

## 44. The Necessitous Local Preachers Fund (NLPF)

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1. The Necessitous Local Preachers Fund (the **NLPF**, or **Fund**) was created by a trust deed dated 5 June 1882 *“for the benefit of necessitous local preachers in the Wesleyan Methodist Connexion”* (the **Trust Deed**). In 1940, the NLPF was amalgamated with two other funds whose purposes were also to support necessitous Methodist or Wesleyan Local Preachers.
2. The capital sum in the NLPF is invested with the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes in Trust 18271. On 28 February 2023 the total capital value of the Fund exceeded £196,000 and the income in the Fund amounted to £9,590.01.
3. The Trust Deed places no limit on the number of trustees who may be appointed, but the number must not fall below three.
4. The power to remove and appoint NLPF trustees lies with Conference.
5. Clause 2 of the Trust Deed states: *“The Trustees shall from time to time invest the said sum of Eight Thousand Pounds ... and shall pay the income thereof from time to time ... for the benefit of such necessitous Local Preachers according to such rules and in such manner as the said Conference shall from time to time direct...”*. This means that the NLPF trustees are responsible for ensuring that the Fund is invested and used in accordance with the terms of the Trust Deed and any rules dictated by the Conference.
6. The Trust Deed goes on to say: *“PROVIDED that if the said Conference shall so direct the Trustees shall pay such income ... to such Committee or Committees as the said Conference shall from time to time direct to be applied for the like benefit according to such rules and in such manner as the said Conference shall from time to time direct...”*
7. Standing Order 364(6) states:  
  
*“(6) In pursuance of its powers under the Deed Poll dated the 5th June 1882 establishing the Necessitous Local Preachers Fund the Conference directs the trustees of that fund to pay the income of the fund to the Methodist Council to be applied according to the trusts of the above Deed. The council shall have power to delegate to any two or more persons, whether or not members or a committee of the council, decisions as to the application or distribution of such income according to the said trusts.”*

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8. In 1969 the Methodist Conference entrusted the administration of the NLPF to the Connexional Local Preachers' Committee (**CLPC**).
9. In 2003, responsibility for administering grants from the NLPF was transferred from the CLPC to Local Preachers' Mutual Aid (LPMA), now reconstituted as the Leaders and Worship and Preachers' Trust (**LWPT**). LWPT is an ecumenical body, which is outside of the control of the Methodist Church in Great Britain.
10. The most recent guidance for the application of the Fund (dated August 2007) states that the trustees shall report to the annual meeting of CLPC.
11. There is no longer a CLPC and in recent years it has proved difficult for the LWPT to administer the Fund effectively due to lack of active trustees.
12. Consequently, in 2020 the Methodist Council directed the Ministries Committee to take over the administration of the NLPF from the LWPT. The Council reported this decision to the 2020 Conference, noting that the position was complex and that work was ongoing to enable the NLPF to be used for its intended purpose.
13. Legal advice has now been taken which indicates that, in order to bring the NLPF back onto a proper footing to enable the Fund to be administered effectively, the Conference should remove the existing NLPF trustees and appoint a new set of trustees.
14. For the avoidance of doubt, the Conference is also advised to confirm the Council's 2020 decision that responsibility for administering grants made from the NLPF now lies with the Ministries Committee rather than the LWPT.
15. Once appointed, the new trustees are advised to review the Trust Deed and, in the Law and Polity Committee, to propose amendments to modernise and clarify the terms and powers of the Trust Deed. This might include, for example, asking the Charity Commission to approve amendments to the eligibility criteria to enable grants from the Fund to be made to Worship Leaders as well as Local Preachers.
16. The Conference is also asked to direct the Ministries Committee, in consultation with the NLPF trustees and the Law and Polity Committee, to devise new rules for the administration of grants from the Fund and to bring these rules to the 2024 Conference for approval.

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### **\*\*\*RESOLUTIONS**

- 44/1. The Conference receives the Report.**
- 44/2. The Conference removes the existing trustees and appoints the new trustees of the Necessitous Local Preachers Fund as follows: [*names to follow*]**
- 44/3. The Conference confirms that the Ministries Committee shall be responsible for administering the allocation of grants made from the Necessitous Local Preachers Fund, in place of the Leaders of Worship and Preachers Trust.**
- 44/4. The Conference directs the new trustees of the Necessitous Local Preachers Fund, in consultation with the Law and Polity Committee, to propose amendments to modernise and clarify the terms and powers of the Trust Deed and to report to the 2024 Conference.**
- 44/5. The Conference directs the Ministries Committee, in consultation with the Necessitous Local Preachers Fund trustees and the Law and Polity Committee, to devise new rules for the administration of grants from the Fund and to bring these rules to the 2024 Conference for approval.**