



ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24

London District of the Methodist Church

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CHAIRS RESPONSIBILITIES (UNTIL 31 AUGUST 2025)

Revd Dr Jonathan Dean			
Link Chair for the: Authorised Ministries Commission			
35/31	Barking, Dagenham & Ilford	35/05	Battersea & Wandale Valley
35/28	Blackheath & Crystal Palace	35/04	Chelsea, Hammersmith & Fulham
35/41	Croydon	35/24	Ealing Trinity
35/38	Kingston Upon Thames	35/06	Lambeth
35/30	Lesnes Abbey	35/40	Purley
35/25	Richmond & Hounslow	35/07	Southwark & Deptford
35/39	Sutton	35/37	Teddington
35/03	Westminster	35/42	Widmore
35/26	Wimbledon		

Revd Dr Jongikaya Zihle			
Link Chair for the: Social Responsibility Commission			
35/35	Barnet & Queensbury	35/01	City Road
35/34	Enfield	35/33	Forest
35/10	Hackney & Stoke Newington	35/36	Harrow & Hillingdon
35/11	Islington & Camden Mission	35/12	London Mission North West
35/22	New River	35/20	Newham
35/13	Notting Hill & Harlesden	35/32	Romford
35/09	Tower Hamlets	35/23	Wembley
35/01	West London Mission		

INTRODUCTION

It's a joy to introduce the Annual Report for 2023-24 to you. It represents a small snapshot of the work being done all across London (and beyond!) by the people called Methodist. There's much in here to be proud of, to be challenged by, to be grateful for, and to hear as a spur to, and an inspiration for, our future mission and ministry.

During the period of time I served the United Methodist Church's Northern Illinois Conference, I was privileged to work under the oversight and leadership of Bishop Hee-Soo Jung. One of Bishop Jung's frequent exhortations to us all was to ponder prayerfully the abundance amid which we were working – even and especially when it might appear that the resources we needed were scarce. I was reminded of his words and his counsel when reviewing this collection of reports which reflect something of the nature of our current context and circumstances.

There are, to be sure, some areas where we experience scarcity: sometimes in physical resources or financial reserves or the condition of our property; and often in terms of the amount of volunteer time available to our churches or related to the reality of some congregations whose numbers are dwindling. It's right to lament those things which cause us pain, and to offer to God our sadness when we want to grieve for what was, or what seems lost, or when the speed and process of change over which we have no control has caught up with us, or wearied us. Sometimes there aren't easy answers: but we believe in a God who walks with us amid the complexity and confusion, and who promises to stay with us regardless of our fear, our apprehension, and our sorrow.

More even than that, though, we believe in a God of surprising and sometimes hidden abundance. This report bears witness to that God too, above all to the abundance of healing grace and transforming love upon which we can always rely in our efforts to follow Jesus in today's world and amid its pressing needs. We are rich in vision; we are bold in prayer; we are blessed with both lay and ordained leaders in our local churches; we are part of a Connexional community of faith which roots us into wider energy and activity; we are blessed with financial resources which we can use where they are most needed; we hold a passionate longing in our hearts which one of my favourite hymns expresses like this:

Jesus, with all your Church I long

to see your Kingdom come.

Show me your way of righting wrong

and turning sorrow into song

until you bring me home.

We believe in a God of inexhaustible purpose and ambition – an ambition to labour with us until all creation and all of humanity, made in the image of God, experience that full and flourishing life which is God’s intention and desire. The Bible speaks to this divine passion on almost every page. It’s a passion which cannot fade, just as our God will not abandon us, but rather promises to pour out the Spirit of life and love and joy on us in all we seek to do in our mission. It’s that Holy Spirit of God which remains our most precious and most abundant resource – let us pray for a new outpouring of her inspiration, energy and joy as Pentecost approaches.

With thanks for all you do in this holy collaboration with our God: and with expectation of and confidence in the abundance of new life which our work and witness will enable in the life of God’s Kingdom:

Revd Dr Jonathan Dean (and on behalf of Revd Dr Jongikaya Zihle).



DISTRICT VISION AND PRIORITIES

The London District of the Methodist Church currently comprises some 15,000 members, 205 ministers, 234 churches, 34 circuits and their projects, together with a number of educational institutions.

We are a diverse group of people originating from many different countries and communities, who find ourselves worshipping and witnessing together in urban, suburban and more rural areas.

We have come together in the belief that we are better together and our intention is to contribute to the wellbeing of each other, of this global city and its surrounding areas; and of the wider Methodist Church.

As the people, churches and projects of the London District of the Methodist Church, our mission is:

‘To share the good news of Jesus Christ throughout Greater London and the surrounding areas, and to improve the wellbeing of people and their communities.’

We do this by:

- Engaging pastorally and prophetically with the communities in which our churches are located and with the wider region
- Equipping and developing faithful and fruitful disciples and congregations
- Equipping and developing faithful and fruitful preachers and ordained ministers

Our ways of working include:

- Engaging in theological reflection and prayerful discernment which will help us to fully understand our mission
- Building quality relationships across our Circuits, with wider Methodism and with ecumenical, interfaith and community groups
- Building quality relationships with civic and political authorities in the area covered by the District
- Seeking to communicate effectively and work collaboratively
- Living and working creatively with diversity and difference
- Deploying the resources over which we have stewardship, effectively and flexibly
- Developing and sharing best practice

District Priorities

As adopted by Synod in April 2014

- To develop lay leadership—in breadth, depth, numbers and confidence
- To ensure that every minister and local preacher is engaged in an intentional review and development of their ministry
- To increase participation in social and civic action, by identifying and sharing good practice and promoting networks of practitioners—rooting such engagement in our Methodist identity

These goals are by no means exhaustive or embrace the range of activities carried out in the name of the District. Their purpose is to help focus the major developmental work that is key to the next phase of the District's life as it seeks to support the ministry and mission of local churches, circuits and engage with London as a global city.



**DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

DISTRICT COUNCIL

The Council is the London District's Policy Committee which seeks to think strategically about the life and mission of the whole District. It coordinates the work of the Commissions and is responsible for the continuity of District business between Synods. Its membership comprises representatives of Superintendents, Circuit Stewards, the Diaconal Order and the Learning and Development Network as well as other relevant groups. The twelve members meet bi-monthly under the leadership of the District Chairs.

The Past Year

The Council has seen a number of changes in personnel. The Council bid farewell to one of its dedicated District Chairs, The Revd Nigel Cowgill, and endorsed the recommendation of the Nomination Committee that the Revd Dr Jonathan Dean be invited to serve as District Chair. The Council also bid farewell and acknowledged the valuable contributions of the Revd Andrew Dart in the life of the District and The Revd Dr Steven Cooper for his representation of the Methodist Council.

Mr George Kulasingham completed six years of diligent service as District Treasurer followed by a transitional period for passing on the role of the District Treasurer to Mrs Nana Ama Ackah-Yensu. The Council has regularly monitored the finances of the District with the aid of detailed summaries from the Treasurer and developed its thinking on the district's budget priorities.

At its awayday in May 2024, the Council discussed key issues that influenced ways of working across the District and focussed on ways of enhancing effective communication, value of learning resources and priorities for the District's mission and development plan.

The theme of the Spring Synod was "Refusing to be Enemies- Giving Peace a Chance". The theme for the Autumn synod was given the title the 'Celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the Ordination of Women as Presbyters to Methodist ministry in Britain'.

The Council has continued to fulfil its remit of overseeing the formal consents, authorisations and approvals required for the ongoing work of the District.

Ongoing Plans

The Council will remain committed to the smooth running of the life and mission of the District as the Revd Dr Jonathan Dean takes leadership as a new Chair of District. The Council will play a full part in planning and devising the new mission and development plan and the 'Action for Hope' initiatives towards the approach to Net Zero 2030.

Priya Rasanayagam, District Council Secretary

CHAIRS NOMINATION COMMITTEE

The Chairs Nominations Committee met on 18th January 2024 to interview for a new Chair of District to replace Revd Nigel Cowgill. The committee recommended the Revd Dr Jonathan Dean to take up the post from the 1st September 2024 for a period of six years.

We were very grateful to Notting Hill Methodist for their generous hosting of the day and to the committee, both our own District reps and the Connexional reps for their prayerfulness and commitment to this process.

John Logan, Convenor of the Chairs Nomination Committee

HUMAN RESOURCES GROUP

The District HR Group provides advice to the District, Circuits and local churches on all lay employment matters. It provides an advisory service only and does not negate the wish of Churches and Circuits to seek employment advice from other HR specialists or employment lawyers.

The District HR Group has continued to provide advice to churches and circuits in the District on various employment issues throughout the year. Matters had ranged from recruitment and non-complex behaviour/management/relationship issues to complex employee relations and change management issues.

The District HR Group's input and oversight on recruitment issues, especially the design and quality checking of role profiles has continued. Their input also extends to the approval of recruitment/selection documentation pre and post appointment.

The Past Year

Due to the lack of volunteers willing to take on roles within the church, particular tasks relating to recruitment have increased in recent months as more churches and circuits recruit lay employees to undertake tasks that have ordinarily been undertaken by volunteers.

Churches/Circuits continue to undertake rigorous review of their lay employment staffing resources to include other employment options e.g. self-employment for which we continue to provide appropriate and fit-for-purpose templated documentation. Some of these reviews have also led to redundancies which have become more frequent. It is encouraging to see many churches seeking early advice before any change that could lead to redundancy is started. They have been supported through any proposed changes with purposeful advice. We continue to assist churches and circuits to think through their change management processes so to avoid or minimise any legal challenges and conflict.

Many churches now offer enhanced terms and conditions of employment for their lay employees other than the minimum/statutory terms that had been the norm. Churches have been encouraged in this positive step and many have restructured their terms and conditions to provide higher-than-statutory salaries and sickness absence payments.

Churches and circuits have become more aware of their obligation as employers and our advice and support have been sought in a variety of employee relations cases which continue to increase in both quantity and complexity. For many churches/circuits there is deep intent and necessary rigour to ensure that processes are followed that are not

just legal and satisfactory to the needs of the church/circuit but are also sensitive to the lay employees involved. We have endeavoured, as best we can, to support and guide churches and circuits to healthy and effective solutions, negotiating a careful balance between churches and circuits legal obligations and their pastoral responsibilities.

Ongoing Plans

It is clear that churches and circuits have learning and development needs in the area of lay employment management but with our advice and support, many are getting better at it and are making informed and intentional decisions in this regard. The Learning Network continues to run some excellent training sessions for those responsible for managing lay employees and have also (in conjunction with the Connexional HR Team) produced a useful handbook for use by line managers. These courses have become very popular and most churches/circuits would refer to this handbook.

The Methodist Church website has a rich resource of materials which churches and circuits are encouraged to access and use, especially in the area of recruitment and selection as well as employment policies which churches/circuits can adapt for their use. These resources are regularly reviewed and updated. We have continued to signpost churches and circuits to these resources. And I'm glad to report that they have found these very useful.

We will continue to provide churches and circuits with effective support and advice in all areas of the lay employment journey for which our intervention is sought.

Janet Arthur, Lay Employment Secretary

DATA PROTECTION RESOURCE GROUP

The purpose of the Data Protection Resource Group is to support and guide churches and circuits across London in reaching data protection compliancy and continuing this good practice. TMCP's (Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes) annual data protection checklist will be used as the initial indicator of compliance for the District Resource Group. The support and guidance provided by the group is achieved through specific resourcing material, training, drop-in sessions and/or signposting as deemed appropriate by the group.

The group is responsible for educating church and circuit trustees on the legal requirements of data protection (as outlined in Standing Order 019) and outlining the consequences of non-compliance.

The Past Year

During 2024 the group continued its work to encourage churches and circuits to fulfil their obligations to data protection and consequently complete TMCP's data protection checklists (as the primary indicator of fulfilling their data protection obligations).

To encourage completion of the checklists, the District continued to advise via Circuits to complete the forms, signposting the support available from February, and then ad hoc throughout the next couple of months. The group held a well-attended training session online in February, and an online drop-in session towards the end of May to help anyone with questions regarding data protection. The group specifically reached out to those circuits who had struggled to complete the checklists the previous year, and the support was well received given that those circuits were able to work on their data protection priorities this year.

The group continue to hold a page on the London District website to support churches and circuits with their understanding of data protection. The page provides top tips on data protection and breaks down some data protection jargon.

The return rate for 2024 was slightly disappointing, given that it had risen steadily over the previous years with returns at 78.4% by the deadline of 31 August (88.8% in 2023).

Ongoing Plans

The group are looking to how they might best support churches and circuits going forward with their data protection needs in 2025.

In January, the group reached out to those circuits who struggled to priorities data protection in 2024, to offer more support.

In February the group will start a programme of bitesize training over lunchtimes on data protection. The programme is made up of five sessions and will run every three/four weeks until mid-May.

Throughout February-May, the group will continue supporting churches and circuits as they complete their data protection checklists for TMCP.

Revd Roz Hollingsworth, Data Protection Resource Group Chair

PROPERTY ADVISORY GROUP

The last year has been one of stability for much of the District with only three church buildings (previous worship sites) currently on the market to be sold. This has provided a space for many of the churches to take a step back and assess to a greater level of detail; the condition of their buildings, what their buildings can provide and most importantly what they should provide. This work is a continuous endeavour, and our churches should always be looking to review their current position and what can be done better.

There are many good news stories throughout the District stemming from a property perspective, and we need to continue to share these stories and learn from each churches' experience with approaching redevelopment or refurbishment.

The Property Advisory Group, particularly the District Property Development Officer (DPDO), would like to extend a thank you to all those Church members, stewards and other duty holders who work tirelessly to maintain and celebrate our buildings and other built assets.

The Past Year

Property Consents Activity

The consents system recorded the creation of 79 new property projects this connexional year, which represented a significant decrease by 38 points compared to those created within the previous term. The 79 property consents entries made, are at various stages of the process and interestingly 15 are still at the 'proposed' stage and they have yet to receive any level of consent. However, the projects comprise of the following;

- 42 related to leases (both church and manse properties)
- 20 related to maintenance, repair and upgrade works
- 6 related to substantial redevelopment works
- 3 related to property sales
- 8 related to other matters (right to light, easements, solar panel installation etc)

Property Returns/Annual Returns

Unfortunately, once again, there has been an extremely slow submission of the annual returns.

Last year the process was only reviewed in terms of the submission date. This was pushed back towards the end of February, and it was decided that no further pressures were required; however, consideration will need to be given as to what actions can be taken to keep Circuits aware of the deadline and, any help that can be given to aid timely submissions.

At the time of writing an overview of the current Annual Returns is as follows;

- 6 x Circuits have fully completed their returns
- 17 x Circuits have partially completed their returns
- 9 x Circuits have not completed any of their returns

The Property Advisory Group (PAG)

The PAG last met at the end of Q1 2024. The meeting was productive and informative, but it should be noted that the District Property Development Officer was newly in post and therefore their insight was limited at this time. PAG meeting consistency will need to be addressed throughout 2025 with meetings realistically being held once every four months.

A particular success story throughout this period was the establishment of the monthly Bricks, Mortar and Mission (BM&M) video call sessions, run by the DPDO and although the meetings are arguably focused on information and discussion that will aid Property Stewards and Secretaries, the meetings are open to anyway to attend. The BM&M meetings have seen increased engagement and the sharing of experience, knowledge and best practice from churches across the District. The BM&M meetings have also been blessed with talks being delivered by various third parties including; The National Churches Trust, Surveyors and the Connexional Property Team.

Ongoing Plans

The year ahead offers more opportunities for the DPDO to continue visiting Circuits and Churches to review their existing position and to discuss the potential for future development and mission. The DPDO's visits enable a clearer understanding of the District's position on property and, more importantly, helps to promote a culture of reassurance and confidence when the church and its members consider their property potential.

The upcoming District Property Potential Day event is anticipated to be a key moment towards understanding what the property strategy could, and should, be for the District. The event is to be held towards the end of 2024 and the plan is to invite representatives with various specialisms from around the Connexion to talk to attendees about their experiences and knowledge. A great deal of the property day's strength will come from the networking and sharing of experiences between attendees, who, coming from all over the District may have otherwise not had an opportunity to meet.

The PAG will continue to work with the District to develop an agreed approach to the Methodist Churches Net-Zero initiative, that will suit the diverse scale, architectural character and culture of the London District. Due to the diverse nature of our District we will need to consider both larger sustainable initiatives and small local wins to approach this sustainable target.

The District, and specifically the PAG, will continue to work towards enabling churches to maintain, transform and develop their property to provide mission and worship for the community. The DPDO through their site visits and promotion of the monthly BM&M group calls will endeavour to reinforce and increase the network of Property Stewards and Secretaires that is required to rebuild the property culture to its full strength.

Thomas Winter, District Property Development Officer

A man with a beard and short dark hair is shown in profile, looking down at a book he is holding with both hands. He is wearing a dark shirt. The background is a blurred library or study with wooden bookshelves filled with books. Two warm, glowing lights are visible on the shelves in the background. The overall atmosphere is quiet and scholarly.

AUTHORISED MINISTRIES COMMISSION

AUTHORISED MINISTRIES COMMISSION

The AMC oversees the culture of discernment, formation and ongoing equipping needed to sustain the ministry offered by and within the District by a whole range of people: Local Preachers, Worship Leaders and other lay volunteer roles, Local Lay-Pastors and other lay employees, and those exploring ordained ministry, being formed for it, and seeking continued development as they inhabit it. There are several other groups and individuals working under the care of the AMC, for whose time, commitment and wisdom we are immensely grateful. These include the Ministerial Sabbaticals Advisory Group, the District Probationers Committee, and our advisors and officers responsible for Local Preachers and leaders of worship, vocations, early years in ministry and continued ministerial development, as well as our lay stationing representative.

Our goal is to ensure that every minister (presbyter and deacon) and Local Preacher is engaged in an intentional review and development of their ministry, primarily through programmes of ministerial development, supervision and continued Local Preacher development. Our probationer ministers, together with those in the early years of their ministries, continue to share opportunities to come together, formally and informally, for training, discussion and an annual residential. Funding is available for ministers seeking to attend courses and other events to enable their continued development. Requests are received for a diverse range of things including retreats, conferences, accredited degree programmes, short courses and much else in between. Guidance and application forms for CDiM can be found on the [London District website](#).

There continues to be a gap between the number of people who wish to train as Local Preachers and those able to tutor and mentor. The District Local Preachers Secretary works with the Learning Network to ensure that those in training are supported and encouraged and new patterns of circuit collaboration and mutual support in this are being explored.

Through these activities, then, the Authorised Ministries Commission strives to share the Good News of Jesus Christ through Greater London and surrounding areas, and to improve the wellbeing of people and communities by equipping and developing faithful and fruitful preachers, lay pastors and ordained ministers. We approach our work in the conviction that everyone involved in or attending any of our churches brings unique gifts to the building up of the Church, and for the mission and ministry of God's people here. We are seeking to cultivate a church-wide culture of vocational discernment in every church and circuit, in which we ask deep and intentional questions of ourselves and others about the gifts which we might develop and the ways in which all might share in and contribute to the Methodist witness in London.

PROBATIONERS COMMITTEE

During the year, under the direction of the District Probationers' Secretary (DPS), the Probationers Committee seeks to support and encourage the work of all those stationed as probationer presbyters and deacons in the District. Early each year, the Committee gathers to hear reports on individual probationers from their circuits and the institution overseeing their studies (for the vast majority, this is The Queen's Foundation in Birmingham), to meet and reflect with the probationers and those accompanying them from the circuit, and to make a recommendation to the Conference about their continuance on probation or for reception into Full Connexion and ordination.

In 2023-24, there were two probationer ministers serving in the London District: one deacon in her second year of probation, and one presbyter in her first year. The DPC met in February to discuss in depth the progress and training needs with the probationer ministers. A great debt of gratitude is owed to the members of the committee, made up of a mix of presbyters, deacons and lay members, who all work with dedication and enthusiasm. They have to digest a great deal of written material in preparation for the committee and do so very diligently.

We also thank the superintendent ministers and circuit stewards who support our probationers. Their comprehensive written reports as well as personal reflections during the committee day are incredibly valuable. It was good to welcome Revd Andrew Letby back to facilitate the main committee meeting during the sabbatical of the then DPS.

The probationer ministers attended their annual retreat with their peers from the South East District. This year the retreat was held at The Kairos Centre in Roehampton, where they spent two fascinating days reflecting on the book of Leviticus.

Following the committee meeting, Deacon Marie Poole was joyfully recommended for ordination. She was able to give testimony to her own experience of God's calling in her life at a District Testimony Service held at Wallington Methodist Church on Sunday 19th May, at which the preacher was the Vice President of the Conference, Deacon Kerry Scarlett. Marie was received into Full Connexion, and into membership of the Methodist Diaconal Order, and ordained at The Methodist Conference held in Leeds in July.

Revd Dr Stephen Day, District Probationer's Secretary

CONTINUING DEVELOPMENT IN MINISTRY (CDiM)

Standing Order 745, states that “After reception into Full Connexion and ordination all ministers and deacons shall be required to engage in further study, training and professional development under each of the following headings:

- (i) engagement with peers in considering issues of the mission and worship of the church in the world and of ministerial or diaconal practice
- (ii) specific training when entering a new context or mode of ministry
- (iii) personal and vocational development.”

“The district recognises the crucial importance of continuing learning and exploration for the development and growth of presbyters and deacons. A changing society may require new skills and expertise in different areas of knowledge. An authentic personal response to God’s mission in the world will call forth a desire to delve more deeply into areas untouched or ill-developed in initial training.”

The District normally contributes a grant of one third (up to a limit of £800 per year) towards the fees for a recognised course or training package run by an academic institution or professional body.

It is hoped that circuits will also consider one third of the cost or two thirds if the course has been identified as a need via the MDR (Ministerial Development Review) process. The Representative Synod in March 2013 agreed that each circuit should budget for at least £100 per annum for each minister for continuing development in ministry.

Therefore, funding continues to be available for ministers who are seeking to attend courses and other events to enable their Continuing Development.

In the last Connexional year, this has included funding for academic work as well as day conferences, retreats, and much else in between.

The District also makes grants for lay members, prioritising District office holders or those who have been identified as leaders by their Circuit or potential leaders by the district. The maximum grant is usually £250 per year.

Revd Faith Nyota, CDiM Secretary

EARLY YEARS IN MINISTRY

The purpose of this group is to provide peer support alongside the District Chairs and Secretary, two led retreats per year (one just the London District and one with the South East District) and a forum for ministerial development and training.

The Past Year

We currently have 7 ministers in the London District who are in their early years of ministry. In February 2024 the London District joined with the South East District for a retreat at the Kairos Centre in Roehampton and were led by Michael Wadsworth from the Learning Network. In September 2024 the early years group plus our two probationers visited the Franciscan Centre in Ladywell (near Guildford) for a 24hr retreat. The time was well spent in reconnecting and discussing individual needs and possible training for the future.

Ongoing Plans

The group will return to The Franciscan Centre in Sept 2025. There will also be a 48hr retreat with the South East District in February 2026. It will be London District's turn to decide venue and theme.

The group will continue to respond to the ministerial development needs of individuals and the group.

Deacon Dawn Canham, Early Years in Ministry Secretary

LOCAL PREACHERS AND WORSHIP LEADERS

The role of a District Local Preachers' Secretary involves advocating for local preachers and worship leaders within the district and supporting local preachers' meetings in their role as communities of fellowship and learning.

The Past Year

I have continued to provide a link between circuit Local Preachers' and Worship Leaders' secretaries and the connexional Local Preachers' team: some of that work still involves routine circulation of information, but from time to time new queries or issues arise on which the advice of the connexional officers has to be sought.

The initial training of local preachers and worship leaders is still a source of concern in many circuits. Some of the issues relate to the nature of the Worship: Leading & Preaching course itself, and some to the difficulties in finding tutors and mentors to support and work with students. Thanks to the efforts of the Learning Network, we are now looking towards the sharing of tutor support across groups of circuits within the District. I remain deeply grateful to the Learning Network for all the help they give to us as preachers and worship leaders.

We are also looking at ways of reducing the number of preachers in training who are unable to complete their training within the five-year On Trial period. In such cases the circuit needs to apply to the District Council for an extension to the period On Trial if the student is to continue with and complete their studies, but extensions should only be granted in exceptional circumstances. There are currently seven extensions in place in the District, with a few more anticipated in the coming months. Enquiries about the application process should be made to me in the first instance.

Ongoing Plans

I will continue to work with the Learning Network as the new arrangements for sharing tutoring resources take shape. In addition, I am still happy to attend circuit Local Preachers' and Worship Leaders' Meetings, if or when invited.

The work of local preachers and worship leaders is much appreciated by congregation members; and as the initial training can be lengthy and challenging, it is always a joy to learn that another student has completed it successfully.

Janet Tweedale, District Local Preachers' and Worship Leaders' Secretary

SABBATICALS ADVISORY GROUP

A sabbatical is a gift from the Church to all presbyters and deacons, an opportunity to step away from circuit life for a period of three months and do something different. It is a time for ministers to reflect on their ministry and return refreshed spiritually, mentally and physically too. Sabbaticals are compulsory for Methodist ministers and are taken after every seven years of ministry.

The role of the District Sabbaticals Advisory Group is to receive, review and advise on the content of prospectuses submitted by presbyters and deacons preparing for their sabbaticals. The combined wisdom of the members is a useful resource for ministers in the planning process, to help refine their initial ideas into a fruitful sabbatical.

Recommendations for sabbaticals are submitted to the Spring and Autumn meetings of Synod for approval.

The Past Year

15 ministers took their sabbatical during the Connexional year 2023-24, and their experiences were many and varied. A number travelled abroad, as far afield as Africa, East Asia, the Caribbean, the USA and Canada as well as within Europe. Several of the more energetic walked various distances along the Camino de Santiago to Santiago de Compostela, and others travelled within the UK, including to the holy places of Scotland and Northumbria. They engaged in reading, writing and study, and in a wide range of creative pursuits, took up exercise and spent time on retreat. Hopefully all were also able to enjoy quality time with friends and family and returned refreshed to their normal routine.

Also, during the year, three requests for deferral were granted, 11 ministers completed their plans for sabbaticals in 2024-25 and a number are already in the planning stage for 2025-26.

Ongoing Plans

The Advisory Group is aware that, whilst some ministers approach their sabbaticals brimming over with ideas of how to spend the time, for others planning can be much more daunting. The Group is keen to help and support those preparations as much as possible and members are always willing to provide advice if needed.

The District encourages the sharing of experiences in the form of a reflection and feedback form ([available on the District website](#)) on return from sabbatical. The feedback received can act as inspiration for ministers in the planning stages, as well as providing valuable information for Circuits and the District, so we are grateful to all who complete it. The sabbaticals section of the District website contains examples of these sabbatical stories and work is ongoing to make more of these available as a resource for all.

Dawn Downes, District Sabbaticals Secretary

STATIONING

The process of stationing occupies much of our minds and attention for a large part of the year, and especially in the summer and autumn. District Chairs meet with circuit leaders, and with ministers and their families, as we seek to discern together the ways in which God is calling us into new paths of service and ministry. We are very aware of and grateful for, all the ways in which circuits and local churches care for and support those caught up in stationing, which can be a bracing combination of excitement and anxiety. We seek to ensure that the whole process is covered with prayer, and an openness to God's leading, holding in mind the character and missional priorities of circuits, and the wellbeing of our ministers. Thanks are also due for the patience of those making visits, and the trust that they and their families showed as they prepared to move in 2024.

Throughout the stationing process in 2023-24 we had 14 appointments to fill:

- One Diaconal appointment
- One Probationer appointment (of a student minister leaving Queen's with limited deployability)
- Nine Presbyteral appointments
- Three MOCC appointments

The challenge for circuits continues to be to consider what kind of ministry they need to support their mission, and what creativity and flexibility may be possible; which may be specialist lay ministry, diaconal ministry or presbyteral ministry. Circuits may also consider the possibility of accepting probationer ministers or ministers from other conferences and churches around the world. These ministers bring a depth and a richness of experience with them, and churches often find working alongside them a great privilege and joy.

Training for circuits and ministers who were involved in stationing for 2025 took place as follows:

- Saturday 20th April at 2pm (after the morning session of Representative Synod) at Methodist Central Hall
- Thursday 30th May at 6pm on Zoom

As we write this, the process of stationing for the year 2024-25 is continuing, and will be reported on in due course.

Please hold in prayer, the many circuits across our Methodist Connexion which carry vacancies in this coming year; pray for more people to be called into ministry and for all those within the life of our churches to recognise we, both lay and ordained, have ministries to fulfil as members of the body of Christ.

A close-up photograph showing three hands of different skin tones clasped together in a prayerful gesture over an open Bible. The Bible is open to a page with text, and the hands are resting on it. The lighting is warm and soft, creating a sense of intimacy and spiritual connection. The background is blurred, focusing attention on the hands and the text of the Bible.

DISCIPLESHIP AND CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

SAFEGUARDING

The London District is committed to elevating its safeguarding practices, inspiring a safe and supportive community for all.

The District Safeguarding Group (DSG) convenes regularly to ensure the effective implementation of the safeguarding policy throughout the District. Members are called upon to share their extensive expertise, providing advice and guidance to the District Safeguarding Officer regarding existing cases and established best practices. This forum also facilitates discussion of prevailing trends and concerns. Furthermore, the group evaluates the District's future initiatives to ensure alignment with the established policy framework. The DSG has played a pivotal role in the Connexion Safeguarding Audit, as noted herein. Such deliberations are essential for both the maintenance and enhancement of the District's safeguarding policy as required.

The DSG continues to explore the appointment of an Independent Chair along with new members to expand the group on the advice of the Audit feedback.

The Past Year

We continue to work hard to ensure the number of outstanding DBS checks for Ministers remains low. Automatic reminder emails are sent three months, and then 14 days before DBS renewals are due ensuring sufficient time is given for the renewal process to be completed.

The District has identified deficiencies in training and is addressing this issue by providing more Train the Trainer sessions. This allows more people to become trainers and deliver the training within their circuit. It is our hope that this will reduce the burden on circuits by enabling them to put on more Foundation Module training sessions. Train the Trainer sessions are provided in an online capacity only.

The 2024 Edition of the Foundation Module was introduced in July 2024. To ensure that all trainers are aware of the new material and remain skilled in delivering it, we have implemented the revised Train the Trainer training program and have completed three sessions since the release of the new material. It is anticipated that two additional sessions will be required. The promotion of this training is included in the District's Weekly Update.

The Training Hubs that were introduced last year are working well to share training needs across the District. The nine venues are conveniently located and offer good transport links. We believe that being part of a hub will also create further opportunities for gathering with neighbouring circuits, assisting one another and sharing resources.

We continue to encourage circuits to be in contact with each other to share training to help maximise limited resources.

We have managed to secure more Advanced Module trainers for the District through conversations with our colleagues in the Learning Network. This has made a positive impact and helped significantly with planning our training schedule. The schedule is drawn up twice a year and enables events to be organised well in advance giving everyone ample notice.

Over the past year, there have been a total of 65 new safeguarding cases reported, excluding those that are still ongoing. The diverse and dynamic demographic landscape of London contributes to the variety of these cases, which range from instances of inappropriate physical contact, including unwanted touching or harassment, to more insidious forms of abuse such as financial exploitation, where individuals are manipulated into relinquishing their financial resources. Each case presents unique challenges and reinforces the importance of tailored support and intervention strategies to protect vulnerable individuals within our community.

The monthly edition of "Coffee with Claire" continues to garner significant support from participants, creating a vibrant community dialogue. This open forum acts as a valuable platform for thoroughly discussing safeguarding queries and sharing essential updates.

In each session, I endeavour to incorporate relevant and timely safeguarding news, whilst also delivering insightful presentations that tackle critical issues. Recent topics have included the complexities of financial abuse, effective strategies for ensuring online safety against scams, and the responsible use of social media. By fostering these discussions, we aim to empower participants with knowledge and resources to enhance their understanding of safeguarding practices.

Ongoing Plans

The theme for the 2025 safeguarding conference is 'Unbounded Love', emphasising the importance of compassion and support in safeguarding practices. It will take place on Saturday 15 March at Methodist Central Hall Westminster.

We are delighted to welcome Carolyn Godfrey, Vice President of the Methodist Conference, as the keynote speaker to open the conference and to set the tone for the day. After the keynote speech, attendees will have the opportunity to participate in a workshop of their choice, each designed to address various aspects of safeguarding.

We look forward to welcoming everyone for a day of meaningful discussions, learning, networking, and collaboration.

I want to thank everyone in the District for your dedication to keeping our churches safe. Your hard work helps create a safe and caring environment for everyone. This reflects your strong sense of responsibility for our community. Together, we are setting a standard of integrity and compassion. Your efforts truly make a difference. Thank you for your commitment.

Claire De Stefano, District Safeguarding Officer

NEW PLACES FOR NEW PEOPLE (NPNP)

During the year, the NPNP Team continued to discern the possibilities and potentials in the London District for encouraging new Christian communities. Embracing Connexional principles and priorities in this, it sought in particular to reflect on where such communities might be seeded in places of marginalization, with and alongside those experiencing poverty.

The team is aware of and energized by several projects being explored in churches and circuits, including the two new developments in the Lambeth Circuit, at the former Lambeth Mission and in Vauxhall, and which will soon come to fruition. It has also been good to hear of other new gatherings such as the WAVE (We're All Valued Equally) Church, meeting in Muswell Hill in the New River Circuit. These are just two examples of the kinds of initiatives springing up in London, and it's hoped that they'll inspire and ignite other similar projects elsewhere.

As we move forward and reimagine the District Mission Plan for the next season, we hope to access new Connexional resources, and to work hard to ensure that the vision of new expressions of Christian community can grow and flourish, alongside the growth and revitalization of existing churches, all across London. As Methodists, we have a particular story to tell about the breadth of God's love and the depth of God's welcome and grace, which can touch and transform the lives of all.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY COMMISSION

The Social Responsibility Commission (SRC) continues to seek to advise the District on policy and priorities for Methodist Social Responsibility involvement in London; to coordinate and advocate that involvement, and to encourage theological reflection on its nature and significance as an expression of Christian discipleship.

The Past Year

The SRC was pleased to have provided input and guidance into the District Lent Course – Let Justice Flow – by Revd Richard Grocott. The success of the course highlighted the need for more resources that churches and circuits can engage with.

In May, the SRC had its annual Away Day to discuss the direction of the group and the projects/issues the group feel called to be involved with in the coming year. The Away Day very much focused on the desire to rejuvenate the group to give it a renewed sense of purpose and mission. A document has been submitted to the District Council to consider plans including a revision of the group name and its mission, to enable the group's work to be more aligned with the mission of the District as a whole.

The membership of the SRC continues to be an issue. The group welcomed a new member and continues to seek more members to facilitate its work, increase visibility within the District and diversify the thinking of the group.

Ongoing Plans

The SRC looks forward to a rebrand of the group, solidifying the group's mission and purpose. Plans for a 'District Day' are being cultivated, which will aim to bring churches and circuits together to both showcase and celebrate the many projects that are taking place across the District. Such an event represents an opportunity to be inspired, wider collaboration and networking.

DISTRICT RECONCILIATION GROUP

The District Reconciliation and Mediation Group exists within the District to come alongside Churches and Circuits where there has been conflict or a break down in relationships. We are able to provide independent listeners, to facilitate conversations, or to signpost individuals to other support that may be available and more appropriate.

We are keen to support individuals, Circuits and churches where there may be a need and a desire for reconciliation.

Currently the group is quite small, and we would welcome those who might like to join the group to be in contact either with Revd Jongi or Deacon Ali for further conversation about what the role entails.

Our thanks to the members of the group for their careful work and support of the District by serving on the reconciliation group.

Deacon Ali McMillan, Convenor

METHODIST WOMEN IN BRITAIN

Methodist Women in Britain (MWiB) is part of the wider sisterhood of the World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women of which MWiB forms the British unit.

I was commissioned in October 2023 as London District President for MWiB. Early in my role I learnt from the responses from Circuits, that there is a decline in the number of women's groups meeting in our churches for fellowship and support.

My focus was to visit churches in the district to try and revive the joy of women meeting and supporting each other socially, emotionally and spiritually. During my visits we discussed issues and challenges. One issue frequently mentioned is the aging church population; difficulty getting to meetings and poor health; however, there was some interest and enthusiasm to know more and be involved in the work and activities of MWiB. Three new groups started in their individual churches sharing and embracing the virtues and values of MWiB.

The Past Year

The highlights of 2024 have been:

- A Quiet Day for spiritual growth and enrichment, acknowledging and showing our appreciation for our “Sheroes” who kept the flames of MWiB alight pastorally and spiritually to maintain the richness of the organisation in the London District.
- The Easter offering service in some circuits had ceased so this was encouraged. The 2023-24 theme of Let Justice Roll was pertinent to our values “for women, for justice and for Christ”. Rolling justice was explored, encouraging people to value justice both individually and in communities.

Education for All, Hope for All is the theme for the 2024-25 Connexional year Easter Offering.

It focuses on every person's right to education and how the fulfilment of this opens God's promise of hope and fullness of life for all people. The many resources available include an Order of Service, Colouring-in sheet (to support the inclusion of younger church members) MWiB offer this service as a gift to the Methodist Church in collaboration with the Global Relations Team. The offering goes towards Methodist World Fund.

Another aspect of my role is to organise our District Day. MWiB women gather for fellowship, inspiration and information sharing. The two Co-chairs from connexion joined and shared with the group, plans to continue the work of MWiB at home and the wider sisterhood of the World Federation of Methodist Church Women.

An application for a pastoral grant from the connexion was approved. With the Pastoral grant we are able to keep in touch with members who are house bound or in care homes, assuring them that they are loved and appreciated for their commitment to MWiB and their Church. Where possible a visit is made with their permission observing safeguarding guidelines.

We continue to raise awareness and support and participation in Daffodil Day celebration at Methodist Central Hall, and the yearly weekend conference in Swanwick.

Ongoing Plans

We will continue to nurture and support new MWiB groups and encourage young church women to be involved in the work of MWiB.

Fundraising plans are being made to support a project in Merry Wood Primary School in St Elizabeth, Jamaica, to purchase textbooks to enable the boys and girls on their educational journey to achieve in life.

We continue to work towards, and hope to build, lasting relationships across our circuits, churches, community groups and the wider Methodist family.

For more information please see: mwib.org.uk

Lilla Hercules, London District President for Methodist Women in Britain



FINANCE AND BUDGETS

DISTRICT FINANCE REPORT

A summary of the accounts for the year ending 31 August 2024 are set out on the following pages. They are an abridged version of the full audited accounts. Copies of the full version of the audited accounts have been emailed to all Circuit Treasurers and Superintendents. They will be available at Synod in April and also on the Charity Commission Website.

The Full Trustee Report and Accounts are aligned with the Charity reporting requirements FRS102. This is further explained in the full report and accounts along with the comparative figures of 2022-23 accounts where relevant.

The District General Fund (non-designated) operated with surplus of £12,201 for the year. The main reasons for the surplus was due to higher interest rates than expected and the refund from the Connexion of the District's Voluntary Contribution to the Pension Reserve Fund.

The District owns two manses which are shown at their 2017-18 valuation. There has been little change in value since that time and therefore the only impact on the Manse Value Fund is the depreciation of the buildings.

The Benevolent Fund continues to provide the support needed by ministerial staff in special circumstances. During 2023-24, grants of £4,850 were made. Interest earned was £171 and £12,000 was transferred from the General Fund, leaving a balance of £11,338 at the end of the year.

New grants awarded from the District Advance Fund amounted to £649,375, of which £102,291 was paid in the 2023-24, with £547,084 being transferred to Liabilities for payment in future years. DAF Grants of £942,953 were held for expected payments in future years.

The Jean Richardson Endowment Fund exists to assist exchange visits between UK and Overseas youth organizations. No grants were made from the fund during the year. The balance at the year-end was £78,588.

Trust Fund 20520 - East End Mission - remains under the management of the District Trustees, for the benefit of the Tower Hamlets Circuit, who received grants of £200,364 during the year.

Other funds shown relate to District projects funded by the DAF, the Connexion and contributions. They cover Youth Enablement, Training and Chaplaincy.

At the year-end, the finances were adequate for the continued progress and development of District activities.

Going forward, the development of the District Mission Plan will inform our planning more closely to ensure that our budgets align with District priorities. The District will also continue, as always, to work with Circuits towards ensuring that assessments remain fair and affordable.

We give thanks to God for another year of provision. To Him be all the glory!

Ama Ackah-Yensu, District Treasurer

CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL ACTIVITY (SEPT 2023—AUGUST 2024)

	2023-24	2022-23
Income		
Assessments from Circuits	1,672,097	1,621,251
deduct: Payment to Methodist Church Fund	1,429,224	1,311,216
District Assessments	242,873	310,035
Donations	483	
Contributions from Circuit Advance Funds	438,049	379,760
Total from Circuits	681,405	689,795
Contribution from Connexion to cost of Chair	97,709	90,178
Interest on deposits and investment income	243,424	153,312
Capital Receipts	978,332	-
Other Income (e.g. Rent, Grants, training)	217,974	54,123
Grants (incl trfs from DAf & General fund)	61,645	211,534
Total Income	2,280,488	1,260,794
Expenditure		
Grants and Donations committed in year	684,882	581,188
Salaries and associated costs	340,392	382,348
Property Costs (incl. Ins., C tax, utilities etc.)	96,961	149,227
Office Expenses (Admin., tel. travel etc.)	33,344	23,242
Synods, Commissions, Committees, Conference, etc.	9,900	9,823
Depreciation (now incl. of manse buildings)	20,583	21,213
Training	1,697	2,325
Other Expenditure	32,962	35,558

Audit& Accountancy fees	10,566	10,105
Capital Levy	367,333	-
Total expenditure	1,598,620	1,215,029
Net income	681,868	45,765
Gains/(losses) on disposal of investment assets	44,618	
Gains/(losses) on revaln fixed assets		
Gains/(losses): on investment assets	(9,416)	(163,393)
Net	717,070	(117,628)
Fund Balances from last year	5,032,200	5,149,828
Total Fund Carried Forward	5,749,270	5,032,200

BALANCE SHEET (AS AT 31 AUGUST 2024)

	2023-2024		2022-2023	
Fixed Assets				
Manse & Property (Depreciating)	1,648,805		1,668,757	
Investments with TMCP	1,430,453		1,395,251	
	3,079,258	3,079,258	3,064,008	3,064,008
Current Assets				
Cash in Bank and in hand	139,521		165,893	
Central Finance Board Deposits	160,902		165,893	
TMCP interest accounts	3,203,325		2,377,355	
Loans by the District	40,000		0	
Debtors and Prepayments	25,813		45,530	
	3,569,561	3,569,561	2,811,790	2,811,790
Current Liabilities				
Creditors (due in under 1 year)	25,833		16,657	
Grants payable (within 1 year)	659,864		708,936	
	685,697	685,697	725,593	725,593
Long Term Liabilities				
Grants Payable after 1 year	213,852	213,852	118,005	118,005
Net Assets		5,749,270		5,032,200

BALANCE SHEET (AS AT 31 AUGUST 2024, CONT)

Fund Balances and Movements		Opening Balance	Incoming Resources	Resources Expended	Gains on Re-valuation	Transfer to other funds	Closing Balance
		£	£	£	£		£
Unrestricted Funds							
General Fund (excluding manse fund)	U	190,101	369,927	(357,726)	-	(69,416)	132,886
Designated Funds							
London District Advance Fund (incl. loan to circuit)	D	720,114	727,173	(439,264)	-	18,795	1,026,818
Manse Value Fund	D	1,666,558	-	(19,100)	-	-	1,647,458
Manse Refurbishment Fund	D	22,745	10	(57,952)	-	59,419	24,219
District Training Personnel & Facilities	D	11,851	-	(910)	-	-	10,941
District Youth Enablement	D	16,019	-	(3,800)	-	-	12,219
London District Chaplaincy	D	5,798	40,390	(42,465)	-	-	3,723
Growing London Leaders	D	6,745	-	-		(6,745)	-
District Focus	D	21,441	50	(10,529)	-	-	10,962
CSS Advanced Level Training	D	5,992	-	(1,114)	-	-	4,848
Media & interfaith project	D	50	-	-			
New Community Church Project	D	14,963	-	(8,201)	-	-	6,762

Fund Balances and Movements		Opening Balance	Incoming Resources	Resources Expended	Gains on Re-valuation	Transfer to other funds	Closing Balance
CDiM	D	3,118	10,000	(1,937)	-	-	11,181
ADSO	D	14,864	38,645	(37,995)	-	-	15,514
CRM Project	D	7,415	-	(1,760)	-	-	5,655
Warm Spaces	D	12,000	-	-	-	(12,000)	-
Emergency Response Funds	D	30,621	-	(600)	-	(2,000)	28,021
HIV Chaplaincy	D	22,000	6,000	(28,000)	-	-	-
District Property Officer	D	-	-	(1,393)	-	-	(1,393)
Total Designated (excluding DAF)		1,862,180	95,095	(215,786)	-	38,621	1,780,110
Total Unrestricted and Designated		2,772,395	1,192,195	(1,012,776)	-	(12,000)	2,939,814
Restricted Funds							
London District Pastoral & Benevolent Fund	R	3,534	654	(4,850)	-	12,000	11,338
Tower Hamlets - Sale-Land Stepney East End Mss	R	2,160,557	1,084,855	(573,855)	30,871	-	2,702,428
London Regional Network (incl. deferred Income)	R	337	-	(35)	-	-	302
Inter Circuit Support	R	23,700	-	(6,900)	-	-	16,800
Total Restricted Funds		2,118,128					
Endowment Fund							
Jean Richardson Bursary	E	71,677	2,784	(204)	4,331	-	78,588
Total Funds		5,032,200	2,280,488	(1,598,620)	35,202	-	5,749,270

GENERAL FUND BUDGET – UNRESTRICTED NON-DESIGNATED

(SEPTEMBER 2025 – AUGUST 2026)

London District of the Methodist Church Budget 2025- 26

	Actual 23-24 £	Budget 2024-25 £	Draft budget 2025-26 £
Income			
Income from assessments on circuits	1,672,097	1,1810,692	1,867,287
<u>Less</u> Assessment to Connexion			
Methodist Church Fund payments	1,429,224	1,494,881	15,75,558
Net Income from circuits	242,873	315,811	291,729
<u>Add</u> Other Income			
CAF interest receivable	172.84		-
CFB interest receivable	29,132.34	11,929	12,000
Refund voluntary contribution to pension reserves	27,140		
Other income	40		
DAF grants paid through district			
Total Other Income	56,485	11,929	12,000
Less Operating Expenses			
General and Governance			
Audit fees	10,566	10,611	11,142
Bank Fees	65	83	79
Consultancy/external supervisors	250	0	2,596
Ecumenical grants	3,734	4,872	3,962
Hospitality& gifts	2,515	2,215	2,668
Meeting facilities (Non commission)	1,770	3,464	2,654
Miscellaneous		479	-
CCLI License	266	280	294
Minutes of conference & cpd	240	291	275
Other grants paid	3,655		-
Travel	653	724	1,500
Total General and Governance	23,714	24,850	26,837
Chairs Expenses	6,083	7,632	6,980

Commission, synods, Methodist conference etc	9,900		17,308	18,458
Finance expenses	389		584	493
Office Expenses	13,653		15,682	18,524
Property costs				
indemnity insurance for property officer				594
Manse costs	24,470		18,762	21,528
Office rent	21,243		21,238	25,000
Total Property costs	46,072		39,999	47,122
Safeguarding costs	3,157		3,501	2,627
Salaries & Associated costs	183,388		202,642	166,688
Training costs				
Staff training - non project	125		1,000.00	1,000
Chairs' training	741		1,000.00	1,000
Total training costs	866		2,000.00	2,000
Total Operating Expenses	287,010		314,200	289,729
Transfer to Manse Refurbishment Fund	59,416		11,929	12,000
Transfer to P&B Fund	10,000		-	
Transfer to removals fund				2,000
Net Surplus / -Loss	-57,215		1,611	-
Less Depreciation			2,000.00	2,000.00
Net Cash surplus/deficit			3,611	2000
Less Capital Costs			4,000.00	2,000.00
Cash surplus / -required			-389	-

Circuit Assessments 2025-2026

Circuit number	Circuit name	Circuit assessments 2025-26 100% £	MCF 84% £	District expenses 16% £	Quarterly payments £
1	City Road	61,976	52,292	9,684	15,494
2	West London Mission	75,184	63,437	11,747	18,796
3	Westminster	48,812	41,185	7,627	12,203
4	Chelsea, Hammersmith and Fulham	33,912	28,613	5,299	8,478
5	Battersea & Wandale Valley	62,868	53,045	9,823	15,717
6	Lambeth	82,660	69,745	12,915	20,665
7	Southwark & Deptford	96,412	81,348	15,064	24,103
9	Tower Hamlets	28,552	24,091	4,461	7,138
10	Hackney & Stoke Newington	46,784	39,474	7,310	11,696
11	Islington & Camden Mission	27,568	23,261	4,307	6,892
12	London Mission North West	40,484	34,158	6,326	10,121
13	Harlesden & Notting Hill	43,332	36,561	6,771	10,833
20	Newham	40,216	33,932	6,284	10,054
22	New River	87,116	73,504	13,612	21,779
23	Wembley	40,288	33,993	6,295	10,072
24	Ealing Trinity	59,636	50,318	9,318	14,909
25	Richmond & Hounslow	37,240	31,421	5,819	9,310
26	Wimbledon	38,220	32,248	5,972	9,555
28	Blackheath & Crystal Palace	56,936	48,040	8,896	14,234
30	Lesnes Abbey	42,948	36,237	6,711	10,737

Circuit number	Circuit name	Circuit assessments 2025-26 100% £	MCF 84% £	District expenses 16% £	Quarterly payments £
31	Barking, Dagenham & Ilford	55,380	46,727	8,653	13,845
32	Romford	65,008	54,851	10,157	16,252
33	Forest	84,640	71,415	13,225	21,160
34	Enfield	80,604	68,010	12,594	20,151
35	Barnet & Queensbury	63,368	53,467	9,901	15,842
36	Harrow & Hillingdon	117,096	98,800	18,296	29,274
37	Teddington	33,316	28,110	5,206	8,329
38	Kingston upon Thames	39,152	33,035	6,117	9,788
39	Sutton	87,608	73,919	13,689	21,902
40	Purley	29,300	24,722	4,578	7,325
41	Croydon	79,464	67,048	12,416	19,866
42	Widmore	81,244	68,550	12,694	20,311
	Total from Circuits	1,867,324	1,575,558	291,766	466,831

DISTRICT ADVANCED FUND (DAF)

The purpose of the District Advance Fund of the London District is to support missional and outward looking, creative projects amongst our churches and circuits. Grants approved by the committee meet the criteria which are set out in a policy document on the District website. These may include grants for personnel, training, equipment and property. Funding for the District Advance Fund comes from a levy on circuit model trust funds.

The total of Grants awarded 2023 – 2024 was £603,375 plus £69,237 from ‘Church at the margins’. These are summarised by category as follows:

Category	DAF Grant	Church at the Margins grant
General	£177,379	
Ministry	£177,330	£69,237
Project	£248,666	
Grand Total	£603,375	£69,237

As in previous years, the grants were awarded to a diverse and inspiring range of projects. These are a few examples:

- £25,000 to Epsom Methodist Church towards the development of a community suite
- £60,000 to the Romford circuit towards a Mission outreach project
- £39,000 towards the enhancement of circuit administration at New River

The next page details DAF grants awarded by the London DAF committee between September 1st 2023 and August 31st 2024.

Our thanks go to all committee members who have kept the important work of DAF running through this past year.

Revd Richard Grocott, Secretary of the London DAF committee.

DAF Grants Agreed 2023-2024

Date Agreed	Grant to	Purpose	Category	Years	Amount of grant (DAF)	Amount of grant (Church at the Margin)	Amount of grant (LMF)
25/10/23	Harlesden Methodist Church	Church Administrator	General	1	£11,834		
25/10/23	London District	HIV Chaplaincy	Ministry	1	£6,000		
25/10/23	New River Circuit	Enhance the Circuit Administration	General	3	£39,000		
25/10/23	Lantern Methodist Church (Wimbledon Circuit)	Lantern Centre Building Project	Project	1	£20,000		
25/10/23	Harlesden Methodist Church	Renovation of Flat	Project	1	£20,000		
24/01/24	Barnes Methodist Church (Richmond and Hounslow Circuit)	Church audio visuals	Ministry				£4,000
24/01/24	Battersea Methodist Mission (Battersea and Wandle Valley Circuit)	Roof repair	Project	1	£25,000		
24/01/24	Sutton Methodist Church	Circuit Operations Manager	Ministry	3			£57,000

Date Agreed	Grant to	Purpose	Category	Years	Amount of grant (DAF)	Amount of grant (Church at the Margin)	Amount of grant (LMF)
24/01/24	West Croydon Methodist Church (Croydon Circuit)	Roof repair	Project	1	£25,000		
29/05/24	Beckenham Methodist Church (Bromley Circuit)	Community Café Manager	Ministry	1	£15,000		
29/05/24	Sanderstead Methodist Church (Purley Circuit)	Family Worker project.	Ministry	3	£14,000		
29/05/24	Epsom Methodist Church (Sutton Circuit)	Community Suite Development Project	Project	1	£25,000		
29/05/24	Epsom Methodist Church (Sutton Circuit)	Support for Family Centre Manager Post	Ministry	3	£28,815		
29/05/24	Walworth Methodist Church (Southwark and Deptford Circuit)	New Church Heating System	Project	1	£25,000		
29/05/24	Bermondsey Central Hall (Southwark and Deptford Circuit)	Project support officer / food projects support worker	Ministry	3		£60,000	

Date Agreed	Grant to	Purpose	Category	Years	Amount of grant (DAF)	Amount of grant (Church at the Margin)	Amount of grant (LMF)
29/05/24	Clapham Methodist Church (Lambeth Circuit)	Clapham Night Hub Project Co-ordinator	Ministry	3			£59,372
29/05/24	Martin Way Methodist Church (Wimbledon Circuit)	Community Garden & The Open Table	Ministry	1			£6,700
10/07/24	Acton Hill Methodist and URC (Ealing Trinity Circuit)	Window renovations	Project	1	£8,666		
10/07/24	London District	London District Chaplaincy Coordinator	Ministry	2	£15,000		
10/07/24	London District	District Property and Development Officer Extra Hours	Ministry	3	£31,152		£20,848
10/07/24	Kensal Rise Methodist Church (London Mission North West)	Food poverty and renovation project	Ministry	2	£7,363	£9,237	
10/07/24	Romford Circuit	Circuit Mission Outreach Project	Ministry	3	£60,000		
10/07/24	Methodist Central Hall Westminster (Westminster Circuit)	Church Administrator	General	3	£126,545		

Date Agreed	Grant to	Purpose	Category	Years	Amount of grant (DAF)	Amount of grant (Church at the Margin)	Amount of grant (LMF)
10/07/24	Finsbury Park Methodist Church (New River Circuit)	Roof & Building Repairs	Project	1	£25,000		
10/07/24	Miller Memorial Methodist Church (New River Circuit)	Upgrading church facilities	Project	1	£25,000		
10/07/24	Middle Lane Methodist Church (New River Circuit)	Roof replacement	Project	1	£25,000		
10/07/24	Willoughby Methodist Church (New River Circuit)	Roof replacement & repairs	Project	2	£25,000		
Total					£603,375	£69,237	£147,920

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