



The Methodist Church

LIVERPOOL DISTRICT METHODIST CHURCH

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2014

Registered Charity No 1134011

49 Queens Drive

Liverpool

L18 2DT

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1 REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATION DETAILS

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

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 Lily Twist
Secretary of the Resourcing Mission Group	Mrs Elizabeth Hudson
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	The Revd Stephen Kingsnorth
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 Kenneth Sims
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 £140,568. 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 £140,374 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 met for formal business three times during the year (in May, October and February) and once, in November, at a district open event, with newly appointed officers of the Discipleship and Ministries Learning Network for the North West & Mann area. A number of shared conversations have also taken place between representatives of RMG and the Circuits, as part of a planned annual programme.

Since October, RMG has welcomed a number of newly appointed circuit representatives, whose experience, contributions and commitment is much valued. The new consultation process with circuits is proving interesting and fruitful, and while, in practice, it may be more effective for RMG to meet with Circuit Leadership Teams rather than the full Circuit Meeting the choice of occasion will remain with each circuit.

The year has seen the departure of the District Development Enabler and the Regional Training Officer to new appointments and services of thanksgiving for their service to the Liverpool District were held in August and September 2013. Since then, a specially convened working group has been meeting to prepare for the appointment of a part-time District Mission and Evangelism Facilitator, and it is expected that the position will become active from September 2014.

Other appointments noted by RMG have included a University Chaplain (in September 2013), new members of the District Probationers' Committee (throughout the year), and, in February, the re-appointment of several District Officers who have served 6 years or more.

Two training extensions for Local Preachers in the district have been authorised during the year.

The February meeting addressed three Connexional Consultation requests, with the following outcomes:

- Larger than Circuit: Feedback had been requested in respect of the existing working relationships between circuits and the Connexion, and with reference to the role of a District Chair. RMG endorsed the proposal that the Chairs of North West and Mann Region might send a collective response outlining the work done locally to establish and develop the Covenant relationship.
- Same Sex Marriage: The time scale for replies to this consultation was extremely short and prevented the district being able to formulate a collective response.
- Recommendations of the Commission of the Covenanted Churches in Wales – RMG were uncomfortable with significant elements of the proposals as indeed we were advised were many others across the connexion. The areas of concern related to issues around ministry of women and proposals regarding the historic episcopate. RMG asked Revd Booth to respond to that effect on behalf of the District.

During the year RMG unanimously adopted LEP constitutions for Lord St West (Southport) and Emmanuel (Ormskirk), and acknowledged the cessation of worship at Halebank and the termination of the sharing agreement & LEP at St Michaels. All these items were endorsed by Synod in September. At the February meeting RMG retrospectively authorised the cessation of worship at Whiston Methodist Church.

At the May meeting Revd Booth took the chair for the last time. We have very much appreciated his leadership and guidance over the last 11 years and record our sincere thanks for the invaluable contribution Jim has made to the District. The meeting in October will convene under the leadership of the new District Chair the Revd Sheryl Anderson.

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 2013/14 and reported to RMG were:

- Inner City Issues:
- Discipleship and Ministries Learning Network:
- Ecumenical work:

There was concern that, despite numerous requests, no ecumenical officer was in post. After discussion it was agreed that the role of the Ecumenical Officer has changed since the original appointment and, perhaps the role should be split into a "Communications" role and a separated missional one with creative links. A proposal for presentation to Synod may enable the work to continue in a new form.

A review of the effectiveness of the current group had been carried out identifying a number of issues and potential weaknesses.

The group had identified that a District Manses Secretary is required. The Safeguarding Officer role is planned to be shared with the Manchester and Stockport District. Other voluntary roles require succession planning to ensure continuity.

It was suggested that Connexional Grant applications be co-ordinated within Circuits before submission.

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

Most of the churches in the District have now completed their on-line returns; the outstanding ones are urged to complete as soon as possible (a requirement of Standing Orders). There were, inevitably, some queries during completion since this was the first year that the Schedules had been replaced with the on-line system. These queries have been taken on-board by the team in London in order to improve and make the system more user-friendly for the 2014/15 returns.

The consents system appears to be working well. Churches are reminded that they need to enter a "project" on the website for all work which is of a structural nature or requires Local Authority Building Regulation approvals, and for those repair schemes where the requisite funding is on deposit with TMCP, including Circuit Model Trust and District Advance Fund monies.

Over 15 years ago the Connexional Property Office issued a Handbook for the use of District Property Officers. It has long been felt that, a: the usefulness of the handbook was such that it required updating. The good news is that a new and expanded version of the Handbook will be available, first at the Connexional Resourcing Mission Forum in May, then in hard copy for all Districts and Circuits and on-line. All future updates and additions will be notified via “Property Matters” – the on-line replacement for “Property Points”. “Property Matters” is currently distributed to all Superintendent Ministers, Circuit and Church Property Secretaries and Treasurers.

4.1.6 Manses Report

The position of District Manse secretary is vacant and applications are encouraged.

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.

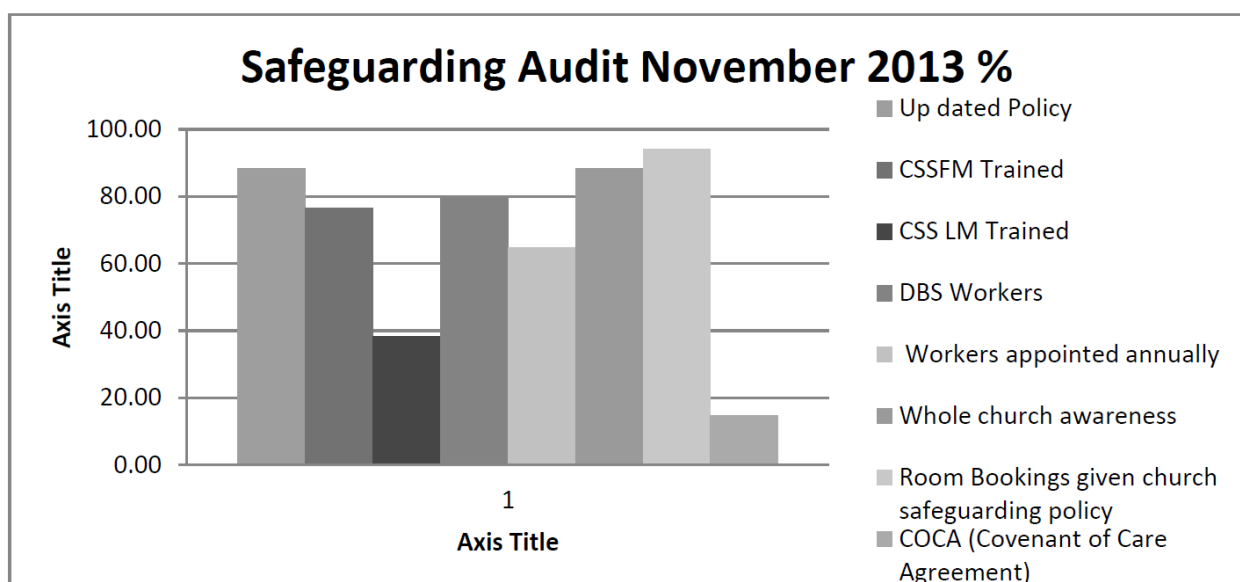
4.1.8 Certificate of Property Accounts and Investments

Standard Forms of Accounts for excepted charities within the District were displayed at the District Synod on 10 May 2014, where they were deemed to be incorporated into the Synod Agenda.

4.1.9 Safeguarding (Children and Vulnerable Adults)

More churches and circuits have replied this year to the annual audit schedule. Of those who replied almost all have replied having an up-to-date policy. A few churches and circuits are currently bringing their policies in line with Connexional guidelines and show that this is intended for their next church council and circuit meetings.

Over the last year there have been five declared Covenants of Care across the District and support groups who, on behalf of their church and circuit, are enabling those who pose a risk to others to worship safely and so help in creating safer space for all.



It has proved difficult recruiting members for the District Safeguarding Group that urgently requires someone with particular focus on Vulnerable Adults - and a minute secretary.

The delivery of Creating Safer Space, Foundation Module training is ongoing as people take on new roles which necessitate their doing the training within six months of

appointment. It would be useful if training session dates can be advertised across the District to better enable circuits to work together to deliver the Foundation Module.

The North West & Mann Discipleship and Ministries Learning Network are assisting in delivering Leadership Module of Creating Safer Space: the Liverpool Methodist District has just completed three training events. Other dates are available in neighbouring Districts.

This District is currently undertaking work as part of the Connexional Past Cases Review. The District team is aware that this for some can be an extremely painful process for individuals and for churches. We also recognise that for some individuals it is also the first opportunity to speak. We pray that through this, often hurtful process, that we are working towards a safer space for all within our churches.

4.1.10 District Candidates Committee

This year four people began the discernment process to proceed to Candidature. Two of the four realised that this was not God's call for them at this present time. The remaining two candidates presenting for Presbyteral Ministry met with the District Committee on 24th January at Formby.

The Committee recommended one candidate proceeds to the Connexional Selection Committee. The candidate was accepted for Pre-Ordination Training.

The Committee recognised a calling upon the life of the second candidate but felt that further discernment was needed. The recommendation was to explore Diaconal or continuing Lay Ministry.

There are two vacancies on this important committee.

4.1.11 District Probationers' Committee

There have been five probationer ministers in the District this year – two probationer Deacons (a first year and a second year) and three Probationer Presbyters (two first years and a second year).

The District Probationers Committee has received and considered reports on the progress and development of each Probationer and made recommendations that all those in second year proceed to ordination at Conference this year and all those in first year be continued on probation for a second year.

There are vacancies on the Committee for next year.

4.1.12 Ministerial Development Review

Following the changes to the Ministerial Development Review process, the Circuits began their MDR's during the end of the last Connexional year. The figures show progress being made with to date all but three having been carried out and dates arranged for those others to be undertaken.

4.1.13 Sabbaticals Advisory Group

The District Sabbaticals Advisory Group has agreed sabbaticals as submitted. All ministers due for sabbaticals in 2013/14 and 2014/15 have been contacted and relevant information and support offered. Six ministers have taken or are due to take sabbaticals in the current connexional year. Four ministers are due to take sabbaticals in the connexional year 2014/15. It has been agreed that one minister can defer their sabbatical to 2015/16.

4.1.14 District Lay Employment

In the last year advice has been provided on some seven different matters. They include recruitment, redundancy and amending terms of employment. There have not been any disciplinary issues or appeals.

4.1.15 Action for Children Report

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

- Liverpool & Knowsley Junior Mentoring Service
- Liverpool Runaways Service
- Wigan Family Intervention
- Wigan Parental Outreach
- Wirral Health Service in Schools
- Wirral Contract Care Fostering service

5 FINANCIAL REVIEW

5.1 Financial Overview

The accounts show, overall, net outgoing resources of £48,823 (2013 – £48,476) and net gains on manse and investment assets of £9,294 (2013 – £12,998), resulting in cumulative total funds of £877,308 (2013 - £916,837). 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 £1,617 (2013 - £1,820), transfer in of £4,894 (2013 - £29,700) and transfer out to restricted funds (CASAI project) of £13,536 (2013 - £15,633).

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 2015/16 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 Advance Fund (Restricted)

This fund provides grants to circuits and churches to engage in mission and property schemes. The balance at 31 August 2014 of £140,568 has commitments to the value of £140,374 to be paid over the next five years. The remaining balance will be utilised in 2014/15.

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 being funded by District Advance Fund and the general District budget. 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)

**SHERYL M ANDERSON
(District Chair)**

**STEPHEN COOPER
(Secretary)**

June 2015