June 2025

PROPERTY MATTERS

The Methodist Church

Welcome to this Month's edition of Property Matters
For the latest property guidance, please refer to the Property pages.
Meet the Property Support Team

Important Reminder

Deadline for LBAC Paper Submission - 24 June 2025

Meet the Team Profile Series

Meet our **Property Development & Asset Manager** - **Andrew Hornsby**

1. Can you share a bit about your background?

I've been working in the charitable sector for most of my professional career, apart from a short stint in local government. I have worked for a local church, a homelessness and housing organisation, a district council, and several charities including my most previous role in Action for Children.

I studied Supported Housing at degree level and qualified with a PGDip in Leadership in Health & Social Care. I am a chartered member of the Institute of Housing, and I am currently working towards building surveyor accreditation.

2. What is your role within the Connexional Team and what are you most excited about in your role?

I joined in September 2024. I work as part of the property team, supporting local Methodist Churches in reviewing and determining how property can facilitate and enhance the mission and growth of their church. Whilst it is the local church I work with predominately, I am also called upon to give support to Districts and Circuits on matters relating to property maintenance, building efficiency improvements, marketing and partnership assessments, grant funding guidance, community engagements, design, planning, commercial and construction guidance and support.

My role is often to provide support and guidance to local churches who have ideas about building projects or building improvements yet are not sure where to start! It is my job to help churches review where they are and help define a clear path of where they want to go. I occasionally encourage churches to stop, pause, and think.

Ensuring the 'concept' is right at the outset can prevent future pain and financial expense, so I support churches in refining their idea or concept and supporting the development of a well-costed business plan. I also enjoy all things construction, so having opportunity to help churches understand and approach the construction lifecycle is a privilege. I enjoy helping churches find new ways to serve and support their local communities with the hands and feet of Jesus, whilst generating new income streams supporting sustainable mission.

3. What's the most unusual job/most interesting project you've ever worked on?

After managing several homeless hostels and a young person's supported housing project, I had the privilege of financially modelling, designing, and project managing an £8m supported housing project in Grimsby. Being able to forward ten years of operational experience into the design and construction of a bespoke building was a thoroughly enriching and humbling experience.

I insisted that the needs of neurodiverse individuals were incorporated into design elements (neuroarchitecture), and I particularly enjoyed instructing structural architects to include a long, cambered steel beam within the frame design, removing the need for several ground floor columns and subsequently 'opening up' a large space, which now hosts a popular café, children's play area, and room for sports and youth work activities.

4. If you could have any superpower what would it be and why?
It's called "Memory Glimpse" – the ability to briefly witness key moments in someone's life, giving context and understanding to who they are.

5. What's your most favourite way to unwind after a busy day at work?
I have a young family with neurodivergent needs, so honestly, unwinding after work is a bit of a fantasy. However, when the children are asleep, I unwind by catching up on global news, politics, sport, and video-hopping on YouTube. I enjoy listening to heavy metal, trying my hand at all things DIY, rollerblading with our miniature labradoodle 'on tow', and occasionally fixing my yellow Fiat Panda!

If you would like to have a conversation with Andrew directly about a project you are planning or currently working on, please click here

To contact the rest of the Property Team, please click here to submit your enquiry and a member of the team will be in touch.

Action For Hope Corner

This section of Property Matters is where we share news, resources and events linked to Action for Hope and our commitment to care for creation.

Historic England have put together guidance on solar panels, covering from planning an installation through to the end of life of an array.

This sits alongside their other guidance on historic buildings and energy efficiency, as well as webinars, which you can watch back here. Links to Historic England's guidance can be found throughout the Property A-Z, where several items have recently been updated to include the latest guidance and resources.

The **Eco Community Network** recently met to consider how to green our spaces, from churches using land off site to churches with very little land and churches with lots of land sharing their ideas and experiences.

The panel discussion was recorded and will be available soon. If you're interested in joining the Network, you can find more information here. The Network will be meeting next on 17 September, learning about green worship.

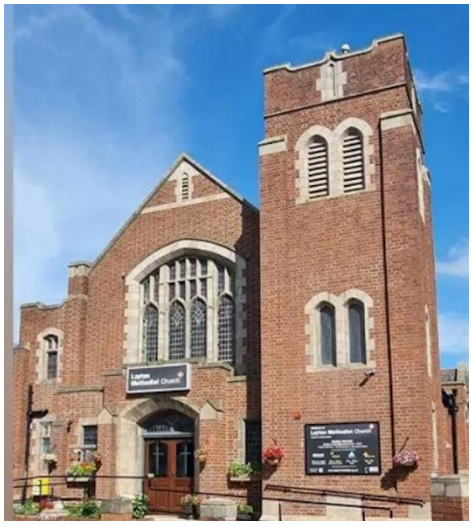
For churches in Greater Manchester, City of Trees is working with landowners to plants trees to tackle the climate and biodiversity emergencies. They have secured funding from the Government's Nature for Climate Fund and can help landowners with funding, design and planting. Click here to find out more and get in touch with them.

As always, a reminder you can find more about Action for Hope here, guidance on getting your building down to net zero here, and you can contact Anna here for net zero support and guidance.

Inspiration from Blackpool

Tackling Food Poverty with a £25k Grant from the National Churches Trust

Two churches in Lancashire received a share of almost £600,000 of funding from the National Churches Trust.



This fund aims to save important heritage and keep churches open - Layton Methodist Church in Blackpool was one of the churches who received part of this grant.

This church is in one of the most deprived areas of the country and they are striving to tackle the issue of food poverty through its community café and foodbank. The volunteer chairman of Layton Methodist Forward Project told BBC News Lancashire that the grant was "truly transformational" in the expansion of

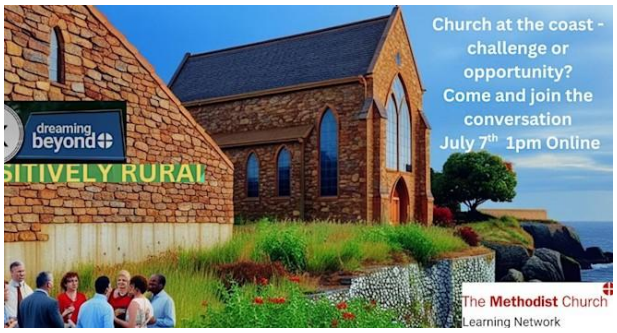
their small kitchen thereby giving them the opportunity to help the community even more.

Click here to read the entire article.

We would love to share your Story?

Do you have an Inspirational Story to share, please get in touch – no project is too big or small. Sharing your project experience will help encourage other churches who are thinking of embarking on a similar journey.
Please click here to access the questionnaire that will help you write your story.

Upcoming Events



Coastal Churches - The Power of Partnership: Stories of Hope and Transformation

Join colleagues from the Learning Network and the Mission team online for a heartening lunchtime event as we explore **The Power of Partnership** - a celebration of how collaboration between churches and communities is creating spaces of transformation and hope.

Through five real-life stories from across the Castle Eden Circuit and the Dorset South & West Circuit, we'll hear how local partnerships are bringing renewed life and purpose to church buildings and the people they serve:

Date: **Monday, 7th July 2025**
Time: **1pm**
Venue: **Online**
For more information and to register your attendance, click here

Wholehearted Monthly - Hosted by the Methodist Church in Britain and open to all. The sessions are still going on strong and another great evening of discovery, learning, networking and fellowship awaits. The special guest for the main session is **Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester** so don't miss it.

As always, you are invited to join the Property Team after the main session in our breakout room with our guest **Nathan Green**

Topic: **A Space(ious) Place to discuss Homelessness**
Date: **Tuesday 8th July 2025**
Time: **7pm – 9pm**
Venue: **Online**
Click here to register your attendance (***spaces fill up fast so register now***)

Training Opportunity

Circuit Stewards Community of Practice
Are you a Circuit Steward and do you feel you could benefit from connecting with other Circuits Stewards -- to share what's happening for you in your role and oversight, and to learn what's happening in others' contexts?

If so, please join this Circuit Stewards' Community of Practice, facilitated by the Learning Network and wider Connexional Team. The sessions explore many of the practical, missional aspects of Circuit Stewarding including: property, finance, mission planning, climate care, trusteeship and governance, leadership and management, EDI/JDS, justice-seeking, lay employment... and more!

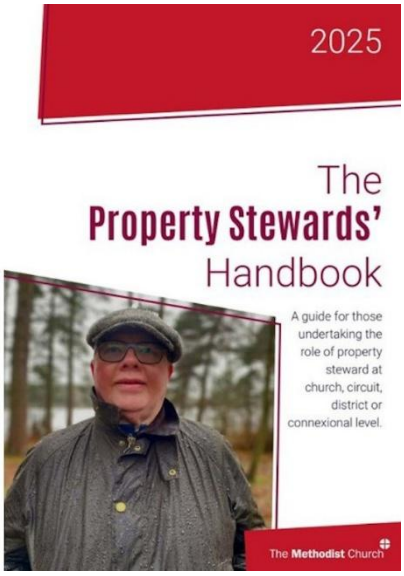
Date of Next Session: **Wednesday, 31st July 2025**
Time: **7pm – 9pm**
Topic: **Inclusive Mission with Bevan Powell (Director of inclusion)**
Attendance is Free. For more information and to register, click here

Important Reminders & Useful Resources

Property Steward's Handbook - Updated

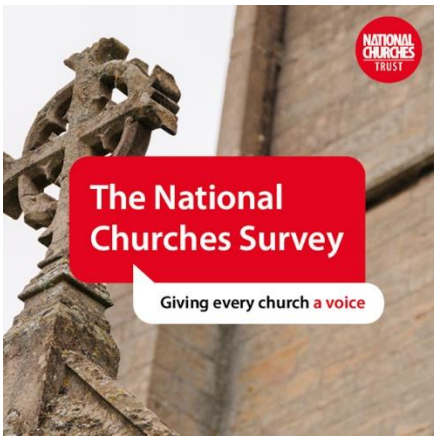
Just a gentle reminder that the Property Steward's Handbook has been updated and a 2025 edition is now available to download on the Methodist Church Website.

Click here to access and download the PDF version of the handbook



The National Churches Survey: giving every church a voice (Reminder)

The National Churches Trust is carrying out a survey to help policymakers, the media, and the wider public better understand the challenges churches face and to highlight the vital work that churches, like yours, do. This survey has the support of denominations, faith, and heritage groups across the country and we encourage you to take part.



Your response will provide essential evidence to build a clearer picture – to tell a stronger, more informed story about your church, and others like it, so that together we can address some of the biggest challenges facing churches and help ensure their future. Please complete The National Churches Survey and encourage others you know to join in too. **The survey is live until the 30th of June so please take part if you are yet to do as every participation counts.**

For the English Version of the form - click here
For the Welsh Version of the form - click here

Methodist Insurance June E-News
(Sponsored Content)

This month, Methodist Insurance highlight your responsibilities when undertaking church building works.

The publication also shares 12 practical tips to help secure your shed, and explore how the Benefact Trust's Methodist Grants Programme can support your church's mission, growth, and maintenance needs.

Click here to access the e-news content

Important Update from The Online Support Team

Dear Friends,

We are writing to let you know about the upcoming changes to the Online Suite (which includes Property consents, Annual Returns, Gift Aid and Statistics for Mission)*. We are very aware that in recent months, the Online Suite has not been operating to a satisfactory level and as a result, data and change requests have not been updated in a timely manner.

We are very sorry for any inconvenience or confusion that this has caused. Unfortunately, there are significant issues with the Online Suite and it is no longer able to function reliably. As a result, we have taken the decision to shut down Statistics for Mission until the new Online Suite can be launched.

From Monday, 9 June, there will be no access to Statistics for Mission. If you need to request any changes, there will be links to a Microsoft form where you can input the changes. These requests will then be processed manually so please bear with us as it could take up to 7 working days to process

the queries. **Please note that Property Consents, Annual Returns and Gift Aid will be able to continue to operate as per normal.**

We have also made TMCP aware of the position and they recognise that some Managing Trustees may have experienced difficulties in confirming various contact details, held on the Online Suite, as part of Check 4 of the 2025 Data protection Checklist. Those Managing Trustees are advised to wait until the launch of the new Online Suite and then check the contact details as soon as possible. If Managing Trustees have confirmed that all other information held locally is correct, as well as that held with TMCP, then they may mark off Check 4 as being completed.

We are working towards implementing a new online suite which will be secure, fit for purpose and will offer scope for future improvements. Unfortunately, complications with the development of this new online suite mean that the launch date for this has been delayed, and we now expect it to be launched in October 2025.

We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause but we ask for you to continue to bear with us. If you have any queries, please click here to contact us and we will do our best to respond within 7 working days.

Best wishes,
The Online Suite Support Team

**Statistics for Mission* is used for the collection of membership numbers while Annual Returns are used for reporting on property, mission & ministry and Action for Hope*.*

An Interesting Read

Over 9,000 Crimes Reported at UK Churches in Three Years

In April this year, the Countryside Alliance published new research showing that, on average, at least eight crimes took place at churches every day from 2022-2024.

Sadly, this information didn't come as a surprise and now, through no fault of their own, repair costs to fix the damage will be up to 20 percent more expensive for listed churches.

This situation leaves churches open to various risks and dangers with the recent cap on The Listed Places of Worship Grant Schemes adding its own to an already precarious situation. **Is your Church protected?**

Click here to read the entire article

Listed Building Advisory Committee (LBAC)

Meeting Dates:

- **15 July 2025** - Deadline for paper is 24 June 2025
- **14 October 2025 -** Deadline for paper is 23rd September 2025
- **20 January 2026 -** Deadline for paper is 20th January 2026

Property Matters is a monthly newsletter focused on giving updates on property related guidance and legal updates as well as providing information and links to related subjects. To view the most current content, please refer to the Property pages on the Methodist Church website. We cannot know about everything that's going on, so please do email us if you have any feedback or ideas for items to include.

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