

March 2024

PROPERTY MATTERS

The **Methodist** Church 

Welcome to the March edition of Property Matters with a focus on property-related updates and guidance.

For the latest property guidance, please refer to the [Property pages](#).

[Meet the Property Support Team](#)

Housing for Homelessness

Wed, 8 May 2024 10:30am
The Church at Carrs Lane, Birmingham

Tickets are now available for the first in person Housing and Homelessness Gathering in a number of years. There will be a range of speakers from within the church and from the housing world who will provide you with inspiration and the knowledge on using church property for affordable and supported housing. The gathering is an opportunity to learn about how affordable and supported housing is delivered and how you can work in partnership with housing organisations. Meeting in person will also give you the chance to meet Methodists from other parts of the country who also wish to play their part in tackling the housing and homelessness crisis. You will also be able to hear about what Methodist churches are doing locally as part of our calling to serve the community.



The event is free. Tickets are limited so [click here to book now](#).

Love Your Burial Ground Week

Caring for God's Acre annual [Love Your Burial Ground and Churches Count on Nature](#) week has been set for **8th - 16th June 2024** and there is a focus on the brilliant wildlife to be found in churchyards and chapel yards. It is a joint initiative promoted by Caring for God's Acre, the Church of England, the Church in Wales and A Rocha UK.



Over 27,000 wildlife records have been submitted during this dedicated week over the past two years, and many recorders are continuing to submit records through the burial grounds project on [iNaturalist UK](#).

[Click here](#) to find information on how to sign up as well as resources.

The Story Behind the Restoration of the Spire

It was a great relief to know that while storm Babet did its worst, the Spire and roof at [St Andrew's church](#) in Sheffield were secure. It is less than a year since we started to raise funds to undertake the restoration of the Spire, having been told by the architect that we should complete this during the summer of 2023, as it was probable it would not survive another winter.



The Spire Restoration Group worked hard to raise funds and manage the project. We investigated the possibility of removing the spire - after all it is an aesthetic architectural feature, without function as a bell tower or ventilator - but we were advised that as an important aspect of the Grade II listing and would have to be replaced (which would have cost more than the £135k required for restoration). [Click here to read the rest of the story](#).

The Cherish Project

[Cherish](#) will help preserve the heritage of our churches, chapels and meeting houses, and illustrate their importance in communities throughout the UK. Cherish is being delivered across Scotland, Wales/Cymru and North-West England in Partnership with the National Lottery Heritage Fund, thanks to National Lottery players. Through dedicated support officers, Cherish aims to provide much needed extra support for historic churches, chapels and meeting houses that have traditionally been less well represented in our programmes.



The National Churches Trust will work with partners to deliver a grants programme for maintenance works, promote sustainability in church buildings and provide a range of support to help churches open to visitors and tourists. This will ensure even more people can enjoy the stunning heritage that these churches across Scotland, Wales/Cymru and North-West England have to offer.

Get in touch with your local support officer in:

- Scotland - [email Karen Hind](#) or ring 07707 149 288
- Greater Manchester, Lancashire and Cumbria - [email Matthew Maries](#) or ring 07707 149 287
- Wales - [email Gareth Simpson](#) or ring 07707 149 286

Guidance on Special Historic Interest

Historic England has published guidance [Understanding Special Historic Interest in Listing](#) to help people better understand special historic interest, one of the two main criteria used to decide whether a building can be listed or not.



Historic England

Special historic interest is about the connection between the building and the people who use or have used it, the things that happen or have happened there, the ideas that were developed there or the role that the building played in the nation's history. HE's guidance provides advice on how they might assess a building's special historic interest, as well as examples to illustrate the historic interest of different buildings.

Such examples include a converted Wesleyan Methodist Church (now the St Mary Protectress Ukrainian Orthodox Church). It also explains HE's approach to addressing difficult or uncomfortable heritage. [Click here to read more.](#)

[Click here to read a guide to the selection criteria](#) for churches, including Methodist Churches.

Community Businesses in Places of Worship

HRBA has been promoting the initiative developed by the Plunkett Foundation supported by the Benefact Trust. One community who received a grant as well as guidance and business support from the Scheme, is Amberley, Gloucester who have just opened a café and coffee shop in Holy Trinity Church which has brought new life to the church building and united the community.

[Click here to read the story.](#)

An article has also appeared in the European Heritage Tribune recognising the Amberley Shop & Cafe at Holy Trinity as a best practice case study.

[Click here to read the article.](#)



William and Jane Morris Church Conservation Grants

The application portal for [the Morris Church Conservation Grants](#) is now live, and the next deadline is 31 March. You can apply for between £500 and £5000 for the conservation of decorative features and monuments in churches and places of worship in the UK.

[Click here for more information](#) about our grants programmes.



Update from HMRC on VAT associated with Burials

HMRC has updated [Burial, cremation and commemoration of the dead \(VAT Notice 701/32\)](#). It explains the VAT liability of funeral services, burials and cremations, goods and services connected with the commemoration of dead people, other goods and services connected with organising funerals, and other activities relating to the disposal of the remains of the dead, including transport of the deceased. In general, the following services are exempt from VAT:



- the disposal of the remains of a deceased person;
- the making of arrangements for, or in connection with, the disposal of the remains of the deceased; and
- the services of one undertaker to another in connection with a specific funeral of the deceased.

Specifically in relation to places of worship:

- fees payable to churches for ministers' services are outside the scope of VAT;
- orders of service for use in funeral commemorative services are zero-rated (read Zero rating of books and other forms of printed matter (VAT Notice 701/10))
- burial (including reburial), cremation and interment of ashes are exempt from VAT, as is the digging, preparation and refilling of a grave.

Chubb Fire Extinguisher Contract

The contract with Chubb for fire extinguishers has been renewed and the details below can be found on the [A-Z Property Guidance](#). Any new premises wishing to participate in this agreement must apply through the below address, via post, telephone, or email. Contact details as follows:

Chubb Fire & Security Ltd
National Accounts
United Technologies House
Shadsworth Business Park
Shadsworth Road
Blackburn BB1 2PR
Email – service@chubbfsc.co.uk
Tel - 0344 879 1773

If the following details could be provided to enable them to add your premises to the Churches contract:

- The full name and address with postcode for the invoice
- The name and telephone number of the contact to arrange access to site
- The name and address of the site that is to be serviced
- The due month in which the service is required

On receipt of this correspondence they will arrange to visit your premises. Subsequent to each annual service carried out, any recommendations for replacement or additional extinguishers will be forwarded to you for your approval.

Churches should ensure that when dealing with Chubb they are on the National Account Contract as agreements with Chubb's local offices can be more expensive. [Click here](#) for further information on fire safety that can be found on the Methodist Insurance's website.

Methodist Insurance Updates

Methodist Insurance has moved!

Our new office offers a modern, eco-friendly workspace, vibrant surroundings, and is a perfect location to support our expert team in delivering excellent service.

Please update your records with our new address:

Methodist Insurance PLC

11 York Street

Manchester

M2 2AW.



Demystifying the National Lottery Heritage Fund

Our new fundraising guidance in collaboration with Philanthropy Company, gives an introduction to one of the UK's most important church funders - [The National Lottery Heritage Fund](#).

- Find out more about their key requirements and processes.
- Learn how to put together a compelling application and avoid common pitfalls.



Ladder safety - a top priority

Ladders are extremely practical but injuries from falls can be severe. Choosing the right ladder and carrying out some simple checks will reduce the chances of an accident. Knowing how to use them safely will also help too.

[Ladder safety guidance](#)



Keeping people safe at Easter

With Easter falling earlier this year, you'll probably already have some events in the calendar.

Special events are a fantastic way to bring new people to your church. However, larger events or unusual fund-raising



activities can present greater risk and steps will needed to make sure everyone stays safe.

[Safety at events](#)

Are your bicycles covered by your home insurance?

Our Home Shield contents cover automatically includes bicycles up to £750 (or more if you let us know), provided you take some precautions.

Keep your bike safe from thieves at home and away.

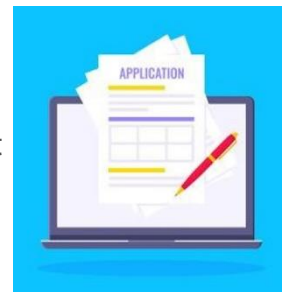
[Bicycle cover and security](#)



Methodist grant giving

Benefact Trust’s Methodist Grants Programme provides funding to support the mission and ministry of the Methodist Church. Grants are available to help churches run building development projects that focus on church growth, community engagement and accessibility.

[Could you benefit from a grant?](#)



An advertisement for Methodist Insurance. The top left features the 'METHODIST INSURANCE' logo with a blue shield icon. Below it, the text reads 'HOME INSURANCE CAN COUNT FOR MORE THAN JUST COVER.' in large, bold, blue letters. The background shows a woman with dark curly hair sitting on a grey sofa, holding a smartphone. In the bottom right corner, there is a blue circular badge with white text that says '20%* DONATED TO YOUR CHOSEN CHURCH OR CHARITY'. At the bottom left, small text reads '* Terms and conditions apply. Full details available on our website methodistinsurance.co.uk/charitydonation'.

HSE Update

Workplace health, safety and welfare: legal requirements



There are a number of legal duties which all businesses must comply with on workplace health, safety and welfare. HSE have a [workplace, health, safety and welfare website](#) which brings together general guidance for all workplaces to follow.

This includes the [law on workplace safety](#), which covers a wide range of basic health, safety and welfare issues. There is also guidance on a variety of topics and legal duties that all businesses should follow, including:

- [temperature](#)
- [ventilation](#)
- [emergency procedures](#)

Portable Appliance Testing - busting the myths

Portable appliance testing (PAT) is the examination of electrical appliances and equipment to ensure they are safe to use.

There are many myths about PAT but you can use [HSE's frequently asked questions](#) to find the key facts about the inspection and testing of portable electrical equipment.

You can also download HSE's leaflet [Maintaining portable electric equipment in low-risk environments](#). It sets out simple and sensible precautions you should take to prevent danger from portable or movable electrical equipment. HSE's website also has [general advice on electrical safety at work](#).

Updates to First Aid at Work Publications

HSE has made recent updates to 2 publications on first aid at work. Please note that the updates do not change what is required to comply with the law.

[First aid at work: Guidance on regulations](#)

This publication sets out what you need to do to address first aid provision in the workplace. The updates include emphasising employers' responsibilities to take account of employees' mental health in their first aid needs assessment.

[Selecting a first aid training provider: A guide for employers](#)

This guidance helps you identify and select a competent training provider to deliver your first aid training needs. It has been updated to simplify what employers should consider when selecting a training provider.

New Data Protection Resources

TMCP are pleased to let Managing Trustees know that there are four new data protection resources available for immediate use. These are additional tools developed across the Connexion:



- QR Code for the Managing Trustees Privacy Notice
- Data Protection Symbol Truth Promise
- Sheffield District's data protection website pages
- Social Media slides from a recent District Data Champion Forum and links to additional resources.

[Click here to view the new resources.](#)

London Historic Buildings Trust: Free Training Worksops 'Building Futures'



This workshop on **22 April 2024** is aimed at anyone that are considering or developing a

historic building regeneration project, The key themes of the training are:

- What makes a successful, viable regeneration project and how to develop on
- Who could benefit from your project and in what ways
- Project funding opportunities and ensuring a successful application, including to the National Lottery Heritage Fund

[Click here for more information.](#)

Methodist Church Resources Facebook Group

Just to let you know the Connexional team have created a FB group called Methodist Church Resources. This is primarily for sharing news and info about our resources/ events/ webinars/ learning opportunities from the Connexional Team and frees up the other Methodist Church social media channels to concentrate more on posts other than events and sign ups.

[Click here to take a look.](#)

A Future for Your Church: Exploring Sustainable Futures

Thursday 18th April 2024, 10-11:30am
on Zoom, FREE

Heritage Trust Network and Historic Churches Scotland are joining forces to host the next event in this series for any group contemplating the future of their church building. At this event, Deborah Kent of Fife Historic Buildings Trust will present on a recent study that looked at future uses and financial models for three churches in Fife. Everyone is welcome.

[Click here to register.](#)



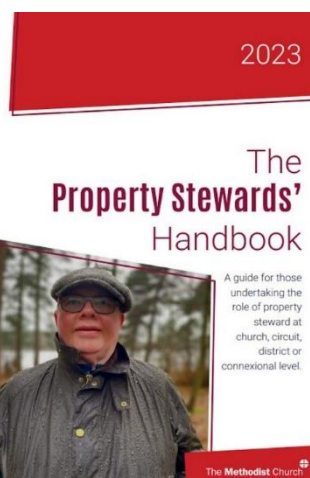
Property Stewards' Handbook

We are pleased to announce the launch of the Property Stewards' Handbook!

This handbook is design to be an across-the-board information resource for property stewards at a church, circuit and district level.

It includes the Top 10 Essentials of being a property steward as well as other useful information and links.

[Click here to download a copy.](#)



Energy Buying Update

Business Solutions Made Simple!

Proud Partners of the Methodist Church



As Christians we are called to care for God's creation and to work for justice in the world. We are currently living in a climate emergency which threatens much of the life on earth and disproportionately affects those people who did least to cause it.

The Methodist Church in Britain has set a target of net zero by 2030. This will require action in a number of different areas and contexts, but crucial to achieving this aim will be ensuring that the energy we use is green, renewable energy. Moving to using green electricity not only ensures that the energy we use does as little as possible to contribute to the climate emergency but also allows us to demonstrate collectively that we, as a Church, want to see the building of greater capacity for renewable energy.

As well, we are aware of the concern that churches have regarding rising energy costs. One possible option for managing trustees to consider would be to get in touch with an energy broker who may be able to fix your rates for a period of time. Although it is not always guaranteed that the rate is cheaper, there is a level of security of having a fixed rate. Managing Trustees could also contact other churches in their circuit and/or district to see if they might be interested, as sometimes brokers can offer deals for a cluster of churches. Here is a message from [Switch365](#), the new energy partner for The Methodist Church:

Our goal is to streamline the energy renewal process for all Methodist Churches. Whether your current contract nears expiration or extends into the future, we invite you to reach out.

Our account managers can explore tailored plans designed to meet your specific needs and to introduce sustainable energy practices for your church. Together, we can embark on a journey towards a greener and more cost-effective energy future. [Click here to fill in an online enquiry form.](#)

Listed Building Advisory Committee (LBAC) Meeting Dates:

- **23 April 2024** - Deadline for paper is 22 March 2024
- **16 July 2024** - Deadline for paper is 14 June 2024

Supporting the Methodist Connexion

Methodist Insurance has been protecting the property of the Methodist Church since 1872. We are a Public Limited Company owned by shareholders and independent of the Methodist Church. The company operates like a mutual by returning most of our profits back to our community in the form of a significant financial contribution to the Methodist Connexion. [Find out more.](#)



Property Matters is a monthly newsletter focused on giving updates on property related guidance and legalisation as well as providing information and links to related subjects. To view the most current content, please refer to the [Property pages](#) on the 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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