

## GUIDANCE: Reporting the changed status of a church

**District approval is needed for a Methodist Society to cease to be recognised as such and for its associated Church Council to be dissolved. The relevant change of status of the Local Church then needs to be reported via the Statistics for Mission site.**

The effect of "closing" a Local Church in this way means that separate membership and attendance statistics no longer need to be reported. It does not necessarily mean that the church *building* is closed (for example, it may become part of a multi-site church, which will include the former church's membership and attendance statistics in its aggregate returns). Separate district approval is required before a church building is "closed", i.e. for public worship. **If a building has become unusable but the society continues to meet elsewhere, all you need do is notify us of the address of the new site.**

### 1) Go to <https://online.methodist.org.uk>.

If you are not registered, you will need to click REGISTER and follow the instructions.

If you are already a registered user, log in and choose the STATISTICS FOR MISSION option. Note: you may not see all buttons displayed below.

- > PROPERTY CONSENTS
- > STATISTICS FOR MISSION
- > ANNUAL RETURNS
- > GRANT ASSESSMENTS
- > GRANT APPLICATIONS
- > MANAGE USERS
- > CONTACT US



### 2) Select your church via the SELECT A CHURCH button on the left-hand panel.

### 3) Go to CHURCH PROFILE.

### 4) Scroll to the REPORTING CHANGES section.



Click the REPORT CHANGED STATUS button.

**NOTE:** This function is active throughout the year, not just during the statistics collection.

## 5) A POP-UP BOX will appear.

To capture distinctions between different types of closures, a list of four options appears when you click the blue REPORT CHANGED STATUS button. You need to **select the option** that best explains the new status of your church:

- **"CLASS"**. Members continue to meet, but as a Class of another Methodist church. This may be where the membership has fallen to six or under, as per Standing Order 605;  
**NOTE:** If you choose this option, you will also be able to choose the society your church has become a class of via a dropdown menu displaying all circuit churches.
- **"CEASED"**. Public worship is discontinued and members cease to meet in the worshipping community: some may transfer to other Methodist churches;
- **"CEASED LEP"**. The Single Congregation Local Ecumenical Partnership is constitutionally dissolved or Methodist participation discontinued. Remaining members cease to meet or meet otherwise than as Methodist participating members.  
**NOTE:** If you choose this option, the Connexional Ecumenical Officer ([eo@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:eo@methodistchurch.org.uk)) needs to be informed as well;
- **"MERGED"**. Members continue to meet, but as part of a scheme whereby the Local Church has merged with one or more other churches: this may involve sharing the use of a building, or a church spread across more than one site (multi-site society).

Once you have selected one of these options, you then need to **report the effective date of change** (dd/mm/yy) in the appropriate box. This may be one of the following: The date of Synod accepting the recommendation to cease worship (SO 943(1)), the date of the last church council meeting, the date of a resolution to wind up a Society, the date of the last service in a Methodist chapel, or the date of the adoption of a scheme for church merger.

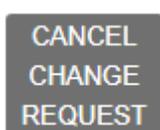
## 6) Finally, click CONFIRM.

An automated notification email is sent to the Web Support Officer.

## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Once processed, that society's record will be removed from the list of active churches and instead appear within its Circuit's **Digital Archive** tab. The trusteeship of the property will be transferred accordingly.

**NOTE:** You will be asked to complete the final statistics year before the change of status can be actioned.



If you have reported a change of status in error, return to the Church Profile page and click the **CANCEL CHANGE REQUEST** button.

**Questions? Contact [statisticsformission@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:statisticsformission@methodistchurch.org.uk)**