



District Report September 2006 – March 2008

Presented to the Representative Synod
Methodist Central Hall, Westminster

Saturday 5 April 2008

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During the course of the business, Synod will be asked to note the content of the report and approve the accounts.

Foreword

The London District of the Methodist Church was launched with an inaugural Synod and a service of worship on Saturday 2 September 2006.

From the outset, it was clear that the London Methodist District was a District of remarkable diversity and that there would be a constant and considerable challenge to engender a sense of shared identity.

In the months preceding the launch, therefore, a great deal of work was undertaken by an Implementation Group drawn from members of the four former Districts that were to form the new London District. One of the documents produced by the Group was a Draft Statement of Core Values that would shape the mission and ministry of the emerging District. This Statement has been developed further into its present form:

Draft Statement of District Values

Believing that we are called by God to ministry and mission in this Global City, the District is committed:

- To seek the wisdom of God, through PRAYER and DISCERNMENT;
- To offer opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to become FOLLOWERS OF JESUS CHRIST;
- To be a REFLECTIVE, LEARNING community, that offers opportunities for members and adherents to grow in their discipleship;
- To be an INCLUSIVE community that cherishes DIVERSITY and respects everyone, paying appropriate regard to their age, gender, ability, ethnicity, and sexual orientation;
- To give special attention to the perspectives of YOUNG PEOPLE while promoting the spiritual, social and moral well-being of all members and adherents according to their needs and circumstances;
- To affirm our membership of a WORLD-WIDE church and human family;
- To encourage members to SERVE their neighbours;
- To advance issues of SOCIAL JUSTICE and promote PEACE;
- To advocate policies that protect the ENVIRONMENT;
- To work in PARTNERSHIP with other Churches, Faith Communities and social groups whenever possible;
- To encourage and value the development of new forms of worship and learning while cherishing our INHERITANCE AND IDENTITY.

This Report looks back over the first eighteen months of the District's life. It has been a period of setting in place the structures and processes, officers and activities that would help the District achieve its aim of being "Good News for a Global City".

In the following pages, there are summaries of the main activities of the District Commissions and some of the other District Groups. There are also indications of some of the tasks that they have set themselves for the coming months. The District Council would welcome the help of Synod in identifying new members for these groups.

Issues for the District that have arisen in the groups in the course of their work so far, include the need to:

- Improve communication throughout the District;
- Co-ordinate the work of the Commissions more effectively;
- Find clerical and administrative support for Commissions and Groups;
- Look at churches' expectations of Local Preachers and Worship Leaders and the implications for training and continuing development;
- Have a more strategic approach to property development throughout the District;
- Recognise and affirm gifts, rather than merely filling vacancies;
- Ensure that legal requirements are being met consistently where churches act as employers; and that good practice in relation to Safeguarding is followed in all areas of the church's life;
- Assess how Circuits and churches could have access to appropriate legal/ financial/ technical guidance and support when needed;
- Achieve greater integration in Training, especially with the coming of EDEV – *Extending Discipleship, Exploring Vocation*.

London is unique in having three Chairs of District working as a team in the District leadership. This provision was made very deliberately, with financial support from the Connexion and from the London Mission Fund, to ensure that the District would be able to offer the customary oversight of the work of churches and ministers and also seek to engage creatively with initiatives and developments in the wider city. So the District has been involved, for example, in the plans for a co-ordinated response to the distressing rise in gun and knife crime in several Boroughs; in the preparations for the 2012 Olympics; and the setting up of a Faiths Forum for London.

We are grateful to the many people who have played a significant part in the life of the District so far and to many more who have participated so readily in District activities. We may no longer be called a 'new' District, but we are still a 'young' District and we have much to learn together. We trust that this Report of the first eighteen months of the District's life will both encourage you in the continuing work in your local community and stimulate you to engage with others in ministering to our Global City.

Jenny Impey; Stuart Jordan; Ermal Kirby;
District Chairs

THE METHODIST CHURCH LONDON DISTRICT

Consolidated Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31 Aug 2007

Income

From Circuits	1,101,511
Assessments	
deduct: Paid to Methodist Church fund	-951,830
District Assessments	149,681
Donations	3,719
Contributions from Advance Funds	420,167
Total from Circuits	573,567
Interest on deposits and investment income	47,319
Sundry income	8,209
Total Income	629,095

Expenditure

Commissions	2,743
Resource Centre	95,397
Launch and Set up costs	20,854
Synods and Conference	5,996
Ministry Grants and support	131,823
Property Grants	198,750
Total expenditure	455,563
Net income	173,532
Funds received from former Districts	1,577,644
Fund Balances at 31 August 2007	£1,751,176

Movement of Funds

	From former Districts	Income	Expenditure	Transfers between Funds	Balance at 31.8.2007
Manse Fund	1,000,000			44,488	1,044,488
General Fund	116,957	167,994	135,100	-2,000	147,851
Benevolent Fund	15,197	4,243	885	2,000	20,555
District Advance Fund	402,587	453,462	318,062	-44,488	493,499
Jean Richardson Fund	42,903	3,396	1,516		44,783
Totals as above	£1,577,644	£629,095	£455,563	£0	£1,751,176

THE METHODIST CHURCH LONDON DISTRICT

Balance Sheet as at 31 Aug 2007

Fixed Assets			
Manse Property at cost		1,044,488	
Depreciation		<u>0</u>	1,044,488
Equipment at cost		5,595	
Depreciation		<u>1,865</u>	<u>3,730</u>
			1,048,218
Investments - Jean Richardson Fund			44,783
Current Assets			
Bank Current Account	6,384		
Central Finance Board Deposit	150,718		
Central Finance Board Benevolent Fund	18,813		
District Advance Fund Deposit	493,499		
Debtors and Prepayments	<u>14,140</u>		
		683,554	
Current Liabilities			
Creditors and accrued expenses		<u>25,379</u>	
Net Current Assets			<u>658,175</u>
Net Assets			<u><u>£1,751,176</u></u>
Representing:			
Manse Fund			1,044,488
General Fund			147,851
Benevolent Fund			20,555
District Advance Fund			493,499
Jean Richardson Fund			<u>44,783</u>
Total Funds			<u><u>£1,751,176</u></u>
Notes:			
Future grants committed from the District Advance Fund amounted to (at 1.9.2006 £406,024)			<u><u>£446,482</u></u>
The Jean Richardson Fund exists to assist exchange visits between UK and Overseas youth organisations for churches within the former London North West District.			
Collections for other Charities were			
Launch event for Methodist Relief & Development Fund			£3,396
April Synod for Methodist Ministers' Children's Relief Association			<u>£722</u>
			<u><u>£4,118</u></u>

TREASURER'S REPORT

Report on the accounts

The District purchased two manses and incurred costs in making good deficiencies and this is an ongoing project. A third manse is occupied and maintained by the District but is owned by the London Committee.

The District General Fund operated within the budget and realised a surplus of £32,894. About half of this is being applied in the current year to make up our total required contribution to the Methodist Church Fund over and above the amounts contributed by Circuits. The Benevolent Fund provided the support needed by ministerial staff in special circumstances. The claims on the Fund in the current year are much greater than in last year.

New grants awarded by the District Advance Fund amounted to £410,458. Payments during the year included £119,312 for ministry support and £243,238 for property projects.

At the year end the finances were adequate for the continued progress and development of Distinct activities.

What has been done/achieved since the launch of the District

- Agreed District Expense Budgets. Agreed assessments with Circuit Treasurers for District Expenses and Methodist Church Fund.
- Established bank accounts and accounting systems
- Dealt with financial administration
- Produced accounts for the year to 31 August 2007
- Provided support for Circuit and Church Treasurers as required

Plans for the next 18 months

- Continue financial administration
- Continue support for treasurers

Michael Allan

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT COMMISSION

About the group

The membership of the Civic Engagement Commission has remained stable from the start – Akua Agyepong, Felicity Budu-Manuel, Nigel Cowgill, Gerry Davis (link to the District Council), Bala Gnanapragasam, Ermal Kirby (Lead Chair), Alan Peel, Hannah Reed and Jennifer Potter (Co-convenors). Alan Peel has recently been quite ill and unable to attend.

At the start of the Commission's life a number of other people expressed an interest in the work. Their names are on record so that they can serve as consultants for topics related to their interest and expertise.

What we have done/achieved since the launch of the District

Right at the outset the Civic Engagement Commission worked in collaboration with the Social Care Commission on a mapping exercise done for us by the Geography Department of Queen Mary College.

The research sought to identify work that the London District Methodist Churches or individuals and groups within them, were doing in the areas of social care and civic engagement. The intention was that this would provide basic data which the commissions could then work with. There was a very reasonable response rate to the questionnaires and the information that those yielded was then put onto a map of the District available electronically on the District website. A Conference was held in June to feed back the results of the exercise.

Mapping civic engagement proved quite challenging. The terminology is new and much of the engagement was by individuals and not always known by the Church or the minister. Right from the start the Commission realised that identifying who was involved in local Councils, as school governors, in their local PCT etc was not going to be easy. All means would need to be used to collect such information.

An Away Day was held in June 2007 and a number of issues were identified as important for the people of London – community cohesion, gun and knife crime, migrant workers and asylum seekers, the welfare of young people and affordable housing.

Faced with the huge range of political, social and economic issues that the Commission could possibly address some very basic questions had to be addressed, namely:-

- How were we to prioritise work we might tackle?
- Were we going to be proactive on issues or reactive, or what combination of the two?

- Was the Commission going to do work itself or be the facilitator bringing together those in the District already doing important work?
- How was the Commission going to establish its credibility in the District and be useful to churches and members?
- What theological understanding were we bringing to our work?
- What were our aims and objectives?

Given that all the Commission members have a great deal of other work how do we set ourselves realistic goals?

To answer these questions we have had regular meetings, each member in turn presented their own theological understanding of the work of the Commission, we have held an Away Day and there was a Conference to feed back the results of the mapping exercise.

The Commission has responded to two specific issues raised in Synod

- providing input for the debate on environmental issues at the September Synod
- carrying forward the work on the Resolution on Sharing Wealth in the City brought to the April Synod by Revd David Haslam.

A sub-group of the Commission has met with other groups who have done work on the high salaries in the City and how to encourage greater philanthropy in those who receive such salaries. At present work is continuing towards organising a Round Table of significant figures in the City.

Plans for the next 18 months?

- We have plans to compile the theological reflections that members of the Commission offered as part of our devotions over a number of months and form these into a coherent theological basis for Christian engagement in civic issues.
- We plan to carry forward the work already begun on 'Sharing Wealth' especially in the City of London.
- We hope to work on raising the profile of 'civic engagement' in the churches and circuits of the District through providing articles for newsletters and the development of a Lent Course.
- We will endeavour to follow and make our District aware of developments or opportunities in London – areas of new house building such as Thames Gateway, the Olympic Games and assist the District Advance Fund to prioritise the proactive use of the funds at its disposal.
- It is our intention to develop a programme plan with milestones

Jennifer M. Potter

CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

What we have done/achieved since the launch of the District

- Carried out one Circuit Review
- Produced a Circuit Review pack to enable other circuits to do reviews and to ensure that the District can resource more of them.
- Several training events – pastoral care, stewards, children's work, worship
- Set up a Worship Task Group
- Developed issues
- Put diversity issues on the agenda
- Started discussion on a children's charter and on research into growing congregations
- Made people aware of the breadth of the District (especially through training events)
- Started to discuss a disability policy
- Fresh Expressions conference
- Initial work on the planning for the visit of the President and Vice President of Conference

Plans for the next 18 months

- Appoint new conveners to take the work forward
- Develop key areas: healthy churches and circuits, worship, addressing issues to do with church management and meetings. Consider setting up task groups up to work on these areas.
- Continue developing training and building on that already done (stewards, youth event, worship, voice workshop, pastoral care, and possibly theological resourcing for non-preachers)
- Continue appointing district advisers to circuits planning reviews and facilitating the process. Encouraging Circuits that have not done reviews to consider one.
- Develop Childrens ministry charter
- Continue work on the 'Away-day pack' – a resource to help Circuits and churches planning retreats / away days.
- Continue work on developing a District 'Diversity factsheet'

Claire Potter

CONTINUING DEVELOPMENT IN MINISTRY

What we have done/achieved since the launch of the District

Since the start of the new District, the Continuing Development in Ministry officers have received applications for grants for higher degrees in a wide variety of areas, as well as applications for courses in counselling and psychotherapy, supervision and team development, and for funding towards attending an international conference. One feature of last year's applications was the number of both ordained and lay people who did the Mediation Skills course run by Bridgebuilders. It is hoped that the skills and knowledge thus acquired may be put to use in the life of the district.

Plans for the next 18 months

Continuing Development In Ministry aims to broaden its scope in the coming months by working with other district initiatives such as the New To London day, and to set up training events around engagement with people of other faiths and cultures.

Madeleine Andrews

DISTRICT ADVANCE FUND

What we have done/achieved since the launch of the District

- Approved grants to the total of £560,000 to different Churches and Circuits.
- Increased meetings to 4 a year and introduced a 'fast track' for smaller or urgent grants.
- Developed clear guidelines

Plans for the next 18 months

- To continue to evaluate those grants which have been taken up
- To continue to refine the grant making process, and most importantly
- To engage in a consideration of the strategic nature of grant making within the district, through consultation with other district wide bodies.

Grants agreed 1 September 2006 to 12 March 2008

Circuit No	Grant to	Purpose	Amount £
0	London District	Equipment - office	4,870
22	New River - Trinity at Bowes	Community Officer	30,000
38	Kingston - Chessington	Youth Mosaic project	2,000
		Training Ministerial &	
0	London District	Lay	6,000
2	WLM - Kings Cross	Chinese Musical	1,000
3	Westminster	Media chaplaincy	9,420
22	New River - Muswell Hill	Community worker	30,000
26	Wimbledon - Wimbledon	Rebuilding scheme	10,000
		Children & families	
32	Romford - Upminster	worker	24,000
33	London Forest - Shern Hall	Building scheme	10,000
39	Sutton - Trinity	Building scheme	15,000
0	London District	Foundation training	6,012
0	London District	Mediation skills	2,500
		Fresh Expressions	
0	District	Vision Day AV	1,000
2	West London Mission	Day Centre	17,000
22	New River - Finsbury Park	Fund raiser	3,000
27	Streatham & Dulwich	Fair trade coordinator	27,000
13	Harlesden	Kitchen refurbishment	1,000
24	Ealing Trinity - Northolt	Equipment	3,000
24	Ealing Trinity - Kingsdown	Property	20,000
35	Barnet & Queensbury	Finsbury heating	10,000

Circuit No	Grant to	Purpose	Amount
36	Harrow & Hillingdon – Trinity	Property	20,000
0	District	Churches Together in Essex and East London	956
0	CDIM	Misc Training	750
29	Blackheath & Lewisham – Eltham	Property	3,500
0	CDIM	HE courses	3,965
35	Barnet & Queensbury	Rock gig	1,680
26	Wimbledon	Centre manager	15,000
38	Kingston upon Thames – Kingston	Lay worker	30,000
20	Newham - Manor Park	Mural	1,000
22	New River - Finsbury Park	Property	20,000
32	Romford - Trinity	Property	10,000
40	Purley - Warlingham	Property	10,000
41	Croydon - Parchmore Road	Community Centre	20,000
0	Lay Training	Training	8,000
0	CDIM	HE courses	1,001
2	West London Mission	Chinese advice work	4,000
2	West London Mission	Part time HE Chaplain	30,000
22	New River – St Marks	Property	20,000
23	Ealing – Ealing Road	Property	15,000
38	Kingston upon Thames	Surbiton	5,000
39	Sutton - Epsom	Property	50,000
39	Sutton	Chinese ministry	32,000
29	Blackheath & Lewisham	Development worker	45,000
22	New River	Lay training	600
36	Harrow & Hillingdon	Course fee	500
	Total		<u>£600,754</u>

Cathy Bird and Michael Allen

DISTRICT COUNCIL

What we have done/achieved since the launch of the District

- At every meeting, some theological reflection to support our thinking.
- Engaged in activities to promote better understanding of our own skills/attributes/experience and how these might best serve the District.
- Attempted to hold in tension the excitement of doing something new, (Methodists bringing Good News for the Global City) while maintaining systems and processes of connexionalism (responding to Conference/Council requests)
- Endeavoured to fill necessary appointments, drawing on as wide a range of District members as possible
- Overseen the District budget
- Approved or considered a number of strategy/policy papers e.g. communications, training, District Advance Fund/Accessibility framework/ circuit boundary changes
- Preparations for, and reflections on, programme for Synods.

Plans for the next 18 months

As above, plus:-

- Working through the implementation of EDEV (Extending Discipleship, Exploring vocation), Annual Development Review for Ministers, District Development (and its enablement) , Training Officer
- Accountability issues
- Further reflection/action on issues of Identity; Resources; Partnerships; - priorities identified at January 2008 Council Awayday

Kathleen Loveridge

DISTRICT PROPERTY GROUP

What we have done/achieved since the launch of the District

- We have responded to scheme approvals and grant applications
- We have ensured that the District Chairs are all housed.
- Work has begun on a property strategy guide

Plans for the next 18 months

- There are several very large redevelopment schemes in the pipeline and even for some of the smaller schemes, Managing Trustees can feel out of their depth. We will be looking at whether the District is able to provide more help for these schemes where needed.
- More work needs to be done regarding the quinquennial inspections throughout the district.
- We need to appoint a District Manse Secretary to ensure co-ordination of district manse inspections.
- The connexion is implementing a new system of property scheme approvals / consents and the London District will conduct one of the initial pilot schemes for this project.
- Improve communication around the district as to how property matters are dealt with.

David Holland

GHANAIAN METHODIST FELLOWSHIP UK CHAPLAINCY

What we have done/achieved since the launch of the District

- Encouraging and supporting its members to help 'build' their local Methodist Churches and be able to work together with their Ministers and other members of their congregations. Where there are no Ghanaian Fellowships individual members are encouraged and supported to offer their best within the life of their churches. This has inevitably led to reported increases in the number of Ghanaian Methodists, their relatives and friends registering their membership with local Methodist Churches, especially in recent months.
- The Management Committee has led the Fellowship to accept the model of Chaplaincy which serves as a resource for encouraging the full integration of Ghanaians into their local Methodist Churches.
 - Indubitably, the acceptance of this model has almost completely removed the once opposing model of setting up a Ghanaian Methodist Church in Britain. We warn that there should be no complacency in continuing to work towards discouraging the idea of the Fellowship becoming a Church.
- An estimation of over 200 Ghanaian Methodists have since been redirected back to their local Methodist Churches and encouraged to register their membership there. These members can then attend the Methodist Central Hall (Westminster) or St Mark's Methodist Church (Tottenham) once every month for the Chaplaincy's monthly worship service, where they are 'recharged' to return and continue their Christian ministry
- The Ghanaian Chaplaincy has established a Choir which has now become one of the best known religious 'cultural' groups in the London District of the British Methodist Church. The choir sang at the launch of the London District at the Synod last year.
- In the past 18 months, the Choir has been invited to perform and add variety and colour to several events at the Methodist Central Hall and at other venues. The choir participated in the celebration of the life of Rob Frost at the Methodist Central Hall. We currently have an invitation from the Pentecost People asking the Choir to participate in a programme to be held at the Trafalgar Square on 10th May 2008.
- The Ghanaian Chaplaincy hosted the thanksgiving service of Ghana at 50. The service was attended by His Excellency Mr John Agyakum Kufour, the President of the republic of Ghana, chiefs, and members of the Ghanaian community in the UK as well as friends of Ghana.
- In August 2007, a group of 33 members made up of men, women and children represented the black people within the British Methodist Church at the European Methodist Festival held in Bratislava, the capital of the Slovak Republic.

- Following our performance at the festival, the United Methodist Church's correspondent in the UK wrote an article on the work of the Ghanaian Chaplaincy in the UK. This can be found on the UMC website. (http://www.umc.org/site/apps/nl/content2.asp?content_id={1BFE4B38-6C99-4C95-8BB5-B5F414E89181}-oc=1&c=IwL4KnN1LtH&b=3634679) In Nottingham the Ghanaian Fellowship has helped in the revival of the Radford Methodist Church and saved it from closure.
- The Chaplain (GMF-UK) was invited in January 2007 to share with the United Methodist Church in Germany the chaplaincy model adopted by the church in Britain and the work of the Chaplaincy within British Methodism.
- The general effect of the activities of the Ghanaian Fellowship, in the last couple of years, has been in the area of evangelism among Ghanaians and non-Ghanaians into the Methodist church.
- The Chaplaincy has established a monthly children's service at the Methodist central hall Westminster where children are taught the bible as well as the Ghanaian culture and language.

Plans for the next 18 months

The Management Committee has challenged the Ghanaian Fellowship to embark on a rather ambitious target under its plan '*Our Vision for the Future*':

- Recognising the need for better interaction and relationship among the members of the Chaplaincy and that of the Zimbabwe Chaplaincy, the Management Committee is organising a joint weekend away at the Cefn Lea Park in Wales from Friday 30th May to Sunday 1st June 2008. The weekend together is intended to achieve the following:
 - foster greater understanding of 21st century Methodism in Great Britain;
 - foster understanding among members of the two fellowships; and
 - enable members work together and relate better towards the mission of the church.
- To set up a permanent Secretariat from where information, advice and support would be communicated to the Local Ghanaian Fellowships and the Ministers in charge of the Local Methodist Churches.
- To support and educate local Methodist Ministers, who have Ghanaian Fellowships in their Churches, to take charge of the Fellowship and offer the level of pastoral care which is generally expected by Ghanaians. This would be achieved through running periodical workshops, lectures, distribution of information leaflets and through its website: ***gmf-uk.org***
- Encourage and support the setting up of other similar Fellowships; to enable the building up of the local Methodist Church congregations; and working in partnership *with each other*.

Emmanuel Aggrey-Ogoe

LAY EMPLOYMENT GROUP

What we have done/achieved since the launch of the District

The work usually involves me in between 3 & 6 queries / requests / a week, raised predominantly by e mail, but sometimes by direct by phone. The work is equally divided between:

- Employment Law advice
- Employee Relations advice
- Advice on recruitment, including the Job Description; Person Specification; Advertisement; Financial Statement, etc:
- General issues around 'Managing People'

Plans for the next 18 months

I am hoping that my fellow committee members will be able to help me to set up 2 databases:

- One that contains a list of all the Lay employees across the District, with Job Title; Length of Service; Terms & Conditions etc:
- One that contains Job Descriptions; Person Specifications; Advertisements; Typical Contracts etc:

Monty Grigg

LAYWORKERS GROUP

What we have done/achieved since the launch of the District

We have met 4-5 times to support one another. Some sessions have been well attended, others have not.

Plans for the next 18 months

- We have a quiet day in April and another gathering in June.
- We plan to meet together three to four times a year for sharing, training, worship and prayer.

Jonathan Green

LONDON'S HIV COMMUNITY CHAPLAINCY

This chaplaincy began out of my experience as a part-time hospital chaplain with particular reference to the HIV directorate; patients had become less institutionalised and were living an isolated life in the community. In 2002 the Connexion saw fit to designate me as chaplain to London's HIV Community.

The chaplaincy was set up to offer a comprehensive, cost-free service to a growing number of requests for home visits by people living with HIV. Support of this nature is beyond the scope and resources of most hospitals or clinics and there are still very few voluntary or outreach organisations in London capable of offering an effective response to this urgent and specific need.

In 2002 there were some 48,000 people living with the virus in the UK, in 2008 there are 73,000. One in three of these will be undiagnosed and it is believed that around 60% of the total numbers will be in the London region.

In the autumn of 2007 the Archdiocese of Southwark seconded one of their priests to work with me in the Chaplaincy and together we are a spiritual presence within the HIV Community and hopefully enabling something of God's love to be experienced by people who feel hurt. Currently the two of us are working with some 70 people across London (from Sidcup to Wembley, from Mile End to Hounslow). The number of people the chaplaincy is working with at any one time has doubled this current year. The people who request support from the chaplaincy are from various Christian traditions, from other faiths and from those who would claim no faith.

It is my intention to sit down at this coming Conference and after establishing the Chaplaincy we hope that it will continue as an Ecumenical Chaplaincy supported not only by London Methodists, but by the Church of England (London and Southwark Diocese), the Roman Catholic Church (Westminster, Southwark and Chelmsford) and the United Reformed Church (Thames North and Southern Synods). Representatives of these areas have met and have indicated that they are prepared to fund such a chaplaincy; they are now checking with their own authorities to discover what financial commitment can be made from their funds.

If the funds are forthcoming, and we have every reason to believe that sufficient will be found, the job of Ecumenical Chaplain to London's HIV Community will be advertised, interviews will be held and hopefully an appointment will be made. Because of the complexity of this new appointment it is envisaged that the day to day management of the chaplain will be done by the Director of the London Ecumenical Aids Trust although there will be an annual account given to a gathering of the sponsoring bodies.

This is good news; something that has been championed by London Methodists is now becoming owned by all the mainstream churches across London.

Steve Penrose

SOCIAL CARE COMMISSION

What we have done/achieved since the launch of the District

- We commissioned research on behalf of the Social Care and Civic Engagement Commissions to gain an overview of the involvement of London Methodism in these areas. The research was undertaken independently by Queen Mary College and completed in the spring of 2007.
- In June 2007 the report of this research was launched at Westminster Central Hall at a half day conference attended by 40 people from around the District.
- A map of provision is now available on the District website together with copies of the research findings.
- We have established an informal network of those providing Night Shelters for homeless people. We are investigating other possible social care networks (for example youth provision, lunch club provision, chaplaincy provision).
- We have met with NCH to discover what work they are undertaking in the London area. A list of their London projects is now available on the website.

Plans for the coming 18 months

- We are planning a seminar on the theology of social care to understand why social care has been a key part of the DNA of the Methodist Church
- We plan to meet with MHA to see what policy and programmes may be relevant to the District.
- We plan to explore with NCH what response to gun and knife crime the Methodist Church can contribute.

Paul Regan

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

What I have done/achieved since the launch of the District

Training:

- A series of training events has been offered to the District with very positive responses for the Training Days for Pastoral Care, Stewards, Worship and those involved with work with children. 10 different CoreSkills courses have been held in the District, to present and use the new material for training workers with children. A training resource is being developed for new Circuit Stewards.
- The 'Working With Adults' course run jointly at the Queens Foundation with the Birmingham & Wolverhampton District and the Diocese of Birmingham has been held twice and enabled nine members of the District to develop adult training skills to use in Circuits and churches.
- The Faith & Worship Access Course has been developed to address problems around Local Preacher training. The District is greatly indebted to Dr. Joy Barrow (Connexional Local Preachers' Secretary) for her guidance and support. There are twelve students on the first course. Others will be joining in the latter stages and a new course is planned for the autumn. The results have been promising, new materials have been developed, and we are beginning to clarify ways of effective training that will enrich worship in our diverse context.

Development:

- A number of Circuit, church and project reviews have been undertaken since the formation of the District. The Commission for Congregational Development has been the focus of that area of work. A Circuit Review Handbook has been drafted for the District, and is being developed for use by Circuits with the support of a trained District Review Enablers.
- The concern to develop effective communications to create a greater sense of District identity and to share the range of experiences in London Methodism has involved spending time helping to develop the website. A mini-Directory was produced with support from Methodist Insurance. The first phase of 'Writing the Next Chapter' was completed for the District launch, and as soon as time allows, further work will be undertaken on sharing the wealth of stories collected.
- The Worship Task Group brings together District resources to support the work of Local Preachers and Worship Leaders. It faces the task of helping churches and Circuits to meet the District challenge. A significant part of my work has been devoted to work in this area, and to supporting and developing worship resources.
- The 'New to London' course has been available for ministers new to the District, providing the opportunity to discover some of the resources and issues to be faced in London.

Plans for the coming 18 months

The Connexion brings the TDO scheme to an end in August 2008.

Paul Kybird

WOMENS NETWORK

What has been done/achieved since the launch of the District

The first priority for Network after the launch was to meet and plan how and what would be the best way forward. To this end we have organised the former districts into Sectors each with a Co-ordinator.

Sector A (formerly London North West),

Sector B (formerly London South West) and

Sector C (formerly London South East).

Sector C is the largest covering 23 Circuits, the other two have 11 Circuits each.

Each Sector organises and hosts its own events, but take it in turn to host the Annual London District Women's Network Day.

The Executive Committee met twice during the 2006/7 Connexional year. We have already had one meeting at the beginning of this Connexional year. Representation from every Circuit is invited to attend the executive meeting so that all can share and discuss any concerns and also exchange ideas and future plans so that we become better equipped to support each other.

Each Sector is supporting a Project/ Programme.

Sector A's Project is supporting the work of the Arulagam Hospice.

Sector B's Project is the Vulnerable Children's programme in Belize. They are supporting this in partnership with the World Church Office and NCH.

Sector C is currently supporting the Imani Project for Victims and Offenders.

Plans for the next 18 months

Sector A: Co-ordinator, Mrs Gillian Oxman.

- A Quiet Day is to be held on 4 June 2008 at Barnes Methodist Church, 1.30pm to 4.30pm. Rev Veronica Faulkes has been invited to be guest speaker.
- The District Network Day will be held at Hinde Street on the 11 October 2008 at 10.30am to 3.30pm. Vice President of Conference, Ruby Beech has been invited to be guest speaker at this event.

Sector B: Co-ordinator, Revd Femi Cole- Njie

- A Spring event is planned for the 12 April 2008 and Ann Morrissy has been invited to lead this. The theme will be "local issues – Doing it like Jesus."
- A Quiet Day is planned for the end of June.

Sector C: Co-ordinator, Mrs Eve de Graft.

- The Spring Event will be held on the 17 May 2008 at Bromley Methodist Church at 10.30am to 3.00pm.
- As well as continuing with the current project their main target will be supporting education in developing countries. They have agreed to support the wives of Ministers in Sierra Leone to become computer literate so that they feel enabled to help their husbands in their ministries. To this end they have invited speakers to the Spring Event to enlighten them about this new project.
- The Quiet Day will be held at Walworth Methodist Church on 9 July 2008 from 10.30am to 3.00pm

Abby Springer

WORSHIP TASK GROUP

About the Group

The Worship Task Group was formed in July 2007 In response to the District challenge to recruit Local Preachers and Worship Leaders.

It was set up to improve the standard of worship in the London District

- By assisting in the recruitment and training of lay preachers and worship leaders
- By supporting Local Preachers meetings and other local worship initiatives
- By encouraging an increase in the involvement of Church members in worship and widening their understanding of its purpose and form
- By supporting minister led local worship training initiatives
- By supporting the work of the District appointees in this area

The Group consists of

- Brian Taylor - School Student and Assistant District Worship Leaders' Secretary
- Daniella Fetuga-Joensuu - Assistant District Local Preachers' Secretary
- Geoff Goodman - District Local Preachers' Secretary
- Graham Cocking - Superintendent Minister Sydenham & Forest Hill Circuit
- Jai Mary Rose Njie - Student and Assistant District Worship Leaders' Secretary
- Paul Kybird - District Training and Development Officer
- Richard Hamilton-Foyn - District Worship Leaders' Secretary

What we have done/achieved

- In 2007 We helped to organise and run the 'Worship in the Global City' day in October - About 100 people attended. Their feedback indicated that this was an enjoyable and helpful event.
- We have carried out important research into the Circuit numbers of Local Preachers and Worship Leaders - This will provide valuable insight into strengths, weaknesses and patterns of training
- We have started to construct a District Worship Directory - This is a natural outcome from the information gathering that we have been doing. It has not yet been decided what the audience for the directory will be. It represents a lot of work but will require even more to bring it to completion and then a major effort to keep it up to date.
- We have supported the establishment of the experimental District Access Course to provide an alternative route for the training of Local Preachers. The new course still involves all aspects of Faith and Worship but through residential weekends and intensive coaching the aim is to assist trainee preachers for whom the current training method is not ideal.

- A sub group are working with the Connexional Local Preachers' Secretary to review and redevelop the current course for the training of Worship Leaders. It is hoped to pilot the new course in the first quarter of 2008 so that it can go forward to Conference for approval

Plans for the next 18 months

- Further work on 2007 activities including - information gathering, the Worship Directory, the Worship Leaders Training Course and the Access Course
- A programme of visits to Circuit Local Preachers Meetings
- Work to investigate extension requests in relation to Local Preacher Training and provision of support to preachers in this position
- Liaising with the Vocational Development Commission to explore the possibility of a jointly run Worship and Vocation day
- Planning and running a Bible in the Global City day
- Planning and running a day course providing public speaking training for Worship Leaders and Local Preachers
- Planning an running a Music in Worship day
- Offering training on the use of IT in Worship to circuits and churches

Richard Hamilton Foyn

YOUTH REPORT

What has been done/achieved since the launch of the District

Ermal Kirby has kindly convened a number of sessions to consult with young people and youth leaders about how the District can best support them. Often Ruby Beech has also been there, which has been both a privilege and a help. There have been variable people at the meetings, as and when they have been available, and we have tried to keep the theme going and move to a point of consensus. Members have been, Chidi Onyiforo, Monica Ukandu, Darren White, Anne Lemince, Rachel Espeute, Peter Bafoe, Amy Jewel, Jamie Poch, Paul Kybird, Kirsty Middlemist and myself.

The Autumn synod was asked to indicate what District Support would be most helpful to the churches and circuits in their work with children and young people. We have been working from this original list to action what is most needed, most helpful, and most achievable:

- Enabling Youth Workers to get in touch with one another – establishing and sharing a database;
- Helping to increase enthusiasm among church attenders and members for working voluntarily with young people – focused recruitment, training and on-going support;
- Helping to identify places where the time is right for a church or circuit staff team to recruit a youth worker, seeing how existing youth workers can help in planning or paving the way, as well as being strengthened in the work they currently do;
- Offering opportunities for teams of young people from the District to engage in mission and service in other parts of the world;
- Holding a District Event or Festival in which young people demonstrate and engage with the breadth of cultural and spiritual diversity that is to be found in the London Methodist District.

Plans for the coming 18 months

We have begun planning a Big Idea's BBQ for Saturday 21st June, 6-9pm, which seeks to meet a number of the needs highlighted. The main aim is to further ask for young people's ideas and to enable the same group to prioritise what they want to be involved in through the following year.

Alongside this Paul Kybird has been consulting about a District training event that is now scheduled for Saturday 19th April. This is an update on the training cancelled from December 07. The aim is to inspire those who are currently doing the work as well as bring them together for some mutual support.

I have been consulting with Paul Kybird to bring together a database of youth workers contacts for each of the District's Circuits. A request for such information was made at Synod but there were only about four replies. Work needs to be done on getting more information.

Lindsey MacFarlane