects (applications for \geq £10,000), should demonstrate the commitment of trustees and the local community (internal and/or external) to support and personal giving and fundraising. This might be demonstrated in the funding plan by reference to income to be secured from 'individual donations', activities such as 'church jumble sale/Christmas Fair' (largely internal giving) or 'street collection at farmers' market' (largely external giving) or events 'organised by the Friends'.

5.3.5 Demonstrate partnership working, since, as the Heritage Grants Stream will be aware, most external funders to whom heritage applicants may also apply will require evidence that demonstrates that the applicants are engaging with the wider community and that the work proposed has relevance to them. The Heritage Committee wishes to encourage this in the interests of best practice and to maximise the likely success of applications to other bodies for funds alongside a Methodist 'Heritage & Mission' grant Methodist heritage has value to the history and culture of the wider region in which it is located, sometimes nationally. Therefore, the Heritage Grant Stream is recommended to require evidence of applicants' consultation and collaboration outside, as well as across, the Church, for example, with similar organisations in their area (such as local National Trust or English Heritage property teams or officers, in the case of Methodist heritage sites) and relevant local authority or other bodies (for example, town/city/county museum, County Record Office or Regional Tourism Development Agency).