



# ***ANNUAL REPORTS***

## **2019-2020**

*We will be a District where Circuits, Local Churches and individuals of all ages are accompanied and encouraged to respond to the gospel of Jesus Christ and participate in God's mission in the power of the Holy Spirit.*

**District Chair: The Revd Andrew de Ville**

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## SOUTHAMPTON METHODIST DISTRICT VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT

### DISTRICT VISION

We will be a District where Circuits, Local Churches and individuals of all ages are accompanied and encouraged to respond to the gospel of Jesus Christ and participate in God's mission in the power of the Holy Spirit.

### DISTRICT PRIORITIES

1. to give priority in using our finite resources to support Circuits that are engaging positively in the reshaping for mission process;
2. to support Local Churches and Circuits in providing a safe professional and legal environment;
3. to encourage Local Churches to explore and trial new ways of being 'church';
4. to encourage and resource Christian learning and discipleship across the District;
5. to develop partnerships within the District and the wider global and ecumenical context focused on mission, and to engage with the inter-faith landscape.

As you will appreciate these reports were all prepared prior to the events of Covid-19, therefore please do check with the report writers directly should you wish to enquire about future courses/events or discuss elements of their reports.

Also do check the District website (<https://www.sdmc.org.uk/>) for the latest information.

## **DISTRICT ARCHIVIST**

**Mr Geoffrey Goodman**

I continue with my contact with Circuit Archivists across the District and being involved in the historical records of churches in our District. It is not an easy job as questions often arise which need to receive careful consideration and if I do not know the answer there is always someone at Methodist Heritage who does.

Churches need to be vigilant as to what happens to their records (meeting minutes, newsletters, church records, worship details, circuit plans, etc.) and a rule of thumb should be that they are kept in-house for up to ten years then sent to your nearest Records Office for safe keeping which I can supply the location of if need be. If anyone wants to know what records exist for their church go on-line to the 'Discovery National Archives.gov.uk' web-site and type in the name of your church or Circuit and hopefully it will show you what you are looking for. One warning, I cannot supply storage at my house as it is not big enough or suitable to store church records in, so the direct route using a Records Office is preferred.

I would hope that every Church and Circuit in the District has a person responsible for archives. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you want to pass on valuable news or need advice.

Thank you for all the work our archivists have done over the past year.

## **DISTRICT POLICY COMMITTEE**

**Mr Paul Yarren**

The District Policy Committee (DPC) has met twice since the last District Synod in September 2019. Some matters have also been considered via email consultation between meetings. An important piece of work was to review a paper prepared by members of the District Enabling Team (DET) titled, Interim Leadership Arrangements for Southampton District. This paper had several recommendations with the appointment of two Deputy Chairs being the most urgent. Rev Sue Keegan von Allmen and Rev David Shaw have been appointed as Interim Deputy Chairs for the period 1 January – 31 August 20.

DPC received the report from the District Enabling Team Review that recommended the continuance of the Team and the development of the membership and the roles they undertake. Synod will be informed of the developments at the Autumn 2020 Synod.

Under delegated powers, DPC has appointed:

- Rev Audrey Browne to serve on the Probationers' Committee
- Mrs Doreen Dace to serve on the Probationers' Committee

A significant task for DPC members as District Trustees, is to review and approve financial documentation. The following documents were approved:

- Accounts for the year ending 31 August 2019
- Annual Report for the year ending 31 August 2019

DPC also received updates on many activities from across the District and included the following:

- Circuit updates on the Marriage and Relationships discussions and events
- Safeguarding
- Stationing
- Learning Network
- Intergenerational Mission Enabler
- Ecumenical matters
- GDPR
- MWiB

At the time of writing this report, DPC is reviewing the Circuit applications for Lay Authorisation to preside at the Lord's Supper, effective from 01 Sep 20. The District Submission will be sent to the Conference Office by 03 Apr 20.

### **EVANGELISM ENCOURAGERS**

**Mr Mark Tizzard**

We normally meet as two groups of Evangelism Encouragers - one based in the West and one in the East of the District and we do so in a place where we can have conversation over something to eat and drink. One group meets at lunchtime and one in the evening. We aim to meet 3 times a year, to share stories about things we have seen going on in the churches and circuits, and to talk about what sort of things church and circuits are trying to do. We share concerns and seek to learn from each other. We are a group of people who are interested in the idea of how we do evangelism in the Methodist Church in 2020. We are not experts, or the only people who can do evangelism.

The evangelism and growth team of the Methodist Church. You can find out more here <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-work/our-work-in-britain/evangelism-growth/> and they also have a big report to bring to Conference this year, called God for All - An Emerging Connexional Strategy for Evangelism & Growth. Three members from our Synod joined a large consultation in the autumn of 2019. You can read more on the strategy here <https://www.methodist.org.uk/media/12498/god-for-all-connexional-eg.pdf>

In the current 2019/20 connexional year the President and Vice President have co written a book called "So What's the Story?" This book sets out the scene for our year of Testimony. We are pleased to be able to host an event called "The Story Project" on March 28<sup>th</sup> 2020 in Basingstoke. You can find out more details here <https://www.sdmc.org.uk/news/the-story-project-28th-march-2020/>

If you want to find out more about these groups, please do get in touch.

[Mark\\_tizzard@aim.com](mailto:Mark_tizzard@aim.com) 07391017548 <https://www.sdmc.org.uk/ime/evangelism/>

## **FINANCE**

**Mrs Christine Holland**

During the year 1 September 2018 to 31 August 2019 the District received income of £374,359 (2017-18: £396,730) and spent £326,777 (2017-18: £418,319).

At 31 August 2019 the District had funds totalling £897,581 (£847,725 at 31 August 2018).

This includes:

- General funds £94,847 (£80,015 at 31 August 2018)
- District Development Fund £61,867 (£66,626 at 31 August 2018)
- District Advance Fund £60,815 (£1,841 at 31 August 2018)
- Portsmouth Chaplaincy £265 overdrawn (£93 at 31 August 2018)
- Property Reserve (District Manse) £530,000 (£530,000 at 31 August 2018)
- Benevolent Fund £2,631 (£2,631 at 31 August 2018)
- MIH Fund £146,554 (£165,037 at 31 August 2018)
- £1,132 held on behalf of Churches Together in Hampshire and the Islands (£1,482 at 31 August 2018).

In 2018-19 the District paid grants from the District Advance Fund that totalled £143,755 to churches, circuits, university chaplaincies and ecumenical groups. At 31 August 2019 grants totalling £324,950 had been awarded from the District Advance Fund that are payable in future years.

## **GROUP FOR LEARNING AND DISCIPLESHIP (GLAD)**

**Mrs Fran Jenkins**

The group continues to work in accordance with our Mission Statement “To have a strategic overview for learning opportunities in the District and to engender, ecumenically, a culture of learning and spiritual development”. This we do as we hear reports from the various sections of the District about their initiatives and activities, and discuss ways to encourage discipleship development.

As well as considering Sabbatical Prospectuses and Applications for grants, we welcome and value feedback of Sabbatical experiences and Training courses and events from those ordained and lay people who have taken them.

Grant application forms are available from District website or from myself: [fran.jenkins@btinternet.com](mailto:fran.jenkins@btinternet.com)



**Mr Mark Tizzard**

Following on from the DPC review of 2019, and the decision made by Synod in September 2019 I have been looking to implement the recommendations along with my management group.

We identified a 4-pronged approach to the work, these being:

- Being a visible presence in the District.
- Developing the Eastern and Western Evangelism Encourager Groups to be more constructive and visible.
- Building up an online/social media presence.
- Developing training.

Being a visible presence in the District.

I have continued to travel widely across the District, and sought to keep in touch with many ministers, deacons and lay people encouraging them in their ministries.

Working with the Learning Network, so we don't unnecessarily duplicate work, have sought to help churches and circuits think about becoming intentionally more intergenerational in their mission. Sometimes this has involved taking vision days, sometimes talking with leadership teams/stewards, sometimes preaching in services. I have also sought to encourage lay workers, children's, family and youth workers in their work to think about how that work can be more intergenerational. For instance helping a toddler group to offer a parenting course, or how a community Christmas event can offer some family related follow up events.

Developing the Eastern and Western Evangelism Encourager Groups to be more constructive and visible.

I have sought to facilitate these groups in the West and East of the District; we meet 3 times a year with the aim of encouraging people who resource, encourage and where possible facilitate Evangelism as "The Main Thing" for our circuits. We are looking to

1. Identify Evangelism Encouragers.
2. Inspire Evangelism Encouragers.
3. Hold informal meetings for Evangelism Encouragers.

For more details see <https://www.sdmc.org.uk/ime/evangelism/evangelism-encouragers/>

Building up an online/social media presence.

With the wonderful help and guidance of Jason Elkin I have been working to create an information/news hub on the District website. Here I am seeking to share good news stories, some news and some articles about Intergenerational mission

<https://www.sdmc.org.uk/ime/intergenerational-mission-enabler-news/>

I have also been using social media to create online communities you can find out more at [@intergenmission](https://twitter.com/home)  
<https://www.facebook.com/marktizzardime/>

## Developing training.

There are many different models and programmes available for us to use in Intergenerational Mission. There seems to be an almost endless list of possibilities with some being Messy Church, Who Let the Dads Out, youth work, all-age worship, café church, breakfast church, working with parents, repair cafes, coffee shops, overseas missional trips, holiday at home projects, and death cafes. Each model offers something different, plus the context we do them in is very different, so I seek to help circuits/churches discern which is the right model for them.

Again I have been working with the Learning Network and the Safeguarding officer on providing training resources so whichever model is chosen it can start, run and nurture faith. Some of this training can be online as we develop that, such as All-Together-Now, or HomeGrown, or group training sessions run across the district, or region. Or at a local level coming into a circuit/church to run a specific training event.

### **LAY EMPLOYMENT**

**Mrs Penny Thatcher**

This year I have had the pleasure of meeting and corresponding with more Circuit and Church Leadership Teams to advise and guide them through employment-related situations, arising from issues such as funding availability, gaps in ministerial appointments and the merging of Circuits. The balance of my role is spent administering day-to-day guidance on employment processes and legislative implications.

One of the highlights of last year was to provide some line management training in conjunction with the Regional Learning Network, and it was good to meet some new and some more familiar faces at this event. We are planning a similar event in the near future. Another way in which I am able to offer assistance is to support Superintendents through a review of the work of the employed roles being carried out in their Circuit, to maintain the ongoing efficacy of each post and ensure that the work is still fulfilling the aims of its employer.

As I write, we are all navigating our way through the Covid-19 pandemic-related lockdown, and I am endeavouring to sift through all the information and ensure that those churches and circuits which employ people have access to the most accurate and relevant information and guidance.

As ever, I am available by phone or e-mail for advice and guidance on employment issues, and happy to attend meetings where appropriate. Please do not hesitate to contact me, however small or mundane your query may seem!

### **LEARNING NETWORK**

**Rev Adrian Roux**

In the midst of a period of significant leadership changes with the region, alongside structural changes within the Connexional Team, this has been a good year for the team. We have focussed our Learning and Development work in support of the Methodist Church affirming its calling to respond to God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission, and been able to support, equip and enable the church and its leaders in so many areas.

Administratively we have seen the settling in of the regional forum and the aligned officer' system, and Adrian as coordinator. There has been a welcome to Jon as a new officer in the team (although it feels as if he has been around forever) and a farewell to Kathy. We are still a member short in the team, which does affect our capacity, but by the time you read this, we should be able to announce a new appointment.

The challenges of such a large region (with its own travel oddities) are obvious but as a result we are investigating how to stream events through the internet and make training available online as a means of augmenting our training capacity. Keep in contact and let us see how we can develop it best, to everyone's advantage. The Bible Month training will be the first major event for the new technology, there may well be some hiccups, but it is all about learning and developing.

The other major development across the region has been in our use of the internet and social media for sharing information and organising and booking events. The region has its own Facebook page ([facebook.com/learningnetsi](https://facebook.com/learningnetsi)) and blog ([learningnetsi.org.uk](https://learningnetsi.org.uk)), and a presence on Twitter ([twitter.com/learningnetsi](https://twitter.com/learningnetsi)) and Instagram ([Instagram.com/learningnetsi](https://Instagram.com/learningnetsi)) and, of course, the monthly newsletter the SiGN (you can sign up at [learningnetsi.org.uk/subscribe](https://learningnetsi.org.uk/subscribe)).

If you want to know what training is available, or when an event will be happening, link up. Alternatively, if none of that means anything to you, why not sign up for the Social Media training?

## **WHAT WE'RE DOING IN THE SOUTHAMPTON DISTRICT**

Since September 2019 the Learning Network together with our much-valued local and Connexional partners have delivered multiple learning and development events that the Southampton District has been engaged in, in addition to refreshing our online presence and participating in various projects behind the scenes. Here's a snapshot of what we have been up to:

- We've run: The Mine – the regional conference for lay employees
- Two Circuit Stewards days, one in the Southampton District and one in the South East District
- A new and continuing series of training events for Children's, Youth & Families workers, including:
  - Young People & Mental Health
  - Developing Sustainable Patterns of CYF Ministry
  - Responding Well to Challenging Behaviour
  - Children's, Youth & Families Ministry: The Basics
- Positive Working Together, a course to help people engage with and transform conflict in our churches
- Bible Month Training with Dr. Rachel Starr from Salisbury Methodist Church and live-streamed to locations across Southampton, The South East and Channel Islands Districts.
- *Making Volunteering Work for Everyone*, a course for employed leaders and key volunteers to make volunteering in our churches a simpler, more fruitful process for all involved
- The Fresh Ways Hub, a bi-annual gathering for those interested or involved in fresh



ways of being church.

- Circuit Mission and Vision days, bespoke events to support circuits in their discerning, calling, resourcing and visioning for mission.

We also...

- Continue to meet with church leaders across the region who are exploring the role of Local Lay Pastor.
- Gather with the pioneers in the region who are on the Methodist Pioneering Pathways to share, discern and learn together.
- Stay connected with the Evangelism Enablers groups, learning and sharing with those who attend.
- Support the facilitation of The Crucible Course, hosted in Southampton, in partnership with Urban Expressions.
- Remain in relationship with the South Central Regional Training Partnership, networking, sharing resources and learning with ecumenical partners in the Southampton District.
- Continue to work fruitfully with District Officers Penny Thatcher, Mark Tizzard, Jane Fisher and Sarah Potheary
- Connect national and local resources to assist the running of The Story Project in the Southampton District.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

The following events are scheduled until the end of September 2020. You can register and find details of them all on [learningnetsi.org.uk/events](http://learningnetsi.org.uk/events).

- The Crucible Course, 9th May & 6th June 2020, Ascension Church, Southampton. A course that explores 'Jesus on the margins'
- The Under 5s Retreat, 18th-19th May 2020, St. Columba's House, Woking – a 24 hour retreat for ministers ordained less than 5 years
- Line Managing Lay Employees – 9th June 2020, Trinity Methodist Church, Woking – a training day with input from Penny Thatcher, Lay Employment Advisor from the South East District
- InFormation 'The Outdoor Retreat' – 17th July 2020, Chilton Manor, Alresford. An ecumenical 24 hour camping retreat for pioneers, led in partnership with The South Central Training Partnership and The Guildford Diocese.
- Advanced Social Media & Digital Evangelism Training Day – 16th June 2020, Tilehurst Methodist Church, Reading. A day of workshops and key note speakers encouraging 'next steps' in our use of digital and social media.
- The Mine 2020 (Lay Employees Conference) – 24<sup>th</sup> September 2020, Trinity Methodist Church, Woking – a day-conference for lay employees across the Southern and Islands Region of the Methodist Church

## CONNECT WITH US

We are here to support you, your circuit and your church's learning and development. To connect with us, you can:

- Email [Insandi@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:Insandi@methodistchurch.org.uk)
- Visit our blog at [learningnetsi.org.uk](http://learningnetsi.org.uk)
- Subscribe to our free monthly newsletter at [learningnetsi.org.uk/subscribe](http://learningnetsi.org.uk/subscribe) Find us on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter at [@learningnetsi](https://www.instagram.com/learningnetsi)
- Adrian Roux – Southern & Islands Co-ordinator ([rouxa@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:rouxa@methodistchurch.org.uk) or 07799 900 476)
- Katie Deadman-Vernall – Aligned Officer, Southampton District ([deadmank@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:deadmank@methodistchurch.org.uk) or 07799 902 571)
- Jon White – Aligned Officer, South East District ([whitej@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:whitej@methodistchurch.org.uk) or 07969 985 376)

## LOCAL PREACHERS SECRETARY

**Mr Geoffrey Goodman**

The work of our Local Preachers and Worship Leaders has moved forward again this year and a thank you is due for all the hard work they have put into their preparation and the leading of worship, as well as attending LWPT meetings every quarter in their Circuits.

Thank you for the feedback to the District in your Circuit involving statistics and reports, including the leading of worship.

Local Preachers who have died:

Kennet & Test Valley: Brian Mottram (1992), Jean Frost (1959), and Howard Peters (1958)  
Winchester, Eastleigh & Romsey: Stephen Ings(2010) Rosemary Paul(2002), Ted Ashley(1955)  
Yeovil & Blackmore Vale: Clifford Harris (1957)  
Meon Valley: Michael Gilbert (1992)  
East Solent & Downs: Mary Sendell (1978) and Winifred Parry (1954)  
Christchurch & Wimborne: Miss Joan Frampton (1960); Dr. Margaret McDermott (1968)  
Isle of Wight: Keith Dyer, Margaret Potts (1952), Colin Pidgeon (1991), Diana Wiles (2007)  
Salisbury: Syd Rutt (1964)

These are some of the issues raised by Circuits:

Reviews of Local Preachers; CLPD; Wide range of worship reported (Cafe worship, Messy Church, residential homes, inc. MHA), LA's (one circuit calls them 'Local Fellowship Services'; Advanced Safeguarding Course; Worship: Leading & Preaching/Tutors & Mentors, and changes made by Church House; Chrestos software for producing the plan; Bible Month; Pastoral responsibility of LP/WL meetings; Mixed Economy of ministry (Dispensation for LP's to take Holy Communion).

Worship: Leading & Preaching- last year a new initiative called 'WLP in a year' was introduced. This was intended to be a "fast track" approach that could be completed in a year. It will demand a high level of commitment from students and local tutors, but it is designed to meet a real need, especially for those who sense a call into full-time Christian service. Refer on-line to [info@cliffcollege.ac.uk](mailto:info@cliffcollege.ac.uk). It is costly but with the help of Circuits and District students hopefully will make fast progress towards accreditation and certification.

The District LP/WL Conference was held at Salisbury Methodist Church in June, on the theme of Philippians (Bible Month 2019)

Cliff College are once again holding their Spring & Summer Schools to help student local preachers and worship Leaders with the EXPLORE meetings for WLP. Grants are available from the District GLAD Committee if you feel you need to apply for one of these courses.

Peer Review is being tackled by Circuits. Guidance Notes are available on the Methodist website in the Local Preachers' Secretaries' section.

The new annual re-dedication service for LP's (and WLs!) has been well received across the District.

The Connexional District Officers' Meeting was held in September 2019 at Church House and I represented the Southampton District at the meeting. There was a lot of discussion about Worship: Leading & Preaching (LP & WL Training Course) based on the many alterations that have been made. This is certainly true for Worship leaders who now have three different pathways they can follow which will be decided by the local church and the Circuit.

Finally, my thanks to Circuit LP/WL Secretaries for all their hard work, with much of their work going on behind the scenes. The work of God in our District has been maintained because of their dedication, both spiritually and pastorally.



Please see the website for a full newsletter from the MHA.

### **METHODIST WOMEN in BRITAIN (MWiB)**

**Mrs Chris Stuckey**

Since September we have embarked on a new District Partnership supporting two villages in Fiji, named Nabuna and Vanuakula. These villages are very much at risk from rising sea levels and the increasing number of tropical storms due to climate change. Consequently these villages suffer from increasingly disastrous flooding.

We are raising money in the District to buy two boats, with outboard motors, to ferry people to evacuation centres on higher ground when floods threaten. When the danger subsides, the women can then use these boats to fish and support their families with the catch.

We have undertaken this Partnership in conjunction with the World Church Office, who have provided us with a PowerPoint presentation highlighting the plight of these village people. There are DVDs of the presentation available. We would like to be invited to come and speak about this partnership in any of the meetings or churches of your circuit. Please get in touch with me. ([chris@christom.org.uk](mailto:chris@christom.org.uk))

We are continuing to lead Sunday morning worship services in the District. We have been to Porchester and Whitchurch this February. We are delighted to be able to serve circuits in this way and look forward to future invitations to take a service on your plan.

At our Celebration Day in Romsey last October, Irene Bourne was commissioned as our new District President for a period of two years. Hilary Evans, (MWiB National President) was the speaker.

A group of us will be attending the Connexional MWiB Conference at The Hayes, Swanwick in April. The theme for that weekend is *'Travelling in Hope'*. The keynote speaker will be Jill Baker, former President of MWiB and past Vice-President of the Methodist Conference. We have a District Sharing Day planned for June 4<sup>th</sup> from 10.30am to 3.30pm at Highcliffe Methodist Church. The theme will be *'Water of Life'*.  
Connexional website: [www.mwib.org.uk](http://www.mwib.org.uk)

## **PROPERTY - GENERAL**

**Mr Mark Bell**

As District Property Secretary it is a privilege to work with faithful, dedicated and hardworking people in circuits and churches across our District.

It is also important to place on record the outstanding contribution of colleagues on the District Consents Panel, who offer wisdom and advice as well as exercising careful assessment of schemes submitted.

### **Connexional Property Strategy**

**The Connexional Property Strategy has been introduced to support and challenge us to explore how our property resource can best serve the church's mission.**

**The strategy sets out a series of key questions to help frame our thinking:**

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/property/property-strategy/>

### **Property Returns**

Thank you to those who have completed their returns for this year, the period ending August 2019. Completions as at time of writing (17<sup>th</sup> March) – 75% of churches and 4 circuits.

May I please ask that circuit colleagues review the situation in their own churches to help us achieve a 100% rate of completion this year?

I am aware that, in some circuits, it is not possible for the records to be fully “signed off”, owing to the presence of “ghost properties” – ie those sold in the past, or those which have never existed as Methodist Model Trust Property. Where such issues exist, please send me details, so that, once again, I can take up the matter with TMCP and Property Support. If a record of sale or disposal can be found in “old” circuit meeting minutes, please include this information in the details you provide, as this will speed up any investigation of TMCP records.

### **Quinquennial Inspections**

**New Connexional Guidance for quinquennial inspections is now on the website on the Maintenance page under 'Quinquennial Report' and 'Quinquennial – How to Appoint an Inspector.'** <https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/property/maintenance/>

May I remind everyone of the need to ensure that these inspections are renewed every 5 years. To date, in all circuits, there are omissions. I do recognise, however, that some of those identified as “not done” relate to “ghost properties”, as referred to in the previous paragraph. Again, if difficulties exist, please let me know.

### **Property Projects and Consents**

Substantial progress has been made towards completion of one major building redevelopment scheme during the past year: St James' Road, Southampton. When complete, the accommodation will help drive forward the church's vision of witness through creating "A Space to Share" as a Community Hub.

Around the District there are other exciting schemes being planned, which seek to develop church premises as effective resource bases for mission in their communities. Other projects have, of necessity, had to focus on major repairs to buildings, many of which are either "Listed" or in major conservation areas.

Rather than quoting a lot of statistics about Property Schemes in the District, I refer you to the list of Consents given in the papers of every Synod which show the extent and diversity of work done on Church premises and manses. Every Scheme given consent is shown to be necessary and relevant to God's mission in that place.

I should like to take the opportunity to restate for the benefit of all, and especially those new to the District or starting out, the guidelines on Methodist property and resourcing mission matters:

*The on-line Property Schemes Consent process began operating on 1 January 2010. Synod has delegated to the **District Consents Panel** the responsibility for considering and giving Consent to approved Property Schemes posted to the Methodist Church Consents Website by Churches and Circuits. The DPS manages the process on behalf of the Panel.*

*Synod requires all Schemes costing above £25,000 to be given consent by all available Panel members. For Schemes costing below £25,000, Synod has given the DPS delegated authority to give consent and to report such consents to the entire panel. At each meeting Synod receives and is asked to note a report of recent Schemes.*

*Where premises require structural repairs, or are to be sold or leased, the Property Consents Process also applies.*

*Trustees are strongly recommended to contact the Connexional Conservation Officer, at an early stage, for advice when maintenance work is required on listed buildings or those in conservation areas.*

Members of the District Consents Panel continue to be confident that, in the main, the Process is working effectively. However, as I have said in my previous reports, there appears to be some misunderstanding about the reasons why it is important to set up a Project on the Consents Website and for the Consents Process to be followed. I believe, therefore, that it is worth repeating this advice:

*Apart from the "obvious" situations where circuit, district or connexional grant funding is being sought, the system is useful as a property record for each set of premises. More importantly, by providing checks and balances, it serves to protect Managing Trustees in the event of something "going wrong".*

*Managing Trustees are merely custodians of Model Trust property, not the legal owners. Legal ownership rests with the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (TMCP).*

A range of resources is available to help Managing Trustees on Property Matters:

- *The Consents Process online continues to be regularly updated and includes helpful guidance notes.*
- *“Property Matters” which replaces the old “Property Points” provides useful information updates for Churches and Circuits.*
- *TMCP legal and conservation officers are available to offer specific advice by email or telephone. Details on Methodist Church website: [www.methodist.org.uk](http://www.methodist.org.uk) or dedicated TMCP website: [www.tmcp.org.uk](http://www.tmcp.org.uk)*
- *In appropriate cases Panel Members are happy to arrange visits to Churches and Circuits to enable informed guidance to be given and to offer “first line support” over the ‘phone and by email.*
- *I am also willing to set up training workshops for circuits or groups of circuits, or attend circuit meetings.*

Finally, I offer sincere thanks to all District and Circuit colleagues who have shared with me in these responsibilities during the past year.

## **PROPERTY - MANSES**

**Mr Henry Stroud**

Currently the district has 54 manses occupied by ministers and another 27 residential properties available to let. The numbers change as ministers come and go, and as manses are bought and sold. The committee aims to visit each manse every five years, normally in the year following the quinquennial inspection of the property, but this sequence may not be followed if the occupant is moving on or for other reasons.

As visitors we are another pair of eyes to look at the state of the property afresh and another pair of ears to hear if the house really makes a good home for the minister and their family. The response from those visited seems to be that they regard it as a valuable practice.

In 2019 for various reasons only six manses were visited and the reports were discussed at the annual meeting of the committee. Five were found to be in very good order; matters arising from the remaining report have been taken up with the circuit involved and discussions are ongoing. Concerns about several other manses or potential manses have been acted upon.

We acknowledge the diligent work done by the current small group of visitors. CPD states that *“The district manses committee shall appoint a panel of visitors (at least half of whom shall be women) sufficient in number to ensure that every manse... in the District, is visited by two members of the panel...every five years.”* We must recruit new visitors (especially women!) if we are to accomplish this.

In 2020 arrangements are being made to visit twelve manses.

There is a wealth of information on the Methodist website to help circuit stewards and others to purchase and look after our manses. It can be difficult to find what you want. If you need any help please contact me.

## **SAFEGUARDING**

**Mrs Maureen Hudd**

The Foundation Module of Creating Safer Space has been updated. In addition to the Participant's Handbook and Trainers' Notes there will be a Workbook which includes all handouts and case studies. This will greatly reduce the amount of photocopying that needs to be done locally. The new material is available on the website.

There has been a change of Connexional policy regarding requirements to attend Creating Safer Space Refresher training. The requirement to renew will only apply to the highest level – so if an individual has previously been required to undertake and complete the Advanced level this is what they will need to renew in four years. They will not also have to refresh Foundation level.

Connexion are developing training for Monitoring and Support Groups and also Domestic Abuse. The Connexional Safeguarding Team are currently working on a package of safeguarding training for managing trustees.

Churches will shortly be receiving Safeguarding Posters for display in every church location.

There is now a reciprocal arrangement with the Church of England which means that their C1 level training is an acceptable equivalent to the Methodist Foundation level and their C2 level is equivalent to our Advanced level.

Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2020 has been designated as 'Safeguarding Sunday'. Churches are to be encouraged to pick up this theme for their services on that day. Worship resources will be available in due course.

Between the two Districts (Southampton and The Channel Islands) Jane is currently dealing with 16 live cases and overseeing 17 Contracts of Care. Jane has also been busy lately dealing with a number of blemished DBS disclosures for lay people, the sudden increase in these is puzzling and may be due to a change in the checking process.

At the last District Safeguarding Group meeting concerns were expressed about the lack of rigour in applying Safer Recruitment practice in appointments. Jane will include a reminder in the next Safeguarding Newsletter that this process must always be followed.

Jane and Maureen attended the National Safeguarding Conference on 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> February where the theme was 'Evolution or Revolution' and focussed on the outcomes of the Past Cases Review 5 years on. Excellent speakers were Jane Stacey, author of 'Courage, Cost and Hope' (2015) (The Past Cases Review) and Revd Dr Jane Leach, Connexional Director of Supervision on 'Ministerial Supervision – its impact and potential'. Other speakers included Revd Leslie Newton, Chair of Yorkshire North and East District who spoke on 'Embedding Respectful Uncertainty and Establishing Effective Leadership at all levels of the Church'. The Conference was rounded off by Tim Carter and Revd Dr Jonathan Hustler, Secretary of Conference who reported on the progress of the submissions to IICSA (Telling our story at the hearing, and what we need to do next). The whole Conference was underpinned with worship led by Revd Helen Cameron.

## **SUPERNUMERARIES GIFTS AND NEEDS GROUP**

**Rev David Read**

The group has raised the profile of the ministry to supernumeraries at connexional level by:

- Corresponding with the Secretary of the Conference and the relevant member of the connexional team about the supernumeraries section on Methodist website. There has been considerable development and improvement to the section, which now includes exemplar letters prepared by this group. (A Superintendent Minister

may send such a letter to a new Supernumerary following an initial conversation so that the status and contribution (or otherwise) of the supernumerary to the circuit is clarified and documented.) The website now provides a comprehensive guide to the place and role of supernumeraries and we commend the whole of this section of the website to all members of the synod. It can be found here: <https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/ministry/supernumerary-ministers/>

- Responding to the Faith and Order *Ministry in the Methodist Church* expressing our profound disappointment at the perfunctory reference to Supernumeraries in the report in view of the enormous contribution which supernumeraries make to the life of the church and the need for further exploration of the theology and role of supernumeraries in the church.
- Encouraged the setting up of a connexional working party to reflect on the contribution of supernumeraries to the life and work of the church.

We have also continued to wrestle with how to encourage and support the pastoral care of supernumeraries. We shall be making recommendations to the district policy committee during 2020.

What and how to believe deserve constant thought and reflection throughout our church, but it can become more of an issue for older people, not least supernumerary ministers. The group will continue to reflect on suggestions we could make to aid this process.

## **ZAMBIA**

**Rev Andrew de Ville**

Earlier this year the District, from friends in the URC Wessex Synod, heard of the need to support sisters and brothers of the Lusaka Presbytery of the United Church of Zambia, with whom we have connections, because of the consequences of a severe drought in parts of Zambia. Our friends of the URC Wessex Synod were helping to raise funds and I know that URC/Methodist United churches, and individuals, would have supported this appeal – thank you.

The latest update I have is that £5,000 has been raised which the URC Synod have matched so that £10,000 has been sent to the Lusaka Presbytery. The Moderator, Revd Clare Downing, was due to visit Zambia and the Presbytery as part of her sabbatical, but due to Covid19 this has been postponed indefinitely. However, the funds are now being sent directly to the Presbytery.

It is not too late to make a contribution – you can do so by cheque or preferably by BACS to: ‘URC (Wessex) Trust Limited’ 40-52-40 00006097 with a reference of ‘Zambia’.

The Appeal was arranged to support the Presbytery as it provides help to the many people who are facing the effects of famine spreading across Zambia. Like so many other places around the world the work the Presbytery were doing, is being overtaken by Covid19 Pandemic which hit Zambia a bit later than it arrived in UK, but the Zambian government has acted promptly.

Zambia has suffered badly for decades from the AIDS epidemic, so Zambians know the fear and grief of many people dying young and families bereaved.



Schools and other places of learning were closed on 20<sup>th</sup> March, and gatherings (including church gatherings) were banned the same day. On 3<sup>rd</sup> April, non-essential businesses were closed, including bars and cafes. The Zambian Government does not have the resources to finance closed businesses or provide unemployment relief so, for thousands of people, their means of livelihood have been cut off, and this is the time of year when food supplies are lowest. The harvest is not until June/July.

Zambia is doing some testing for coronavirus and, so far, there have been less than 50 cases identified and quarantined. The two people who have died because of the virus were infected elsewhere, not in Zambia. But everyone is worried about coronavirus, because, if it takes hold, tens of thousands of people will die. (This information is already a few days old and so unlikely to be the up-to-date situation).

One positive result in Lusaka is that the rubbish has been cleared away, even in shanty compounds. Also, with the bars closed, the excessive beer drinking common among men has been reduced.

Please do hold the people of Zambia in your prayers, under lockdown as we are, but with far fewer resources than we have to cope with it. Pray for the hungry in Zambia and for the tradition of sharing and community to be sustained, by God's grace. Pray for the churches as they continue to worship without meeting and to care and help without much money or food.

I'm grateful for news shared by the Wessex Synod, Rev Cecil King and Rev Joseph Tembo in preparing this short report.

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