

## Thinking About A Major Property Scheme?

**Do you have a vision for your church's mission and outreach? Does your property have potential but lacks the appropriate facilities? Do you want your building to be a focal point in your community? If so, the staff of the Methodist Property Office are here to help.**

Faced with the complexity of plans, planning permission, grant applications and approval from church bodies, translating vision into reality can seem a very daunting prospect! This leaflet provides an initial idea of the different stages of the property scheme process and provides some useful questions to think about.

- **Why is your church thinking about a major scheme?**

Stop and think about the real reasons behind the need for a major property scheme. Is the congregation outgrowing its present facilities? Are you responding to a need in your community?

- **How will the scheme reflect the church's mission?**

It is important to be clear how worship, service, fellowship and mission will be enabled or enhanced by the scheme. The church's mission should be the focus and driving force for your property scheme.

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### **Don't forget - Church, Circuit, District, Connexion!**

Talk about your ideas at your Church Council, discuss them with the Circuit Leadership Team or Circuit Meeting. Share your vision at an early stage with the District. If you need guidance at any point contact the Resourcing Mission Office using the specific email addresses below or via the switchboard on 0161 236 5194.

There are several different sections within our office, with whom you will probably be in contact for the duration of a major property scheme. The following gives a brief outline of those sections:-

#### **Mission Projects and Funding**

The team works with churches to bring together funding packages for property schemes, assesses eligibility for and allocates Connexional grants, and provides general guidance on scheme development and administration. One of our aims is to encourage and enable churches to bring their mission to life by providing guidance in resourcing their mission and encouragement in finding new ways of being church. They are also able to offer guidance and help when applying for external funds, including landfill, lottery and a range of charitable trusts. They can be contacted at [mpfo@property.methodist.org.uk](mailto:mpfo@property.methodist.org.uk).

#### **Technical and Conservation**

The purpose of this section is to offer information and help about technical aspects of building schemes, and to give technical agreement to those schemes requiring Property Office approval. They also deal with schemes on chapels which are listed, or in a conservation area. Technical queries are many and varied, and range over a huge number of issues including appointment of consultants, feasibility studies, quinquennial inspections, etc. Their email address is [tech-cons@property.methodist.org.uk](mailto:tech-cons@property.methodist.org.uk).

#### **Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes – (TMCP) Legal and Finance**

Although TMCP are a separate body, they do play a vital role in the life of a building scheme. The TMCP finance section holds all bequests, legacies, Circuit and District Advance Funds, and is able to advise on whether or not certain monies can be used towards schemes. The legal section is able to deal, on behalf of TMCP as Custodian Trustee, with purchases, sales, leases and sharing agreements, and is also available to give guidance on the terms and conditions of certain types of external grants. They can be contacted at either [legal@tmcp.methodist.org.uk](mailto:legal@tmcp.methodist.org.uk), or [finance@tmcp.methodist.org.uk](mailto:finance@tmcp.methodist.org.uk).

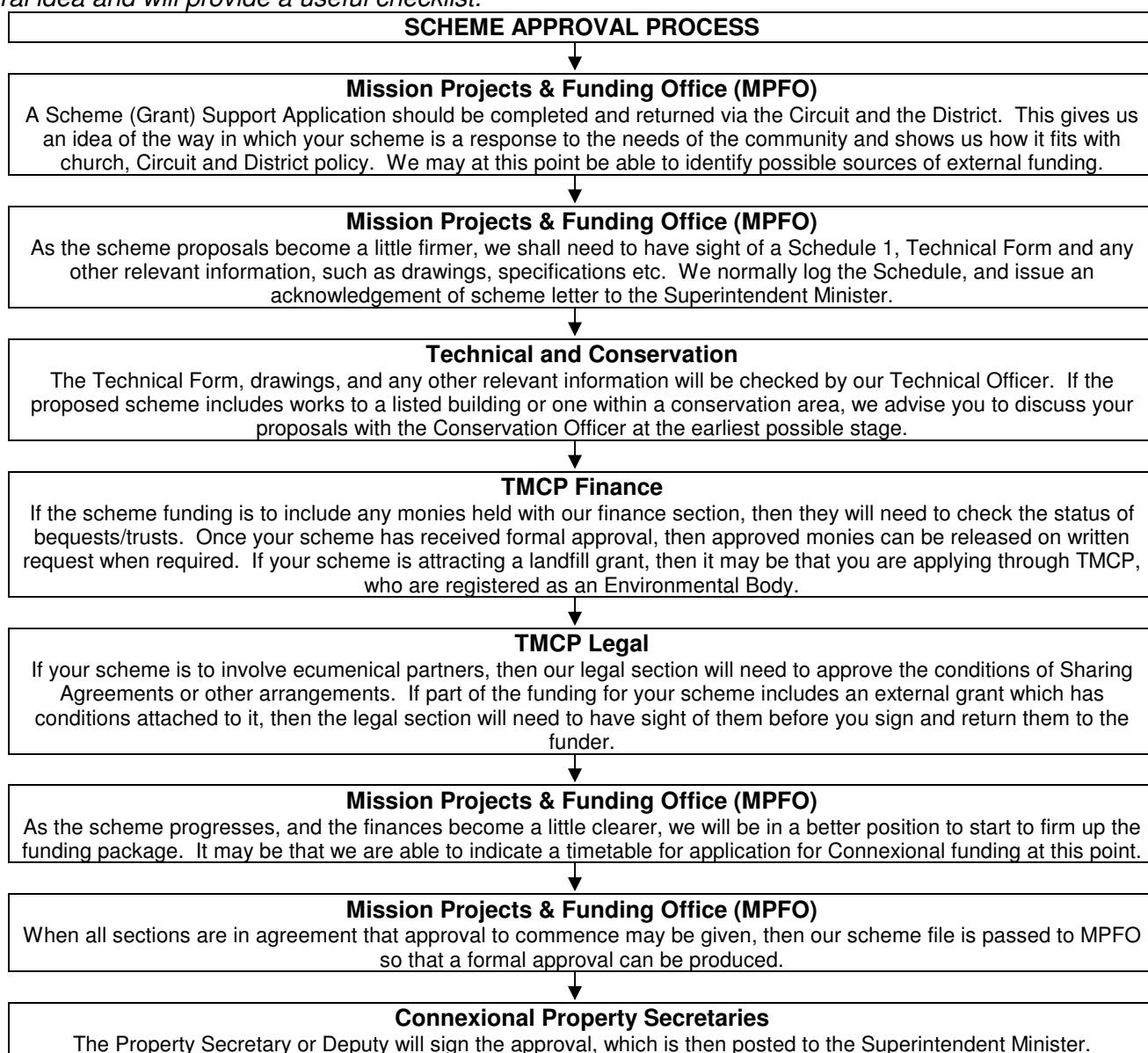
If you do not have access to email, the Property Office address is: The Methodist Property Office, Central Buildings, Oldham Street, Manchester, M1 1JQ. Tel. 0161 236 5194, fax: 0161 236 8908.

The Methodist Property Office - MPO (Resourcing Mission Office – RMO) and Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (TMCP) have Information Leaflets and Guidance Notes for general and specific issues relating to major property schemes. They are available on the Methodist Church website, or can be posted to you.

Our website ([www.methodist.org.uk](http://www.methodist.org.uk)) enables churches to download schedules and information leaflets and find useful information. To access the Resourcing Mission area, go to 'Information' then 'Resourcing Mission' via the menus and scroll down to the required section. The TMCP section can also be accessed via the 'Information' menu. Your Superintendent Minister will have a CD ROM entitled 'Building Confidence' which contains other useful information and also includes links to information on the website.

## The Process

*Every church has characteristics of its own and the Methodist Property Office sees part of its task as helping you work through your scheme. As soon as your ideas begin to take shape contact the office. The process may vary depending upon the circumstances of the particular scheme, but the following outline gives a general idea and will provide a useful checklist.*



Although the above diagram gives an idea of the sort of process that a major property scheme might go through, it is rarely so straightforward. Certainly, a file may pass through the hands of some sections several times before all the issues are resolved, and it is therefore very difficult to predict the time that a scheme may take to come to fruition. In addition the timetables for schemes vary depending upon the nature and complexity of the project, the partner agencies involved and legal, technical and financial matters. However, we do endeavour to keep the church informed at all times as to the status of their proposed scheme, and we are always on hand to give guidance and help at any time. It is however the Managing Trustees responsibility to ensure their scheme is properly managed and progressed including all aspects of fundraising etc.