

MISSIONAL GRANTS OVERVIEW

11 NOVEMBER 2021

Under our new grants policy, district funding is available to support Transforming Mission and Properties Fit For Mission projects.



To keep this funding support closely aligned to our overall strategy and our ongoing learning from its implementation, grant applications are now assessed directly by the Leading Team. Full details of our scheme and what we have said we will prioritise are available at <https://www.sheffieldmethodist.org/what-we-do/finance-fundraising.html>

We have one application - for a loan rather than a grant - to consider to consider at this meeting.

I have remained in dialogue with The Grove, Retford, following their stage one application, and expect DLT to receive a stage two application in time for the January meeting.

TRANSFORMING MISSION LOAN – ENGAGE HOUSING

Mark North, CEO of Freedom Community Project took me through a presentation for their Engage Housing proposal. Following on from our NPNP pilot presentation in September I suggested that the best way to present this to DLT would be to record his presentation and allow you to watch in advance of our meeting, when he will be available to answer questions. It takes approximately 20 minutes to watch. This is slightly longer than I had anticipated, but hopefully provides a clear presentation of his proposal.

The presentation can be downloaded from WeTransfer at <https://we.tl/t-OqSNxkMCwW>

Freedom Community Project have received district grant funding towards their core costs in recent years, and this has been key to them achieving their rapid growth. Part of their objectives of the last grant, was to give them capacity to identify sustainable funding streams for their work which are not reliant on short term grants. Their Enable Housing subsidiary is one such initiative to come from this.

The request is for a loan of £15,000, which would be repaid in instalments over 7 years, together with 5% interest.

Enable will lease an otherwise abandoned property, invest this loan in renovating it, and sublet the resulting good standard house to a client of Freedom Community Project, who would otherwise be living in poor standard accommodation. The rent is funded by the Housing Benefit element of Universal Credit.

This is not an entirely risk-free loan from the perspective of district as a lender, but the concept does appear to have been thoroughly researched, to be a missional rather than purely financial investment.

If DLT were to be content to grant a loan and was subsequently satisfied it was operating as anticipated, there are several churches and some circuits around the district which hold significant restricted/ endowed cash, or money earmarked for spending in the medium to long term, which is earning considerably less than 5% return and may be available for social investment.