

Sheffield **Methodist** District

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



South Yorkshire - North Nottinghamshire - North East Derbyshire



Sheffield, Chesterfield, Bolsover & Staveley, Peak, Doncaster, Barnsley Rotherham & Dearne Valley, Trinity



Reports to Synod April 2020

The **Methodist** Church 

Dear friends

As I write this, we are still experiencing some lockdown measures and for many of us, life has taken on a completely new pattern. Our movements are limited, some of our larger gatherings are not allowed and our contact with each other is now achieved remotely and virtually most of the time.

However, the church is still very much alive and kicking and in many senses our ability to connect with each other and with those beyond the church has increased. I am hugely grateful to so many of you who have imaginatively and creatively found ways of staying in touch with each other, worshipping together and sharing our stories and God's story with the wider world.

All manner of opportunities for sharing faith are now being picked up in ways that we might have thought we didn't have either the time or the skills to achieve before and we are seeing more people in our communities sharing in worship with us than we have for some time.

So, despite the strangeness of our current circumstances, there is still much to celebrate and this annual set of reports provides us, yet again, with a snapshot of all that has been happening across the District in the last year.

I continue to be thankful for and greatly encouraged by all those of you who hold office in the life of the District and who faithfully serve the District, Circuits and local churches in a wide variety of ways.

Please take time to read these reports, to pray for the various aspects of the life and work of the District as it seeks to support all those of you in the local churches and circuits. Please, also, in these days, pray for continued vision and hope for a future which may look very different from the past, remembering that these days will pass and that with God, the best is always yet to be!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gill". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke underneath the name.

Gill

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35 Chapel Walk

Following discussion within the 35 Chapel Walk management committee in autumn 2019 regarding the long term viability of the project, and subsequent decision by the DLT, January 2020 saw the closure of the 35 Chapel Walk gallery and 35 Chapel Walk art business.

Led by the management committee, under the direction of the District the closure was completed in an orderly and professional way acknowledging the huge investment of those who originated the project, and being especially sensitive to the three members of staff employed in various capacities across the project. All three members of staff had their employment terminated in January, with redundancy packages in place, as appropriate to their employment status.

January 2020 saw the final formal meeting of the management committee, although various members have continued to support the practicalities of closure in the months since – not least facilitating the sale and distribution of the assets of the project. At the final meeting time was taken to thank every person in the group for their contributions over the years as staff, volunteer, line manager, art consultant, curator and treasurer/minute taker.

Whilst this has been a difficult and sad time for many surrounding the project – staff, volunteers, clients and supporters alike, I believe this can be a time of learning for the District in relation to new forms of missional church. This was certainly the hope expressed at the DLT meeting in autumn 2019, and of the 35 Chapel Walk management committee at its last meeting in January 2020. The process of project evaluation now begins, as requested by the District, and I am delighted that Jane Bingham has been approached to help the District reflect on what can be learnt from the work and ministry of 35 Chapel Walk, and evaluate ways forward.

As I step down from the responsibilities as Chair, I wish to acknowledge the work of Rev Ric Stott as originator of the project, and especially of Naomi Gordon McKibben who became, as Project Manager, the first staff member of 35CW, following many hours of work in a volunteer capacity. Their energies produced the project. I wish to put on record the work of the staff over the years, and I am grateful to the various members of the management committee who have put in many hours of meetings, discussions and personal commitment into the project. I will not list them all, save Neil Harland, without whose clear guidance, financial wizardry and legendary minute taking I would personally have floundered in my role.

Lastly, I am grateful to the District for the invitation to be part of the project as Chair of the management committee, and for the four years of involvement and challenge that has come with helping to support this project among the arts community. It is my hope that after reflection and evaluation, further ministry into that community could emerge in the future.

Ian White
Chair, 35 Chapel Walk management committee

Archivist

A few days before lock down commenced I attended the meeting of the Yorkshire branch of the Wesley Historical Society and the annual meeting of the Society of Cirplanologists. The society was founded in 1955 and is dedicated to the preservation of Circuit Plans. Unfortunately it is suffering as many other organisations, from a declining (but enthusiastic) membership, the death of long serving officials and a lack of leadership. The future of the organisation is very unclear and there may not even be a future.

If you have ever had the opportunity of examining any 19c Circuit Plan, you would realise how much it was an important social document.

Such plans did not just give the names of Presbyters and Local Preachers and their appointments, but also circuit staff/stewards and often financial and administrative information. In addition they would list morning and evening Bible readings, weekly activities such as love feasts, prayer meetings, hospitality arrangements and even phases of the moon. (The latter very important in places, like the Shetland Isles, when Preachers often had to walk many miles in total darkness.)

The size, style, font, layout and printing peculiarities give insight into local conditions and the available technology.

Circuit plans are not only of interest to Methodists, but to a wider range of local historians and study groups and increasingly to family historians.

Contrast this with what we have today when there appears to be a general movement to giving as little information as possible other than the very minimum often justified by quoting legalistic, socio- economic 'nonsense' as justification. In a hundred years' time this will be of little use to both historians and the general public. (Well - that's got that off my chest.!!)

As District Archivist I am available to talk to church groups and would be more than delighted to talk on 'The Romance of Circuit Plans.!!'

*John Tranter
District Archivist*

Candidates' Committee

This year we welcomed Revd Debra Marschner onto the committee. Deacon Meredith Evans swapped with Deacon David Hunt to help us out and allow David to serve on the Yorkshire West committee. Revd Jill Pullan again supported us as Chaplain to the Candidates. This was the last time on the committee for Revd Louise Dawson and Mr Steven Atkins who have each now stood down. We are thankful for all the work they have done and the significant contribution each of them has made over the years. I am very grateful for all who served this year as we met with two candidates from the Sheffield Circuit and one candidate from the Doncaster Circuit. We were also very grateful for the generous hospitality and assistance of Christ Church Stocksbridge this year.

The candidates presented to us on “So what’s the story?” and were encouraged to explore their call to ministry with us in small groups and full committee. We recommended all three candidates to Connexional Selection Committee. However, only one of our candidates has been recommended for pre-ordination training this year. We continue to pray for all three candidates as they explore where God is leading them.

We are also praying that others within our churches will reflect upon their calling and, if it seems right, offer for ministry. If you are aware of anyone who is thinking about a call to ministry, please encourage them to speak with their Superintendent Minister. I would also encourage anyone who is interested in exploring candidating to go along to the Regional Candidates’ Support Group which is helpfully provided within the Yorkshire region, contact Revd Graham Jones for further information.

Revd Marion Olsen- District Candidates Secretary

marianolsen@aol.com

District Leadership Team

The District Leadership Team has met twice since the September Synod, the meeting in March was cancelled due to the coronavirus lockdown. Reports were circulated electronically and votes returned with comments in place of this meeting.

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 and groups and the significant decision to close the project at 35 Chapel Walk was reached. A full review of the project is currently being undertaken and a full report about the project will be available when that work is complete.

The DLT has considered in detail the budget for 2020/21 and subsequent years, and the Treasurer’s report sets out the decisions reached.

A request to cease worship at Great Longstone in The Peak Circuit has been considered and supported, support was given for a new constitution at Loundsley Green LEP in the Chesterfield Circuit and support has also been provided to the Bolsover & Staveley and Chesterfield circuits as they move towards the creation of a new Circuit in September 2020.

The DLT organised a number of District gatherings to aid conferring on the “God in Love Unites Us” report.

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

- from Rotherham & Dearne Valley Circuit
Edward Archer-Siddall (new); Wayne Ashton (renewal)
- from Bolsover & Staveley Circuit/Chesterfield Circuit
Mark Carrick – probationer minister stationed from September 2020

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

The following lay authorisations will be automatically renewed:

- 3rd year:
Melissa Quinn (Sheffield Circuit);
Kevin Laming (Bolsover & Staveley Circuit);
Susanna Brookes, Christine Ogle, Barry Parker, Steven Willimott (Doncaster Circuit);
- 2nd year:
- Keith Abel, Graham Lee (Trinity); Alice Curry, Sue Pickering (Doncaster); Anne Holmes, David Guy, Clive Taylor (Rotherham & Dearne Valley)

Katrin Hackett
acting DLT Secretary

Ecumenical Officer for Derbyshire

I reported last time that the then connexional ecumenical officer Revd Ruth Gee was going to visit Chesterfield and Churches Together in Derbyshire's s day at Matlock. This happened very fruitfully, in that Ruth engaged at Matlock with a range of local ecumenical projects, including Tideswell LEP, where Methodists and URC in Fountain Square are collaborating more widely in a Tideswell area covenant. Chesterfield reported their happy debut at Chesterfield Pride and music and prayers came helpfully from Wirksworth's Wellspring LEP.

I work very happily with Peter Barham, the diocesan ecumenical officer; we were invited to a lunch with the new diocesan Bishop Libby and this led in turn to my offering to share in the arrangements committee to welcome bishops from the Church of North India in July. This ambition may not survive the corona virus scare. In Chesterfield, a full programme of Lent groups started and met twice (back on a York course this time) but has been suspended and the Good Friday and Whit Monday processions look doomed.

A requested review of the Ang-Meth LEP in Langley Mill looks like being delayed also.

7 church venues in Chesterfield have hosted this year's Night Shelter and may just about manage to complete their 4 months before the virus lock-down.

One or two minds at least are working on how to run church life without actually meeting, not least regarding the merger arrangements for Chesterfield and Bolsover & Staveley.

Revd Paul King

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Looking back on my Report for last year, there were a number of issues that I expected to address this year and sadly have mostly gone on hold this year, due to

the demands of my paid work and things to attend to as Chair of the Board of the Urban Theology Union, Sheffield.

However, I was able to make a presentation on Welcoming and Inclusive Churches to the Autumn Synod 2019:

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One of the most inclusive churches I've been part of looked something like this:



I highlighted the resources that are available for local churches , especially the Positive Working Together courses (contact Richard Armiger of the Learning Network if you'd like a course for your church - armigerr@methodistchurch.org.uk or 07799 900490).

I also attended the latest Connexional Safeguarding Training which is an important part of Inclusion.

The Circuits have largely made their own arrangements for the God in Love Unites Us conversations. However, I facilitated two conversations for Rotherham Circuit in January 2020 and coordinated the feedback from that to the District. I was intending to contribute to the three District conversations but they were cancelled due to a combination of sickness and Covid-19 lock-down.

Churches need to be especially aware of being in good contact with those on the fringes of their fellowships during this period – otherwise there is a danger that those that not many people find it easy to talk to will be even more isolated.

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Erica Dunmow
EDI Officer

Grants - District Advance Fund

Report to Connexional Grants Committee as required under S.O.963(3) Period 1st Sept 2018 to 31st August 2019

1. Ministry Grants paid			
<i>Circuit</i>	<i>Project</i>	<i>Amount</i>	
Sheffield	Wesley Hall youth & childrens workers		5,000
Bolsover & Staveley	Freedom Community Project office worker		21,000
Doncaster	RE Scheme		11,000
Sheffield	Victoria Hall Outreach Worker		5,000
Sheffield	Terminus centre manager		6,500
various individuals	Learning and Development grants		8,615
various individuals	Ministerial development		2,185
		Total (A):	59,300

2. Property Grants paid			
<i>Circuit</i>	<i>Project</i>	<i>Amount</i>	
The Peak	Fountain Square redevelopment		90,000
Sheffield	Greenhill redevelopment (phase 1)		20,000
Sheffield	Firth Park soft play centre		21,000
		Total (B):	131,000

3. Future Commitments (as at 31/8/2017)			
<i>Year</i>	<i>Amount committed</i>		
2019/20	£	281,950	
2020/21		40,000	
2021/22		7,000	
	£		
Total future commitments	£	328,950	

4. Summary of Accounts				
Income	£	Expenditure	£	
Levies rec'd from circuits	141,258	Ministry Grants paid	59,300	(Total A)
Other circuit contributions	1,689	Property Grants paid	131,000	(Total B)
CAPF distribution	10,205	Other expenditure	847	
Interest	4,221	Grants lapsed	-3,000	
Other income	1,675			
Total (A):	<u>159,048</u>	Total (B):	<u>188,147</u>	
Bal b/fwd from 31/8/2018	394,444			
Net Income / Expenditure	<u>-29,099</u>	A-B		
Bal c/fwd @ 31/8/2019	<u>365,345</u>			

District Officer's comments and report on the use of the District Advance Fund during the past year

The Sheffield district continues to support a wide range of projects by the use of its income whilst retaining enough for its future commitments. The investment in people continues with success in many different ways. The major work at Tideswell LEP, is completed after a long struggle (five years) with an unusual build project . A rededication service hosted by the district chair and the UR Moderator will take place on Nov 23 2019.

The work of the Mission Development Support Officer continues to have a significant effect on helping groups find funding for projects and to understand the grant's systems available to them. An initiative to fund quickly a range of smaller projects has begun.

Monitoring and Evaluation of grant-funded work undertaken during the year:

Monitoring of projects continues to show that in all cases objects stated in the grant applications are being achieved and funds have only been used for the purpose specified in the grant letter agreement. There is a problem with sustainability of worthwhile projects running for several years. These tend to become reliant on extended period district grant funding although the Support Officer's work has helped in these cases. The uncertain political situation has had an effect on build project estimates especially those likely to run for a number of years. The advice to try to break these projects into a number of phases has been heeded albeit leading to an increase in costs. This has allowed the churches involved to see step progress and also to maintain interest.

John Purdy
District Grants Officer

Inter-faith relations

Just as Christians currently find themselves unable to use their church buildings and exploring different ways of worshipping and sharing fellowship, in the same way other faith communities face similar challenges. Not all faiths depend on special buildings for their regular worship – for Hindus, for example, worship is mainly

focused on the home, and people congregate in the temple or mandir primarily at the time of the main festivals. For Jews, Muslims and Sikhs, however, the synagogue, mosque and gurdwara are at the heart of weekly prayer and worship, and not to be able to use these buildings has been as hard as it has been for Christians to have their churches closed.

There have also been some major festivals during this period, just as Christians have celebrated Easter. The Jewish Pesach (Passover) and Vaisakhi for Sikhs took place during April, and I contacted a number of Sikh and Jewish friends and colleagues to offer good wishes at these times. As I write, the month of Ramadan is also about to begin. I'm sure that many of you will have been in touch with members of your local places of worship of different faiths, or perhaps with your neighbours, to express friendship and support during the lockdown, and like me you may have received warm greetings and good wishes.

Before the coronavirus crisis began to dominate our consciousness, inter-faith initiatives were continuing to develop around the District. Some of you may be aware, for example, of the Dialogue Society, a group of mainly Turkish Muslims who set up a Sheffield branch a couple of years ago. The Dialogue Society have been very proactive in organizing meetings, talks and meals, very open in ethos and usually attended by fairly large numbers of people. If anyone would like to know more about these events, please contact me.

For those with an interest in inter-faith relations, national bodies are providing helpful updates during the lockdown. The Inter Faith Network for the UK, in particular, regularly posts stories on Facebook of ways in which different faith groups are supporting vulnerable members of their local communities, sometimes as shared endeavours. Just as churches, both nationally and locally, are providing resources for worship and fellowship, especially online, at this time when congregations are unable to meet physically, similarly many other faith communities are producing inspiring talks and acts of worship to support their members through these very challenging times.

Revd Gareth Jones
Inter-Faith Officer

Lay Employment

As at March 2020, we have a rich variety of staff in the District, including Administrators, Pastoral Workers, Family Workers, Youth Workers, Mission Workers, Local Lay Pastors and a number of Cafe Workers, Caretakers, Cleaners and Premises Managers.

In January 2020, I was very pleased to welcome Katie Roberts to work alongside me to help you with Lay Employment matters in your area. Katie's prime areas of responsibility are around the administrative elements of Lay Employment to include job descriptions, person specifications, authorisation of new roles, offer letters and contracts of employment.

Hello, I'm Katie and I'm very excited to be working for Rob Cooper helping with administrative tasks. I am a mum of 4 children and have been a full-time parent for the last 10 years. Before having a family, I was an orthopaedic nurse. I go to Haxby and Wigginton Methodist church in the York Circuit, where I am an active member of the worship band, playing the flute. I love walking in the countryside, reading, watching a decent film and good food! I am very much looking forward to helping you with anything that I can.



We will be using one shared email address so could you use employment@2bpeople.com moving forward please

Real Living Wage

Please be aware that the last date for you to implement the new rate for the Real Living Wage is 1 April 2020. The new rate is £9.30 per hour. This is the minimum rate that an employer should be paying any lay employee.

Salary Levels

You will be aware that last year at District Level we put together a document around recommendations for Salaries and Remuneration for Lay Employees. We have now done some work around revising the salary levels in line with the Real Living Wage percentage increase for 2020. Please contact Rob or Katie for further information

Changes to Employment Legislation

As you will know the laws around employing people can be quite complex and change from time to time. The main change that will affect employers from 1 April will be around the issuing of Contracts of Employment. Currently, employers have up to two months to issue the statement to any employee working for them for more than a month. From 1 April every employee should have a Contract of Employment on the first day they start work.

In addition to this change, on 23 January 2020, the Government announced that the Parental Bereavement (Leave and Pay) Act 2018 will be coming into force on 6 April. The Act, which became law on 13 September last year, gives employees who lose a child under the age of 18, or suffer a stillbirth from the 24th week of pregnancy, the right to two weeks' leave as a 'day one' employment right. The leave, which can be taken as one block or as two one-week blocks, will be paid at the same statutory rate as other family friendly rights.

As ever, if you have any queries around Lay Employment please contact myself or Katie on employment@2bpeople.com

Rob Mobile: 07947533598

Katie Mobile 07851 652979

*Rob Cooper
District Lay Employment Officer*

Learning and Development Working Group

Learning and Development during COVID-19 pandemic

Whilst most of our activities are closed down and many of us are self-isolating there are lists of websites and Youtube links offering us distraction activities, games to play, fitness exercises and endless films and 'box-sets' to view. We had thought that our Learning and Development activities might close too and, of course, any planned group events, courses and conferences have been cancelled or postponed. But that doesn't mean that learning must stop; indeed this may be a great opportunity to take up some of those things you have thought about...'If only I had time to....' or 'I would love to..... but I don't have time'.

However, there are many free learning opportunities available to us, using the web and social platforms. For example, you may want to set up – or continue – a book group, where everyone reads a chapter of a book and then talks about it via Skype or Zoom or Facebook. Or you may want to set up a virtual 'house-group' to share a course, or materials, using one of the social media platforms as a meeting place.

On the other hand you might want to use the opportunity to take up some individual study, reflection or exploration. This enforced isolation means we don't have to feel guilty about not attending a meeting or going to see someone; the time could be used to develop knowledge, skills or become more informed about an aspect of life or faith.

There is a great deal of information on our website:

<https://www.sheffieldmethodist.org/category/learning-development-sheffield-district/> Many of the resources and opportunities are free of charge.

Similarly, there are free 'courses', many of them 'bite-sized' which are offered by the Open University.

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/free-courses/full-catalogue>

Taking up a learning opportunity to help what we might do to support our health and well-being during stressful times – as now – could not only help to pass the time but also help us to stay safe and well.

Should you need funds to purchase books, study packs or resources, there is money available from the Learning and Development group; just fill in a simple form following the accompanying guidance and we'll get back to you as soon as possible. The groups continues to meet 'virtually'.

<https://www.sheffieldmethodist.org/grants-for-learning-and-development-opportunities/>

See COVID 19 as a gift of time and use it to learn and develop yourself and your faith!



Jan Eldred

Chair of the Sheffield District Learning and Development Group

Learning Network

This report contains selected highlights of the work we have undertaken and a reminder of some of our on-going engagement whilst recognizing the changed context in which we are all living and operating.

Working Locally

We respond to requests from Circuits and groups of churches with regard to mission development; Circuit Steward training; and Review work. We celebrate with Bolsover/Staveley and Chesterfield Circuits as they work towards creating a new Circuit.

The Yorkshire Plus team is part of a number of key District groups including: DPCs, DLTs, the Peak Park Rural Development Group; Learning and Development Groups; Synod Planning Group; Circuit Support Group; Safeguarding groups and Grants committees.

We are supporting the District Safeguarding Officers in Sheffield and Yorkshire North and East with the Advanced Module Safeguarding training which is now for all local preachers and worship leaders. This is a considerable undertaking and we have held training days throughout the year. We are also facilitating training the trainer events for the new Foundation Module.

We have a good working relationship with Whirlow Spirituality Centre. Siggy has worked with a team to put on an evening event on the Book of Esther which was delivered in partnership with the Jewish community and several non-faith organizations and a second, similar event is planned on the Book of Ruth to sit alongside Bible Month. Rachel is part of the facilitation team for Spiritual Accompaniment.

Working Regionally

The 'How to' practitioner days have been received warmly and have led to further requests for training. The day on Local Arrangements has since been repeated for Sheffield Circuit and for Flourish, a major Yorkshire North and East District event. On all three occasions this has been very well attended. We anticipate arranging further dates for this subject.

Carla continues to support the organisation of the Pentecost Party within the Yorkshire West District. Look out for details for the 2021 event as this year's has understandably been postponed.

We are working ecumenically via the Network of Yorkshire Learning Practitioners (NYLP) and with the URC Yorkshire Synod, supporting LEPs with their Church Reviews.

We held the Joined-Up Conference in March which was a great success despite having to move venues at the last minute. Wesley Hall and St Thomas' came together in order to give us enough space to run the day and we had over 200 people with keynote speakers, short-stories, market-place and a plethora of engaging workshops around children's, youth and families ministry, schools work and chaplaincy.

We offer training around the Positive Working Together agenda, including a day on Growing through Conflict and one on Bullying and Harassment. These days are excellent for circuit teams who would like to learn more about conflict styles and how we can grow through conflict and also for those seeking to build relationships in healthy ways across all areas of church life.

Supervision training across the Region has gone well and we have held briefing days with the Chairs for Ministers who are going into supervision and are planning continuing development days around this agenda.

We continue to deliver line-management training and support days as well as our lay orientation programme and a training day on lay leadership skills. Our team works with District leads to actively support lay employees across the region through three regional Communities of Practice which will be happening via zoom in this next period.

The Pioneer Pathway Community of Practice continues to grow and be of real benefit to those working in pioneering contexts. We continue to coach and support pioneers across the Region. Rachel is part of the New Places New People Connexional team.

We held two regional retreats for presbyters, deacons and lay employees both prayerfully and beautifully led by Jill Baker at Cliff College and Edel McClean at Wydale, and much appreciated by those who attended.

Following her continued support of the James Hudson Taylor Lifepath within the Barnsley Circuit, Carla and a team are developing a John Wesley event for schools.

Siggy continues to develop her work on workshops based on female saints. There are now workshops available on Julian of Norwich, Abbess Hild of Whitby and Brigid, some of which have been delivered at Regional events. Work on developing Forest Church is ongoing.

Graham heads up the Candidates' Support Group with Rev Sean Adair and this year we have supported six candidates from the region through this rigorous process, and been joined by others exploring their call to ordained ministry. As Sean steps down from this role we would like to express our deep appreciation to him for his considerable contribution and commitment over many years.

Working Connexionally

We have completed the Facilitator Training for the God in Love Unites Us report and the District conversations are on-going.

We remain involved in supporting and delivering Connexional priorities, including: Bible Month; Thy Kingdom Come; A Methodist Way of Life; Cliff Festival; 3Generate; Rise and Shine; OPP training weekends; the Fresh Expressions Gathering 'New Places for People'; and Germinate Leadership.

Our on-going support for the training and development of worship leaders and local preachers includes training for tutors and mentors; development events; portfolio moderation by a Regional team; and delivery of the Explore sessions at Cliff Spring and Summer Schools.

Siggy and Rachel have delivered training on a 'Taste of AI' for colleagues across the Connexion and Siggy is now writing for 'Roots' magazine. She is also working with Rachel Lampard and the Connexional Justice group that is seeking to increase

engagement with social issues across the Connexion and she has graphically recorded the recent JPIT conference.

Our thanks go to the large network of people and organizations who partner with us in the delivery of learning and development across the Yorkshire Plus Region.

Please contact us if you would like to be part of this Network.

Contacts:

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

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Follow us on our Social Networks:

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

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

Manse Advisory Committee

This year, thankfully, the Manse Advisory Group Visitors were busy visiting about half of the Sheffield Circuit Manses, the rest are scheduled to be visited in autumn of 2021. The group were pleased, particularly in light of the numbers involved, that the Circuit had systems in place to manage and keep the Manse stock in very good order. Taking into account the wide variety and ages of the houses used as Manses, it was evident that a lot of hard work had taken place by the Circuit Officers. Well done!

However, the care of the manses in all circuits is at all times a matter of partnership and co-operation between the occupants and the circuit stewards. To carry out their stewards responsibilities, whilst respecting the privacy of the manse they must have access to ensure that the property is kept in good repair and that an annual and ongoing programme of maintenance and redecoration is sustained. If such arrangements are in place, then at changeover of staff there is not such a panic situation to provide the high standard of manse which people desire.

In recent years there have been incidences where manse visitors have made a visit within months of a manse being vacated and yet when the presbyter has moved on during the normal process, the circuits are left with a manse in an unsatisfactory condition. This has caused excessive financial and work commitments by circuits to get the properties up to expected standards as in the Charter of Outgoing and Incoming Ministers.

Consequently, circuit stewards have done a lot of heart searching as to whether to send the excessive invoices to the offending presbyters. In both cases involved, this was generously not done. These cases are in the minority, therefore thanks are due

to the many manse occupants, together with administrators and circuit stewards, who clearly do take their responsibilities seriously and keep the manses so well.

The group would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the twenty six years of dedicated service of Barbara and Bill M on the Manse Advisory Group, as they have now announced their retirement. We extend our sincere thanks and gratitude to them for their expertise and time so generously given. In light of this, the group are actively seeking new Manse Visitors to continue this vital work as we endeavour to keep up the high standards in the manses within the Sheffield District and we look forward to visiting the new Circuit being formed by the Bolsover & Staveley and Chesterfield Circuits next autumn.

Lionel Derry

District Manse Advisory Committee Secretary

NB: Please note that since this report was written we have received the sad news of the death of Bill Marsden and offer our love and prayers to his wife Barbara.

Methodist Council

This is my first year as District representative to the Council and I would like to say what a privilege it is to serve the District in this way.

The Council met for the first two scheduled meetings of the connexional year, in October and January, at the High Leigh Conference Centre in Hoddesdon. The third meeting of the year due to be held in March at Woodland Grange in Leamington Spa had to be cancelled in its physical form due to the coronavirus lockdown. However the meeting did go ahead, with a modified agenda, via Zoom video conferencing. This worked very well considering there were 58 participants.

Council agreed the nomination to the 2020 Conference of Revd Dr Jonathan Hustler to serve as Secretary of the Conference from 1st September 2020 for a period of six years. It was also agreed to nominate Revd Ruth Gee to serve as Assistant Secretary of the Conference for a further year to 31st August 2021.

The Council has considered the next steps following the reaffirmation of Our Calling as being 'the primary strategic driver for the whole Church'. Much work has been done on developing the Connexional Strategy for Evangelism and Growth, and on reviewing our governance structures. A report 'Oversight and Trusteeship' has been produced but due to the change in format of the March meeting further work on this has been delegated to the Strategy and Resources Committee. The likely outcome will be proposals for changes to our structures and new models of trusteeship both at connexional and local levels.

Due to the current coronavirus pandemic Council has agreed that the Conference cannot meet as planned in Telford in June and will look at ways for the Conference to meet in an alternative form. The restriction on groups meeting has meant that some Synods have not been able to meet and give full consideration to the "God in Love Unites Us" report. The Council therefore also agreed that the debate and voting on the provisional resolutions will be deferred until the 2021 Conference. An

additional meeting of the Council on 16th May will consider proposals for the way in which the Conference will conduct its business this year.

*David Burton,
Methodist Council Representative*

Methodist Women in Britain

MWiB has been an eventful year in more ways than one, due to the present climate.

In August we held our AGM and planned our programme for 2019-2020.

On October 11th I was inducted as President; a very special day for me. The service was held in my own church, Gleadless Methodist. The service was conducted by our Lay Pastor, Melissa Quinn, and included Holy Communion. It was really encouraging to see so many in attendance. An enjoyable buffet lunch in our church Hall followed the service.

On Monday the 6th of December a Carol Service, ably led by Mary Sykes and with contributions from other members, was held and was much appreciated by all, this was followed with a Christmas Dinner ably cooked by Rodney Quinn (husband of our Lay Pastor) with assistance from myself, Carol Wignell, Janet Dickson and Sue Ellis. This was a very festive occasion which definitely put us all in a festive spirit.

We never thought at the time we would be unable to meet again and participate in the programme we had planned. Retreat days at Castleton and Sprotbrough plus the proposed trip to York will have to be rearranged for 2021.

Our current project, Children's Air Ambulance, has so far raised over £7,000 with more money to send when we are up and running again.

Sadly Elaine Graham, our treasurer, passed away in January in Ashgate Hospice after a short illness with cancer. Her funeral, conducted by Revd Adrian Perry, was held at Bradway Methodist Church following the committal at Hutcliffe Wood Crematorium. Rev Ann Baldock gave a tribute to Elaine's dedication to MWiB and spoke of a much loved member and friend.

At the moment we are unable to update our Finance details due to lockdown. In the midst of this turmoil, we do have some good news for when we move forward-we have a new treasurer; Carole Baker, from Gleadless Valley Methodist Church, after being asked if she might step into the breach, immediately agreed to take up the post.

Unfortunately, owing to the coronavirus the Easter Offering Service has not taken place in our churches this year. Although arranged by MWiB the service is essentially meant for the whole of the Church and money raised is for World Mission not MWiB. I sincerely hope that our District, after we are able to meet again, will consider finding some way of raising money and forwarding to MWiB so we can help World Mission. This would be brilliant as normally in the region of £66,000 has been contributed through the Connexional MWiB; if we as a country are struggling because of the virus just think how less affluent countries will have even more need of our support

We look forward to being able to move forward in the future and with God's help may we be blessed to carry on our work for MWiB.

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 particular 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 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 their ministry and which have grown out of the review meeting's discussion about their ministry and circuit/ district/ connexional priorities. The recorded hopes and goals are confidential to the three participants at the review meeting.
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. The process for reporting needs to the District Office and seeking reimbursement of expenses has been clarified.

In the Connexional year ended August 2019 the staged implementation of "Supervision" for all Ministers has caused problems for a number of Ministers and consequently the District Chair and the Superintendent Ministers have agreed a pragmatic way forward which holds to the spirit of both MDR and Supervision. As yet there does not appear to be any progress with the review of MDR that was expected to be carried out during the current Connexional year.

John Lashmar

MDR Officer

Mission Development Support Worker

The nature of supporting our churches and circuits in developing their mission is always to be looking into the place where the future meets the present, where God calls us as we are now to follow where God's Spirit has already gone ahead. As I write my head is full of conversations with many people across our District about how they are responding with gifts they didn't know they had to a radically changed present, and how they might prepare to be forebears of God's Kingdom in an unpredictable future. It is therefore hard to turn back to recall the road already travelled, but here is my attempt.

Following the buzz of our Radical Hospitality conference and synod back in September, it has been a pleasure to be part of the small team responding to churches who have taken up the challenge of our new Keep Fishing scheme to try something new to welcome new people into their worshipping congregation. Responses have included giving out Christmas chocolates on doorsteps, a new foodbank with conversation and offer of prayer, LEGO church and an alpha course. We rejoice that, when invited, new people have gladly taken the opportunity to join in worship.

I have spent some of this year working with our town centre churches, leading a review of the mission of Victoria Hall in Sheffield. After Rev Tom Read asked synod in September to pray that Priory Place would find the outreach worker and building manager they needed, these roles were indeed filled quickly, and I have continued to work with the church in adapting to a new phase of being – a reminder that our mission is always a process and never a task ticked off the to-do list.

I have also been working with some of our smallest chapels, experiencing the amazing things that God can do when we are open to new ways of engaging with our communities, churches such as The Hub at Hope, reborn as a hiking and cycling church.

There have been many occasions over the last year when it has been a delight to convene a gathering, and then sit back and listen to the buzz of stories shared, insights gained, and new ways of working together discovered. One such occasion was with some of those who lead lunch clubs across Sheffield, volunteers who feed and provide essential social interaction for over 600 vulnerable people every week. Out of this meeting some churches are now exploring ways to together secure the future of existing outreach and possibly start new lunch clubs in partnership with MHA Live at Home. Another has been to bring together Methodists ministering to Persian asylum seekers in Sheffield, Doncaster, Hull and Germany, which is leading to a re-imagining of how we can be the church at the margins for these people.

In recent months we have started planning for a new District mission strategy, how through *learning, changing and joining in* we can equip our churches and circuits to be transformed and transforming in their mission as they live out our shared calling of *evangelism, worship, service, learning and caring*. Look out for opportunities to help shape this strategy in the coming weeks.

I am now glad I have looked back and remembered the joy and privilege it has been to support so many missionaries across Sheffield District. I am always happy to meet with churches or circuits of any size, whether hopeful, fearful or somewhere in between.

*Neil Harland
MSDW*

Peak Park Rural Development

These are the activities I have been taking part in over the past year in brief.

Messy Church Monyash and Earl Sterndale

Both of these small village chapels struggle to maintain their existence yet in the struggle have developed Messy Churches, both of which are well attended. They meet monthly and usually follow the church year. We also have extra presence at well dressing and festival times. Ecumenical relationships in this area are improving after a lot of work, we have planned joint acts of worship as well as activities including Christingle, Mothering Sunday and Easter activities.

The Hub

This missional project in the village of Hope now employs a Pioneer Minister in a part time post to support the development. The aim is to be a worshipping community that is attractive to those who live in or visit the Peak Park for hiking and mountain biking. Although our numbers vary, we have regular contact with (including those in leadership) 18 adults, 2 teenagers, 7 children, 4 dogs and a few others of each category on the side lines.

The Hub meets twice a month on a Sunday and twice a month for discipleship groups. Regulars are both from the village and further afield who gather for a breakfast butty, fellowship and worship as well as a mountain bike ride and a hike. We have a Facebook page 'The Hub at Hope' and a WhatsApp account for communication. We are proactive with invitation. In February we were excited to welcome and celebrate with 6 new members.

Edale Chapel (Barber Booth)

The building work is in progress and we are almost at the end of stage one of the building plan. Current activities include raising the final funds to enable stage 2 to commence.

The Chapel continues to hold its 6 planned services a year but have added, through local enthusiasm, a local arrangement each month when there is no planned service, (sometimes they have both!) It is hoped that the Anglicans and Methodists will hold a joint covenant service at the Anglican Church. The National Trust art installation – light boxes, ran through the summer in the chapel as part of the 'Be Kinder' project. It was very well attended by locals, visitors and walkers in the area.

Care Farm

Lowberdale (Lowberdalefarm.org.uk) We are now a registered charity, continuing to support young people in need of social and educational development. We are focusing on fund raising to enable the continued support of more young people and

to strengthen the team through the appointment of new volunteers and trustees to the charity.

Joint Rural Strategy Group

This group supports the Methodist/URC Rural Officer based at the Arthur Rank Centre. We meet four times a year to discuss and share knowledge/experience of rural matters. The attenders at the meeting are informed of the work and role of the rural officer, who also responds to the conversations of the group through her role. It is a group I value.

Rural Officers Gathering

This is a very informative, ecumenical, two day gathering of rural officers organised by the Rural Officer of the Arthur Rank Centre. It proved invaluable for developing ecumenical links within the Peak Park. It also informed of activities in rural life countrywide.

Safeguarding conference

The conference considered Courage, Cost and Hope, the report of the Past Cases Review and subsequent changes made by the church now 5 years on. We were asked to comment on where we thought compliance was in our districts and what we thought compliance would be 5 years on. We were informed of the current IICSA review.

Deacon Lorraine Brown

Peak Park Rural Development Enabler

Probationers' Committee

The 2019 – 2020 District Probationers' Group includes our only Probationer Ben Scrivens from the Barnsley Circuit, who is in his second year. Ben, Probationers Tutor Sean Adair, District Chair Gill Newton and Probationers' Secretary Katie Leonowicz meet together monthly for support, prayer, learning and theological reflection.

As part of Ben's continuing training in Presbyterian ministry, Probationers participate in continued academic study, meet regularly with their supervisors, Worship Development Group and mentors. In January Ben presented his Gospel in Context Project in which explored hope; through his own experiences, theological reading and in the context of his ministry. Ben also joined the District under 10's group for their 24 hour retreat and participated in the Yorkshire Plus Regional retreat in Ilkley.

For the fifth year the District Probationers' Committee members were given an informal opportunity to meet with Ben and get to know each other over lunch in November. This time provided the foundation; along with reports submitted reflecting on Ben's second year, for the more formal interviews which took place in early March. In the meeting the Committee observed a transformation and growth in Ben; we commended Ben for his work this year and give thanks for his many gifts and skills. The Committee were pleased to hear of Ben's continuing ministry and

presence beyond the walls of the Church, and we look forward to see how he continues to grow and develop as a Presbyterian.

Many thanks to Ben's Supervisor Mick Neal, mentor Debora Marshner, tutor Sean Adair, Gill Newton and the Barnsley Circuit for their support of Ben. Many thanks also to the District Probationers' committee, especially those who took part this year with 24 hours' notice due to members being ill.

Revd Katie Leonowicz
Sheffield District Probationer Secretary

Property Panel

The joint District Property Secretaries system continues to work well and is continuing in its present form. The District Property Panel remains unaltered.

There have been 34 property projects considered during the past 12 months and are listed in the Schedule below.

The whole panel met on one occasion and considered that project.

There are 4 projects awaiting Circuit Support.

There are no projects awaiting Connexional Support.

There are 2 projects awaiting Consent but have outstanding issues.

There are 11 projects put up by Managing Trustees but have gone no further.

Project No.	Circuit	Church/Manse	Description	Cost £	Date Approved
3995	Sheffield	Greenhill Church	Phase 2 of Re-Development	50,000	14/04/20
46372	Sheffield	Ridgeway Church	Sale of Burial Ground	£1	14/02/20
46462	Sheffield	Victoria Hall	Fire Alarm Installation	60,000	17/04/20
46390	Barnsley	Emanuel Church	Updating of Kitchen	9,800	17/02/20
46388	Trinity	Worksop Manse	Lease of Manse	£1	23/02/20
46300	Bolsover & Staveley	Inkersal Church	Sale of Land	7,500	04/12/19
43747	Barnsley	Hemsworth Church	Refurbish of Church	406,850	25/03/20
48138	Sheffield	Firth Park	Soft Play Facility	49,200	14/10/19
46136	Trinity	Welham Road Manse	Sale of Manse	£1	19/10/19
46105	Doncaster	Tickhill Church	Update of Church Front	10,000	17/04/20

Project No.	Circuit	Church/Manse	Description	Cost £	Date Approved
46094	Rotherham	Wickersley Manse	Sale of Manse	5,000	04/10/19
46089	Doncaster	Field House Road Manse	Letting of Manse	£1	25/09/19
46033	The Peak	Edale Chapel	Restoration of Chapel	78,200	14/10/19
45398	Trinity	Dinnington Manse	Lease of Manse	£100	08/10/19
45879	Sheffield	Cross Lane Manse	Lease of manse	£100	05/11/19
45877	Sheffield	Burnt Stones Close Manse	Lease of Manse	£100	11/11/19
45829	Bolsover & Staveley	Barrow Hill Church	Sale of Church	6,500	03/12/19
46780	Sheffield	Gleadless Valley Church	New Storeroom	36,216	03/12/19
45581	Sheffield	William Temple Church	Temple Park – Phase 2	135,000	26/11/19
45545	Sheffield	William Temple Church	Temple Park – Phase 3	94027	19/11/19
45544	Sheffield	Darnall Church	Re- roofing Project	80,000	16/07/19
45535	Sheffield	Highfield Trinity	Installation of External Lift	137,600	01/11/19
45504	Sheffield	Intake Church	Sale of Church	-	07/01/20
45452	Sheffield	Victoria Hall	Toilets & Kitchenette	39,500	14/11/19
45412	Trinity	Whitwell Church	Sale of Grazing Land	1,500	29/05/19
45437	Rotherham	Talbot Lane Church	Lease to Grimm & Co.	1,750	30/05/19
45295	Rotherham	St James Church	Upgrade of Kitchen, Rear Hall & Wall	55,000	22/04/19
45289	Rotherham	Talbot Lane Church	Sale of Church	8,000	17/04/19
37578	The Peak	Tideswell Church	Refurbishment of Church	920,000	29/04/19
45301	Sheffield	Arbourthorne Church	Lease of Church	£100	25/03/19
45301	Trinity	Tuxford Church	Sale of Church	£1	15/11/19
45137	Rotherham	Wickersley Church	New Kitchen	25,000	13/03/19

Project No.	Circuit	Church/Manse	Description	Cost £	Date Approved
45066	Chesterfield	Storrs Road Church	Re-roofing Project	113,010	15/04/19
43481	Doncaster	Cantley Church	Re-roofing Project	63,985	03/05/19

*Tom Sykes & John Bailey
Joint Property Secretaries*

Sabbaticals

The District Sabbatical Advisory Group (DSAG) normally meets twice a year to consider and approve sabbatical plans and arrangements. Membership consists of the District Chair, the District Sabbaticals Officer, the District MDR Officer (John Lashmar) and two lay people or supernumerary ministers (Agnes Tranter and Rev. David Hunter).

I took over as Sabbaticals Officer in September 2019 and am very grateful to my predecessor, Graham Dawson, for all his help and advice, as well as to the members of the group for the time and care they give to the process of approving sabbatical prospectuses, receiving reports and supporting ministers.

During this connexional year, DSAG has received and approved reports describing the sabbatical experiences and insights gained from Revs. Karen Beecham, Jon Bellfield and Tom Read. We look forward to receiving the report from Rev. Sally Coleman when she has completed her sabbatical, which had to be divided into two sections. The group has also considered and approved prospectuses together with sabbatical timings and arrangements for Revs. Cameron Stirk, Richard Harris, Katie Leonowicz and James Morley, although as I write this the changed realities caused by the coronavirus pandemic mean that there will need to be some adjustments to these plans. It has agreed to the sabbatical for Rev Mark Goodhand being delayed until the 2020/21 connexional year. The list of those due to take sabbaticals in the 20/21 Connexional year also includes Revs. Tracey Harris, Debora Marschner, Jen Mullis and Gill Newton. DSAG expects to consider their sabbatical prospectuses along with reports of any completed sabbaticals at its next meeting which is currently scheduled for October 2020.

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.

*Revd Liz Willis
District Sabbaticals Officer*

Safeguarding

We were very sorry that Howard Smedley resigned as our District Safeguarding Officer (DSO) in December 2019, but we fully understand his reasons. It was a difficult job juggling two districts. We are very grateful to Howard for adopting a proactive approach to safeguarding. This means that we are in a good place in regard to safeguarding in the District and updated policies and procedures in place and available on the District website.

Thanks are also due to Agnes Tranter for her continuing advice, and her support in dealing with casework during this interim period. We had hoped a new DSO would be in post by April 1st, but due to the coronavirus crisis it will not be possible for her to take up the post on that date. Further recruitment to the District Safeguarding Group (DSG) is also postponed for the time being.

In the meantime may I remind you all that Church Councils and Circuit Meetings should have safeguarding as a regular item on their agendas as these bodies are responsible for ensuring that policies and procedures are implemented and annual reviews of such documents take place.

Please continue to be in touch with me or Agnes with any safeguarding concerns to ensure that our good practice and vigilance in these areas are not reduced at this time.

*Hilary Murden Independent
Chair District Safeguarding Group*

Stationing

We started the 2020 stationing round in the Spring of 2019, with training for circuits and meetings with individual presbyters. We held our District Stationing Forum earlier than the previous year, on 25th June 2019. All circuits in the district were invited to attend and share information on their particular circumstances. This did give us an early indication of which appointments we would wish to be critical should they enter stationing. At the beginning of this stationing round there were six presbyters prayerfully seeking to discern God's calling upon their ministry. As time progressed, four sought and were offered re-invitation. Two indicated their intention to sit down. We had no presbyters entering stationing. Three circuit appointments were identified.

The Stationing Committee again issued a document outlining the overall principles and protocols for stationing matching for presbyters for 2020. The two categories of appointment, 'critical' and 'other', were retained, with revised criteria published. Of our three circuit appointments, one was submitted to the Initial Stationing Subcommittee for a probationer presbyter appointment. The other two we put forward as 'critical.' Subsequently, these two appointments were taken for an additional level of scrutiny to the Yorkshire Plus Regional Stationing Meeting on 1st October, which also supported the 'critical' designations. In the event, one was designated 'critical' and one 'other' by the final level of scrutiny from the Stationing Committee. Following an unsuccessful appeal, this is how they entered Stationing

Matching Group 1 (SMG1) in November 2019. We thank God that both appointments were matched at SMG1, and were followed up by successful visits. The Trinity Circuit heard that it had been matched with Rev Angela Potheary, and the Sheffield Circuit with Rev Lisa Quarmby, as Co-Superintendent. In January 2020, the Chesterfield (with Bolsover & Staveley) Circuit heard they had been matched with Mr Mark Carrick as a probationer presbyter. Good news all round.

On 25th February 2020, I attended a meeting for Lay Stationing Representatives at Church House London. We covered various aspects of Stationing, led by members of the Connexional Team. We looked carefully at the arrangements for the stationing of Ministers from other Conferences and Churches (MOCCs). We also considered the application of General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) guidance, and Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) concerns, in the Stationing Process. These issues will be addressed in the Code of Practice for all involved in the Invitation and Stationing Process 2021, and in training sessions.

We will soon be starting the stationing process for 2021. Circuit Invitation Committees should be appointed this month. Arrangements regarding training for circuits and conversations with presbyters, which normally take place in May following the publication of the Code of Practice, are being thought through, in response to measures dealing with the Coronavirus pandemic. There are currently ten presbyters in five circuits across the district who are starting to think and pray about the future direction of their ministry. Our prayers for the process to be as positive and affirming as possible, and for sensitivity and integrity, are particularly important this year in these times of great uncertainty.

Gill Daly
Lay Stationing Representative

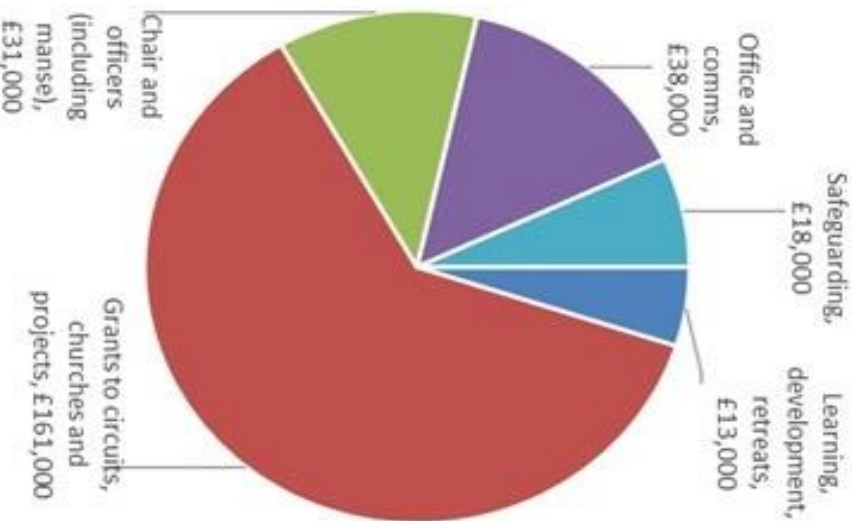
Treasurer

Full statutory District accounts for 2019/20 have been presented to the District Leadership Team for approval. Copies will be available on request. A summary of the District finances is provided here:

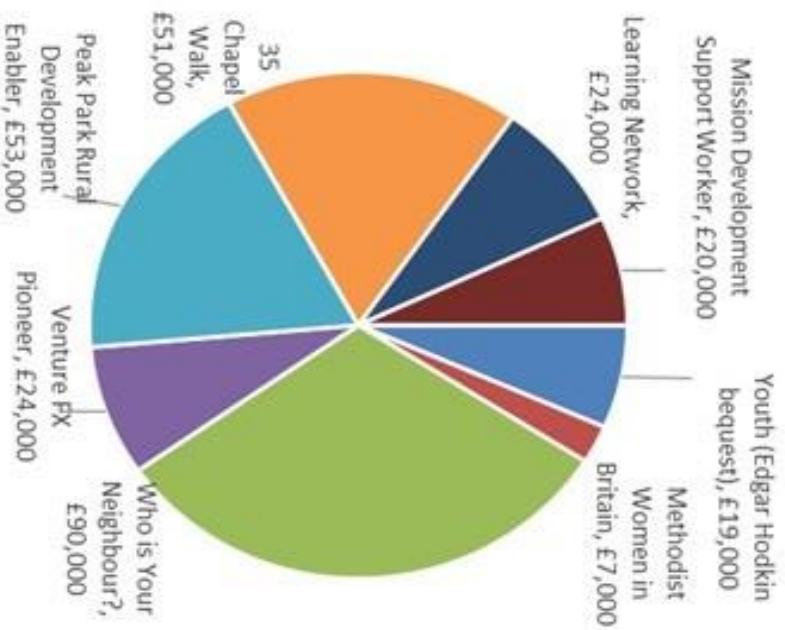
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
INCOME				
Unrestricted	108	100	99	132
Restricted	282	149	132	130
District Advance Fund	159	202	170	170
Total Income	549	451	401	432
EXPENDITURE				
Unrestricted	103	88	111	111
Restricted	288	271	200	151
District Advance Fund	157	261	76	298
Total expenditure	548	620	387	560
SURPLUS/ (DEFICIT)				
Unrestricted	5	12	(12)	21
Restricted	(6)	(122)	(68)	(21)
District Advance Fund	2	(59)	94	(128)
Total surplus/ (deficit)	1	(169)	14	(128)

The main source of unrestricted and Advance Fund income continues to be contributions from our circuits. £62,000 was transferred from general funds to restricted funds during the year, with these projects receiving four times as much again in grants from other parts of our Methodist Connexion and other charities.

UNRESTRICTED AND ADVANCE FUND SPEND



GRANT-FUNDED SPEND



FUNDS HELD AND OUTLOOK	31-Aug-18	31-Aug-18	31-Aug-17	31-Aug-16
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
CLOSING FUNDS				
Unrestricted funds	259	316	376	441
District Advance Fund	36	34	117	23
Restricted funds	131	75	101	116
Total funds	426	425	594	580

Months unrestricted expenditure held as liquid funds	4	13	16	23
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We are now compliant with our policy of holding between three and six months unrestricted expenditure as liquid funds (i.e. cash and debtors, less creditors). Our budget, prepared before the COVID-19 outbreak, was based the district books remaining balanced and assessments on circuits not increasing in the coming years. We will remain in regular contact with circuit treasurers in the current uncertain context and will co-ordinate financial responses to the pandemic as required.

Neil Harland
District Treasurer

Venture FX Pioneer

As my 10 year post as a Venture FX pioneer comes to an end it feels as if we inhabit a radically different world than when I started and not simply because of the dramatic events of the last few months.

The call of pioneering ministry is to go out, into new spaces, beyond comfortable boundaries, and discern how the Spirit of Christ is present in different contexts. And now, wherever we find our calling in Church life, it is an inescapable fact that we all inhabit a rapidly changing context to that which we faced even 12 months ago.

My heart is full of stories, some joyful, some tragic, of the ways I have seen the gospel alive and vibrant in so many spaces way outside the edges of Church life. One of the moments that most delighted me was the opening night for our exhibition “Queer Ways of Being” at 35 Chapel Walk, to celebrate LGBT+ history month 2019. Artists from Sheffield and from around the world contributed work drawing on experiences across the spectrums of human gender and sexual identities. The opening night was packed with colour, joy and an openness to hearing each other’s stories. It was a true celebration of the wonder of who God has made us to be. And so many people, many of whom were alienated from the church and other religious communities, found a place of love and acceptance.

If I have learnt anything over the last 10 years in engaging with the arts communities in and around Sheffield and the LGBT+ communities in my ministry it is that fruitful ministry in new contexts isn’t about having the right strategies and frameworks, instead it emerges from a deep and prayerful listening: listening to the

context and communities we find ourselves amongst, listening to the playful Spirit of Christ and listening to the stories that our tradition has handed down to us. Authentic listening opens us up to the risk of being changed by what we hear, and the Spirit has changed me in many profound ways over the last 10 years. This risky listening isn't like the risk of riding a roller coaster where there is fear and thrill but ultimately there is a safety bar in place so that things can never go too far. The path that Christ calls us to has no safety barriers, everything is open to the possibility of change: dearly held beliefs and patterns of behaviour, ways of doing church, even our deepest sense of who we are. All of these have changed for me in the last 10 years and continue to be changed as I incline my ear to the still small voice of God.

I am grateful to the Sheffield District for the support I have been given to exercise this ministry, hundreds, if not thousands of lives, have been touched by the care and love of Jesus; most of whom would never have encountered the work of the Methodist Church in any other way. Thanks be to God for those changed lives.

As I discern a way forward for my own ministry, I pray for the people of the Sheffield District that you can continue to discern the leading of the Spirit as we navigate our way through a changing world.

Revd Ric Stott

'Who Is Your Neighbour?'



The 'Who Is Your Neighbour?' project is celebrating ten years since it was set up, working to counter the success of far right groups and support communities to live together better with cultural and ethnic differences. When we began we were the only project in England holding conversations in predominantly white communities about race, immigration and ethnicity providing space for people to speak openly about those issues.

We continue to benefit from the wisdom of our multi-faith Management Committee of 7 people, and enjoy the gifts and expertise of our staff. They are: Project Manager Tariq Bashir, Development Worker Regina Drabble, our Administrator Michele Davison and, since November 2019, our Operations Manager Cath Chirgwin (previously a Development Worker with our project) who is able to coordinate the increasing demand for our involvement in communities and organisations and to manage the many and varied 'nuts and bolts' of running the project. This appointment frees the Project Manager to be more closely involved in planning and delivering facilitated conversations (his particular area of experience) and leading the strategic development of the project.

Working to the strategic priorities set out in last year's report, some examples of developments since then:

Securing funding from the Tudor Trust covering the salary of an Operations Manager for three years as referred to above, and the cost of a freelance Communications Worker for a year (to be appointed) and other core costs.

Developing training packages to share our learning more widely and as a source of non-grant income. We have delivered training to about 60 councillors from all over

England on dealing with difficult conversations about race and immigration. The proposed training session for the Methodist Yorkshire Plus Regional Training Network on working with difficult conversations about race and immigration, referred to in last year's report, took place last summer and we are discussing running that session with the other regional networks.

Working with the Refugee Council, MESH (community mediation organisation), and Voz (community arts project) on two streets in Rotherham where refugees have had a difficult time and some have had to move. We are working with long term and newer residents on their experience of their neighbourhood, attitudes to others and building relationships.

Developing a plan for a series of conversations to be held in Rotherham in partnership with the Local Government Association, Rotherham Council and local partners as part of a wider project taking place in four local authority areas relating to the context of "racialised narratives of sexual violence".

One significant piece of work, (postponed since the outbreak of the Corona virus pandemic), has been helping the Sheffield Methodist District and some churches in holding conversations as part of the consultation on the report on marriage and relationships, "God in love unites us". That will be discussed elsewhere on the agenda of Synod when we are able to gather again.

We are grateful for all the support from the Sheffield Methodist District and for the individuals who have worked with us on a variety of occasions to help people to engage in meaningful conversations about important issues and to learn from one another.

Tariq Bashir

Worship and Preaching

An essential element of "Our Calling" is our vocation to Worship, and many within our Methodist communities, lay and ordained, still are called and committed to serve God through the ministry of leading worship and preaching.

My focus is supporting Circuits to deliver the new course, "Worship: Leading and Preaching"; and to explore the course material for the continuous development of Local Preachers and for wider study in study groups.

I am hoping to offer another "Worship: Leading and Preaching" event in autumn 2020 for Superintendents, LWP Secretaries, Tutors and Mentors.

Preachers who have died since last report:

We note at this Synod the passing of the following Preachers over the last year.

Sheffield:

Danny Baker (accredited 1994). Died 01 May 2019.

Kenneth Brown (accredited 1959). Died 15 May 2019.

Ron Chapman (accredited 1994). Died 01 February 2019.

Helen Davis (accredited 1999). Died 28 January 2019.

Raymond Edwards (accredited 1959). Died 22 July 2019.

Bolsover and Staveley

Eileen Hill (accredited 1961). Died 18 November 2019.

Barnsley

Geoffrey Connelly (accredited 1956). Died 01 November 2019.

Jessie Foster (accredited 1960). Died 13 January 2020.

Trinity:

Hannah Bell (accredited 1953). Died 10 January 2020.

Vera Brown (accredited 1968). Died 21 May 2019.

Please hold the Worship Leaders and 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.

Revd Jen Mullis OBE

NB: This report was written at the end of March so there may be other Local Preachers who have died since that date who are not mentioned here. Please be assured that their names will be reported to the Conference Office and mentioned in next year's report to the Synod.

Youth in the Sheffield District

DYference weekend 2019

Once again DYference joined with Cliff College Festival. We had our own dedicated camping area and the young people were encouraged to take part in all the Festival has to offer. Over 50 young people came from across the District. There was also plenty of opportunities for our own activities with late night games, face-painting and crafts, as well as a session with Revd Gill Newton finding out what the District can do to help support and encourage them.

Many thanks to the youth leaders who gave up their time to help facilitate this.

Sadly, Cliff Festival will not be taking place this year, but we hope many will return in 2021

3Gen 2019 – Methodist Youth Assembly

Our District had around 50 young people & their leaders attend 3Generate in November. Grants were given for those who would have struggled to afford the full cost, and transport was also provided. Those who went came back enthused and looking forward to next year!

3Generate is more than just a weekend - it's about hearing the voice of children and young people in the Methodist Church all year.:

See <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-work/children-youth-family-ministry/3generate/> for further information.

Katrin Hackett

Acting District Youth co-ordinator

Learning

Changing

Joining In