

Methodist Heritage Committee (MHC) update on the European section of the World Methodist Historical Society (WMHS)

Contact Name and Details	Sarah Friswell, Chair of the Methodist Heritage Committee, sarah.friswell@btinternet.com
Status of Paper	Final
Action Required	Note
Resolution	25/1. The Council receives the report.

Summary of Content

Subject and Aims	To provide the Council with an update regarding the new arrangements for the European section of the World Methodist Historical Society (WHMS)
Main Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal to move from British and European sections towards a single European section of the WMHS at European Methodist Council in 2015. • New arrangements agreed in principle in September 2016. • The partners of the European churches intend to use the new way of working with immediate effect.

Methodist Heritage Committee (MHC) update on the European section of the World Methodist Historical Society (WMHS)

1. At the European Methodist Historical Conference held in September 2015, in Ruse, Bulgaria (organised by the World Methodist Historical Society (WMHS) European Section), participants, including representatives of the British Methodist Heritage Committee (MHC), were asked to consider the future of the historical network in Europe. It was proposed that in the future there would be one single European section. This would have a leadership group (including a representative from the British Church) which would plan a 5 yearly conference with just one face-to-face meeting in the intervening years. The group would also communicate electronically sharing news and information.
2. Previously there were two sections – the European section (comprising the churches of mainland Europe) and the British section (at the formation of the Heritage Committee in 2009, it took on the role of the British Section/Committee of the European section of the WMHS with a British Secretary, the Revd Dr Martin Wellings). The Wesley Historical Society also plays an active role in the WMHS.
3. The new ‘model’ was agreed by the European Methodist Council which met immediately after the Historical Conference in September 2015.
4. Since then there has been considerable discussion by members of the Heritage Committee about the benefits and disadvantages of this new arrangement, not least because of the MHC’s role as British Committee of the WMHS as set out in SO 337(1)(vii). It was also necessary to clarify to our European partners the difference between the official role of the MHC and that of the Wesley Historical Society, an independent historical society.
5. A meeting took place in Houston, USA, in September 2016, at which the Chair of the Heritage Committee discussed the options with the then World President of WMHS (Dr Ulrike Schuler) and the General Secretary of the General Commission on Archives and History (the Revd Fred Day). After further consultation with the British MHC, there was a verbal agreement to accept the new arrangement for the European section.
6. To date the constitution of the WMHS has not been changed so the new agreement for the organisation of the European section is only agreed verbally and not constitutionally. Nevertheless, it is the intention of the partners of the European churches to use the new way of working with immediate effect.

*****RESOLUTION**

25/1. The Council receives the report.