

Leasing of Methodist Premises – Sunday Trading

Contact Name and Details	Mrs Louise Wilkins Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice wilkinsl@methodistchurch.org.uk
Status of Paper	Final
Action Required	Decision
Resolutions	<p>91/1. The Council receives the report.</p> <p>91/2. The Council amends the policy on Sunday trading to allow such trading within the curtilage of Model Trust property, following consideration of an application to three members of the Property Development Committee.</p> <p>91/3. The Council directs the Property Development Committee to produce an application form and criteria for permission for Sunday trading within the curtilage of a Model Trust property.</p>

Summary of Content

Subject and Aims	The Council is asked to review a policy adopted in October 2013 regarding
Main Points	Restrictions on Sunday trading within the curtilage of the Church site to be reviewed.
Background Context and Relevant Documents	MC/13/68 Leasing of Methodist Premises
Consultations	Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes

Leasing of Methodist Premises – Sunday Trading

1. The Methodist Council in October 2013 adopted a policy that allowed Sunday trading on Methodist premises where it is investment property under SO 908, or premises outside the curtilage of the Church site.
2. In practice it is rare for Methodist property to be investment property as defined by SO 908 given its narrow application. For most local churches, the land that they are seeking to lease, or develop to lease, is within the curtilage of the church site.
3. It is proposed that the restrictions on Sunday trading within the curtilage of the Church site now need to be reviewed particularly in light of the property development work and local churches and circuits being encouraged to think more strategically about the use of property. If a Church Council wants to redevelop a site with some of the site providing an income through commercial lettings, the reality is that the lease needs to be for 7 days a week to achieve the best obtainable rent.
4. It is not suggested that a Church Council should not give serious consideration to the implication that having Sunday trading on their church site might have on their Sunday worship but some flexibility in the policy is now proposed. It is proposed that three members of the Property Development Committee consider applications for Sunday trading to be permitted on a church site (widened to Model Trust property in the resolution so as not to exclude other types of property).
5. The Property Development Committee could be directed to produce an application form setting out the necessary criteria and information. The key piece of information will be advice from a qualified surveyor confirming that not allowing Sunday Trading will limit the interested tenants and obtainable rent. It might also be suggested that there needs to be a clear distinction between the property/part of the property being leased on a commercial basis and the worship area eg retail units underneath a Church would be sufficiently distinct, but a Church hall being let out for office space might not be sufficiently distinct.

***RESOLUTIONS

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