

Southlands College 2022-23

MC/24/61

Date of meeting	13-15 April 2024
Contact name and details	The Revd Dr Tim Macquiban, Chair of the Southlands Liaison Group and Southlands Methodist Trust Dr Christopher Stephens, Head of Southlands College christopher.stephens@roehampton.ac.uk
Action required	Approval
Resolutions	61/1. The Council receives the report.

Summary of Content

Subject and aims	To report to the Council on the activities of Southlands College and the Southlands Methodist Trust as they relate to the mission of the Methodist Church in the context of Higher Education.
Main points	Introduction and Context Areas of Activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southlands College and the University of Roehampton • Southlands as a College Community • Southlands Methodist Trust • Susanna Wesley Foundation Membership of Southlands Liaison Group and Southlands Methodist Trust
Background context and relevant documents (with function)	The full annual report from the University of Roehampton on the activities of Southlands College can be found at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://southlandsmethodisttrust.org.uk/enriching-the-college-community/ (scroll down a short way and click to view) or • https://southlandsmethodisttrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Southlands-Report-2024-FINALsm.pdf (direct link) Annual trustee reviews describing the work of the Southlands Methodist Trust are available at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://southlandsmethodisttrust.org.uk/about/ (scroll down and click to view) • https://southlandsmethodisttrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/22_23_Trustee_report_FINAL_webSM.pdf (direct link) Additional information and documents relating to the life and work of Southlands College and its associated bodies can be found at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.roehampton.ac.uk/colleges/southlands-college • www.southlandsmethodisttrust.org.uk • www.susannawesleyfoundation.org.uk

1.0 Introduction and Context

- 1.1 Southlands College was founded in 1872 as a teacher training college for Methodist women intending to teach in Methodist schools. As the Church's educational provision expanded, so too did the college, causing it to move first from Battersea to Wimbledon and then, in 1997, to its present site at Roehampton. From the 1970s, Southlands became progressively more associated with three sister colleges (including Anglican and Roman Catholic colleges), first as part of the Roehampton Institute and, more recently, as a constituent college of the University of Roehampton.
- 1.2 The colleges are the building blocks of the University of Roehampton and, through the Methodist Church's participation in the founding of the university, the Church has unique and privileged access to a major UK University, appointing senior college staff and members of the governing body of the university, influencing its life and work, and being able to draw on its resources. The Church has this access in the context of a modern and diverse institution and alongside colleges founded by the Church of England and the Society of the Sacred Heart (Roman Catholic), and as such participates in a significant ecumenical project in our church's educational mission, the scale of which is not seen elsewhere in British Methodism. With an excellent and growing reputation for teaching, research and knowledge exchange in Theology, and especially Practical Theology, the University is also a huge asset from which the Methodist Church can benefit in its theological education, and through Southlands College the Church's relationship with that work continues to flourish.
- 1.3 In 2010 the Methodist Conference granted a 125-year lease of the college estate to the University of Roehampton. As part of that arrangement, commitments to the activities and ethos of Southlands College were made by the university, and the Southlands Liaison Group (SLG) was established. The SLG is appointed by the Methodist Council and has responsibility for ensuring those commitments are honoured and that the relationship between the Church and the university is developed and sustained for the benefit of both. Members of the Liaison Group include representatives of the local Methodist communities, of the local District, and of the Connexional Team, as well as university and college appointments and independent Methodist people from across Britain. They are occasionally nominated as members of university committees, including two members of the University Council (governing body).
- 1.4 The Methodist Conference stations a chaplain to Southlands College, whose appointment is made in collaboration with the college and wider university chaplaincy team. The university also employs a Head of College through a process conducted in partnership with the Church and the college (through the Liaison Group). The Chaplain and Head of College live on site and have responsibilities for the oversight of the college community and, with an employed staff team, the wider work of the college and of aspects of university life for all four colleges. The Head of College represents the college's interests within the wider structures of the university institution, holds appointments across a range of Methodist educational bodies, and has a particular role in facilitating the development of the university's relationship with the Methodist Church, in Britain and globally.
- 1.5 When the college lease was granted, some assets were kept under the direct management of the Church. This includes the college's historical archives, a number of paintings and sculptures, musical instruments, ring-fenced funds from alumni bequests, and a separate property, also in Roehampton. These assets and the income received from them are

administered by the Southlands Methodist Trust, a registered charity. The trustees of the Southlands Methodist Trust have responsibility for ensuring their good management, maintenance, and use within the terms of the Trust's charitable purposes.

1.6 Detailed reporting on the activities of the college takes place annually and the Southlands Liaison Group represents the Church's interests in ensuring these activities comply with the various commitments made. Annually, the Southlands Methodist Trust also reports to the Church's Methodist Entities audit, to the Charity Commission, participates in the Church's consolidated accounts audit, and produces a detailed trustee review. The two detailed reports on activities are available at:

- <https://southlandsmethodisttrust.org.uk/about/> (scroll down and click)
- <https://southlandsmethodisttrust.org.uk/enriching-the-college-community> (scroll and click)

(Direct download links to both are provided on the cover sheet of this paper)

Paper copies can be sent to Council members on request, by emailing

southlands.college@roehampton.ac.uk.

For a broader look at the activities of Southlands College and the Southlands Methodist Trust, and indeed the University of Roehampton, please visit the web pages and follow the social media feeds listed on the cover sheet to this paper.

The following paper provides a brief summary of the areas of activity taking place at and through Southlands College, which are explained in more detail (and with detailed examples from the reporting year) in those individual reports.

2.0 Areas of Activity

2.1 Southlands College and the University of Roehampton

Southlands College is one of four constituent colleges of the University of Roehampton. Recently, Roehampton has been judged the joint best modern university in the country for research quality, and the best in London (REF 2021); in the top ten universities in London for student satisfaction (NSS 2023); and in the top ten universities in the country for postgraduate student experience (PTES).

Southlands is home to 300 resident undergraduate students studying across a range of subject areas. It is also home to around 5,000 commuting students, from Foundation level to postgraduate, studying at the Faculty of Business and Law and the School of Education's Applied Music Research Centre. The university has around 20,000 students, of which 13,000 ordinarily study on campus.

Southlands retains its Methodist identity in the context of a modern and dynamic university. Methodist values and approaches to education, alongside those of our Anglican and Roman Catholic sister colleges, play an important part in the life of the university, impacting decision making at all levels, institutional strategic planning, course development, staff configurations, student life, college events, and the practicalities of our work and activities on a day-to-day basis.

The influence of our values-based approach to education based on our Christian foundations has tangible effects on the university's community as whole. It is particularly evident in our inclusive approach to access and participation. The majority of our students come from

demographic groups underrepresented in higher education. Significantly more than half our student population is of global majority heritage and most of our undergraduates are the first in their families to attend university. This mission to provide education to all, regardless of background, is a distinctive quality of the university which places it at the heart of the mission of the Methodist Church, both historically and today. Our Christian foundations are also evident in our strong focus on providing well-being support, pastoral care and chaplaincy across the college and university communities.

2.2 Teaching, Research and Knowledge Exchange

Roehampton offers a number of courses which reflect our Methodist understanding of education as a means for improving the lives of the less advantaged and for encouraging commitment to social action.

The university is committed to the teaching of Theology and Religious Studies, as well as to offering courses in Ministerial Theology, including a growing D.Th. programme for people in ministry roles. This programme is an attractive option for lay and ordained Methodists, and is one key element in helping to fulfil some of the CDiM aims which the Ministries Committee adopted in 2021. Several Methodists are currently in receipt of either Connexional or college-funded awards on this course. In February 2023 the Ministries Committee approved the establishment of a new MCB Scholarship on the D.Th. programme, seeking to build further on the strong foundations and theological collaboration already in place.

Roehampton has a number of departments high on national league tables for research and teaching quality. In the 2021 national assessment for research excellence (REF), 77% of its research was categorised as “world leading”. Roehampton was recognised as being jointly the best modern university in the country for research, as well as being the highest-ranked modern university in London.

The Faculty of Business and Law, which is based at Southlands, is heavily focused on the development of practice which is socially responsible, engaging its students in areas including business ethics, sustainability, and human rights. The faculty’s commitment to social responsibility has been directly drawn from its close working partnership with Southlands College and the Southlands Methodist Trust.

The university remains a national leader in teacher training and has a new and growing programme in nursing, including mental health nursing. In September 2024, the new Sustainable Engineering and Technology Education Centre will begin teaching programmes in architecture and the built environment which focus on sustainability and social good.

2.3. Southlands as a College Community

The ways by which Southlands functions as a community within the university are set out in the college’s annual report to the Southlands Liaison Group, which is accessible at <https://southlandsmethodisttrust.org.uk/enriching-the-college-community/> (Direct link: <https://southlandsmethodisttrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Southlands-Report-2024-FINALsm.pdf>)

Briefly, these areas of activity include:

- A diverse range of educational and community activities for staff and students, focused on offering welcome, hospitality and belonging, engaging our community in critical

issues facing society, encouraging the exploration of identity, and celebrating achievement.

- Enabling and developing chaplaincy as a core function at the college and across the university campus. This includes the provision of a Methodist presbyter and a Methodist Chaplaincy Community Worker as part of the university's multi-faith chaplaincy team, and the co-creation of a Methodist-Roman Catholic student community house on campus.
- The management of student leadership programmes, development opportunities and volunteering roles, designed to have a positive impact on the university and the local community.
- The sustaining of positive relationships with the college's dispersed alumni, which include students who attended the college as long ago as the 1930s.
- Helping to nurture scholarship and learning addressing questions of importance to the Church and supporting Methodist Higher Education across the British Connexion and through wider global Methodist educational networks.

2.4 Southlands Methodist Trust (SMT)

The SMT exists to promote scholarship and research of significance to Church and society, through and with Southlands College and the University of Roehampton; to provide access for the Church to the facilities and resources of the university; to nurture the relationship between the Church and the University; to enrich the college community, especially in ways which promote Methodist values; and to promote further charitable work in the Church.

Working collaboratively with the college's staff team and with colleagues across the university's academic departments and central administration, the SMT aims to live out the identities of Southlands both as Methodism's university college and also as the university's Methodist college.

A full report of the charity's activities is provided every year to the Charity Commission and produced in a report, which can be accessed here:

<https://southlandsmethodisttrust.org.uk/about/> (Direct link:
https://southlandsmethodisttrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/22_23_Trustee_report_FINAL_webSM.pdf)

Some examples from amongst that work include:

- Supporting research and research-related projects across the university's academic departments and more widely in the Church and across HE institutions. These investigate issues of importance to society and which support the mission and work of the Methodist Church, and exploring the best ways to share those with wider audiences.
- Sponsoring bursaries and fellowships as a means of supporting Methodist scholars to study (especially ministers pursuing higher study) and to conduct research at Southlands and to access wider academic resources for the benefit of Methodist mission.
- Exploring and developing opportunities for greater collaboration with and between Methodist schools, colleges and universities in the UK. As part of this, the SMT has led and sponsored Connexional work to bring together a British Methodist and Methodist-related HE, adult education, and research institutions, a goal of the CDiM strategy.

- Nurturing global Methodist education, including hosting the major international event *Transforming Lives* in 2023, which sought to advance the Conference's decisions around education as a core element of Methodist mission.
- Sponsoring cutting edge research and learning activity which advances the values, approaches and interests of Methodism, especially amongst those who are otherwise least able to access resources for education.
- Sponsoring young people to explore their Christian vocation.
- Providing significant financial resources to the Methodist Academies and Schools Trust, and for supporting the development of the work of Methodist Schools and Methodist Education more generally, and developing the support for Methodist schools from within the university's School of Education.
- Maintaining, preserving and developing historic Methodist educational archives.

2.5 Susanna Wesley Foundation

The Susanna Wesley Foundation (SWF) is a project of the Southlands Methodist Trust which funds and facilitates research and enquiry, promotes dialogue through conferences and workshops, and creates resources. Equipping those in churches and faith communities is a key focus. Overcoming silos and connecting those from different backgrounds, different disciplines and in different roles are key features, with a view to generating new learning, innovation, and changes in practice in churches and their wider communities.

Work with the Methodist Church continues to play a significant part in the Foundation's activities and research. In particular, it shares the Church's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and has made its resources available to the Methodist Church in Britain as it implements its strategy for EDI – 'Justice, Dignity and Solidarity'. The first phase of research, capturing experiences and perceptions as the Church journeys on this process of transformation, was carried out by SWF in 2022-23, with reporting and further work by the Foundation anticipated in the future. SWF has also provided an accompanying role for other research also associated with the Strategy, around truth and reconciliation in the Methodist Church; again, work which will be taken forward in the next reporting year.

Work of relevance to the Church has also been conducted by the Foundation in relation to learning, the environment, and death and dying, with research and events, along with a series of podcasts. These latter aim to spark new thinking and connections. Among outputs from the various Foundation's projects is a report published in conjunction with Theos: 'Ashes to Ashes: Beliefs, Tends, and Practices in Dying, Death, and the Afterlife' arising out of joint research which investigated current trends and attitudes in the UK, and explored the role of churches and faith communities.

A new venture was a partnership with the Saltley Trust, a Christian educational charity. 2022-23 saw the first of a two-year project researching the everyday experience of faith in 'edgy' and marginal places and how that faith develops, changes, and grows. This theological action research is being led by Roehampton academics and has involved Methodist 'practitioners', among others, as partners in reflecting on the data.

In April 2023 a conference, 'Transforming Lives to Shape a Just Society: values-based higher education', was hosted by SWF with the International Association of Methodist Schools, Colleges and Universities (IAMSCU). The event saw over 130 attendees and contributors from Methodist-related institutions from across the world join together in exploring some of the challenges and issues, as well as the possibilities, offered by Methodist roots, values and relationships. Case studies teased out how values shape choices about different aspects of

activity and provision, and highlighted how students can be prepared for a future in which they can make a positive contribution to society.

The Foundation continues to sponsor seminars in practical theology, promoting and participating in them, identifying contributors and funding speaker expenses, while also paying the fees of several students, some of them Methodists, studying towards their professional doctorates in theology.

Details about the work of the Foundation can be found at www.susannawesleyfoundation.org.uk

3 Membership of the Liaison Group and Trust Board

The memberships of our groups are as follows:

Southlands Methodist Trust:

- The Revd Dr Stan Brown
- The Revd Dr Joanne Cox-Darling
- The Revd Dr Janet Corlett
- Mr Alan Davies (Deputy Chair from June 2024)
- The Revd Dr Jonathan Dean (in attendance, nominated Connexional representative)
- Mrs Barbara Easton
- Rev Geoffrey Farrar (Circuit nominated)
- The Revd Dr Tim Macquiban (Chair until June 2024)
- Dr Clive Norris
- The Revd Dr Jennifer Smith (Deputy Chair until June 2024. Chair from June 2024)
- Dr Christopher Stephens (in attendance, ex officio)

Southlands Liaison Group:

- The Revd Dr Stan Brown
- The Revd Dr Janet Corlett
- The Revd Dr Joanne Cox-Darling
- Mr Alan Davies (Deputy Chair from June 2024)
- The Revd Dr Jonathan Dean
- Mrs Barbara Easton
- The Revd Geoffrey Farrar (Circuit nominated)
- The Revd Dr Tim Macquiban (Chair until June 2024)
- The Revd Nicola Morrison, chaplain
- A senior member of the university's academic community (Prof Sunitha Narendran, until March 2024; replacement TBC)
- Dr Clive Norris
- The Revd Dr Jennifer Smith (Deputy Chair until June 2024; Chair from June 2024)
- Dr Christopher Stephens, Head of College

*****RESOLUTION**

61/1. The Council receives the report.