

## GUIDANCE

### Reporting a **CHANGE OF STATUS** of a church

**District approval is needed for a Methodist Society to cease to be recognized 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. The church may, for example, become part of a **multi-site society**, which will include the former individual society’s membership and attendance statistics in its aggregate returns.

#### When is reporting a change of status **NOT** needed?

- 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**. Separate district approval is also required before a church building is closed for public worship.
- If a **Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP) ceases to meet**, but the Methodist congregation keep going on their own, all that needs to happen is for the **LEP tick box** located in the church profile (see point 2) to be **unticked**. A **name change**, if applicable, can be requested from the Web Support Officer.

#### STEP-BY-STEP PROCEDURE

> STATISTICS FOR MISSION

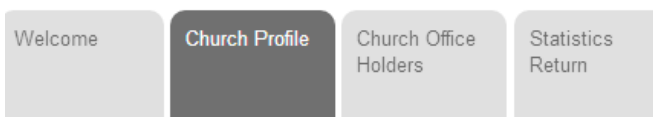
- 1) Go to <https://online.methodist.org.uk>.

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 select STATISTICS FOR MISSION.

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

Select a Church >

- 3) Go to **CHURCH PROFILE**.



- 4) Scroll to the **REPORTING CHANGES** section and click the **REPORT CHANGED STATUS** button.

**REPORT  
CHANGED  
STATUS**

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

**5) Select the TYPE of closure from the pop-up box.**

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. This option also applies if Methodist members cease to participate in an LEP, but the LEP continues.
- **"CEASED LEP"**. The Single Congregation LEP is constitutionally dissolved. The remaining congregation, including Methodist members, cease to meet. **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 a building, or meeting across more than one site (multi-site society).

**6) Enter the DATE of the status change.**

This may be one of the following:

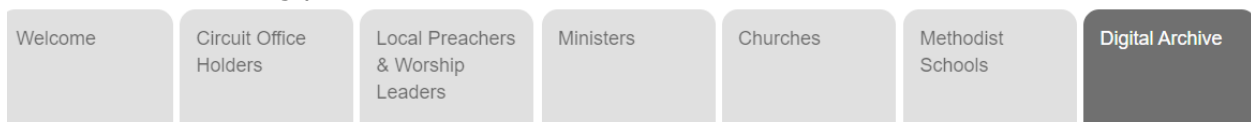
- The date of Synod accepting the recommendation to cease worship (SO 943(1));
- the date of the last church council meeting;
- the date of a resolution to wind up a Society;
- the date of the last service in a Methodist chapel;
- the date of the adoption of a scheme for church merger.

**7) When you have entered all the details, 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.

**CANCEL  
CHANGE  
REQUEST**

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 [onlinesuitesupport@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:onlinesuitesupport@methodistchurch.org.uk)**