



# The Methodist Church

## LIVERPOOL DISTRICT METHODIST CHURCH

### TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2013

Registered Charity No 1134011

49 Queens Drive

Liverpool

L18 2DT

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[www.liverpoolmethodistdistrict.org.uk](http://www.liverpoolmethodistdistrict.org.uk)

## 1 REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATION DETAILS

Charity Name	<b>Liverpool District Methodist Church</b>
Registered Number	<b>1134011</b>
Principal Address	<b>49 Queens Drive Liverpool L18 2DT</b>
E-mail	<b><u><a href="mailto:mail@liverpoolmethodistdistrict.org.uk">mail@liverpoolmethodistdistrict.org.uk</a></u></b>
Web Site	<b><u><a href="http://www.liverpoolmethodistdistrict.org.uk">www.liverpoolmethodistdistrict.org.uk</a></u></b>

### Charity Trustees who served in the year

#### **The Resourcing Mission Group**

##### ***Ex Officio***

The Chair of District	The Revd James A Booth
Secretary of the Synod	Mr Stephen Cooper
Secretary of the Presbyteral Session of Synod	The Revd Melvyn J Kelly
Secretary of the Resourcing Mission Group	Mrs Elizabeth Hudson
District Development Enabler	The Revd Rodney Hill
District Treasurer for the Methodist Church Fund	Mr David K Smith
District Grants Secretary	The Revd Martin J Wood
District Property Secretary	Mr Ralph W Dransfield
District Lay Stationing Representative	Mr Iain S A Henderson
District Training Secretary	The Revd Caroline Ainger
One District Ecumenical Officer	To be appointed
The District Safeguarding & Child Protection Officer	Mrs Ann Taylor
District Representative to the Methodist Council	The Revd Caroline Ainger

##### ***Elected Representatives***

The Revd Marcus Torchon  
The Revd Ann Rigby-Jones  
Mr Barry Natton  
Mr Kenneth Sims  
The Revd Lucille Rogers  
The Revd Stephen Kingsnorth  
The Revd Luke Smith  
The Revd Andrew Fox  
Mr Andrew Lovelady  
Mrs Ann Marks  
The Revd Peter A Knight  
Mrs Anne Baldwin  
Mr David Honour

## **2 STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

### **2.1 Description of the charity's trusts**

#### **Type of governing document**

Deed Of Union (1932) and Methodist Church Act (1976)

#### **How the charity is constituted**

Act of Parliament

#### **Trustee selection methods**

Appointed by area consultations, district synod and existing trustees

### **2.2 Additional governance issues**

#### **Induction/Training**

Range of guidance produced by Methodist Connexion, including a leaflet 'The Role of a Trustee in The Methodist Church' given to each trustee.

#### **Structure**

Accountable to the Methodist Conference.

#### **Related Parties**

None

#### **Risks**

- Considered by the Resourcing Mission Group.
- Take professional advice as required.
- Regular review process.
- Adopted Safeguarding Policy and ensured it is rolled out to the circuits and churches.

### **3 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES**

#### **3.1 Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document**

The purposes of the Methodist Church are and shall be deemed to have been since the Date of Union the advancement of:

- The Christian faith in accordance with the doctrinal standards and discipline of The Methodist Church;
- Any charitable purpose for the time being of any Connexional, District, Circuit, local or other organisation of The Methodist Church;
- Any charitable purpose for the time being of any society or institution subsidiary or ancillary to The Methodist Church;
- Any purpose for the time being of any charity being a charity subsidiary or ancillary to The Methodist Church.

#### **3.2 Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects**

- The District supports the activities of the churches and circuits within the Liverpool District by provision of various support services including training, development and evangelism.
- The District administers an ecumenical project to develop and facilitate Church Action on Sexual Abuse Issues (CASAI).
- The District supports the provision of a chaplaincy service to the universities in Liverpool.

We confirm the trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

#### **3.3 Additional details of objectives and activities**

The District Advance Fund had a balance at the year end of £186,856. This fund derives from sales of chapels and manses and is restricted by the Conference. This restriction is an internal regulation though the fund can be used for a variety of purposes. The District Grants Committee has drawn up a set of ground rules, which have been accepted by the Resourcing Mission Group to ensure grants made from the District Advance Fund are used effectively for mission and capital works. The fund has commitments amounting to £171,241 to be paid over the next five years.

## **4 ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE**

### **4.1 Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year**

#### **4.1.1 District Policy Document**

This is reviewed annually (at the Spring Resourcing Mission Group Meeting) and updated as required to reflect the current structure and aspirations of the District.

#### **4.1.2 Resourcing Mission Group**

The Resourcing Mission Group (RMG) met three times during the year (in June, October and February) for the purposes of normal business, and with the District Chair's Nomination Panel on March 22nd, following the interviews for a new Chair of District, to vote on their recommendation. Members also attended the Area Consultation with the Sankey Valley Circuit in June and, with other District Officers were present at the Regional Meeting in Preston in April 2013.

Several key vacancies for District Officers have been filled during the year, but the positions of Ecumenical Officer and Assistant Ecumenical Officer remain vacant. Since Synod in September, RMG has endorsed the nominations of Revd Lucille Rogers and Revd Peter Summers to the District Candidates Committee and, at the February meeting, considered ways to increase the expertise on the District Strategy Group.

In October RMG agreed unanimously to endorse a proposal that the current DDE role should be extended for a further year, thereby allowing equal access to presbyteral and lay candidates to the new vacancies defined by the Fruitful Field report and to be advertised in May 2013.

The representation of circuits at District level continues to be a source of concern, as the Area Consultation structure has proved to be neither popular nor effective. An alternative, more flexible arrangement was therefore brought to the members in February, in the form of proposals that:

- a. a maximum total of 13 representatives across all circuits should be identified as members of RMG for a 3-year period each, and
- b. RMG will meet with all Circuit Meetings or Leadership Teams (as preferred locally) once in each 12-month period.

It is expected that nominations for the circuit representatives will be brought to Synod in September, and that dates of the meetings will be published in the Directory at that time. A revision of the District Constitution to reflect the new arrangements will also be presented to Synod in September. Other amendments and updates to the District Policy Document, including the Grants Policy and Constitution, were received by RMG during the year and adopted as a work-in-progress, to be accessible via the District web-site.

All recent meetings have included protected time to review and discuss key topics of interest, including the Healthy Churches Review, (undertaken by almost half the churches in the District); what we have learned from the process of Regrouping for Mission; and Mission in the Inner City. Reports have been received from various partnership bodies which receive financial support from the District. Full copies of the reports are available from the RMG Secretary.

During the year the group has

- (a) received updates on the conversations re the Southport (Banks and Hesketh Bank) Circuit to move to the Lancashire District.
- (b) confirmed Trinity Page Moss LEP Methodist Church Council as Managing Trustees for Trinity Huyton Methodist Church

- (c) regretfully endorsed a proposal for the closure of Parr Methodist Church, with effect from September 2013
- d) referred applications for the authorisation of persons other than ministers to preside at the Lord's Supper to an agreed working sub-group

In receiving the report from Methodist Council at the meeting in February, RMG noted that Steve Cooper, the current representative completes his term of service this year, and that a successor must be appointed at Spring Synod.

#### **4.1.3 Report of District Strategy Group**

The strategy group is a sub-group of the Resourcing Mission Group and reports to the RMG meetings. The major areas of discussion covered by the strategy group during 2012/13 and reported to RMG were:

- **Good News stories**

A series of videos of Good News Stories from around the district has been produced. Most of the videos are available on the district web-site and on disk, or USB stick on request to the DDE. All of these videos have consent to be used within the district and on the web-site and some are available on YouTube.

- **District Policies**

All of the policies are now on the district web-site.

- **Inner Liverpool and Birkenhead**

Strategy group noted a concern about the increasingly fragile nature of our churches in inner city Liverpool and Birkenhead, which was prompted by a request for closure from Stonecroft church, in the Liverpool (South) circuit.

Noted John Fielding's research on inner city mission in the URC context, and the difficulty of defining what we mean by inner city.

Strategy group proposed a meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> March to have an initial exploratory conversation based around a map of where the historic denominations are currently located. This meeting to be ecumenical, was well attended, with representatives from all of the circuits in this area and with some ecumenical partners. The meeting agreed that it would be helpful to continue the conversation and a group will meet, to explore how to take this conversation forward with a positive and missional agenda, recognising that, in the Methodist context, any decisions would need to be taken by circuit Meetings and Church Councils.

- **Chaplaincy**

Following a lengthy discussion strategy group recommended RMG to encourage Liverpool (South) circuit to make the appointment of a student and young adult worker in conjunction with the city centre circuit. RMG would seek to nominate a member of the interviewing panel as an indication of its support.

- **RMG and Area Consultations**

As a result of conversations at the Superintendents' meeting it was felt that the area consultations were no longer an effective means of communication between the circuits and district officers. It will be suggested that the circuits propose ways of inviting RMG members and district officers to meet with them and that representation of the circuits on RMG be made in another way, which were subsequently brought to RMG.

- **City Centre circuit**

The development of ways of working with other circuits and pieces of work in the district was noted with support. In particular mention was made of the possible link with the restorative justice programme that Martin Earl is developing out of Altcourse Prison and the work that Ian Hu is doing as Superintendent of Liverpool (North Central) circuit.

- **Stationing**

Policy group has noted the developments in stationing during the year, with a particular eye to maximising the use of district allocated resources for effective mission.

#### **4.1.4 CASAI Project:**

The CASAI project continues to offer support to survivors of abuse. The CASAI worker works with 12 people on a regular weekly basis on a one to one basis. Two groups in Warrington and in Wirral meet regularly with a Liverpool group meeting on an infrequent basis. During the year CASAI had direct contact with over 250 people who had been abused across the full range of denominations and faiths. Conferences, presentations and consultancy work continue to develop. A moving visual presentation was provided to the Spring Synod of the work being carried out.

#### **4.1.5 Property and Resources**

Property continues to be a vital and valuable resource for the work of mission; we have a duty as Managing Trustees to ensure that it continues to be in good condition. That duty is assisted by the annual check on the property (the supplement to Schedule A) which then should have been summarised in the Schedule C which each Circuit should have returned to the District Property Secretary.

The Connexion has been looking at ways in which the amount of paperwork and schedules can be reduced, whilst still maintaining a responsible attitude to managing our resources. Schedule A, together with the annual check on the property, is now an on-line document from September 2013 and much of the data that is initially input into this form will remain there, only requiring updating or amending in future years. Other Schedules and statistical returns are also likely to become on-line requirements.

Quinquennial Inspection reports on property vary widely, and it is likely that new requirements will be introduced later in the year in order to attempt to introduce consistency in the reporting and to increase the usefulness of these reports. Few reports contain photographs and yet they can be helpful explaining a specific defect to a Managing Trustee – “a photograph is worth a thousand words”. In this digital age there is no excuse for their not being included.

Finally, last November, the Connexion replaced “Property Points” with “Property Matters” – this now being issued at least twice a year on-line. It is a valuable reminder of good practice and current legislation and should be available to all churches in your circuit.

#### **4.1.6 Manses Report**

This year five manses had a quinquennial inspection and 5 manse visits were arranged.

Next year five quinquennial inspections are due. Property Stewards are reminded to let the District Manse secretary have a copy of inspection report by mid- November in order to assist in preparing a report for the meeting of the District Manse Committee in January.

Seven manses are due a manse visit next year. We have a number of faithful and very hard working Manse Visitors, who remain willing to travel to carry out these important inspections. Unfortunately some members have had to retire and therefore we do need some fresh volunteers to build up our list, especially from the Southport, Ormskirk, Widnes

and Warrington areas. The District Manse Secretary would be very pleased to hear from anyone who feels that they would like to join the team.

#### 4.1.7 Connexional Grants

The District has not received any applications for Connexional Grants. All monitoring and evaluation reports for term grants have been received and forwarded to the Connexional Officers.

#### 4.1.8 Certificate of Property Accounts and Investments

Standard Forms of Accounts for excepted charities within the District were displayed at the District Synod on 27 April 2013, where they were deemed to be incorporated into the Synod Agenda.

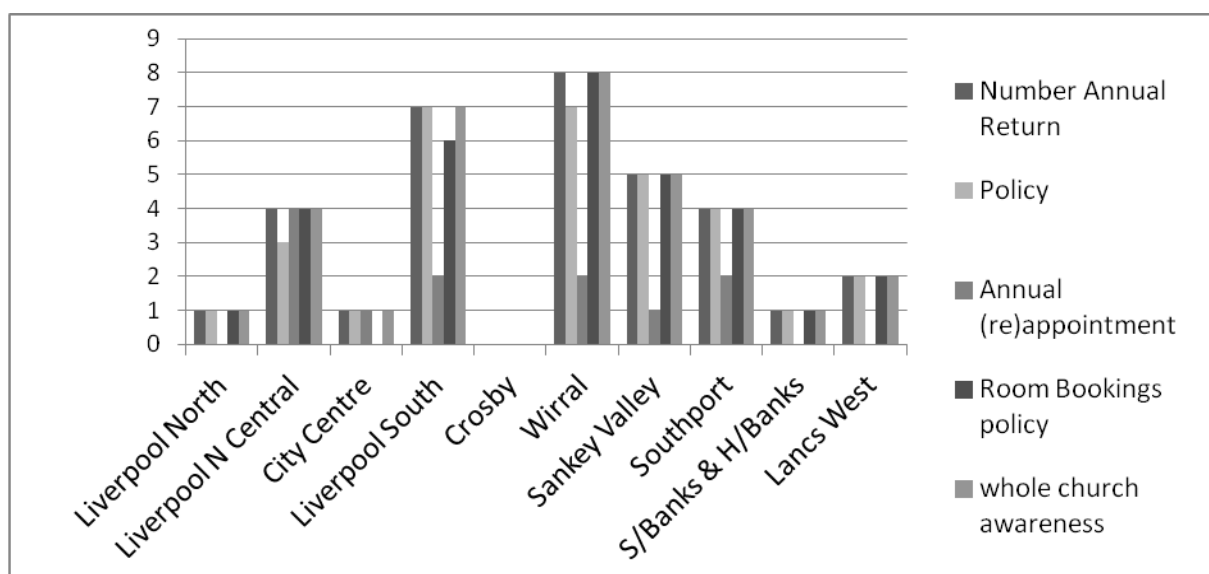
#### 4.1.9 Safeguarding (Children and Vulnerable Adults)

The District team aims to meet 4 times per year to plan meetings for Circuit and Church Safeguarding Officers, discuss safeguarding items and changes arising from the previous Methodist Conference; take an overview of Creating Safer Space training in the District, and consider any safeguarding issues which have arisen.

In accordance with the guidance from one of the three Safeguarding reports to Conference 2012 an Independent Chair for the group, Mr Alan Lewis, has been appointed.

#### Annual Audit

This has, again, been a disappointing response. Highlighted below are some of the areas that the audit covered and each circuit is identified by name with the number of churches that have sent their replies. All those returned, indicate that there is whole church awareness of safeguarding. It is very important that Trustees know their responsibilities as employers (including employment of volunteers) and not only annually re-appoints the workers, but look at any training that may be required.



#### Training

Across the District Circuit Trainers have been involved in delivering Creating Safer Space Module A, or more recently, the Foundation Module to over 2,000 people. This has been a huge undertaking, and our thanks go to all the trainers who have given their time and expertise for this important work. The bulk of the training has been done, but it will be ongoing as people take on new roles which necessitate their doing the training within six months of appointment. Circuits may choose to work together to deliver the Foundation Module every six months.



The Leadership Module of Creating Safer Space is now being rolled out. This is for presbyters and deacons with an active preaching or pastoral ministry; those in paid employment in the Methodist Church which involves direct work with children, young people and vulnerable adults; members of the District Council; and Circuit and Church Safeguarding Officers.

### **Church/Circuit policies**

Some churches and circuits have updated policies in place but have not sent them to District Safeguarding Officer; some churches are still bringing their older documents up-to-date and awaiting Church Council endorsement in February (as can be seen in the graph above).

### **Covenants of Care**

A covenant of Care consisting of usually five church members is established in any situation where a person is accused or convicted of sexual abuse. This enables the offender to take part in church life, with oversight to protect both him/her and to protect the vulnerable. This last year, year 50% of Circuits have had at least one safeguarding issue that is either being or has been resolved and in some, churches covenants of care are in place with appropriate support

We continue to maintain contacts with safeguarding leads in other denominations and the Local Authorities.

#### **4.1.10 District Candidates Committee**

The committee met once during the year to interview the candidate who presented herself. The Committee spent time seeking to prayerfully discern her calling. The candidate has offered for the Methodist Diaconal Order.

Having spent some time in groups and full committee the candidate was unanimously recommended to go forward to the Connexional Selection Committee. We are delighted to announce that the candidate was successful at that Committee and is looking forward to fulfil her calling in the Methodist Diaconal Order. Our prayerful support goes with her.

Thank you to all who sat on the District Committee, for your dedication in preparation for, and during, this process of discernment.

#### **4.1.11 Ministerial Development Review**

Following the changes to the Ministerial Development Review process, Liverpool district have organised training events for Presbyters, Deacons, Lay contributors and Facilitators. The training has focused on the key elements of the new methodology and how the process will work. It also provided opportunities for those involved to discuss any concerns they might have.

To date three sessions have been run, with a fourth planned shortly.

18 Presbyters, 3 Deacons, 18 Lay contributors and 4 Facilitators: have attended

Within the District we have adapted a 'Ministerial Development Review – Quick Start Guide' (originally developed by another District by Anne Howlett-Foster) for use within the Liverpool District. This will be circulated to those involved shortly.

#### **4.1.12 Sabbaticals Advisory Group**

The District Sabbaticals Advisory Group met during the year and brought their information up to date. All ministers due for sabbaticals in the next year have been contacted and relevant information and support offered.

Within the District, five ministers took sabbaticals in the year with a further four ministers planned for 2013/14.

#### **4.1.13 District Lay Employment**

In the last year advice has been given in about seven different matters. They include recruitment, redundancy and amending terms of employment. There seems to be less recruitment and more redundancy than in previous years. There have not been any disciplinary issues or appeals.

On employment matters, the District Lay Employment Secretary should be contacted at the earliest opportunity – and certainly before any decisions are taken. Often the employee should be consulted before a decision is taken and advice is provided about the process. This is how we implement good practice and do our best to avoid being taken to the employment tribunal.

With regard to good practice, some circuits have one person who looks after lay employment. They build up expertise and the idea seems to work well. The District Lay Employment Secretary is able to put circuits in touch with each other, if they agree, to share experiences in similar situations.

Fixed term contracts pose a difficult issue. There has to be a genuine reason for a fixed term and that has to be stated on the job description and in the written statement of terms.

The living wage (as recommended by Church Action on Poverty - £7.60 per hour outside London) has been compulsory since September 2011. The RMG can allow exceptions in certain circumstances. The rate will be going up in November.

The connexional web site contains the lay employment advisory information section. It contains all you need to know as well as draft documents to be downloaded and amended to suit.

#### **4.1.14 DDE Report to Synod**

The work of missional development around the district continued throughout the year. The paragraphs below indicate the major areas of work that the DDE has been involved in this year, with the support of the management group and the district chair. However, this is by no means an exhaustive list!

1. District policies
  - Policy documents have been prepared and approved by either synod or RMG, as appropriate.
  - Procedures for ongoing review of policies have been put in place
  - Policy documents are available on the new district web-site and in hard copy, on request
  - As summary booklet is available for members of synod
2. Supporting the district 'Getting it right for God's sake' events
  - Liaised with 'Transforming church and communities' on governance training for series 1 of these events
  - Liaised with Methodist insurance on risk management training for the second series of events
3. Videos
  - Co-ordinating the production of 5 short videos telling stories of 'Good news' projects around the district

4. Facilitating conversations about a strategic approach to Mission in Inner Liverpool and Birkenhead
  - Attended meetings at Charing Cross, Birkenhead, to help with developing a vision and bringing a district perspective
  - Drew the attention of strategy group and RMG to the need for a strategic approach to mission in the inner areas
  - Facilitated meetings to begin to develop such a strategy
5. Wirral circuit review
  - Healthy Church reviews – trained and co-ordinating a team of people facilitating church reviews and co-ordinated response and feedback
  - Healthy circuit review – undertook the review with circuit meeting and circuit staff
  - Follow up meetings with staff and others
  - Supporting individual churches, especially Trinity Ellesmere Port, Moreton and Claremount
6. Project managing the building of a new nursery/ community centre at Nutgrove
  - Grant applications – submitted grant applications to Methodist and other sources on behalf of the circuit meeting.
  - Site meetings – attended regular site meetings, with others, on behalf of Sankey Valley Developments
  - Authorisation of payments etc. – careful monitoring and control of cash flow and payment authorisations
  - Liaison with professional team
7. Facilitating conversations in Liverpool (North) Circuit,
  - Governance training for CLT – meetings with circuit leadership team and others to explore various governance and leadership issues
  - Visioning event and sharing Good News stories
  - Work with the Church futures group at Maghull and facilitated open events looking at developing a vision for mission
8. One off meetings with several ministers and churches around the district to explore mission development in various ways.
9. Preaching in the East cluster of the Sankey Valley circuit in support of that missional emphasis, but elsewhere around the district, in support of the various areas of work above.

As many will be aware the DDE scheme comes to an end in August 2013. The future shape of the Discipleship and Ministries Learning Network, which will develop the work currently undertaken is unknown.

#### **4.1.15 Action for Children Report**

Presently we have the following projects in the Liverpool District. They are –

- Liverpool Family Intervention, Walton: From this centre we run our Knowsley Junior Mentoring Service, Young Runaways Service and our Assessment Service.
- Wirral Parenting, Birkenhead: Parenting support and courses to help parents care for their children and deal with many social issues.
- Wirral Health Service in Schools
- Seasons (bereavement and support service)

## **5 FINANCIAL REVIEW**

### **5.1 Financial Overview**

The accounts show, overall, net outgoing resources of £48,476 (2012 – incoming £39,287) and net gains on manse and investment assets of £12,998 (2012 – £7,352), resulting in cumulative total funds of £916,837 (2012 - £952,315). The General Fund is the District's unrestricted fund and is split into the three designated accounts being General, Training and Reserve, and Mission. These funds cumulatively show incoming resources of £1,820 (2012– £4,227), transfer in of £29,700 (2012 – Nil) and transfer out to restricted funds (CASAI project) of £15,633 (2012 - £14,489).

### **5.2 Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves**

The District Reserves policy relates to our general (unrestricted) funds which are freely available to be used for any or all of the purposes of the District.

#### **Aims**

- (1) To secure and sustain the District's viability and future.
- (2) To give reassurance to the general public that the District, which is a charity, intends to use all of the money coming into its care for the purposes of the charity.

#### **Financial plans**

The District assessment is reviewed annually and covers the costs of supporting the Chair and the various committees and organisations of the District, the costs of various ecumenical subscriptions and levies and the grant funding of certain projects of primary importance to the overall work of the District. In addition designated funds exist for training and mission.

#### **General Fund (Unrestricted)**

The reserves policy is to hold at least six months expenditure in hand. Based on the proposed budget for 2013/14 these reserves are believed to be reasonable and a balanced budget is proposed. The amounts designated for Training and Mission are felt to be appropriate in respect of planned expenditure in the next year.

#### **District Model Trust Fund (Restricted)**

This fund provides grants to circuits and churches to engage in mission and property schemes. The balance at 31 August 2013 of £186,856 has commitments to the value of £171,241 to be paid over the next five years. The remaining balance will be utilised in 2013/14.

#### **Restricted Funds**

The Overseas Students Development fund provides grants to international students studying in Liverpool who face financial hardship. The committed amount is a capital amount invested to provide income to support the purposes of the fund. Due to the falling balance on the fund a moratorium on grants is currently in place. Further income is required to meet likely commitments. The CASAI project is an ongoing project which is under funded and in urgent need of higher reserves which are actively being sought. The benevolent fund has restricted purposes and lies at the sole funding discretion of the District Chair.

#### **Details of any funds materially in deficit**

There are none.

**6 DECLARATION**

**The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.**

**Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees**

**Signature(s)**

**JAMES A BOOTH  
(District Chair)**

**STEPHEN COOPER  
(Secretary)**

**June 2014**