



Serving the Methodist Church
in South Yorkshire,
North Nottinghamshire
and North East Derbyshire

Reports to Synod April 2022

Chair's Introduction

The year through which we have all journeyed has been another challenging and unusual one for us all and there is much about the last year that we would perhaps not wish to see repeated. Nevertheless, throughout all this time, whether gathered or dispersed, whether together physically or virtually, whether in church or at home, God has still been at work and so has his church.

It would be very easy to think that during the last year or so, nothing much has happened. We've been living under a range of restrictions and unable to do the things we normally do. But this group of reports tell the story of what God has been doing among us and tell the story of how many of you within the district have been responding, serving, reaching out and sharing the love of Christ in many and varied ways "for such a time as this."

I am grateful to all those who work for and serve within the district and who have discovered new ways of enabling us all to continue to share in God's mission. As we gather at this Synod, may we be inspired afresh by the stories that we hear and challenged again to keep telling our story and by so doing, tell God's story. It's what the world needs to hear!

Every blessing

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gill". Below the name is a short, horizontal blue line.

Gill Newton

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Archivist

As in most activities the last two years have been a difficult time for archiving and archivists, with many of the problems centred around the places that normally accept deposits.

Record Offices are now beginning to open up but, in many cases, there are staff shortages and restricted time slots. The Sheffield Record Office is a case in point. Late last year it accepted material, but its acknowledgement did not depict the usual information to enable easy relocation.

At the very best it could only be described as perfunctory, and it is difficult to say if this will be the usual situation for future deposits.

You will be aware that a number of churches have closed or will be closing in the coming days.

It raises the question regarding the preservation of the historic record. It will be my intention to visit every circuit in the near future and to be on hand to advise on material and its preservation.

The Methodist Heritage Committee is arranging a weekend of events at Mow Cop at the end of May and full details can be obtained from their web site.

John Tranter - District Archivist
trants10@tiscali.co.uk

Candidates Committee

It's been a bit of a rollercoaster ride to find my feet in this new role of District Candidates' Secretary, but sometimes roller coaster rides can be enjoyable – and this was one of them!

I am greatly indebted to the members of the committee and especially Rev Gill Newton for her support and guidance throughout the process.

We had one candidate for ministry from our District this year, and it very quickly became apparent that due to long term illness, prior commitments and resignations, we would not have sufficient members on the committee. So, we decided to join together with the Yorkshire West District, who also had one candidate.

This has worked very well, and thanks to zoom, we were able to overcome geographical distances easily and engage in a session on unconscious bias, facilitated by our District EDI officer.

Despite minor variations on the working style of both district committees, we found that zoom also enabled the small groups (each group had two people from each district in it) to get to know each other before the full committee meeting and

interview process. This seems to have been much appreciated and proved to make a difference on the day.

We held our DCC face to face (which really added to the excitement!) and I am very pleased to share that both candidates have been recommended for pre-ordination training at the connexional committee – which is wonderful news!

It has been a huge privilege to journey with the candidates, and to work with such an able and dedicated team of people. It felt a mutually beneficial process for both our Districts, too, and I hope that we will continue to work together in this way in years to come.

Please look out for anyone who might feel called into the ministry. The discernment process often starts with somebody else seeing someone's potential and telling them about it.

Rev Debora Marschner
District Candidates' Secretary

Children & Youth Work

I started in this role as Children and Youth Co-ordinator in September 2021, so have now been in this post for 6 months. Over this time, I've been finding my way around the district and investigating what work has and is happening across the district and how I can best help/support/encourage/equip volunteers, workers, and churches.

I've spent a lot of time getting to know people across the district and I've still plenty of people to get to know. Over this last 6 months I've been looking at how we as a District can best support our circuits. I've been practically supporting facilitating with church councils – asking questions like 'Where is your heart? Where is your passion for the church/community you are in?' Remembering we don't have to do everything we once did, but how can we focus on one or two things really well. Whether that be families, children, or youth work, or third age or supporting other churches that have good work already established. I've been part of a review team for a church – asking families to complete a questionnaire to then identify the areas of strength and weakness of that church and how to move forward.

I'm excited to report we'll be hosting our first "District Take-over" Event at Hesley Woods on Saturday 18 June for all aged 11-18. We'll be asking the young people to take-over our social media for the day; we'll be sharing what it means to belong to a District and taking part in some team building activities onsite too.

We're also planning to host our first District Family Picnic at Bakewell on Saturday 16 July. We'll be meeting together at Bakewell Methodist Church and then

We want to encourage as many as possible across the district to attend 3Generate which will be on 30 September – 2 October 2022 at the NEC in Birmingham.

Please do get in touch with me if you want to chat about all things children, families, or youth work in your setting.

Victoria Loveday - District Children & Youth Co-ordinator
cy@sheffieldmethodist.org

T: 07483 100 864

Communications

As District Communications Officer it's my role to make sure we are communicating in the best ways possible and ensuring the right messages reach the right people, we do this in a number of ways.

We create videos which are shared via our YouTube channel. We use our weekly mailing, which is sent direct into hundreds of email inboxes each week and we use our other digital channels too.

Social media remains one of the main sources people use to obtain news, information and keep in touch with family and friends. This is why it's been important this year to grow our social media following, increase our engagement and create more content than ever before.

The District has four social media channels – Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube. We are also exploring new platforms such as TikTok to reach different audiences. Over the last 12 months our social media followers have been on the rise.

Channel	% increase
Facebook	42
Twitter	22
Instagram	29
YouTube	64

*the challenge for the next 12 months is to reach 100 followers on YouTube so we can have a custom web address for our channel.

How many people do our social media channels reach?

Channel	Average Reach
Facebook	144 per post
Twitter	5,300 impressions per month
Instagram	74 per post
YouTube	388 minutes per month or 6 hours 30 minutes.

After investigating social media trends and speaking with other Communications Officers around the Connexion, we have started sharing regular prayers written and recorded by worship leaders, young people, District officers and staff, and Connexional officers at seasonal times or for significant events in the calendar. These have been well received and it's great to see lots of different faces on our digital channels.

Our District website created by ThenMedia continues to grow with on average 33 visitors per day and is updated at least once a week. Sheffield and Barnsley Circuits who also have websites created by ThenMedia have had an upgrade in the last year. Their website's along with Derbyshire North East use the same template as the district website to show we are all part of one District, but also allowing each Circuit to keep their own personality. Two other Circuits are also in the process of moving their websites to this same template.

One of our themes for this year has been protecting the environment, so we've successfully managed to engage with a printer who offer 100% recycled paper, which is also 100% recyclable, and delivered in a carbon neutral way. Similarly, when seeking a merchandise company, we have chosen one local to Sheffield, and for the first time we are going to be able to offer reusable travel coffee cups and water bottles which are made from 100% recycled plastic and are 100% recyclable. They carry a missional message and are interactive with a QR code to scan.

If you'd like to find out more about how I can support you with your communications needs send me an email to comms@sheffieldmethodist.org

Follow us on social media:

- Facebook @Sheffieldmethodist
- Twitter @SheffMethodist
- Instagram @SheffieldMethodist
- YouTube: search Sheffield Methodist District

Sam Roberts - District Communications Officer

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District Leading Team

The District Leadership team met twice since the last Synod report and the newly formed District Leading Team has met four times this year. Meetings have continued to meet over Zoom as the most effective use of time and resources. They are still seeking new members who will reflect the diversity of the District and more information on this can be found on the District Website:

<https://www.sheffieldmethodist.org/recruitment/vacancies/district-leading-team-member.html>

The Team's regular and continuing work includes setting and monitoring the District's budget, approving grants, and considering requests for authorisations, extensions for On Trial preachers and church closures. During the year the DLT has received a variety of reports about work in the district, in particular from all District employees and the main District committees.

The DLT has considered in detail the budget for 2022/23 and subsequent years, and the Treasurer's report sets out the decisions reached.

Lay Authorisations

Applications for lay authorisations to preside at the sacrament of the Lord's Supper were received as follows:

- from Sheffield Circuit: -
*Michelle Deans (probationer minister); *Nick Waterfield (new - missional)
- from Doncaster Circuit: -
*Jack Key (missional); *Susanna Brooks (renewal); Alice Curry (renewal)
*Christine Ogle (renewal)
- from Rotherham & Dearne Valley Circuit: -
Clive Taylor (renewal); David Guy (renewal); Anne Holmes (renewal)
- From Trinity Circuit: -
Keith Abel (renewal)

The DLT supported these applications, but the Synod may make comments upon these.

*These names were approved last year, but due to an administrative oversight were only approved for 1 year by the President of Conference.

The following lay authorisations will be automatically renewed:

- 3rd year:
Mark Carrick (Derbyshire North East);
Edward Archer Siddall, Wayne Ashton (Rotherham & Dearne Valley)

Extension to LP Training

An extension of 1 year was approved for Linda Stammers (Barnsley Circuit) and Tom Donoghue (Peak Circuit); an extension of 2 years was approved for Stephen Franklin (Barnsley Circuit)

Cease to meet/sale of building

A number of requests to cease to worship, close and sell the buildings across the district have been received as follows:

Sheffield

Stannington (Knowle Top)

Eckington

Derbyshire North East

Barlow & Cuthorpe* The Circuit will take management of the building rather than sell immediately

The Peak

Rowsley * The Circuit will take initial management of the building to explore alternative uses rather than sell immediately

Baslow* The Circuit will take initial management of the building to explore alternative uses rather than sell immediately

Barnsley

Shafton

Pogmoor

Valley Darfield

Rotherham & Dearne Valley

Princes Street

Trinity

Woodsetts* The Circuit will take initial management of the building to explore alternative uses rather than sell immediately

These decisions require Synod approval.

Katrin Hackett - District Administrator

Ecumenical Officer for Derbyshire

I simply report, sadly, that Churches Together in Derbyshire has 'ceased to meet', and its modest residual funds have been given away to ecumenical bodies. One consequence is that Local ecumenical Partnerships are now orphans and, as and when they need support, they will need to make direct contact with their participating denominations.

This is a matter of great personal regret to me, because CTiD has had some good times, and it was a privilege, as my swan song, to be involved in the selection and induction of the new minister of Sinfin LEP on the edge of Derby, where CTiD's long-serving treasurer is a church warden

Revd Paul King

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

This Report covers the two years since I last Reported to Synod.

I start with picking up on my final comment when I reported in March'20, when I said that we needed to be especially aware of being in good contact with those on the fringes of our fellowships during the Covid period. If you have not already done so, I encourage you to take a quick audit of who has come back to worship, and

check that there is not anything you could do to enable those who are choosing not to return, to feel welcome, and to keep in touch with them.

The biggest single piece of work during this period was updating myself on the Connexional guidance on **Unconscious Bias** and delivering a training session for the District Candidate's Committee.

One of the things that I did is to develop the materials, with an experienced colleague, to include a greater emphasis on how to avoid such bias. I am happy to share that additional material.

A major Connexional shift is the acceptance at Conference'21 of an exciting new strategy for **Justice, Dignity and Solidarity (JDS)** to implement the EDI Policy. This if taken seriously will help us re-structure the way churches take decisions so that they are less committee heavy and more prayerfully fuelled for discipleship and action. From Sept'21 a Connexional EDI Implementation Officer - Rev Jill Marsh (who some of us will remember from Rotherham Circuit) has been very active and a great help in encouraging ways of implementing the strategy more locally. I have been connecting with her and making response to consultations. I am currently writing a reflection on how the EDI event that Rev Gill Newton and I attended several years ago has translated into the JDS strategy.

We have a draft EDI Policy for the District awaiting DLT acceptance, and I have been seeking a **working group** of people interested in EDI issues, who will work with me on formulating simple guidance for local congregations on what the JDS strategy means for action on the ground.

Congregations that are struggling with the **Same Sex Marriage decision**, may find a simple summary that I prepared for one church, of key Biblical passages and concepts – with arguments from several perspectives – helpful.

My Report ends with a reminder and a request:

Remember: - Each Circuit is now required to appoint its own EDI officer

Please – consider if you know anyone in your congregation who would enjoy working with others with a passion for God's justice and celebrating that we are all children of God and equally entitled to respect and consideration and supporting people who sadly still do find that the churches across the district do not always live out those values. The **EDI/JDS Working Group** will meet around 3 times by Zoom to develop guidance on the implementation of the JDS in the local church.

Erica Dunmow - EDI Officer
edi@sheffieldmethodist.org

Inter-faith relations

In my report last year, I focused on the ways in which inter-faith and multi-faith bodies, both locally and nationally, had been responding to the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic. This year, I want to concentrate on developments within the District related to inter-faith relations.

In 2021, Liz Wills, Inderjit Bhogal and I began to form, by open invitation, a group of people in the District who have experience of, or an interest in, developing and promoting good relationships with people of other faiths, and who would like occasionally to meet and reflect together. We aim to meet once a quarter over a lunchtime and have decided recently to meet in different parts of the district on each occasion. At the moment there are nine people in the group, the majority of whom are supernumerary ministers; we have met twice, though not everyone has been able to make the meetings so far. We would very much welcome new members, both people with experience of inter-faith relations and those who would like to begin exploring this important subject. If you are interested, please contact me at garethjones11@gmail.com or on 0114 250 8251.

We hope also to be able to link with Connexional initiatives relating to inter-faith relations. Since the ending of the national Methodist Inter-Faith Relations Officer post in 2013, and more recently of the joint Methodist/URC Inter-Faith Relations Reference Group, there has been no dedicated Connexional role. However, it's good that inter-faith is part of the brief of the Assistant Ecumenical Officer, Revd Dr Leão Neto, and the Methodist Church also resources, in different ways, the Touchstone Centre in Bradford - <https://www.touchstone-bradford.org.uk/> - and the St Philip's Centre in Leicester: <https://www.stphilipscentre.co.uk/>. More locally, Liz Wills and I have been invited by the Urban Theology Union on three occasions in the last few years to lead a seminar on Living with Respect and Confidence with People of Other Faiths, and in 2020 I led a three-session extended version of this.

As always, I would be glad to hear about any of your own experiences of inter-faith engagement and any initiatives that you might be involved in.

Revd Gareth Jones - Inter-Faith Officer

We thank Gareth for his time with us and wish him well in the future.

Lay Employment

The trust placed in me to advise and support you in an area that can at times be emotionally charged and where personal relationships often crossover isn't something I take lightly. I continue to learn from those I meet with every interaction further reinforcing my view that the church has the potential to be an employer of choice.

Professionally however the employment landscape does remain challenging. Following Brexit, and then Covid, we have, as employers, had to interpret and adapt areas of the working relationship without the usual comfortable consistency or safeguards of robust employment legislation to fall back on.

Employing bodies across the district continue to go about their business with amazing care and sensitivity (which in turn makes my role so much more straightforward) and the many voluntary groups and committees that support our lay employees should be recognised for the time and energy they devote to this, often in difficult circumstances, particularly over the last two years.

Undoubtedly though challenges connected to Covid remain with us. I don't believe it unrealistic to factor in or to anticipate more workplace disruption in the future and the simplest, most forward-thinking thing we can do is to prepare ourselves and our people by being organised.

It is noted that many of you are still managing difficult employment related situations connected to Covid within your respective areas which reinforces my belief that this is a best time to 'health check' your employment paperwork. From T&Cs to job descriptions, take a moment to review the documents you have and do not hesitate to be in touch.

Over the coming months I will maintain monthly line manager 'drop-in' sessions, by zoom. Please take advantage of these, even if you do not have a specific question. (There is benefit in sharing your concern in a confidential environment, even if it is just to opportunity to talk it through!)

As church doors are again open for worship, I am receiving more face-to-face invitations to facilitate conversations about recruitment strategies, or to assess a specific projects employment need. I am committed to visit as many as I am able over the coming months so, please do let me know if this may be of value to you.

Andrew Crawford HR Officer
hr@sheffieldmethodist.org

T: 07483 106 005

Learning and Development Grants Group

The Learning and Development (L&D) Grants Group manages a devolved budget of learning and development activities across the District.

The application process has been simplified and made more easily available online and you will hopefully have seen the postcards which give details of this. The type of activities which have been supported so far include individual study such as the Short Course at Cliff College, providing resources supporting Godly Play and Messy Church events and support towards the Mental Health conference taking place later this year.

The group would welcome additional members to work with them in scrutinising applications. Meetings are held over Zoom when necessary if more complex debate is needed. <https://www.sheffieldmethodist.org/news/news-stories/learning-development-grants-group.html>

Katrin Hackett (admin)

Sheffield District Learning and Development Group

Learning Network

The role of the Learning Network is to equip and resource the Church through a wide range of contextually relevant learning and development opportunities. Sharing responsibility with others within the Connexional Team and key stakeholders within the districts, circuits and churches.

Contacts:

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Graham Jones: 07799 902574 jonesg@methodistchurch.org.uk

Siggy Parratt-Halbert: 07799 902575 parratt-halberts@methodistchurch.org.uk

Carla Quenet: 07772 979670 quenetc@methodistchurch.org.uk

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Find out about us at: <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-work/learning/network-regions/yorkshire-plus-region/>

Follow us on our Social Networks:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/LearningNetworkYorkshirePlus>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/LNYorkshirePlus>

Manse Panel

A big thankyou goes to the members of the Manse Panel who have the role of being a District Manse Visitors. Every five years Manses which are owned by Circuits and occupied by Presbyters, Deacons or Lay People are visited. The visitors have the privilege of going into these homes; they fill out a Connexional Form J, and have with them the previous report, a summary of the latest Quinquennial and the annual check sheet, when available. Comments are made on the issues that remain outstanding or that the occupants request to be passed on to the Circuit. Once Form J is completed and returned to the Panel secretary, there is liaison with the Circuit administrators and Circuit Stewards about the comments made. A summary for discussion of these the points, which are very good in the main, are discussed at the annual group meeting.

This year has been a strange year as we have needed to catch up with the visits delayed by Covid-19, meaning that we have visited the Manses in the Derbyshire North East Circuit and approximately half of the Sheffield Circuit. Praise goes to the maintainers of these Manses, for although there are some issues to be worked on;

these are in hand, with many QQ and annual check recommendations already attended to. The overriding comments that came back from the visitors were that the presbyters and their family were very pleased with the care and consideration shown to them by Circuits. Due to illnesses and compassionate leave however, there are some visits still to be done.

The Connexion updated Form J last November and this now includes ensuites and a new category where it asks if there is an Energy Performance Certificate issued for the property and we await a recommended minimum level directive. At our meeting we also discussed the installation of charging points for electric vehicles; we were pleased to hear that some circuits have provided such points at the expense of the Circuit. There is also a reminder that all property owned by the Circuit should have a quinquennial including those that are rented out and that a copy, of at least the summary page, sent to the panel secretary.

The leavers from the district had visits had for Charter for Outgoing Ministers and I am delighted to say that the majority these were excellent. There was only one that left a lot to be desired which was very disappointing for both the Visitor and the Circuit involved. This year plans have been made for leaving Charter visits to be made and for the Manses in both Barnsley and Doncaster Circuits to be visited this autumn.

In conclusion may I thank the group for their support and kind comments made as I step down from the role of secretary to the panel at the end of this connexional year.

Lionel Derry
District Manse Advisory Committee Secretary

We thank Lionel for his time with us and wish him well in the future

Methodist Council

Since my report to the Synod in 2021 the Council has continued to meet via Zoom except for its October meeting which was held in person at The Hayes Conference Centre in Swanwick. Having not met in person since January 2020 it was thought that a physical meeting would be beneficial for new members to get to know each other and would also enable those informal conversations to take place between members that can often lead to a more informed conversation during the formal meetings.

Using Zoom has enabled several extraordinary meetings of the Council to be called at short notice to deal with some urgent business. One of these meetings was to agree to the purchase of 25 Tavistock Place as the new home for the Connexional Team, and to agree the necessary financial and legal arrangements. Details of this purchase, and the sale of 25 Marylebone Road, are still commercially sensitive so remain confidential for the moment, but it can be said that the purchase and

refurbishment of the new premises will be adequately covered from the proceeds of sale from 25 Marylebone Road.

These are some highlights of the business brought to the Council at its most recent meeting in January 2022.

The consolidated accounts for 2020-21 were adopted. It was reported that although there had been a drop in income during 2020-21 there had also been a drop in expenditure and fund balances at the end of last year compared with the year before were significantly better.

Members took part in group discussions based on a paper on the work around Impact Assessment. This paper addresses how decisions made by the Conference impact on the workload of the Connexional Team. Groups were asked how can we make better decisions about what work the Church does in the future.

In a report on the appeal for contributions to the Pensions Reserve Fund we were told that 758 individual donations totaling £5.7M had been made. However, some of these were made on behalf of all the churches in a circuit so the number of churches, circuits and Districts that have responded to the appeal is greater. Although this amount is significantly below the target set, the Pension Reserve Fund has benefited from a recovery in investment values and additional income from property sales. A more detailed paper will come to the Council in April. It is not too late for Circuits and Churches to make contributions to this fund, more information and how to do that can be found on the Methodist Church website <https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/finance/pension-reserve-fund/>

The Secretary of the Conference presented an update on Oversight and Trusteeship, which he described as “multi-layered and complicated work” but said significant progress had been made in a number of areas. Work is progressing around the Connexional Council which will replace both the Methodist Council and the Strategy and Resources committee, and a considerable amount of work has been done to bring into being a smaller trustee body with a clear and defined relationship with the Conference. Proposed changes to the Deed of Union will be brought to this year’s Conference along with a review of the committee structure.

An update on the review of the Complaints and Discipline processes was presented. We were told that the review group needs to wait for the final report of the Independent Enquiry into Child Sexual Abuse which may have bearing on how the review is completed. It was agreed that the review should be brought to the Conference of 2023.

A progress report on Action for Hope was received. Work is being done to develop a Methodist Faith Plan to work towards net zero carbon emissions for the Methodist Church in Britain, the plan’s three key areas are: assets, wisdom, and lifestyles.

Rachel Lampard gave an outline of the justice project, Walking with Micah.

A report of the Task Group for Regional and District Structure Planning was received, the Council directed the Task Group to begin detailed work to reduce the number of Districts.

The Safeguarding Policy manager, Nicola Sylvester, presented a paper which proposed an audit framework for safeguarding practice across the Connexion. This framework is designed to assess independently the effectiveness of safeguarding structures and processes across the Connexion. The Council requested that there be full consultation and further work on the framework with District Safeguarding officers and others.

Full reports of non-confidential business are available on the Methodist Church website <https://www.methodist.org.uk/about-us/the-methodist-conference/methodist-council/latest-council-papers/>

David Burton
Methodist Council Representative

Methodist Women in Britain

Last June we finally met together at Whittington Moor Methodist Church for our District Day. Rev Val Ogden was the speaker, reflecting on her time in Ministry and of her time spent in Fiji

After our meal, Communion was celebrated and for many it was the first time since Covid lockdown.

The Rededication of the District President took place at Bents Green Methodist Church in October Rev Graham Wassell was the speaker it was good to be able to worship together.

December saw us enjoy a Carol service at Frechville Methodist Church followed by a Christmas Dinner which was enjoyed by all who came. The profit from the dinner was divided between MWiB and our project this year - Dustbin twinning with the third world countries. It would be appreciated if churches would consider supporting this project.

This year there are two Quiet days planned; at Castleton on Wednesday 6th April and at Sprotborough Methodist Church the following day, both from 10am- 3 30pm. The Quiet Days will be led by Rev Lisa Quarmby with the theme "Lord of Sea and Sky (Lindisfarne)"

The District day will be on Thursday 16th June when the President of MWiB, Ruth Parrott, will be speaking about AGLIT - Mawli. Venue to be arranged.

Anyone wishing to attend either of the quiet days should contact Carol Wignell
T: 01246 433216

Pam Meek
MWiB Sheffield District President

Ministerial Development Review

Ministerial Development Review is a process which enables Presbyters and Deacons to reflect, with input from others, on how their ministry is being experienced and fulfilled both in relation to the Church as a whole and within the context in which their ministry is being exercised. Every Presbyter or Deacon in circuit or district appointment, every District Chair and every Supernumerary who has entered into a formal agreement with a Circuit to undertake pastoral responsibility in one or more Local Churches is required, by S0743, to engage in Ministerial Development Review.

The process envisages that there will normally be reports on three areas as a result of the review: -

1. **Hopes and Goals** – Ministers are encouraged to record up to three hopes or goals which have been identified as a result of reflecting on their ministry.
2. **Points for action regarding the wider context** – If there are changes or developments within the circuits / district / Connexion which have implications for the Minister that need to be discussed with people not involved at the review meeting the points should be recorded and the nature and extent of disclosure would be agreed by the three participants.
3. **Areas for learning and development** – It is intended that the review will assist in identifying learning and development opportunities that the Minister can take up to enhance their existing gifts and skills.

In the Sheffield District it has been acknowledged, in discussion with the Circuit Superintendents, that the requirement to undertake Supervision and MDR places an extra burden on all concerned. Consequently, it has been agreed that, until such time as the Connexion wide situation is clarified, one of the supervision sessions, could be regarded as discharging the obligation under S0743, providing that that supervision session includes consideration of input or feedback from others.

The topic of Supervision and MDR was the subject of a report to the 2021 Conference “40 Reflective Supervision Report”, paragraph 4.5.2.1, of the report, states: -

The research conducted in 2019-20 into the implementation of the Interim Supervision Policy revealed a lack of clarity about the relationship between supervision and MDR, a lack of confidence in MDR and concerns about the

sustainability of both processes. The research report recommended that an audit of current practice and a clarification of the relationship between MDR and supervision be undertaken.

It is clear from the report that the intention is to introduce an effective system of 360 review that enables ministers and those in lay ministry to receive feedback on a regular basis. The aim being strengthen healthy engagement in reflective practice that is responsive to local needs and mission priorities without confusing the supervision and oversight roles.

The timetable for the introduction of a new system of 360 review is unclear, in the meantime all Ministers, in the Sheffield District, have been encouraged to engage in the MDR process so that they are well placed once the new system is implemented.

John Lashmar
MDR Officer

Mission Development Support Worker

Last year we officially launched our new [strategy for resourcing mission](#): *for such a time as this*. Despite another year of coronavirus disruption we have started to make progress on each of our core priorities. Much of this progress is measured locally – the “district” exists only as a sum of local expressions of Christian community and mission. A few highlights are described here, but do keep telling us your stories.

Growing Disciples

We have continued to offer communities of practice for those involved in similar ministries, such as our Ministry with Older People group, making use of the technologies now available to us. Some of us are experimenting with the Methodist Way of Life resources as we work out what accountable small group discipleship could mean for a changing church. Victoria Loveday has been appointed as our Children & Youth Co-ordinator and is resetting how we resource growing younger disciples and their supporters.

Passionate Contextual Worship

We offered district wide online worship in April 2021 but have not since as people return to local patterns. We will restart occasional large scale district celebrations when the time feels right. We have continued to support local expressions of digital and hybrid worship and are preparing more opportunities to develop practice in this emerging area.

Sharing Stories

Reach of our emailed communications and social media continues to grow. District-wide media offerings have flexed in response to lockdowns and local needs. We

have settled into a pattern of offering prayers at key times in our calendar, celebrating local mission through stories and themed blogs.

Transforming Mission

We have spent the last year exploring our New Places for New People pilot, which aims to start new Christian communities in and near Chesterfield and are appointing a pioneer to lead this work. At our recent Mission Forum we discussed with representatives from each of our circuits how we might prepare to start more new congregations in the coming years. All of our circuits are currently, or have recently reviewed, plans for mission. We continue to support people through change which is sometimes exciting and also painful and complex.

During the year the District awarded grants in support of the new Hemsworth Little Fishes soft play centre (£23k), Sprotbrough Methodist Church families & Baby Basics worker (£12k), Hub at Hope development worker (£12k).

Simplifying Procedures

We have rebuilt and modernised the district database, which is now starting to improve and pinpoint our communications. With Andrew Crawford's appoint we have reset the district HR Officer role so we can provide a more hands on approach to lift the burden of fiddly employment paperwork.

Properties Fit For Mission

Tom Rattigan has been appointed as our new Missional Property Enabler, and is already working with many of our churches. Several major building projects were completed across the district, with a few more creative re-imaginings of how we might use our property assets bubbling under the surface. Following our last synod, we have more registered Eco Churches.

During last year we awarded property grants to Mosborough (£7k) and Harworth (£1k).

Your mission is the mission of the district, so I am always happy to speak with churches of any size as you map your way forward or if you want someone to bounce ideas off.

Neil Harland – District Mission Enabler

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Peak Park Rural Development

However challenging, exhausting, and frustrating the past year has been the presence of God continues to be witnessed in the Peak Park enjoyment and excitement have also been present. New projects are coming to light and new people coming forward. God is good! Here is a snapshot...

Edale Chapel

Is in a remote valley, the chapel is a building site, yet even in the bleakest of weathers, good people will gather to worship and share the gospel story. The building project and hence project development has been challenging however, whilst still waiting for further planning agreements, progress to the outside of the building has been made and outdoor worship has been well attended. Hopefully next year will see works completed.

The Hub

I am delighted that we have secured funding to extend the Pioneer Ministry post for a further three years. Numbers increase from toddlers to grandparents. Worship is shared on WhatsApp or gathering in person we walk, bike ride, picnic etc in forests and fields, sunshine or rain.

Lowberdale Farm (A Care farm)

Supports young people in need of extra help. I have confidently resigned the post of chair, in the knowledge that a new strong leadership team is now in place. I will of course continue to share stories like this - A young man who had opted out of education and had limited social development skills has this year passed his tractor tests and gained employment, since being part of the Lowberdale Project. Good work!!

Townend Garden Project

Is thriving, the highlight was the virtual visit of the President of conference who was delighted to hear of the work and gave great praise to the team who set up and run the project. A good harvest was gathered and celebrated. A successful garden tea party that supported the isolated elderly led to plans to hold a regular isolation busting project in the in the coming year. The mental wellbeing team are using the garden and we have links with social prescribers. Funding for a greenhouse means we can meet in all weathers.

Rural Villages in the High Peak Partnership (Flagg, Monyash, Earl Sterndale, Hollingsclough)

The need for creative action enabled some to 'come outside' to share good news to passers-by through visible worship and outside displays. The journey to a new way of being church has no clear road at the moment. What is clear is without commitment to find new ways of sustaining mission to the rural margins, Christian presence and the Gospel stories will not be heard in vast areas of rurality very soon.

Messy Church

Messy Takeaway has continued with face to face if possible. The willingness for local families to re-engage remains strong with renewed enthusiasm for this year.

Ecumenical working.

I now meet with the Anglican group who minister in the area. We share very similar stories. Many churches are becoming Chapels of Ease or Festival Churches as they face the difficulties of sustainability.

Ecumenical Work in Tideswell

Key people have been unable to commit time during the year. The intention is still high so it is hoped further progress will be made in the coming year.

Positively Rural

This 90min quarterly zoom gathering has gone from strength to strength, The speakers are interesting and topical practitioners in rural ministry. Numbers viewing continue to increase. I am excited for the potential of this group in the coming year.

Pilgrimage.

The renewed interest continues to bring pilgrims to the Peak Park with a recent increase in numbers walking in the area. The Tissington Chapel Pilgrimage book has had to be reprinted as more copies were needed. Work with circuit stewards is exploring the possibility of creating a new 'Wesleyan Way' through the Peak Park.

Deacon Lorraine Brown

Peak Park Rural Development Enabler

Persian Ministries

I started my role as the Farsi speaker development enabler in August 2021, working in mainly Doncaster, Hull, and Sheffield. My role is to provide teaching and discipleship training in Farsi, pastoral care, nurturing new believers, giving birth to new fellowships and so on.

Doncaster:

We have a weekly Sunday service and bible study where I have been providing solid biblical teaching for both seekers and new believers. I also invest into the life of mature Christians and potential leaders for future. We have a congregation of 20 members with many new asylum seekers who attend the meeting periodically. We have leisure activities both for men and women including Table tennis, Zomba dance club where anyone regardless of their faith are welcome to participate. A newly arrived couple with a 7-year-old son is being trained in order to develop their gifts and skills in teaching and leadership. On Tuesday, we have a group of 10 people who join the bible study along with a dozen who join us on zoom from as far as Iran. As I am writing this report, we are celebrating Persian new year where we are going to serve 20 Afghan refugees who have probably never been to a church let alone heard the Gospel in their language. This group is part of the Afghanistan's national women football team who were recently located in Doncaster. We are hoping to be able to reach out to all 130 of them with the Gospel and God willing, see some come to know Jesus and put their trust in Him.

Hull:

Every Thursday, I go to Hull and participate with the open doors project. I run an alpha course type of teaching followed by a deeper teaching session which is to include both seekers and new believers. One couple is showing interest in leadership and teaching which I am investing in on the side by encouraging the man and helping him in how to prepare a bible study and so on. The group are mainly none or new believers that has grown from 3 to 12-14 regulars.

Sheffield:

After a long time, I have now developed a relationship/partnership with the city of Sanctuary where asylum seekers and refugees receive many kinds of support. With ongoing partnership with Victoria Hall and City of Sanctuary, in near future I will be having out-reach programs and bible studies at room 35, chapel walk, where Farsi speakers will be reached and served both with their emotional, physical, and also spiritual needs.

Arman Ghamari - Persian Ministry Development Enabler

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Probationers' Committee

We have four probationers in the Sheffield District this year. Mark Carrick, stationed in the Derbyshire North East Circuit, is now in his second year of Probation. This year we welcomed Emily Hoe-Crook as a Deacon in the Trinity Circuit, Michelle Deans as a presbyter in the Sheffield Circuit, and Claude Mwansa Kimpinde, also in the Sheffield Circuit, who is an ordained probationer from the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. Claude attends the Probationers Group for fellowship, learning and support, and is assessed at Connexional Level.

Mark, Emily, and Michelle are all undertaking studies through The Queen's Foundation in Birmingham. Mark and Michelle are studying for a Masters in Theology and Transformative Practice (Newman University); Emily is studying for a Masters in Theology, Ministry and Mission (Durham University).

The group meets regularly with Rev Gill Newton and the District Probationers' Secretary. Several of our meetings have been on Zoom as a precaution due to the pandemic. All four probationers attended a regional probationers' retreat in January at The Briery in Ilkley. The retreat was led by Matt Finch from the Connexional Team exploring the concept of re-wilding.

In January Mark shared with the group his Gospel in Context presentation which was a creative stop-motion video using Lego to illustrate the work of a project in a church in his section. For their orientation projects, Michelle shared her reflections on the possibility of a lunch club in her context, and Emily shared with us reflections on mission and ministry at The Crossing Church and Centre in Worksop. All three presentations were inspiring and informative. It has been encouraging to see how

God is using each of our probationers in their different contexts. Their enthusiasm is uplifting.

Alongside this all the probationers are supported by members of the District Probationers' Committee. We had an informal gathering in early December which gave an opportunity over lunch for Committee members to get to know the probationers in advance of our formal Committee in March. Time was also given to prepare both Probationers and Committee Members for the work of the Spring Committee. All members of the Committee commit to uphold the probationers and their families in prayer, and as members of the Synod I encourage us all to do likewise.

Each probationer minister has not had a 'normal' early years' experience of ministry, starting off as probationers during the Covid-19 pandemic with its associated restrictions, however they have risen to the challenge. It has been encouraging to receive positive reports on them from The Queen's Foundation, their Circuits, associated Worship Development Groups and, in the case of Emily, a report from the Warden of the Methodist Diaconal Order. In addition, Mark, Emily, and Michelle produced self-evaluations for the District Committee. It has been good to see evidence of their fruitfulness in this special formational time.

Thanks are given to all those who support our probationers in whatever way. I would particularly like to record my personal thanks to Rev Sean Adair for covering this role while I was on Sabbatical in the Autumn.

Revd Tracey Harris
Sheffield District Probationer Secretary

Property

After joining the Sheffield District earlier this year, my time has been spent mostly getting up to date with Methodist processes and procedures that are in their very nature very methodical. and getting to know buildings and churches around the district.

We have some fantastic buildings both north and south, east, and west and I hope that my role will let those buildings be better used for years to come. The biggest challenge facing property now is the management of them both in cost and time. The size, heating bills and usage of these buildings can be immense and working with councils to help with better understanding those buildings and how to manage them well. All of this is so that they can be used by more people and the goal is for Jesus to be known in those places, this means as well as a mission plan and outcomes that come from that there also needs to be a business plan in place for people to be able to progress both the Christian mission but also the practicalities of running a building on a commercial footing.

Buildings and property, I hope to be a way to start conversations about what the people in it and why is there for in the first place, why it's based in usually the heart of the community and why we should be looking outside of that building more than we should be looking inside of it.

There are also some new and exciting projects arising, Broom, Victoria Hall, Grove Street as well as circuit and district-wide initiatives taking place.

I would flag up the monthly drop-in and training sessions that will be starting in early May. These will be a great place to get some input and network as well.

I would like to thank everybody thus far for the welcome and help that you've offered, I hope that now over time this may be able to be repaid in some way. I have the pleasure of working with some passionate, wise, fantastic people and it's a real honour to serve the churches that we do.

I am guided by the knowledge that data and forecasts and the wisdom of those who have come before us, the more information the better and the sooner we start a conversation the more I may be able to help. The church is currently shrinking in number and has done for a number of years, many churches would now be classed as at risk and as we close more and more buildings, I hope and pray that we see growth, new churches for new people, different ways of doing church and different views in those buildings.

I look forward to dreaming, hoping, and praying with you all.

Tom Rattigan - Missional Property Enabler
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Sabbaticals

Despite the continuing uncertainties and restrictions imposed by Covid 19 ministers have continued to take sabbaticals during this past year, adapting their plans where necessary. It has been good to read the reports of how God has worked in sometimes unexpected ways, providing opportunities for renewal and recreation within the gift of the sabbatical.

During this connexional year we have, with deep sadness, marked with prayer and silence the death of Rev Jen Mullis, who was due to have a sabbatical.

The DSAG has received and approved reports from Revs Tracey Harris, Gill Newton, and Cameron Stirk, describing their sabbatical experiences and insights gained. The group has also considered and approved prospectuses together with sabbatical timings and arrangements for Revs Tim Crome, Mark Goodhand, Gareth Jones, Debora Marschner, Adrian Perry, and Angela Potheary. It has agreed that the sabbatical for Rev Mick Neal be delayed until April 2023. The list of those due to take sabbaticals in the 22/23 Connexional year includes Deacon Jackie Wright, Revs Julie Coates, Ashley Cooper, Jonathan Gichaara, Judith Jessop, Margaret

Mwailu (whose prospectus we have already approved), Jill Pullan, Lisa Quarmby, and Christine Sutherby. The DSAG expects to consider their sabbatical prospectuses along with reports of any completed sabbaticals at its next meeting which is currently scheduled for October 2022.

We are very aware of the importance of the Local Sabbatical Support Groups (LSSG) in enabling sabbaticals by supporting ministers and their families and ensuring adequate cover during sabbatical periods, as well as helping to explain the purpose and value of sabbaticals to local churches. We are grateful to all members of LSSGs for the time and commitment they give to this and the DSAG provides a Terms of Reference document to help them in their task.

I am very grateful to the members of the District Sabbaticals Advisory Group – Rev Gill Newton as District Chair, the District MDR Officer (John Lashmar) and two lay people or supernumerary ministers (Agnes Tranter and Rev. David Hunter), for the time and care they give to the process of considering and approving sabbatical prospectuses, giving advice, receiving reports, and supporting ministers.

Revd Liz Wills
District Sabbaticals Officer

Safeguarding

The last 12 months, in the world of safeguarding, have been enlightening at both a local and national level.

In June 2021 I wrote to churches & circuits asking them to complete the annual Safeguarding Audit. My focus was on the knowledge Church Council / Circuit Leadership Team members have regarding safeguarding practise in their church or circuit.

Traditionally safeguarding has been the work of just one person, the Church or Circuit Safeguarding Officer. However, the responsibility for safeguarding lies with the Church Council or Circuit Leadership Team. No longer is it acceptable for one person to be involved, now we have to demonstrate that safeguarding is indeed 'Everyone's Business'.

Analysis of the safeguarding audits resulted in two new pieces of work, both concerning safeguarding at a church level.

The first concerned the work Church Safeguarding Officers are tasked to do, as mentioned in the Church Safeguarding Policy. The Methodist Church has very clear expectations about safeguarding at church level, but these expectations are not easy to identify or understand unless time and effort is taken to read numerous other policies and to link work together. In order to simplify the task, I have been writing to Church Safeguarding Officer, reflecting on one or two of their tasks at a time, explaining what the Methodist Church require. If templates, leaflets, or

policies were needed I created and shared them. My hope is that best practise expectations become embedded, and that Church Safeguarding Officers do not do more than is required of them.

The second piece of work is the creation of a serious of training session for Church Council Members called 'How to Support Your Church Safeguarding Officer'. The primary aim for the sessions was to create a support network for Church Safeguarding Officer. Being a safeguarding officer can be a lonely job and a lack of support and understanding can be frustrating and demoralising. Whilst my main focus was on the wellbeing of safeguarding officer, I also recognised that these sessions would develop Church Council members safeguarding knowledge. This deeper understanding will help Church Council members fulfil their responsibility and create a strong foundation for all other work and outreach their church provides.

Some may question why I am pushing a new approach to safeguarding in this Connexional year. The answer stems from the IICSA investigation into Safeguarding in Faith Organisations. The report was published last September, and we are currently waiting for the publication of subsequent recommendations. We have known for a while that the report will have consequences. We know, for example, that each District will have their safeguarding work externally audited starting next year. My hope is that the work we have been doing, and continue to do this Connexional year, will stand us in good stead and allow us to feel confident in the proactive work we do to create and safe and welcoming places for everyone to meet and worship together.

Alison Hill - District Safeguarding Officer

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Stationing

We started the 2022 stationing round in May of 2021. Both the meetings with individual presbyters and the training for Circuits were held on Zoom, with me as the District Lay Stationing Representative and Revd Sean Adair, Deputy Chair of District, as our Chair of District was on sabbatical.

We held our District Stationing Forum on 14th July 2021, again on Zoom. All Circuits in the District were invited to attend and share information on their particular circumstances and hopes for the future development of ministry. This did give an early indication of which appointments we would wish to be critical should they enter stationing, and the possibility of probationer presbyter and diaconal appointments.

The October 2021 conversations with our two presbyters entering stationing were in - person meetings at the District Office. The training for our two Circuits seeking appointments was held on 19th October at Central (Aston) Methodist Church.

At the beginning of the 2022 stationing round there were nine presbyters and one deacon across four Circuits prayerfully seeking to discern God's calling upon their ministry. As time progressed, four indicated their desire to sit down, four sought and were offered re-invitation, and two entered stationing. Five presbyteral appointments for two Circuits were identified and submitted to Stationing, with one of the appointments designated 'critical.' By the end of Stationing Matching Group 3, three were matched, one was without a match, and one was converted into a diaconal appointment. During this period, a further profile was submitted as 'critical' for a Superintendent post for the Sheffield Circuit.

We thank God for very positive and encouraging visits and the issuing of letters of understanding to our four incoming ministers. So, subject to stations being called at the Methodist Conference, we will welcome Deacon Alison McCauley to the Barnsley Circuit, and Revds Naomi Cooke, Mike Jones, and Phillip Peacock to the Sheffield Circuit. At the time of writing, the two outstanding appointments for the Sheffield Circuit remain in the Stationing process.

We will soon be starting the stationing and re-invitation process for September 2023. The situation continues to be that there is a significant gap between ministers available in stationing and Circuit appointments, with the expectation that this will worsen. There was a higher proportion of Superintendent posts in Stationing this year. The Stationing Committee is to begin work in reviewing the current process of Stationing. We continue to encourage all Circuits to prayerfully consider their local situations including staffing, ministerial and lay, in relation to Circuit Mission Plans. Circuit Invitation Committees should be appointed this month. A stationing leaflet, giving May and October 2022 dates for training for Circuits and conversations with ministers, is being produced and will be circulated in due course. The Code of Practice 2023 for all involved in the Invitation and Stationing Process of Deacons and Presbyters will be published this May. There are currently seven presbyters in five circuits across the District who are starting to think and pray about the future direction of their ministry. Your prayers are invited for the process to be positive and affirming, and for sensitivity and integrity throughout.

Gill Daly

Lay Stationing Representative

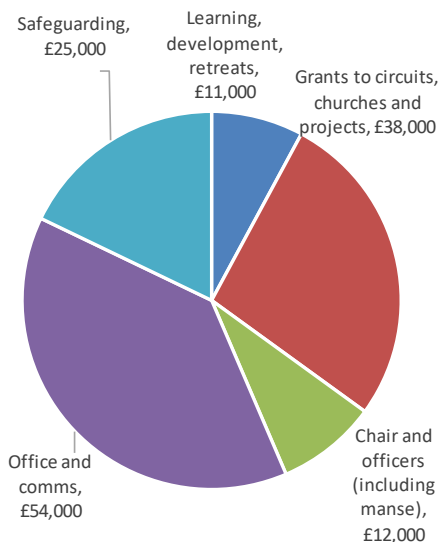
Treasurer

Full statutory District accounts for 2020/21 have been presented to the District Leadership Team for approval. Copies are available on request. A summary of the District finances is provided here:

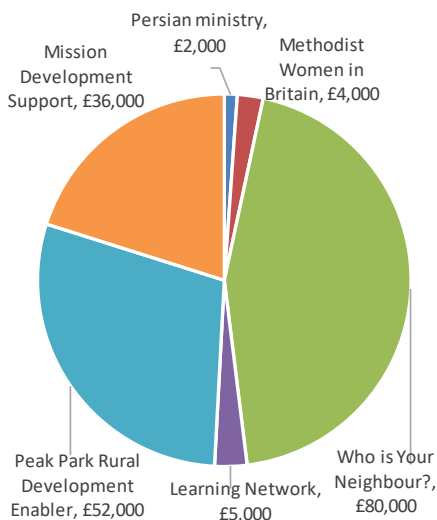
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
INCOME					
Unrestricted	130	119	108	100	99
Restricted	154	205	282	149	132
District Advance Fund	176	178	159	202	170
Total Income	460	502	549	451	401
EXPENDITURE					
Unrestricted	112	108	103	88	111
Restricted	180	263	288	271	200
District Advance Fund	45	116	157	261	76
Total expenditure	337	487	548	620	387
SURPLUS/ (DEFICIT)					
Unrestricted	18	11	5	12	(12)
Restricted	(26)	(58)	(6)	(122)	(68)
District Advance Fund	131	62	2	(59)	94
Total surplus/ (deficit)	123	15	1	(169)	14

The main source of unrestricted and Advance Fund income continues to be contributions from our circuits. £25,000 was transferred from general funds to restricted funds during the year as match funding for external grants totalling £143,000. Requests for advance fund grants were lower than in previous years, but we expect these to increase again as churches and circuits are better able to make plans for future growth.

UNRESTRICTED AND ADVANCE FUND SPEND



GRANT FUNDED SPEND



FUNDS HELD AND OUTLOOK	31-Aug-21 £'000	31-Aug-20 £'000	31-Aug-19 £'000	31-Aug-18 £'000	31-Aug-17 £'000
CLOSING FUNDS					
Unrestricted funds	286	268	259	316	376
District Advance Fund	160	54	36	34	117
Restricted funds	118	119	131	75	101
Total funds	564	441	426	425	594

Months unrestricted expenditure held as liquid funds	8	6	4	13	16
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Our reserves policy is to hold between three and six months unrestricted expenditure as liquid funds (i.e., cash and debtors, less creditors). We are temporarily holding more funds than required under our reserves policy due to lower travel and event costs during the pandemic but anticipate that funds will reduce in line with our policy over the coming year.

Neil Harland - District Treasurer

Worship and Preaching

We welcome our newly appointed Worship & Preaching Officer – Revd Claire Rawlinson.

My name is Claire, and I am a presbyter in the Barnsley circuit. I have recently been appointed as District Worship and Preaching Officer. My role is to support the training of local preachers and worship leaders, as well as supporting their mentors and tutors. Alongside this I will be involved in the continued development of worship and preaching across the district, looking at alternative forms of worship as well as supporting people with the district strategy to develop compassionate, contextual worship. I look forward to working with you all to support you and help you develop your worship in ways that suits your context.

Local Preachers who have died since last report:

We note at this Synod the passing of the following Preachers since the last report in 2020.

Sheffield

Jean Fletcher accredited 1968, died 17 April 2020
 Alan Kennell, accredited 1965, also died 17 April 2020
 Eileen Wragg, accredited 1962, died 17 October 2020.
 Harold Weeder, accredited 1964, died on 14 August 2021.
 Elaine Needham, accredited 1986, died 5 November 2021
 Roy Davison, accredited 1976, died 9 March 2022.

Derbyshire North East

Mary Turner, accredited 1986, died 5 April 2020

The Peak

Peter Horner, accredited 1967, died 1 August 2020

Doncaster

Michael (Mike) Summers, accredited 1967, died 22 November 2021

Barnsley

William (Bill) Marsden, accredited 1970, died March 2020

Diana Wheeler, accredited 2017, died April 2021

Rotherham and Dearne Valley

Mr William (Bill) Campbell, accredited 1952, died 21 March 2022

Mrs Eileen Beevers, accredited 1959, died 23 June 2020

Trinity

Graham Lee, accredited 2015, died July 2020

Apologies for any missing information which was not available at the time of writing. Please let Claire know of any omissions.

Please hold the Worship Leaders and Local Preachers who resource the worship life of our District's Churches in your prayers. Give thanks for them. Encourage them. Pray for God's blessing on their ministries.



For Such A

Sheffield
Methodist
District

Time As This