

## Stewardship of Property for Mission – Part 1

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<b>Status of Paper</b>	Final
<b>Action Required</b>	Discussion

### Summary of Content

<b>Subject and Aims</b>	To invite the Council to engage in discussion relating to the sale of property at less than best price
<b>Background Context and Relevant Documents (with function)</b>	MC/20/40 Property, Mission, and Money (not discussed due to pandemic) - <a href="https://www.methodist.org.uk/media/16363/counc_mc20-40-property-mission-and-money_mar_2020.pdf">https://www.methodist.org.uk/media/16363/counc_mc20-40-property-mission-and-money_mar_2020.pdf</a>  MC/18/74 Connexional Property Strategy

### Summary of Impact

<b>Financial</b>	Strategy will have large impact on finance and property ownership
<b>Wider Connexional</b>	Property strategy impacts the entire Connexion

## Stewardship of Property for Mission

1. The paper Property, Mission and Money [MC/20/40] provided the Methodist Council with some thinking to be developed further. However, it was not able to be debated in the video conference meeting in March 2020. The paper asked a number of questions, one of which related to the policy interpretation of Model Trust 20.
2. The wording of Model Trust 20(1) is:  
*“(1) If the board of the Property Division<sup>1</sup> shall consider **that any purpose of the Church would thereby be advanced**, it shall be lawful for such board to authorise the trustees of any model trust property, by a written authority under the hand of its General Secretary or of any other person authorised by such board in that behalf to dispose of such property or any part thereof, in any manner whatsoever to any person upon trust for such purpose of the Church without the payment or provision of any consideration or for the payment or provision of less consideration than might otherwise be reasonably obtainable in respect of such property or such part thereof, and it shall be lawful for such trustees to enter into any transaction pursuant to such authority.”*
3. The Council previously interpreted Model Trust 20(1) as the Church being able to sell its properties at less than best price to other denominations and other Methodist charities, but stopped short of wanting this provision to include other charitable organisations which may be undertaking work that Managing Trustees would believe was advancing the purposes of the Church. A policy was therefore drafted with that principle contained within it for approval by the Conference.
4. The policy referred to above did not go to the Conference in 2020 due to the restrictions on our way of working, so it will proceed to the Conference in 2021. At present the Council has the responsibility of looking at any exceptions to the current policy of selling at less than best price.
5. A small group was appointed by the Council over the summer to look at one such exception and concluded that our inability to sell to another charity (in this case the Scouts) because it is not a *Methodist* one was hampering the advancement of the purposes of the Church locally. A way through this has been found but the group wished the Council to look again at this policy, hence this paper.
6. The key question is: what would the Council consider to be **‘the advancement of a purpose of the Church’**? At present the best way to describe this would be ‘anything that could be seen to support the Church in responding to the gospel of God’s love in Christ’ – there are other non-Methodist charities and organisations that many Managing Trustees view as doing this.
7. It was also noted that whatever policy is sent to the Conference it should require overage provisions to be included on every sale for less than best price, to ensure the Church receives an appropriate share of any future uplift in value for, say, 25 years. We should take surveyor’s advice on the parameters of what this percentage should be if the Council agrees with the principle.

**The Council is therefore asked to discuss its views on broadening the current policy to sell/lease at less than best price to non-Methodist charities whose purposes broadly align with our purposes, and the inclusion of overage clauses in those cases.**

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<sup>1</sup> The functions of the ‘board of the Property Division’ (which no longer exists) are now exercisable by the Methodist Council