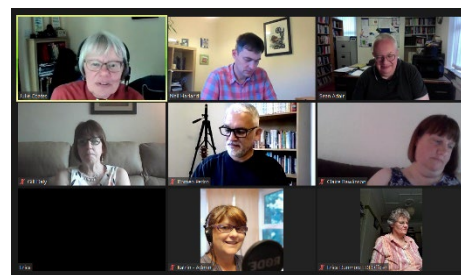


Sheffield Methodist District Leading Team Meeting on Thursday 7 September 2023 at 7.00 pm via ZOOM



Present

Julie Coates (JC) (Acting Chair); Neil Harland (NH); Gill Daly (GD);
Sean Adair (SA); Claire Rawlinson (CR); Erica Dunmow (ED)
Welcome to Romeo Pedro (RP) – new Methodist Council Rep

(non-voting) Katrin Hackett;

Opening Business

1. Opening worship

JC lead the meeting in prayer

2. Apologies for absence

Gill Newton (Presidential duties); McCauley Key, Margaret Mwailu

3. Minutes of the DLT on 4 July

These had been circulated and were accepted as an accurate record.

4. Matters arising from the minutes.

Item 11 – DLT Membership. McCauley Key has agreed to be the New Christian Community rep for the time being; Children & Families worker and Young Person (16-23) are being explored and it is hoped to have names by the November meeting. 2 nominations for Synod representative were received, John Simms and Dave Burton will therefore be elected.

A conversation will be held with Jon Belfield to discuss his continued membership of the meeting - Apprenticeship paper from ED has been circulated for discussion. For this to become more normative it may need to be modelled at District level to set the tone for more local context. It may create extra work in the short term. The tendency is to ask for volunteers without giving much guidance about what is involved. This model was supported by DLT as something to take forward.

ED will introduce this at the District Gathering as part of the EDI report.

5. Decisions made between meetings for ratification.

There were no decisions made between the meetings.

Items For Discussion and Decision

6. Treasurer's Report

The report has been circulated. NH is planning to challenge the formula used to raise the connexional assessment to be more realistic given the financial situation at church/circuit level.

NH was thanked for his report.

7. Mission Strategy Targets.

The report has been circulated.

DLT are asked to focus on three of the topics this time round, looking at the remaining at the next meeting. 3 polls were run on Growing Disciples, Transforming Mission and Properties fit for mission, asking where most and least progress has been made and where support should be prioritised.

A question was raised on how progress is being assessed, how will we know if it is working? Tends to be anecdotal, but NH agreed that this does need to be considered. Should there be very specific actions that churches will be encouraged to try, and see what difference they make?. Possibly focus on a few churches to start with. How do we rediscover where attention needs to be without being in planning paralysis? Would it be helpful for a smaller working party to explore this in more depth? RP

would be happy to be part of such a group. This can also be discussed at the Superintendent Residential and also at the Circuit Stewards Gathering in November / December.
Neil was thanked for his work on this.

8. Property

Tom Rattigan joined the meeting to share a presentation on the next steps on the property strategy. TR feels effective on a local and district/national level, but less so at circuit level. Church projects should meet their agreed mission and property strategy. There should be a checklist for projects to ensure all required matters are completed. The district strategy should be simple, giving guidelines for circuit.

A flowchart on consent will be produced, with a video to demonstrate how this will work.

It is likely that all circuits will be required to have a property strategy

A flowchart on Sales is in the pipeline;

A flowchart on support – where and who to go to is being planned. The annual return for churches has been simplified.

A property Community of Practice is being rolled out connexionally (building on work done in our district)

Property that is fit for mission (location, state, people in the building); property that enables mission (that doesn't come with a load of baggage); property with a purpose and plan (that know where it is going, what it is there for and who it is there for!) buildings may be used more by the community than by the church. Communication is key!

Do any churches have a similar issue with concrete as schools? The guidance will be coming out, but TR doesn't think it does affect us.

Why don't circuits/districts have property management organisations? Sheffield Circuit, there are places where a presence is needed, but membership is not able to manage. There are some early conversations looking at making use of, for example, The Foundry organisation. This is very early days. Rotherham had a similar model and there are things that can be learned from their examples. It can be hard to sign off on leases if there isn't going to be an active Methodist presence, it will need to have a Methodist Board to manage. Does it need to be an independent organisation, can it not be different arm of the Methodist Church? Finding the right group of people to manage is key. The simpler we can make the process the better. What mechanism would work going forward? A lot to think about!

TR will report back at future meetings.

Manse Committee Secretary – this has been vacant for some time. The role is primarily overseeing the work of circuits in looking after manses. There was one expression of interest, but not taken further. In the short term it is proposed that TR takes this role on rather than try to find a volunteer. He has currently been spending about 4 hrs/month at the moment, would like a review after 3 months to see how it does impact on workload. TR left the meeting.

DLT agreed to incorporate this for a trial period, to be reviewed after 3 months

JC reported that Steve Clark, a trustee of the Foundry and the Sunday Centre, has died very suddenly. A message will be sent from this meeting to his wife. There will be a memorial at Victoria Hall on the 18th

9. Conference Feedback.

This was JC's first conference, it was a joy & privilege to be present as Gill was made president! More feedback will be given at Synod

Other Matters

10. Grants update

The report has been circulated. NH asked for guidance on whether to apply for external funding to enable the Warm Space to continue. It would be worth knowing how many churches would want to be involved. It is difficult to know at this stage what might be needed on the ground. Given the time commitment, probably not. NH will keep in touch to see what is planned to continue and what support they might need.

Neil was thanked for his work on this

11. Equality , Diversity and Inclusion

Communication has been difficult due to problems with the email account.

Due to being commissioned by the Methodist Council to undertake an Evaluation of the Implementation of the Justice Dignity and Solidarity Strategy across the Connexion, ED has had very little time to undertake any work at the local level.

- attending two meetings of the Connexional EDI Officers' Group
- attending the new District Justice Seeking Group meetings and working with some of them to plan and lead the Worship for the Spring District Gathering - all of the other initiatives of the Group have been led by other members
- presenting the Strategy to the Sheffield Circuit Preachers' Meeting
- assisting in the delivery of one half-day session of the in-person EDI Training for Sheffield Circuit

- Next step is to find out what we need to do differently as a result of the training.

12. Circuit Staffing Policy

Sheffield Circuit paper has been circulated.

The Peak Circuit paper has been circulated.

There were no questions on the papers and the reports were received

13. Lay Stationing Report

GD reported that 5 presbyters have been welcomed into the District: John Henry; Louise Carr & Lyn Gregg; Andrew Fox and Louise Makin. All have had their welcome services at their circuits and also an informal gathering took place earlier this week.

Looking to 2024, there has been a District Stationing forum looking at the current situations in staffing, both lay and ordained, and starting to identified needs from September 2024.

Decisions are being made on re-invitations, Derbyshire North East will be looking for a Superintendent, and three presbyters will be entering stationing. CR & GD will be representing Gill Newton at the Stationing Matching groups.

There were no questions, GD & CR were assured of the prayers of DLT in this work.

14. AOB

Suggested Dates for DLT meetings 2023/24

- Thursday 7 September
- Wednesday 8 November
- Wednesday 3 January 2024
- Thursday 7 March
- Tuesday 14 May – this date needs to be changed. A doodle poll will be circulated to find a new date.
- Tuesday 9 July

Synod / District Gatherings

- | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| • Spring Gathering (Synod) | 20 April 2024 | Sheffield |
| • Autumn Gathering (Synod) | 14 September 2024 | The Peak (TBC) |
| • Spring Gathering (Synod) | 5 April 2025 | Sheffield |
| • Autumn Gathering (Synod) | 13 September 2025 | Doncaster |
| • Spring Gathering (Synod) | 18 April 2026 | Sheffield |

- The meeting closed with prayer at 20:58