



North West England District Statement of Needs

The North West England District (NWED) are calling for a District Chair to come and join our team. This role builds on the foundations already in place. It includes leading a strong, established, Senior Leadership Team, with 35 Superintendents, 130 ministers, and hundreds of lay staff and volunteers, serving 17,000 Methodist members across 33 Circuits, 30 schools, the Ecumenical Covenantal Partnership in Cumbria and other ecumenical and interfaith partnerships; alongside courageous New Places for New People (NPNP) and Church at the Margins work taking place across the Region. The new District Chair will lead this team into the next phase of our development. This is an exciting opportunity for a seasoned strategic collaborative leader to continue to shape our journey into new ways of organisation and discipleship fit for God's future for the North West of England and beyond.

The District stretches from the Solway Firth to the Wirral, with rural, urban, city, and post-industrial cities and towns being surrounded by coastlines to the west, the Lake District National Park, and the Pennines to the east. Our geographic diversity is matched by our theological, economic, and social diversity – meaning that this Region is a place where everyone can find welcome, inclusion and a home.

Our population of around 5 million people are served by arterial motorways, strong local and national bus, rail, and tram links, and two international airports – alongside the challenges of remote roads into isolated rural communities, commuting, and the impact of seasonal tourism into the Region.

Now home to 'Number 10 in the North', Media City – and even Coronation Street – we are seeking a Chair who can confidently engage in the Public Square. We continue to build relationships which impact local, regional, and national power-holder, stakeholders, and influencers across the political, interfaith, corporate, and cultural sectors. Our partnership with *Citizens UK* is longstanding across the Region, and we are actively engaged in embedding faith rooted community organising practices in our justice-seeking and outreach. With the recently announced Pride in Places awards, around £100 million of investment is heading into some of the most deprived areas of the Region over the next generation, and we believe that our local people are some of the best placed to identify and deliver on local ambitions for the wellbeing and welfare of local communities. As a District, we continue to make bold and brave decisions, investing in innovative outreach, supported social housing developments, and education at all levels.

Whatever your sporting colours or code, there are local, national, and international teams to support. From fish and chips, farm to fork cafes, the Curry Mile, and Michelin star experiences – there's something here for every palette as we are the renowned innovators of the Wigan Meat Pie, Bury Black Pudding, Cartmel Sticky Toffee Pudding,

Eccles Cakes, Grasmere Gingerbread, and Kendal Mint Cake. We are also home to such icons as the world's largest pencil, Quarry Bank working cotton Mill, and the Blackpool Tower and Ballroom. We are a Region of renown, resilience, revolution, and innovation. We are both deeply locally grounded and globally connected. From the Halle to the Royal Northern College of Music to the Beatles, New Romantics and Brit Pop – this Region continues to provide world class music staged in world class venues. We are an area rich in history, culture, music, creative arts, and more.

The Chair of District will be building on the foundation of our ways of working and values, which have been embedded throughout our recent merging of Districts. Our foundational principles underline that as a District we are:

- Justice-seeking
- Spirit led and Biblically grounded
- Oriented to God's time and mission
- Vocationally and Missionally responsive
- Prioritising local circuits as the primary locus of mission

The NWED District Chair works with an experienced leadership team and is supported organisationally in the following ways:

The District Structure

a. Hubs

Leadership: led by the District Chair. The Chair of District gives pastoral and strategic leadership to a skilled and increasingly experienced team of fellow senior leaders (both lay and ordained); some of whom serve on the SLT alongside the Chair. The leadership of the District is collaborative, adaptive, and attentive.

Administration and Compliance: led by a full-time lay District Secretary, bringing explicit experience of running large organisations. This hub exercises oversight of safeguarding, finance (alongside a District Treasurer), reconciliation & support, grants, property, lay employment, data protection, health & safety, and archives, as well as the District provision of support for administration and communications.

Ministry and Vocations: led by a full-time District Secretary, the current incumbent of the role is ordained. This hub supports lay and ordained ministries, vocations (including candidates, probationers, and Ministers from Overseas Connexions and Conferences), local preachers and worship leaders, supervision (including sharing the role of Supervision Implementation Plan holder), and continuing development in ministry.

Mission: this recently evolved hub is led by a half-time District Secretary, the current incumbent of the role is ordained. This hub will oversee the collaborative development of the District Mission Plan and is the focus for supporting and embedding the God for All and Justice Seeking Church strategies as they work out

across the District in NPNP, Church at the Margins, and Faith Rooted Community Organising work.

b. Mission Area Lead and Deputy Chairs

The Mission Area Lead/Deputy Chairs (MALs) are seconded from Circuit appointments and are responsible for encouraging and challenging the circuits in their area to become increasingly mission-focused. They have also taken on the roles and responsibilities associated with deputising for the Chair of District under the relevant Standing Orders and it is assumed that this exercise of senior leadership will continue in conversation with the incoming Chair. The MAL roles are intentionally half-time – locating senior leadership across a mission area region with deeply rooted presbyteral praxis.

Cumbria Mission Area (co-terminus with the now merged Cumbria Circuit) – where the MAL/Deputy Chair is also currently the Circuit Superintendent. This is also an established Covenanted Partnership in an Ecumenical Area (CPEA).

Lancashire Mission Area – broadly the county of Lancashire where the current Mission Area Lead is also currently stationed in the Manchester Circuit

Greater Manchester Plus Mission Area – broadly the Greater Manchester Mayoral region, but extending into parts of Lancashire, Derbyshire and Cheshire. There are two part-time Mission Area Leads who work collaboratively, one is the Superintendent of the Alderley Edge and Knutsford Circuit, and the other is stationed in the United Stockport Circuit.

Liverpool Plus Mission Area - broadly relates to the Liverpool City Region mayoral area, extending into West Lancashire and West Cheshire, the former Liverpool District geography. The Mission Area Lead is now also appointed as the District Secretary for Mission.

We are prayerfully seeking a spiritual leader who can equip and enable God's people to flourish in this next season of the new North West England District, whilst holding the constitutional responsibilities and oversight of the Chairs role – namely safeguarding, supervision, and stationing. We are looking for an experienced communicator who is confident in public theology; speaks honestly; enables creativity; and who engages in and encourages prophetic action. As a Chair of District, we hope that you will bring wide experience of collaboration, strategic skills with a pastoral heart, and a prayerful spirit which enables courage and ambition for our shared vision of God's future for us here in the North West of England.

Our new Chair will have the opportunity to envision and lead our shared future across our large District, bringing your own gifts, skills, and passions into leadership here. You will strengthen our theological voice in the public square; in a fast-changing and crisis-ridden world. At present, we remain a new District, and you will be key in helping us forge our

District identity as a growing, justice-seeking, evangelistic, and inclusive Church. We continue to live with the challenges of ancient buildings, small (often ageing) congregations, and limited budgets. We are committed to working towards being an Eco-District and we encourage a new Chair to be a key advocate for environmental adaptations and action in the face of the Climate Emergency.

We look forward to receiving nominations and applicants who feel called to come and join us on God's journey across our diverse District, and to lead our team into God's vision for our present and future.