








A growing, evangelistic, justice-seeking and inclusive church without walls.

The District exists to:

-  Enable churches to flourish
-  Connect people
-  Evolve with the changing picture of methodism
-  Initiate new work
-  Challenge the status quo

SYNOD HANDBOOK
Representative Session

Saturday 25th April 2026
The Church at Carrs Lane, Carrs Lane, Birmingham, B4 7SX

Contents

Letter from the Co-chairs

Agenda

Accessibility at Synod

Reports

Memorials

Directory Information

Directory

Circuit Numbers

General Information

Dates of Future Synod and Forum Meetings

Conference 2026 Information

West Midlands District Constitution

Synod

District Forum

District Policy Committee

Letter from the Co-Chairs

Dear Friends,

We are delighted to be inviting you all to the Spring Representative Session of the West Midlands District Synod on Saturday 25th April, 10.30am at The Church at Carrs Lane, Birmingham, B4 7SX. Tea and coffee will be available from 9.30am.

The Synod will begin with worship at 10.30am which will include Holy Communion.

This Synod will be thinking about the theological underpinning of our eco-policy and the Christian motivation for our environmental concerns. We are delighted to be welcoming Ruth Valerio as our keynote speaker. Ruth is currently the Programmes, Partnerships and Advocacy Director for Embrace the Middle East and has a particular interest in climate and environmental issues. She has previously worked at Tearfund and A Rocha UK where she spearheaded Eco Church and she has written extensively on justice, environment and lifestyle issues. You can find out more on Ruth's website: <https://ruthvalerio.net>. She will also be leading one of the afternoon workshops.

It would help if you could sign up for your preferred workshop in advance using the link in the email sent with this handbook.

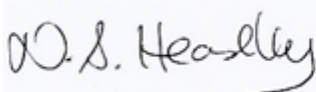
Two memorials are being brought to this Synod. A memorial is simply a request from the District to the Methodist Conference. It asks the Conference to take an action, or change a policy, or make a statement on an issue. The Synod will discuss each memorial and decide whether to send it to the Conference.

The Presbyteral Synod has referred the memorial 'Kairos Palestine' to this Synod. In preparation for the Synod, please make time to read the memorial AND the statement/documents it refers to. You may find it helpful to discuss it with other synod members from your circuit.

Contained in this Synod's Handbook you will find the Synod Agenda and related papers, including the memorials that have been submitted to us, details about upcoming District events and other information about life in the West Midlands District.

If you have any questions, please email the office at info@wmmethodists.org.uk. We look forward to seeing you in Birmingham on 25th April.

Yours sincerely,



Revd Novette Headley, Chair of District



Revd Dr Rachel Deigh, Chair of District

Agenda

WEST MIDLANDS METHODIST DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVE SYNOD

- 9:30 am Arrivals & Refreshments
- 10:30 am Opening Worship including Holy Communion
- 11:15 am **Welcome & Synod Business:**
- Request letters of greetings
 - Appointment of Scrutineers
 - Handbook Reports
- 12 noon **Keynote speaker: Ruth Valerio** [including Q&A]
- 1 pm LUNCH
- 1.45 pm **Workshops:**
- Eco Policy and Personal Discipleship – Ruth Valerio
 - A Rocha – Eco-Congregations
 - Property and Eco-policy – Matthew McDade
 - Prayer Walk – Ermine Mitchell, Lay Pastor
- 2.45 pm **Memorials to Conference:**
- Palestine Kairos Document - Revd. David Haslam
 - Menopause - Deacon Helen Webster
- 3.30 pm **Local Preachers Report** – David Hemmingway
- Ministers moving, farewells and thank yous.
- 3.45 pm **Closing Worship**
- 4.00 pm **Finish**

Accessibility at Synod

Your comfort and participation are important to us. To help support you throughout the day:

- **Chaplains** are available if you'd like to speak with someone.
- **Fidget toys and ear defenders** are available to borrow during the sessions.
- **A quiet room** is located on the ground floor should you need an alternative space to sit or eat. The quiet room is located at the back of the foyer to the right as you enter.
- **Printed copies** of papers are available on request, please email Rammy Obeng, Synod Secretary, to request these – rammy.obeng@wmmethodists.org.uk

Please don't hesitate to ask a steward or member of the district staff if need anything. They can be identified by their red tabards with the District logo on the front, or their name badge.

Reports

Report of the District Policy Committee - Revd Rachel Deigh, DPC Chair

At the time of writing, the District Policy Committee (DPC) has met three times since the start of the connexional year: once in person and twice online. It will meet a further three times. Our business has included the following:

Ongoing work following the District merger:

As of the 1st September, the work of the Merger Task Group & the five sub-committees were wound down, with the remaining action points being picked up by the Senior Leadership Team with Lisa Murphy (District Secretary) taking the lead. These included:

- Towards the end of September, the Charity Commission updated the District name. This enabled the finances to come together – despite issues with CFB online access.
- Overseeing the communications strategy and the appointment of a Communications Officer. The District website is being updated and upgraded.
- There have been some holes in District data and temporary admin support was brought in to compile the data from both former districts. We are continuing to develop a new District Database.
- The location of the new District Office at the Queens Foundation. We were pleased to move into this office during January and are excited about the possibilities that this partnership with Queens provides. The official address of the District is: The Queens Foundation, Somerset Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 2QH.

Policies:

We have approved the following District policies:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Disciplinary procedure
- Grievance Procedure
- Health and Safety Policy
- EDI Policy
- Flexible Working Policy

District Staff:

Since September, the following have been appointed to paid roles in the District with the DPC as the employing body:

- Amy McColgan – HR Officer (P/T)
- Tanya Booth – Finance Officer (P/T)
- Cerys Ward – PA to the District Chairs & District Secretary (P/T)
- Riona O’Dowd – Communications officer (P/T)
- Lianne Silvester – Faith-Rooted Community Organiser (salary funded by the Connexion as part of the ‘God for All’ strategy) (F/T)

Existing members of Staff continue to be:

- Jo Yair – Ministry and Mission Coordinator (F/T)
- Adam Sanders – Mission Advisor and NPNP Lead (F/T)
- Danielle Wilson – NPNP Enabler (F/T)
- Charlotte Scrivens – Youth Engagement Coordinator (F/T)
- Matthew McDade – Property Consultant (F/T)
- Revd Neil Johnson – Street Banquet Pioneer
- Revd Richard Wilde – Rural Officer (P/T)
- David Gwatkin – Agricultural Chaplain (Borderlands)

We have said farewell to Janet Fenny (former Administration Assistant) and Revd Nick Read (Agricultural Chaplain) who both retired at the end of December.

Business delegated to the DPC by the September Synod:

David Hemingway (District Local Preachers’ Secretary) was appointed to fill the remaining lay vacancy as a District Representative to the 2026 Methodist Conference. It was noted that we need to encourage diversity in our representation at both Synod and Conference.

The DPC appointed members to the Probationers Committee:

ExOfficio: Revd Rachel Deigh, Revd Novette Headley, Revd Ruth Wilson (secretary), Revd David Bintliff (interim secretary), Revd George Heinz (Presbyteral Synod Secretary)

Members: Revd Liz Dunning, Revd David Butterworth, Deacon Carys Woodley, Deacon Janet Thomas, Emma Mitchell, Bev Greaves, Jill Wolf, Ian Mason.

Stationing:

This year we have 11 Presbyteral Appointments and six Presbyters in the stationing process, and two circuits seeking Diaconal Appointments.

At the time of writing, three circuits are without Presbyteral matches and one circuit is without a Diaconal match.

Other Appointments made:

- Mr Mark Hambly – Manse Visits Co-ordinator
- Revd Bev Boden & Deacon Corrine Brown – members of the Resourcing Mission Committee

Vacancies:

There remain two vacancies for Synod-Elected DPC members (one lay & one ordained) and we are in urgent need of appointing a new Treasurer who will also be a District Trustee on the DPC and will ensure that the DPC fulfils all its responsibilities financially. We encourage Synod members to prayerfully consider if they or someone they know may be able to fill this role.

Other District Vacancies:

Secretary of the Resourcing Mission Committee
Secretary of the Property Advisory Committee

Churches Seeking Permission to cease to meet/be Sold:

The following requests were unanimously agreed by the DPC to be brought to the Synod:

The Anchor Circuit – Five Ways Methodist Church

Our newly merged church has a long and strong tradition of evangelical Bible based ministry and that is reflected in the services held on Sundays and through the week. With a regular congregation of 90+ and on recent occasions well over 100, the fellowship has a full range of ages.

There is a wealth of resource in its people, those who contribute to Sunday worship but also it has a significant range of midweek users and activities that place it well within the local community. The newly merged Anchor Circuit has two ministers committed to moving this church into a new and progressive stage.

The closure and sale of the Five Ways property is intended to reduce the workload on committed members and enhance the long term sustainability of the buildings and facilities that we will retain at the Himley Road site, allowing a wide range of people to use our premises, demonstrating our intention to keep preaching the gospel, developing mission and working with our local community.

Five Ways' proposed discontinuation of worship, closure and sale (project ID 55707) is of a property 300 metres from another Methodist Church (Lake Street) which is more accessible to members of the local community than the Five Ways building and in a better state of repair. The Himley Road site is 0.7 miles from the Five Ways Site. The people of Five Ways wanted to merge with Himley Road. This was agreed by both church councils.

The closure and sale will give years of extra life to the Himley Road premises, making them far more sustainable (see linked project (55708) where we hope the Connexional Levy can be retained/returned to further the purposes of the Methodist Church on this site). We hope that the resources released will significantly improve the Himley Road building, enabling us to upgrade toilet facilities, double glaze all the windows, increase the insulation and improve other aspects of the site making it significantly more accessible and eco-friendly.

So, the discontinuance of worship at the Five Ways site, and its sale, will help us develop our proposals to enable the Himley Road site to improve this popular and welcoming worship centre at Himley Road.

For these reasons the decision has been made to cease worship at the building and sell the Five Ways property site (project ID 55707).

Agreed by Church council of merged church at Himley Road Jan 25th 2026

Agreed by the Anchor Circuit Meeting 10th February 2026

Formal vote: "That the church building at Five Ways cease to be a place of public worship." In favour 36; Against 0 (There were 36 voting members in the meeting)

The DPC noted that this was a request to cease worship and did not include permission to sell as the property as it was believed this was not necessary as the building is now part of the merged church. However, the DPC also voted unanimously to recommend to the Synod that the building be sold to prevent any delay should it prove to be necessary.

The Shropshire & Marches circuit:

Stiperstones Methodist Church: (from the Wolverhampton & Shrewsbury DPC)

The Rea Valley Church Council acting as managing trustees for a number of chapels including this one, requests DPC's consent to close and sell the Stiperstones Chapel. This was agreed at the circuit meeting on 3rd July 2025.

Stiperstones has had a useful life as a chapel and meeting place.

With community support it offered a home to a Ukrainian family and this year has been used for youth accommodation and by District Pilgrims.

Sadly however given the low level of use over a period of time and the presence of other local places of worship it is not practical to maintain the building. As the Rea Valley Church Council merged the membership of its chapels there are no membership transfers to consider.

There are a number of memorial stones in the grounds and one burial of an urn containing ashes. The Church Council Secretary is making contact with all the connected families and it is likely that they will wish for the stones to be moved and the urn reburied at Snailbeach. The circuit meeting has agreed to the Circuit paying the necessary expenses for moving the memorials etc.

Lingen Methodist Church: (from the Wolverhampton & Shrewsbury DPC)

Lingen is a small village in the southern area of the Shropshire & Marches Circuit. It is quite isolated with nearest towns 9 miles (Knighton) and, 13 miles (Leominster) away. The population is currently under 200, but there is some (limited) new housing being built in the village. The Methodist chapel is part of a 'Cluster' church, comprising of three chapels, known as 'Middle March Methodists' (the other chapels being, Kingsland & Leintwardine). The Cluster has a total Membership of 13 (1 lives in Lingen). There is a worship service each Sunday in the Cluster with the venue alternating around the various locations. The Circuit lay worker who works pastorally in the Cluster was given permission by the Church Council (Oct. '23) to focus her pastoral and outreach ministry in Lingen for one year to see if new people might be encouraged to explore Christian faith and strengthen the work in Lingen. Despite her best efforts, no significant fresh life has been generated.

The last Quinquennial inspection (2023) highlighted the need for an electrical inspection, repairs to (external) roofing and (internal) ceiling, as well as significant re-pointing and re-decoration. Costs for the work estimated at between £6k - £10k. There is a mains electrical connection, but no water or toilet provision.

There is an Anglican (Parish) church in the village. It similarly only manages to attract a tiny congregation, although sadly, contact between the two congregations is very limited.

Given the limited population in the village; the poor state of the property and the high cost of making repairs and improvements; the efforts of the pastoral worker to generate new life; the limited Membership in the cluster attempting to keep open 3 places of worship, the Church Council (09/04/25) agreed to the cessation of worship, and the closure + sale of the building in Lingen.

Blackford Methodist Church: (from the Wolverhampton & Shrewsbury DPC)

The Circuit Meeting of the Shropshire and Marches Circuit held on 4th March 2025 agreed to the request of the Cluster Council of Ludlow and Blackford held on Thursday 6th February seeking permission for the chapel to close, the burial ground to be closed and the property sold.

Blackford Chapel has been a class of Ludlow for a number of years. There are two dedicated members.

The chapel and burial ground has had an important place in the lives of a number of families in South Shropshire. For some it has been "a thin place" but it has been accepted that the work in this building is now complete.

The chapel is listed, has no electricity, gas or water, and is approached up two sets of steps. No attendants walk to church and there is only road-side parking. This sometimes causes problems. Over the years the frequency of services has reduced from weekly to monthly and latterly it has operated as a "festival church". Camp Meeting, Harvest and Christmas services have been well attended, but largely by folk coming to support from other chapels. There is a functioning Anglican Church in Stoke St Milborough.

The Parish Council has asked for attendance at a public meeting, and contact is being made with families connected with the burial ground.

It is proposed that the final and only service this year, will be held on the afternoon of 13 July.

Bettisfield Methodist Church:

The 4 members of Bettisfield Methodist Church have been a class of Wem Methodist Church since November 2023. At the church council meeting of Wem/Bettisfield on the 15th October 2025 the members of Bettisfield asked that they seek permission to close and sell the building due to their age, frailty, ill health and very low attendance at their services, held twice a month. They also asked to have a final service on the 18th January 2026 since they had neither the physical resources nor ability to continue further than then. The Church Council meeting agreed unanimously that they should be allowed to rest from their labours.

Bettisfield is a very small, very rural village of around 150 homes. There is a Parish Church which is now a pilgrim church and prior to this transition both churches held joint services. Declining attendance and age, has hit both churches and the facilities in the village. Bettisfield is just 10 minutes from Wem and Welshampton, and 15 minutes or so from Ellesmere where there are Methodist Churches and busy towns which provide the facilities for the village.

The members will attend worship at Wem Methodist Church where they have been welcomed and feel comfortable, as well as Welshampton in which, prior to 2023, they were a cluster for many years.

Members of Wem Methodist Church do not have the capacity to take on responsibility for the building, and there is a village hall which is used for community use so there is little prospect of finding alternative uses for the building other than a family home. It is situated on the edge of a small cul de sac of houses.

At their Circuit Meeting on 16th December 2025 the Trustees of the Shropshire and Marches Circuit voted unanimously to give permission for the building to be closed, to be transferred to the circuit's responsibility following the final service on the 18th January, and to be subsequently sold.

The Shropshire and Marches Circuit ask permission from the District Policy Committee to sell the building.

The Stafford Circuit – Rising Brook Methodist Church

The Church Council of Rising Brook Methodist Church met on 8/10/25 with Revd David Bintliff (Circuit Superintendent) as Chair.

It was unanimously, but regretfully, agreed by the Church Council and members that public worship at Rising Brook should cease.

This decision was the culmination of meetings, discussions and prayers over several years where members had expressed concerns at being able to sustain worship every week and to look after the extensive premises. Numbers of active members have declined in recent years, and the workload is shared by just a few, taking away some of the joy in celebrating God's presence in Rising Brook 2025 is the church's 70th anniversary and it was felt right to celebrate the years of faithful witness at Rising Brook, as a key part of the community as it has grown and developed. But now the time feels right to be refreshed and fed in the Spirit by closing the building and joining every Sunday with the friends at Berkswich Methodist Church, as a received congregation.

The site is approx. 1.5 acres, which includes the church, land and a manse that is currently used as the circuit office. There is circuit interest in the sale of the land as a whole in order to repurpose the proceeds for further circuit development. The meeting is asked for permission for the circuit to proceed to sell the site. DPC asked to recommend to Synod for permission to sell either all or part of the said site.

Resolutions:

1. The Synod receives the report
2. The Synod gives permission to:
 - a) Five Ways Methodist Church to close and be sold.
 - b) Stiperstones Methodist Church to close and be sold.
 - c) Lingen Methodist Church to close and be sold.
 - d) Blackford Methodist Church to close and be sold.
 - e) Bettisfield Methodist Church to close and be sold.
 - f) Rising Brook Methodist Church to close and be sold.
3. The Synod appoints the Revd Sam Hagerman as Secretary and member of the DPC.

Volunteers Needed!!

District Treasurer

You will be part of a collaborative team, working strategically and creatively to shape a sustainable future for Methodism across the West Midlands with particular responsibility to ensure there is proper governance oversight of district funds and expenditure.

This role is open to lay and ordained Methodists living in the West Midlands District. You will need to be a qualified accountant or hold a relevant accounting qualification, and have a good understanding of charity governance in a Methodist Church context.

Committee Secretaries Required for:

- Resourcing Mission Committee
- Property Advisory Committee
- Lay Employment Committee

You will work closely with the committee chair to collate and distribute papers, make arrangements for meetings and take minutes of committee meetings.

This role is open to lay and ordained Methodists living in the West Midlands District. You will need to be well organised, familiar with the Office365 package and available for evening and daytime meetings.

Other vacancies can be found at www.wmmethodists.org.uk

For further information and an application form, please email the
District Office - info@wmmethodists.org.uk

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

1 Corinthians 12

District Property Advisory Committee - Revd Phil Warrey, DPAC Chair.

The District Property Advisory Committee has met twice since the inception of the new District. We have set some initial operating procedures which we will review at our next meeting.

During this period, we have authorised a number of projects on the Consents Website and discussed many others. We work with Matthew McDade - District Property Consultant to look at projects and assist churches and circuits in the District with Property Sales, and Leases. Chris Osborn is the District Property Secretary for Circuits in what was Birmingham District, and Keith Walton has the same role for what was Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury. Chris and Keith are your first point of call for a new project.

We are in the process of appointing a District Manse Visiting Co-ordinator, and we are still looking for a DPAC Meeting Secretary, to take the minutes, and co-ordinate the invites to meetings.

Recognising the large number of problems churches and circuits were having with the IT side of the Property Consents System, working with Lisa Murphy, we negotiated a meeting with Doug Norton (IT Security Lead and Interim Applications Manager), a member of the Connexional Team. Doug listened to our issues and has been very helpful in working to iron them out, and make corrections to the system. If you are aware of any extant issues, please do report them, and we are confident that Doug and his team will work to resolve them. He did apologise and explain some of the issues and delays that they had been dealing with.

There are a few things that churches and circuits can help us with, so that we can help you:-

1. All too often folk become desperate in wanting things approved faster than we can manage. So please line up your ducks as soon as you can. Start the Project on the consent site as early as you can, and add information as soon as you get it. Please don't ask us at 5pm on a Thursday for something to be approved by Friday morning.
2. We can't do our due diligence to approve a project if we have no information, so please upload to the documents tab, your plans, sketches, specifications and quotes. We need to see that you have done your due diligence too.
3. Speak to us in the early stages of a project, tell us your dreams and hopes for your project - maybe we can help with suggestions, or tell you how a similar project achieved their completion.
4. If its a sale or a lease, upload your Designated Adviser's Report (DAR) , the Estate Agents Sales brochure, the sales contract - we as a District can't approve a sale until TMCP have seen and approved a contract of sale.
5. Before you start anything on a property project, ensure your QI is up to date, and your property schedule has been completed.

Most of all speak to us, ask, or even come to one of our meetings and explain your projects.

The District Resourcing Mission Committee – Revd Iain Ballard, RMC Chair

The District Resourcing Mission Committee has met on two occasions this year and plans to meet again in June. We have considered a large number of grants ranging from small micro funded projects through to larger building projects, and have awarded over £100,000 in grants ranging from £150 to £30,000.

We are also responsible for overseeing the District's contribution to New Places for New People projects. Alongside grant making we are responsible for overseeing the work of the Audit Committee.

It has been an interesting year for the committee coming together from the predecessor committees, welcoming new people and assisting both new and established projects. We are thankful for everyone who has worked with us and especially those who have graciously persisted during this period of change. As a Committee we desperately need a secretary to support our work. If you feel able to assist with this please contact the District Office.

We are currently undertaking a review of our processes and will communicate any changes in due course.

We welcome conversations with anyone considering a mission project and would advise making contact with the committee prior to making any large grant request by emailing grants@wmmethodists.org.uk For information relating to grants please see the Grant Policy which can be found on the District Website at www.wmmethodists.org.uk/grants The deadline for applications for the June meeting is 18th May.

Lay Employment Committee – Brian Oakley, Lay Employment Secretary

Although the new West Midlands District is only eight months old the HR function is developing in a fast and professional way, supporting the District and Circuits in a whole range of employment situations.

We are currently progressing a range of activities, including the development of HR policies and processes and the creation of a new staff intranet. We are supporting Circuits and Churches with their recruitment and employee relation needs as well as developing resources, advice, and guidance for line managers. Our work also includes improving the induction experience for new staff, strengthening approaches to sickness absence management and performance management, and developing a District salary pay scale. In addition, we are producing bite-size training sessions to further support line managers in their roles.

Before decisions are made in the lay employment field it is essential that contact is made with Ms. Amy McColgan the District HR Officer to ensure that recruitment, changes to employment conditions, redundancy or dismissal of an employee are undertaken only with the permission of the HR Officer and the District Lay Employment Secretary.

Ministry and Mission Team Report - Adam Sanders, Charlotte Scrivens, Danielle Wilson, Jo Yair, Lianne Silvester

Since September, the newly formed District Ministry and Mission Support Team, coordinated by Jo and Adam, has met weekly to pray together and share information across areas of work. These regular meetings have enabled us to build a clearer picture of the District's missional activity and to collaboratively map areas of growth, opportunity, and challenge.

We are pleased to have recruited and welcomed Lianne Silvester as Faith Rooted Community Organiser to the team.

After almost seven years focusing on NPNP work within firstly the Birmingham District and now the West Midlands, Adam is moving on to work for the connexional team as the New Churches Officer where he will be involved in shaping NPNP work on a national level. He says that it has been a real joy and a privilege to serve as the Mission Advisor, and he knows that the NPNP work will continue going from strength to strength.

Amplify

Amplify, the District children and youth weekend, took place at Whitemoor Lakes in Staffordshire over the weekend of 6th-8th March this year. This year over 160 children and young people attended from across 10 of our Circuits. They were supported by just over 70 adults including group leaders, other helpers from around the District, the Connexional Youth Reps and Youth President, Cliff College students and a team from the Hereford Diocese.

The theme for the event was "It's all about... Me, You, Us" and offered a chance to look at personal and collective discipleship. For the first time, there were two distinct age stream venues for children and young people led by the Cliff Year and Hereford Diocese Youth Hubs Team respectively. This gave children and young people the chance to engage in faith-based activities appropriate for their age.

Whitemoor Lakes led our groups in outdoor activities including canoeing, archery, zip wire and team games. These activities provided opportunities for young people from different groups to build relationships and support one another.

A highlight within the programme was the variety of Communion services held on the Saturday evening. Young people and leaders were given options to explore communion in a learning style that worked for them – around the campfire, active, messy or quiet. These introduced the elements of communion, why we do communion and helped to move our theme from individual discipleship to our corporate discipleship as part of the Body of Christ together.

Next year, Amplify will be back at Whitemoor Lakes on the weekend of 5th-7th March. Information will be circulated about booking in and getting involved in the coming months. It would be great to see the weekend grow even more and welcome new groups to the weekend.

Circuit and Church Support

A significant focus for Jo's role since September has been embedding both existing responsibilities and new aspects of her role within the District. This has involved spending time

with Berkswich church, and the Anchor, Telford, Hidden River, Stourport & Kidderminster, Herefordshire South & East and the Black Country circuits.

This support has taken a variety of forms, reflecting the different contexts and needs of each place. These have included:

- Facilitating vision days
- Supporting conversations around growth and future planning
- Providing support and review processes for ministry teams
- Conflict support
- Helping develop ecumenical partnerships
- Undertaking fruitfulness audits to reflect on mission and impact.

District Events

Working collaboratively as part of the wider District team all the M&M team plan and deliver synod, forum, and Bloom has provided important touch points for connection and learning.

Ecumenical and connexional

Jo leads on ecumenical relations with formal links to Hereford Diocese Youth Hub Board and the Lichfield Diocese. Connexionally, Jo is a Place for Hope- Connexional PWT mediator, a Connexional Transformational Leadership Coach and she serves on the Connexional Domestic Abuse Advisory Group. Adam serves on the NPNP Embedding team and Charlotte sits on the 3Generate District Ambassadors group.

General Groups and Committees

All members of the team participate in various meetings such as: Lay Employment Committee, District Reconciliation Group, DPC, RMC and more.

Lay Leaders

Developing support for lay leadership across the District has been another key area of focus for Jo. This work has included the launch of "Staff Room," a monthly online gathering designed to support and connect lay employees across the District. Alongside this are plans for a "Seed" group which explores and encourages lay calling and ministry. Looking ahead, plans are being developed for an annual retreat for lay employees and a conference for all in lay leadership.

Line Management, Supervision and Oversight

Jo currently line manages three members of District staff including involvement with Borderlands Rural Chaplaincy on the management and steering groups. Adam line manages one lay member of staff, acts as the District Oversight Officer for two NPNPs and sits on various oversight groups for others. Jo sits on the Supervision Implementation Group and supervises three Methodist Ministers and one URC Minister.

New Places for New People

New Places for New People is about starting new Christian communities in spaces, places and networks with those unaffiliated with church. We have a long history of this work in the West Midlands with new Christian communities emerging such as Street Banquet in Birmingham, The Table in Stechford, Bread and Belief at the University of Birmingham, Peckwood Forest Space in Rowney Green and many more.

Since September there has been an explosion of activity in people exploring NPNP opportunities. Danielle and Adam have been actively involved in conversations in South Worcestershire, Wolverhampton, Herefordshire South and East, Shropshire and Marches, Vale of Stour, Bromsgrove and Redditch, South Warwickshire, Telford and Birmingham with other possibilities on the horizon. People all over the district are grappling with what it means to be an inclusive and justice-seeking church with a commitment to work with those on the economic margins, those often excluded based on ability and marginalised groups such as those who identify as LGBTQ+. New vision has been supported in a variety of ways including through funding and there are lots to come in the pipeline.

The Methodist Pioneering Pathway Community of Practice continues to gather termly visiting pioneering work around the district. This year has seen several new members, and we were pleased to visit Dorridge and Stechford with a trip to Welsh End planned in May. It has been great to visit a mix of rural, urban and suburban contexts to share ideas, wisdom and hear learning from around the connexion.

There are ongoing discussions about how NPNPs are best supported, structured and governed building on past learning with ideas around new administrative structures to best hold new Christian communities.

The work within the district is fully connected to the connexional support with people attending Faith Rooted Community Organising courses and Beginning Church at the Margins. Adam continues to serve on the connexional embedding team representing the district, shaping the national strategy and feeding back to those locally. Danielle and Adam both attend the monthly connexional NPNP lead gatherings and participate in district strategy meetings.

3Generate

3Generate will be at the NEC on 2nd-4th October 2026. Tickets and applications to volunteer will be opening up in April. 3Generate is a great opportunity for children and young people to join with hundreds more young people from across the Connexion, share their views and vote for the next Youth President. There will be financial support available from the District to support groups in attending.

If you have any further questions we would love to hear from you!

Street Banquet Synod Report: Revd Neil Johnson, Pioneer

Street Banquet is a District Church at the Margins venture in Birmingham city centre, ministering among the local Street Community which includes people living with the injustice of homelessness.

During the past few years, Street Banquet has developed from a project into a Christian congregation present at the margins of both the church and society. Our membership has grown as our guests join us as hosts. Each week the Bible Club brings together the Street Banquet community via social media and in person to reflect upon scripture and nurture discipleship. The club has considered every parable in the Gospels, the hard sayings of Jesus, Lent and Advent themes, and now we are exploring the Gospel of Luke. On the first Sunday of the month, we welcome our guests to a Street Banquet meal, a time for Table Fellowship. These communal

meals rotate around three city centre venues (St Martin in the Bull Ring, Salvation Army Citadel, and New Meeting Unitarian Church), with each event promoted through local hostels, drop-in centres and homelessness projects. Hosts Celebrations occur once a quarter at St Philip's, when our members gather for an informal Love Feast of food, prayer and testimony. Decision-making and forward planning takes place through discussion at monthly briefings before each Street Banquet communal meal and at six-monthly strategy meetings that are open to all of our members.

As conversations take between the District and Connexion about ongoing funding and support from 2027, we have an opportunity to look ahead at how Street Banquet could develop and grow into the future. Consolidation and deepening of the current model would ensure stability and open avenues to further ministry with the Street Community. More accessible storage space and suitable transportation are required to secure the continuation of our gatherings and celebrations. Also, in consultation with partner organisations, we want to test the feasibility of a shared base in Birmingham city centre, modelled upon the concept of a Centre of Radical Welcome where members of different marginalised communities would be included, equipped and empowered. Beyond our present context, the vision, theology and practice of Street Banquet offer ways of being Church that is rooted within economically challenged neighbourhoods. Through promotional literature, campaigns and events, the Street Banquet model can be shared and trialled throughout the West Midlands District and across the Connexion.

In terms of the wider reach of Street Banquet, Street Chaplaincy is an important aspect of my role as Pioneer Minister, with weekly visits to the city centre's hostels, drop-in centres and homelessness projects, and by accompanying the rough sleeper outreach team. I continue to convene the Birmingham Christian Homelessness Forum, and in recent months became a co-convenor of the city's sector forum. The two forums connect us with a wide range of statutory services, commissioned provision, and grassroot organisations. Through the Christian Forum network of partners, an Opportunities Fair was organised in March which offered the Street Community advice and support on housing, training, employment and wellbeing. A follow-up event will take place this summer. Alongside the Connexional Church at the Margins Officer, I have led training courses, seminars and workshops encouraging people to think about how they and their local congregations can engage with the Church at the Margins programme. The programme asks us to "imagine new Christian communities shaped with people who have lived experience of poverty, places where their wisdom, strength and faith lead us into a new expression of church." Street Banquet is such a community.

neil@streetbanquet.org.uk

Rural Officer Report: Revd Richard Wilde

Learning from Neighbours

One of the most encouraging aspects of the new district structure has been the opportunity to share experiences and learn from our neighbours. By engaging in dialogue with adjacent districts, we have gained insights into both challenges and innovative approaches to community support. These exchanges have helped to inform our own strategies and highlighted the importance of proactive pastoral care.

Livestock Market Closure: Impact on Farmers and Community

A significant event in our region was the closure of the Stratford upon Avon livestock market in December 2024. This closure not only affected the economic landscape but also had a profound impact on farmers' social connections. The market had long served as a focal point for networking, mutual support, and friendship, and its absence has increased the risk of social isolation among the farming community.

Borderlands Chaplaincy: Successful Farmers' Breakfast Events

In response to similar challenges, the Borderlands chaplaincy has pioneered farmers' breakfast events, offering a welcoming environment for conversation, fellowship, and pastoral support. These gatherings have been widely appreciated by attendees, providing a vital lifeline for those who might otherwise feel disconnected. The chaplaincy's approach demonstrates the effectiveness of simple, regular meetings in strengthening community ties and addressing social isolation.

Extending Ministry to Eastern part of the District

Using the experience from the Borderlands chaplaincy team we drew together a committee with two volunteers from each of Kenilworth and Stratford upon Avon Methodist churches along with 4 farmers who weren't known at Stratford market. We ran a trial breakfast by permission of the land owners of the former market site (October 15th 2025) where some 30 or so farmers came for breakfast and asked for the scheme to go on farm. 2 farmers who were present there offered to host breakfast on their farms in November and December. There was a good turn out at each event, donations more than covered the cost and further invitations were offered taking us into 2026. On each occasion there has been 30 plus farmers who engaged with each other in conversation and were in no hurry to go home! Supporting the chaplain at each breakfast there has been a representative and resource table from the both the Farming Community Network and the Addington Fund. Addington have taken on publicity material while the Rural Hub and Rugby Farmer's Mart distribute posters and flyers. To date we have depended on borrowed equipment including my own barbeque, plus tables and chairs borrowed from churches and some surplus equipment from the former Mickleton Methodist Church. We recruited volunteers who were willing to comply with Safer Recruitment procedures and formalised the committee. Using information from the Borderlands team we drew up a budget including a necessary trailer for transport and all equipment. We are grateful that the District Advance Fund have allocated £2000 for this project and the Farming Community Network have gifted £1000. On the 18th of April we will have a fund-raising ploughing match - a partnership with the Banbury and District Vintage Ploughing Society and the Butty Van Team.

Wider Engagement

Naturally launching the Warwickshire Butty Van has taken a fair amount of my time but I have still been able to work with the Connexional Rural Officer, Sarah Hume and contribute to bring a rural perspective to issues identified by J P I T that concern the church nationally. I attended an ecumenical regional rural mission conference at Bury St Edmunds in November 2025 and I have been invited to attend on 18/19th October when they meet in conference in Staffordshire.

District Rural Mission and Evangelism

I hope by September Synod to receive stories from across the district where rural churches have had flourishing new ideas or community engagement and created missional opportunities. Please consult your appropriate officers to see if you have rural churches in your circuit with stories to tell.

I am pleased to have been invited to Herefordshire and Worcestershire to conduct acts of worship and in May I will be in the Tamworth and Lichfield circuit for a Rogation Sunday service on a farm. In July we will be having an ecumenical Barn service in South Warwickshire Circuit on a farm which will be celebrating 25 years of ministry by the Addington Fund. You would most welcome to attend either of these acts of worship.

Communications: Riona O'Dowd

Over the past few months, work has focused on building communications for the District and helping people stay informed about news and events. This has included supporting District initiatives through social media, photography, video and promotional materials, as well as producing a monthly E-News.

Alongside this, a steady social media calendar has been developed, there has been an increase in our social media following and work has been done to strengthen the District's branding and design, including the creation of a district style guide.

Work has also focused on developing clearer internal communication channels. This has involved creating and distributing an internal Staff Bulletin to share updates and resources, as well as introducing a communications briefing form to help staff request support with social media, graphics and promotional materials. Looking ahead, the aim is to continue strengthening communications across the District, build our following and highlight the many positive stories and activities taking place within the District and across our circuits and churches

Safeguarding Report March 2026: Sue Holder and Steph Bradley

Regional Officer for Safeguarding (ROS), Sue Holder is retiring from her role as of 31st March 2026 after nearly 12 years as DSO and now ROS. Sue's replacement is Neil Hutchinson who is transferring from the Northampton District & starts role on 7th April 2026. Neil will be working 21 hrs per week & Steph Bradley 33 hrs per week.

Training update

- There have been 6 face-to-face advanced courses since the beginning of 2026
- There are a further 7 face-to-face advanced courses planned for 2026 at present and one on line advanced course planned.
- The North West District has offered opportunities to train people in training and delivering both Foundation & Advanced Courses – this has been shared across the District. Anyone wishing to be considered to become a Trainer for Advanced requires the approval of their Superintendent.
- There is now an online Foundation Course available on MCBX.

Ministers DBS and Advanced Training

DBS is managed by Regional Officers for Safeguarding and the advanced training is managed by the District PA. At present there are 10 Ministers who require advanced training, 8 have booked place on a course.

Safeguarding Audits

The audit is electronic – all Circuits have the electronic version and PDF version, and are working through this process. Submissions are due at the beginning May 2026 and the electronic version analyses the results that can then be shared with the respective Circuits.

NPNP

Sue has been collating the responses from identified NPNPs in the District, identifying compliance with safeguarding requirements and identifying areas for development. If there are any new NPNPs to be set up, can the leader please contact Steph to ensure that safeguarding arrangements are considered at set up at an early stage.

Report on the Enduring Friendship Between the Wolverhampton Methodist District, now the West Midlands District, and the Free Methodist Church of Rwanda: Revd Teddy Siwila

The friendship between the Wolverhampton & Shrewsbury District of the Methodist Church of Great Britain and the Free Methodist Church of Rwanda has grown into a vibrant and deeply valued relationship since its beginnings in 2006. What started as a modest partnership rooted in shared faith and mutual curiosity has, over two decades, developed into a dynamic and flourishing friendship marked by collaboration, learning, and spiritual enrichment.

From its earliest days, this relationship was shaped by a commitment to mutual exchange rather than one-sided support. Visits between the two communities played a crucial role in strengthening bonds. Representatives from the Wolverhampton District travelled to Rwanda to experience firsthand the life and ministry of the Free Methodist Church of Rwanda, while Rwandan leaders made return visits to the United Kingdom. These exchanges fostered understanding, deepened trust, and built lasting personal connections that continue to sustain the friendship today.

As the relationship matured, it naturally expanded to include other key partners within the Methodist Church. The involvement of the Global Relationships Office brought additional structure and support, helping to coordinate visits and encourage wider participation across the Connexion. Similarly, the inclusion of the Queens' Foundation for Theological and Ecumenical Education added an important academic and theological dimension. Through this collaboration, opportunities for shared learning, ministerial formation, and theological reflection have enriched both communities. Over the years, numerous visits have taken place involving individuals and groups from the District, the Global Relationships Office, and the Queens' Foundation. These visits have not only strengthened institutional links but have also deepened friendships at a personal level. Encounters in worship, teaching, and community life have enabled participants to share experiences of faith in different cultural contexts, offering fresh perspectives and renewed inspiration for ministry. The recent merger of the Wolverhampton & Shrewsbury District with the Birmingham District to form the West Midlands District marks a new chapter in this story. It is encouraging that this longstanding friendship has been warmly and enthusiastically embraced within the newly formed District. This reflects a shared recognition of the value and importance of global relationships within the life of the Methodist Church.

This year, 2026, we celebrate 20 years of this enduring friendship. A special event will take place at the Queens' Foundation on 20th June 2026, bringing together partners from the West Midlands

District, the Global Relationships Office, the Queens' Foundation, and the Free Methodist Church of Rwanda. This occasion will be both a celebration of all that has been achieved over the past two decades and an opportunity to look ahead with hope and expectation.

As we reflect on this journey, it is clear that this friendship continues to grow from strength to strength. Rooted in faith, sustained by mutual respect, and enriched by shared experience, it stands as a powerful example of the global nature of the Church. With gratitude for the past and confidence in the future, we look forward to the next chapter of this remarkable relationship.

Finance Report – to follow

There has been a delay in preparing the Finance Report as the audit of the Birmingham District accounts has taken longer than expected. We hope to have draft figures available for the Synod.

Archivists Report – no report submitted

2026 MHA Report to Spring synods

Thank you for continued support and prayers

MHA is grateful for the support and prayers of the Methodist Church during continuing pressures facing adult social care and charities.

We are thankful for the ways districts, circuits, and churches continue to stand alongside MHA, holding older people, staff, volunteers, and chaplains in prayer. Your support affirms the importance of care rooted in dignity, compassion, and community, especially at a time when such values are under pressure.

MHA Sunday 2026: The Second Cup

MHA Sunday offers churches an opportunity to engage with questions of later life, care, and belonging through worship and reflection. This year's theme, The Second Cup, invites congregations to consider loneliness and exclusion, and what it means to create communities where everyone has a place at the table.

MHA Sunday can be held at any point in the year, enabling churches to find a date that suits them. Whether this is your first MHA Sunday or a return after some years, thank you for holding a service. Churches who would like to request a speaker or explore how MHA Sunday might work locally are warmly invited to contact the chaplaincy team at chaplaincy@mha.org.uk

Scan the QR code or sign up to receive the resources here: <https://mha.org.uk/get-involved/fundraise/mha-sunday-2026>

Worship resources for churches and ministers

Alongside MHA Sunday, MHA offers worship resources for use throughout the year. These are being updated to support congregations exploring later life and care, and will soon include

guidance for ministers visiting care homes, and additional services you can hold in your church to explore themes related to later life.

The resources offer practical support for leading person-centred worship attentive to context, capacity, and participation. They reflect the distinctive nature of worship in care settings, shaped by inclusivity, relationship, and respect for older people.

Changes at MHA

Many will recall our announcement in 2023 that, following a strategic review of our services, MHA were selling a number of our care homes to enable us to become a more financially sustainable charity.

We have now come to the end of this project, which has seen 12 care homes across England and Wales transfer to new ownership. Sadly, we also had to close three care homes as a result of the review. All 12 homes have been taken on by reputable providers, and some have been acquired by the same organisation.

In addition, we have seen changes to MHA Communities across England and Wales including mergers and, sadly, some closures.

These decisions have not been easy. Behind every change are residents, members, families, and colleagues who built real communities together with us. We remain grateful for them and mindful of all those affected.

We are now working through the retirement living phase of our strategic review. When this has been completed, MHA looks forward to moving ahead with stability and renewed vigour for supporting older people to live later life well.

The wider environment

Rising costs, workforce challenges, changes to immigration visas, and long-standing underfunding shape the environment in which MHA works to support and care for older people. These pressures are felt not only organisationally, but by older people, their families, and our colleagues who support and care for them each day.

Your prayers are appreciated for our colleagues who feel discriminated against due to changes in visas for overseas workers being made by the Government. Sadly, we are unable to recruit from overseas anymore and this is likely to once again put additional strain on our workforce.

Additional uncertainty on MHA continues in relation to funding for adult social care. While we applaud the Fair Pay Agreement which aims to make sure care workers are paid what they deserve, our fear is that there will not be sufficient funding available, creating more strain on the charity's finances. Because of this, we are pressing the government and local councils to fully fund the increases.

Despite all this, MHA continues to pay above the Real Living Wage to all our colleagues. This is just one of the ways we recognise the work our colleagues do in supporting and caring for older people.

While we have been frustrated by the amount of time the Government's Independent Commission on Adult Social Care has taken to start work, we are pleased this is now underway. Known as the Casey Commission, and led by Baroness Louise Casey, we are hopeful that this will lead to real reform in the social care sector and that we might get the flagged National Care Service the Government keeps referring to. We are making sure MHA's voice is heard as a charitable provider by putting forward evidence and information to the commission.

Throughout all of this uncertainty, it has been heartwarming to know that the Methodist Church holds us close to their hearts and continues to pray for us, donate and support us through your social justice campaigning.

Fund for Human Need Report

How we help

Set up 66 years ago by a group of Methodists "to relieve and remove hunger and poverty in all parts of the world," since the 1990's the Fund's focus has been on the needs of destitute and desperate people in the UK. One-off payments are made irrespective of faith, ethnic origin or social group to help those facing particularly challenging financial circumstances. The Fund seeks to offer not only money but also love and the means for those struggling to find hope and self-confidence. Our Supporters We are grateful to all who have contributed to the Fund in the past connexional year. Personal donations and churches' fundraising enabled FHN to make 776 grant payments totalling £279,330. We express our thanks to the Cupalt Foundation for their generous commitment to fund our administrative, fundraising and governance costs from September 2025. This generous funding means that 100% of donations made by individuals and churches is now going directly to help people in need. FHN has become a member of the Charities and Networks in Association of Churches Together in England and it is expected that this ecumenical link will lead to an increased awareness of the Fund's work.

Own Arrangement Service

We have now produced a full order of service with suggested hymns, prayers, readings and an address, together with links to a video that can be downloaded, which churches may find useful in preparing a local arrangement service. For further information and more resource material contact our administrator and see our website: Ways to help - arranging a fund-raising event making a special collection at your church - donating regularly by standing order - adding 25p to each £1 given by gift-aiding your donation, if a tax-payer - including FHN as a bequest in your will Further information Mrs G. Mason, Administrator, Fund for Human Need, 6 Newlands Road, Darlington, DL3 9JL. Phone 07561 717230 email fundhumanneed@gmail.com website <https://fundforhumanneed.org.uk>

MEMORIALS

MEMORIAL TO CONFERENCE 2026: KAIROS PALESTINE

The West Midlands Methodist District urges Conference to draw the attention of the Methodist Church in Britain to the new Statement by the Christian Palestinian Initiative, Kairos Palestine, 'A Moment of Truth: Faith in a Time of Genocide' (November 2025) [Kairos Palestine II](#)

The document is written out of the lived experience of Palestinian Christians in the West Bank and Gaza. The current context sees Palestinian deaths growing beyond 75,000 in Gaza, with no solution in sight, and increasing settler violence and Israeli Defense Force operations in the West Bank resulting in deaths, injuries and loss of land for Palestinian families and communities. Israel thus continues its annexation of the West Bank, illegal under international law.

The West Midlands Methodist District also draws the Conference's attention to a Study Guide to the Kairos II document prepared by the US Presbyterian Church, United Methodists for Kairos Response, and Friends of Sabeel North America - [Study Guide for Kairos Palestine II](#), and asks Conference to encourage the study of Kairos II through this Study Guide by UK Methodist Churches, Circuits and Districts.

Revd David Haslam
Revd Phil Warrey

MEMORIAL TO CONFERENCE 2026: MENPAUSE POLICY

The West Midlands District Synod believes that the Methodist Church in Britain requires a menopause policy, guidance and related resources to promote greater awareness and provide appropriate support for those affected.

In recent years there has been an increase in understanding the effects Menopause and Perimenopause may have on those who experience them. Symptoms can manifest both physically and psychologically, including (but not limited to) mood changes, loss of memory and concentration, headaches, panic attacks, heavy or light periods, anxiety, loss of confidence, sleep difficulties/fatigue, depression, hot flashes, joint and muscle stiffness and out of character behavior. Symptoms can last for several years.

Research shows that about 70% of those going through menopause experience a wide range of physical and psychological symptoms and it has been found that approximately 60% find their working life negatively affected by symptoms.

Each person will be affected in different ways and to varying degrees over long or short periods of time, and menopausal symptoms can often indirectly affect their partner, families and colleagues as well.

A lack of understanding and support can cause people experiencing menopause to:

- Lose confidence in their skills and abilities.
- Feel like they need to hide their symptoms.
- Reduce their productivity.
- Take more absences and sick days.
- Suffer mental health problems such as stress, anxiety and depression.
- Leave their job

However, with the right support and awareness those who experience menopause can continue to work, in a paid or voluntary capacity, with their wealth of experience and skills and continue to be valued members of their local church community.

As part of its commitment to inclusivity, justice for all, dignity for all and solidarity with all we believe the Methodist Church requires a menopause policy and guidance to help Methodists develop and promote an environment and culture that supports those experiencing the menopause, so they can feel confident about raising issues relating to their symptoms and, for those in roles within the church, for reasonable adjustments to be made regarding how they carry out their role and perform their duties without fear of discrimination.

Some national churches have already produced menopause policies and guidance, including the Church of England and Church of Scotland. However, despite the Signpost for Ministry Women's Health Project in 2022 gathering information, the Methodist Church has yet to develop a menopause policy, guidance or related resources.

The Synod believes that the Methodist Church requires:

- A menopause policy that will develop and promote an environment and culture which support those experiencing the menopause and allow for working patterns to be adapted as appropriate.
- Resources to raise awareness among Methodists about ~~for~~ those experiencing menopausal symptoms so good pastoral care can be provided.
- Resources to signpost the availability of medical/wellbeing support for those experiencing symptoms
- Guidance and information to debunk some associated myths and assumptions about menopause.

The Synod therefore requests that the Conference direct the Connexional Team to produce a menopause policy, guidance and resources for the Methodist Church as soon as possible, preferably within the next year.

Proposer: Deacon Helen Webster, Hidden River Circuit
Seconded: Revd Liz Dunning, Cannock Chase Circuit

Volunteers Needed!!

District Treasurer

You will be part of a collaborative team, working strategically and creatively to shape a sustainable future for Methodism across the West Midlands with particular responsibility to ensure there is proper governance oversight of district funds and expenditure.

This role is open to lay and ordained Methodists living in the West Midlands District. You will need to be a qualified accountant or hold a relevant accounting qualification and have a good understanding of charity governance in a Methodist Church context.

Committee Secretaries Required for:

- Resourcing Mission Committee
- Property Advisory Committee
- Lay Employment Committee

You will work closely with the committee chair to collate and distribute papers, make arrangements for meetings and take minutes of committee meetings.

This role is open to lay and ordained Methodists living in the West Midlands District. You will need to be well organised, familiar with the Office 365 packages and able to

Directory Information

Please send any Directory amendments to the District Office by email: info@wmmethodists.org.uk

Representatives elected in March take up their appointments with the new Connexional year and should therefore attend the ensuing September Synod. Names and addresses (including telephone numbers and postcodes) of Circuit Stewards should be sent to the Chair and to the Synod Secretary immediately after the March Circuit Meeting. The preparation of next year's Directory will begin in Spring 2026 with a request to Superintendents for updated information.

District Officers

Co-Chairs	Revd Novette Headley & Revd Dr Rachel Deigh	Chair@wmmethodists.org.uk
Deputy Chair	Revd David Bintliff	David.Bintliff@wmmwthodists.org.uk
Synod Secretary (Presbyteral)	Revd George Heinz	presbyteralsynod@wmmethodists.org.uk
Synod Secretary (Representative)	Rammy Obeng	synodsec@wmmethodists.org.uk
District Treasurer	Vacant	treasurer@wmmethodists.org.uk
Rural Officer	Revd Richard Wilde	Richard.Wilde@wmmethodists.org.uk
Probationers' Secretary	Vacant	
Ordained Vocations Champion	Deacon Janet Thomas	
Ecumenical Officer	Revd David Lavender	
Local Preacher's Secretary	David Hemingway	lpsec.wmdistrict@gmail.com
Local Preacher's Tutor	Revd Ian Howarth	ian.howarth@methodist.org.uk
Lay Employment Secretary	Brian Oakley	layemployment@wmmethodists.org.uk
Property Advisory Committee Chair	Revd Phil Warrey	DPACChair@wmmethodists.org.uk
District Property Secretaries	Chris Osborn and Keith Walton	Property@wmmethodists.org.uk
Manse Visits Coordinator	Mark Hambly	
District Archivists	Diane Webb and Miriam Nori	archivist@wmmethodists.org.uk
Lay Stationing Rep	Max Reynolds	laystationingrep@wmmethodists.org.uk
Assistant Lay Stationing Rep	Vacant	
Resourcing Mission Committee Chair	Revd Iain Ballard	iain.ballard@methodist.org.uk
Grants Officer	Revd Denise Hargreaves	grants@wmmethodists.org.uk

Audit Committee Chair	Andrew Morris	audit@wmmethodists.org.uk
Sabbaticals Secretary	Deacon Sue Culver	sabbaticals@wmmethodists.org.uk

District and Connexional Staff

District Secretary	Lisa Murphy	Lisa.Murphy@wmmethodists.org.uk
Finance Officer	Tanya Booth	Tanya.Booth@wmmethodists.org.uk
PA to the Co-chairs & District Secretary	Cerys Ward	info@wmmethodists.org.uk
Mission Advisor and NPNP Lead	Adam Sanders	Adam.Sanders@wmmethodists.org.uk
Ministry and Mission Coordinator	Jo Yair	Jo.Yair@wmmethodists.org.uk
Youth Engagement Coordinator	Charlotte Scrivens	Charlotte.Scrivens@wmmethodists.org.uk
NPNP Enabler	Danielle Wilson	Danielle.Wilson@wmmethodists.org.uk
Faith Rooted Community Organiser	Lianne Silvester	Lianne.Silvester@wmmethodists.org.uk
Property Consultant	Matthew McDade	Matthew.McDade@wmmethodists.org.uk
District HR Officer	Amy McColgan	Amy.McColgan@wmmethodists.org.uk
District Communications Officer	Riona O'Dowd	Riona.O'Dowd@wmmethodists.org.uk
Street Banquet Pioneer	Revd Neil Johnson	Neil@streetbanquet.org.uk
Rural Chaplain (Borderlands)	David Gwatkin	David.Gwatkin@wmmethodists.org.uk
Rural Officer	Revd Richard Wilde	Richard.Wilde@wmmethodists.org.uk
Learning Network Aligned Officer	Rosie Bryant	BryantR@methodistchurch.org.uk
Regional Officer for Safeguarding	Steph Bradley	BradleyS@methodistchurch.org.uk
Regional Officer for Safeguarding	Neil Hutchinson	HutchinsonN@methodistchurch.org.uk

District Representatives

Trustee for Black County Urban Industrial Mission	Revd Stephen Willey
Wolverhampton University Chaplaincy Representative	Revd Paul Nzacahayo
Chair, Birmingham International Student Homes	Andrew Steele
2025 Conference Reps	Revd Caroline Hague, Revd Cleopas Sibanda, Deacon Corrine Brown, Ade Johnson, Deborah Majola, Sandie Smith, Helen Woodall, Revd Juliet Kisob, Revd Julia Skitt, Deacon Helen Webster, Lesley Cook, Keith Walton

District Policy Committee

Co-Chairs*	Revd Novette Headley & Revd Rachel Deigh
Deputy Chair*	Revd David Bintliff
Synod Secretary (Presbyteral)	Revd George Heinz
Synod Secretary (Representative)*	Rammy Obeng
DPC Secretary	Revd Samantha Hagerman
District Treasurer	Vacant
Resourcing Mission Committee Chair	Revd Iain Ballard
Property Advisory Committee Chair	Revd Phil Warrey
District Property Secretary	Keith Walton
District Lay Employment Secretary	Brian Oakley
Lay Stationing Rep	Max Reynolds
EDI/JDS	Vacant
Synod-Elected DPC members	Claire Evans
	Revd Farai Mapamula
	Vacant
	Vacant
<i>Non-voting members in attendance</i>	
District Secretary*	Lisa Murphy
Mission Advisor and NPNP Lead	Adam Sanders
Ministry and Mission Coordinator	Jo Yair
Youth Engagement Coordinator	Charlotte Scrivens
Learning Network Aligned Officer	Rosie Bryant

*also members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

District Property Advisory Committee

DPAC Chair	Revd Phil Warrey
District Property Secretary	Chris Osborn
District Property Secretary	Keith Walton
District Property Consultant	Matthew McDade
Manse Visits Coordinator	Mark Hambly
District Archivists	Diane Webb and Miriam Nori
DPAC Secretary	Vacant
District Chair(s)	Revd Novette Headley & Revd Dr Rachel Deigh
Resourcing Mission Committee Chair	Revd Iain Ballard
Synod Secretary (Representative)	Rammy Obeng
District Secretary	Lisa Murphy
Plus 2-3 members with specialist knowledge of property related matters.	

District Consents Giving Body

District Chair(s)	Revd Novette Headley & Revd Dr Rachel Deigh
Property Advisory Committee Chair	Revd Phil Warrey
District Property Secretary	Keith Walton
District Property Secretary	Chris Osborn
Resourcing Mission Committee Chair	Revd Iain Ballard

District Manse Management Committee

Manse Steward (Amesbury Road)	Ian Bosman
Manse Steward (York Avenue)	Alan Stinton
Manse Steward (Farrier Close)	Lindsay Peniston
Manse Visits Coordinator	Mark Hambly
District Treasurer	Vacant
Property Consultant	Matthew McDade
Rep. to Stationing Committee	Max Reynolds

Resourcing Mission Committee

Resourcing Mission Committee Chair	Revd Iain Ballard
Grants Officer	Revd Denise Hargreaves
District Chair(s)	Revd Novette Headley & Revd Dr Rachel Deigh
Synod Secretary (Representative)	Rammy Obeng
District Treasurer	Vacant

Property Secretaries	Keith Walton and Chris Osborn
Property Advisory Committee Chair	Revd Phil Warrey
Ecumenical Officer	Revd David Lavender
Audit Committee	Andrew Morris
Resourcing Mission Committee Secretary	Vacant
Plus ordained and lay representatives from around the District	Revd Bev Boden Deacon Corinne Brown
<i>In attendance</i>	
Mission Advisor and NPNP Lead	Adam Sanders
Ministry & Mission Coordinator	Jo Yair
District Secretary	Lisa Murphy
Finance Officer	Tanya Booth

Audit Committee

Audit Committee Chair	Andrew Morris
District Chair(s)	Revd Novette Headley & Revd Dr Rachel Deigh
Synod Secretary (Representative)	Rammy Obeng
District Treasurer	Vacant
Audit Committee Members	Vacant

District Lay Employment Committee

Lay Employment Secretary	Brian Oakley
District Chair(s)	Revd Novette Headley & Revd Dr Rachel Deigh
Synod Secretary (Representative)	Rammy Obeng
HR Officer	Amy McColgan
District Secretary	Lisa Murphy
Lay Employee Rep	Jo Yair
Lay Employment Committee Members co-opted by the Chair(s) and Lay Employment Secretary - Vacant	

Supervision Implementation Group

Revd Novette Headley
Revd Dr Rachel Deigh
Revd Anne Smith
Revd Henry Lewis
Jo Yair

Church Life

Local Preachers' & Worship Leaders' Secretary	David Hemingway
District Member on Regional EDI Group	Revd Samantha Hagerman
District Member on Regional EDI Group	Revd Juliet Kisob

Sabbaticals

Sabbaticals Secretary	Deacon Sue Culver
Sabbatical Support Group	Chair(s) of District, Deacon Sue Culver, Philip Purcell, Revd Shalome MacNeill Cooper

District Safeguarding Group

Safeguarding Group Chair	Sue Barnseley
Safeguarding Group Members	Stephanie Bradley – Regional Officer for Safeguarding, Novette Headley – District Chair, Rachel Deigh – District Chair, Jayne Hall, Keith Drinkwater, Sue Smith, Peter White, Pauline Salter and Meryl Carson

Circuit Numbers

3/1	Anchor	3/11	Hidden River
3/2	Birmingham	3/12	Kidderminster and Stourport
3/3	Birmingham (Sutton Park)	3/13	Shropshire and Marches
3/4	Birmingham (West) and Oldbury	3/14	South Warwickshire
3/5	The Black Country	3/15	South Worcestershire
3/6	Bromsgrove and Redditch	3/16	Stafford
3/7	Cannock Chase	3/17	Tamworth and Lichfield
3/8	Coventry and Nuneaton	3/18	Telford
3/9	Dudley and Netherton	3/19	Vale of Stour
3/10	Herefordshire (South and East)	3/20	Wolverhampton

General Information

Attendance

The principal Standing Orders governing Synod organisation can be found at S0411, 413 and 741.

All members of the Synod will receive a calling notice requesting their attendance on the days appointed for every meeting of the Synod. Members of the Synod may bring notices of motion, which must be submitted in writing to the Chair and Synod Secretary fourteen days before the date of the Synod, and the Synod Secretary shall see that they are printed and distributed to the members of the Synod not later than its opening. Only on matters of urgency and by express permission of the Synod may notices of motion be submitted during a session of the Synod.

Except as provided by Standing Orders 1007 (3), 806(6) and 791(5), **every minister, every deacon who is not a supernumerary and every ministerial and diaconal probationer, unless, in any case, excused by dispensation of the Chair, is required to attend the Synod of which he or she is a member and to remain throughout its sessions.** A dispensation of absence is to be given only upon compelling grounds. The Chair shall report all dispensations to the Synod for its approval.

Lay members unable to attend Synod are requested to send apologies for absence to the Synod Secretary and to ensure that their papers are handed to any authorised substitute appointed by the Circuit Meeting.

Memorials to the Conference

Memorials to the Conference from any Circuit Meeting should be submitted by 31 March to:

- The Memorials Secretary – memorials@methodistchurch.org.uk
- The Synod Secretary – synodsec@wmmethodists.org.uk

A copy should also be sent to the District Office, to ensure that the Co-chairs are informed of all memorials submitted.

Plans

Circuit Plans should be sent each quarter electronically to the Co-chairs at chair@wmmethodists.org.uk

Stationing

Immediately following the September Circuit Meeting Ministers and Circuit Stewards must inform the Chair of any ministerial changes or extended appointments.

Contacting the Co-chairs

District PA: Cerys Ward

Email: chair@wmmethodists.org.uk

Contacting the District Office

Email: info@wmmethodists.org.uk

Future meetings of Synod

Presbyteral Synod: 10th March 2027, Venue TBC

Representative Synod: 12 September 2026, Venue TBC
24 April 2027, Venue TBC

Conference Information

The Conference of 2026 will meet in Telford from Thursday 25 June – Wednesday 1 July 2026.

WEST MIDLANDS DISTRICT: CONSTITUTION SEPTEMBER 2025

PURPOSES, FUNCTIONS AND MEMBERSHIP OF DISTRICT BODIES

The following provisions are either dictated by *The Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church* or permitted within its guidelines.

Synod

The Synod is the overall governing body of the district. Under the Conference it has the responsibility for making the final decisions about the policies and strategies affecting the district's life, work, worship and mission. It does so in the light of recommendations, proposals and advice from its subsidiary bodies. All the circuits and other constituent bodies in the district are represented in it. Together they confer to discern the will of God and decide how to respond. They also engage in celebration, connection, encouragement, and inspiration.

n.b. Lay people can only be voting members of the Synod if they are members of the Methodist Church. If they are not, they can be in attendance and speak but not vote.

Categories of Membership	Approx. Numbers as at 03/2026	How this number is calculated
These are set out in detail in Standing Order 410 (summarised below).		General principle: the number of lay members should be at least equal to the number of ministers (presbyters and deacons).
The Vice-President and all ex-Vice-Presidents of the Conference who are eligible	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eligibility means e.g. resident in the district. V-P's may be lay people or deacons and so are discounted in applying the above general principle to the final totals.

All Methodist ministers and probationers stationed in the District	99	These are both presbyters and deacons. The figure is based on the actual numbers for 2025-6 of those required by Standing Orders to attend the Synod. Of these 69 are presbyters in circuit appointments or tutors at Queen's, and 15 in other types of appointment; and 11 are deacons in circuit appointments and 4 deacons in other appointments. The figure does not include 136 supernumerary presbyters and 10 supernumerary deacons who may attend the Representative Session and vote but are not required to do so (and few do).
One circuit steward of each Circuit in the District	20	Number of circuits
Lay representatives of each circuit	48	As notified to the circuits, based on membership numbers for each circuit with 1 rep for up to the first 150 members, 2 reps for up to 300, 3 for up to 450 etc.
1 members of the District Policy Committee	6	Discounting those who are qualified under other heads in this list or by being ministers stationed in the District.
Lay representatives for particular connexional functions (e.g. Stationing, Property, World Affairs)	About 4	
Reps of young people	2	
Reps of Methodist Women in Britain	1-2	
All lay representatives elected by the Synod to the last preceding or next following Conference;	12	6 were appointed by the Synods of the two districts to the 2025 Conference, and 6 are to be appointed by the new Synod to the 2026 Conference.
Reps of student ministers at Queen's	Max. 4	
Such lay district officers as the Synod may determine;	5	
Synod-elected lay members, in numbers determined by the Synod;	10	
Some local lay-pastors and lay employees appointed in the District	6	These might include (if they are not already members under the category of lay district officers) such as the District Secretary; Ministry & Mission lead; NPNP lead; Youth

		Engagement lead; Learning Network Workers.
The secretary of the Synod;	1	
Sub-totals	99 ministers (P&D) 72 + 48 (circuit reps) lay	Plus some voting supernumeraries Plus some non-voting attenders
TOTAL		

District Forum

The District Forum is a non-executive, consultative body for the discussion, formation, and exploration of visions, plans and practical issues. As such it relates closely to the Superintendents' Consultation and Circuit Stewards' Consultation which the Senior Leaders' Group will organise. The Forum is a place where circuits can raise matters that concern them and through which they can be consulted about proposals as they are being developed. It therefore consists of a representative of each circuit together with the members of the Senior Leaders' Group. Other members of the District Policy Committee, staff and officers of the District may attend as appropriate or required.

DISTRICT FORUM	Projected Numbers	
Members of the Senior Leaders' Group (see above).	4-6	
Circuit Representatives	20 - 40	20 Circuits in 2025-6. At least 1 and no more than 2 reps per circuit Ideally half of the total number of reps shall be ordained and half lay.
TOTAL	24 - 46	

District Policy Committee

The District Policy Committee (DPC) is the chief executive body for the policies, strategies and other decisions of the Synod, to which it is accountable. As such it has to formulate and promote policies that will advance the mission of the Church in the Circuits and Local Churches. It also constitutes the District Trustees for all Methodist purposes and Charity purposes with regards to finance, employment and property managed by the district. Any district committees and task groups (such as the Resourcing Mission Committee) work under it, and it guides the work of staff and officers. It consists of the members of the Senior Leaders' Group (SLT) and other senior district staff and officers. Employees are in attendance and do not vote when the Committee is acting as District Trustees or making other formal decisions.

	Projected Numbers	Notes
Chair(s), Deputy and Assistant Chair(s)	3-4	For 2025-6 there will be 2 Chairs and 1 formal Deputy, all of whom must be Presbyters. Another deputy and assistants may also be appointed and may be Presbyters, Deacons or Lay. (They are all also members of the SLT)
District Secretary	1	Lay Employee in attendance (also in SLT)
Synod Secretary	1	Lay (also in SLT)
Presbyteral Synod Secretary	1	Presbyter
Treasurer	1	Lay or ordained; may be in attendance if employed.
Lay Stationing Rep	1	Lay
Ministry and Mission Lead	1	Probably = Lay Employee. In attendance.
New Places New People Lead	1	Probably = Lay Employee. In attendance.
EDI/JDS	1	Lay or ordained
Youth Engagement	1	Probably = Lay Employee. In attendance
Learning Network	1	Employee. In attendance.
Resourcing Mission Chair	1	Lay or ordained
Property Committee Chair + Property officer	2	Lay or ordained
Secretary for DPC	1	Lay or ordained
Synod elected members	4	2 ministers and 2 lay
Sub-totals	4-6 3-5 10-11	In attendance Voting members of DPC who are also members of SLT. Voting members of DPC who are not members of SLT.

TOTAL	17-22	
-------	-------	--

Volunteers Needed!!

District Treasurer

You will be part of a collaborative team, working strategically and creatively to shape a sustainable future for Methodism across the West Midlands with particular responsibility to ensure there is proper governance oversight of district funds and expenditure.

This role is open to lay and ordained Methodists living in the West Midlands District. You will need to be a qualified accountant or hold a relevant accounting qualification, and have a good understanding of charity governance in a Methodist Church context.

Committee Secretaries Required for:

- Resourcing Mission Committee
- Property Advisory Committee
- Lay Employment Committee

You will work closely with the committee chair to collate and distribute papers, make arrangements for meetings and take minutes of committee meetings.

This role is open to lay and ordained Methodists living in the West Midlands District. You will need to be well organised, familiar with the Office365 package and available for evening and daytime meetings.

Other vacancies can be found at www.wmmethodists.org.uk

For further information and an application form, please email the
District Office - info@wmmethodists.org.uk

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

1 Corinthians 12