

**THE METHODIST CHURCH
SUTTON CIRCUIT
LONDON DISTRICT 35/39**

Minutes of the Circuit Meeting Held on 8th September 2016
At EPSOM METHODIST CHURCH

Please note that these minutes include an important point for the action of each member of the meeting after Minute 17 at the end of this document. Please read on.

Those present: Revd Dr Dave Dickinson (Chair), Revd Barnabas Alexander, Revd Rosemary Richter, Revd Dr Mark Wakelin, Revd Nik Wooller, Revd Gill Long, Revd Ung Soon Nguang, Mr Richard Smith (Circuit Treasurer), Mr David Forty, Mr Ravi Saravanamuttu, Mr Chee Hong Fui, Miss Raj Kalsi, and 14 members whose names are recorded.

1. Opening devotions

Revd Dave Dickinson led the meeting in reflection and prayers. The meeting acknowledged Revd Hazel Yu's passing with sadness.

2. Meeting Membership

a. Welcome to new members

Chair welcomed Revd Barnabas Alexander as newly appointed Minister for Wallington and Bandon Hill and wished him a long fruitful Ministry. The Chair also welcomed Revd Ung Soon Nguang who has come from Malaysia and will take pastoral charge of the Chinese Congregation at Epsom and wished him well.

b. Confirmation of membership list.

The membership list was confirmed as accurate, with the following changes:

Maureen Patel replaces Sally Palmer as Senior Steward for Bandon Hill, the addition of Sally Palmer and Ama Boachie Mensah as elected representatives for Bandon Hill and John Riley has withdrawn as representative for Epsom.

There was a question from the floor regarding the number of elected representatives for Trinity. The Chair proposed that for the next Circuit Meeting the Circuit Stewards will report if the current elected representative number for Trinity is correct.

c. Changes to Circuit Appointments

The Chair informed the meeting of the following three changes to Circuit appointments:

- Tom Styche has been Connexional Funds Treasurer for many years and has indicated that he wishes to retire from the role. The Chair on behalf of the Circuit meeting expressed thanks to Tom for all the work he has done. The Senior Circuit Steward had written to him on behalf of the circuit.
- Philip Sandiford has been the Circuit Manse Secretary for six years and has indicated that he wishes to stand down from that role. The Chair expressed the Circuit's appreciation on the excellent job he has had done in upgrading and maintaining the Manses.
- Nick White is no longer eligible to serve as Secretary to the Local Preachers Meeting as he is not a member of the Methodist Church. Local churches may invite Nick to lead worship and preach as a visiting preacher. Keith Halstead will serve temporarily as Secretary to Local Preachers Meeting's and alternative arrangements will be made at the next Local Preachers Meeting.

3. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from: Rev Des Williamson, Revd Philip Richter, Shirley Breeden, Judith Yates, Geoff Gunton, John Wroe, Philip Sandiford, Caroline Cook, Caroline Kingsnorth, Vernon Tucker, Gordon Fleming, Christine Asirwatham, Ama Boachie Mensah and John Miller

4. Minutes of the meetings held on May 18th 2016 (previously circulated).

The minutes of the meetings held on May 18th 2016 were agreed as accurate.

5. Matters arising

None were brought to the meeting.

6. Report from the Circuit Leadership Team

The meeting received a report from the Circuit Leadership Team by Shirley Breeden which was included in the agenda papers, which was accepted by the meeting. David Forty on behalf of the Circuit Stewards thanked Shirley for her service as Senior Circuit Steward and commented that he appreciated working with her and that she was very tactful.

7. Invitation Committee report and recommendation

Nik Wooller's appointment to the Circuit comes to an end in the summer of 2017. The Chair informed the meeting that over the summer the Invitations committee has had meetings with the Senior Stewards from Cheam and Epsom and have prepared a Profile for submission to the District Chair for an appointment of a Presbyterian to Cheam and Epsom. The Profile indicates that the Presbyterian would split his or her time between Cheam and Epsom. The meeting agreed that the Profile be submitted to the District Chair.

On behalf of the Meeting the Chair wished Nik well as she prepares her profile and goes into the stationing process.

8. Circuit Manses

a. Philip Sandiford was not able to attend the Meeting and sent his apologies. A detailed manses report covering the works carried out for the past year was previously circulated. There were several questions from the floor regarding the amount of overspend on the manses. Sue Forty was concerned that there is £30k in the budget each year and yet a lot more is spent in the year and therefore the expenditure is being moved from one year to another. On the second page of the manses report there is an overspend of £22k and also showing is a contribution from lettings of £20k but the Draft Accounts does not show a figure for manse lettings for 2016/17. Malcolm Booth was also concerned that if we do not have income from lettings then we will not have funds for the £28k expenditure for the year. Richard explained that when the budget for 2015/16 was prepared, he did not know at that time if we would have a manse to let out. The Chinese Minister, Ung Soon Nguang has moved into 37 Tattenham Way and the Chinese Ministry is separately funded as they have a grant up to 2021. The Chinese Ministry will be renting 37 Tattenham Way for £1,750 a month and therefore the lettings income for the year will be £21k. The total budget therefore for 2016/17 is £51k. Mark Wakelin asked if income from capital assets should be spent on manses without approval from TMCP. Richard explained that this decision was taken in the proper manner by the Circuit two years ago. The Chair asked Richard to supply both Sue and Malcolm with a spread sheet showing the Budget and actual expenses.

The meeting agreed to the recommendation made by the Chair that when the next budget is prepared, serious consideration is given to setting a realistic level of budget for the manses.

b. Recommendation for managing manses from 2016

The Chair explained that as Philip Sandiford is retiring from his role as manse secretary, inquiries were made across the circuit for a suitable volunteer but none was found. The Chair has had conversation with both the Circuit Stewards and Staff about how to respond to this situation. The following recommendation is made with the support of both groups consulted :

We engage Patricia Shepherd Letting and Management to manage all six manses. This will be a non-standard service, as our arrangement will not include services for rent collection and seeking of tenants. While the Ministers occupy the properties there will regular six monthly inspections. There will be an easy method of reporting faults - by a telephone call to a dedicated, online or by mobile app. The company will arrange for repairs for which they use their own property service company, but we can nominate our own preferred tradespeople. The Company will also arrange to carry out safety inspections such as gas inspections. At the beginning of the tenancy the company will

prepare an inventory which will be used as a checklist for the six monthly inspections. The Chair has been in negotiation with the Company and negotiated a favourable rate of £75 per Manse per month which will be £5,400 per annum. As there may be extensive works carried out at Manor Green Road in the summer of 2017, we will begin by placing five manses in the hands of Patricia Shepherd, reducing next year's cost to £4,500 per annum. Circuit will need to appoint a liaison person to authorise any work. Philip Sandiford has expressed willingness to manage the transition and to introduce the Company to the manses.

Question from the floor included:

- Was it put out to tender? The Chair explained that because of time limits it was not put to tender but expressed confidence in this company.
- Has the amount been included in the budget? The amount will be included in the budget the following year.
- How long will the contract with the Company be for? Proposal is for annual contract.

Mark Wakelin expressed his thanks to both Philip and Richard for all the work they and done for the manses.

The recommendation to use Patricia Shephard Letting and Management was accepted by the Meeting.

9. Circuit finances

a. Preliminary accounts for 2016/2017

The agenda item 9.a. should read 'Draft Accounts for 2015/16 and Budget for 2016/2017' and not 'Preliminary accounts for 2016/2017'

A copy of the Draft Accounts for 2016/2016 was previously circulated prior to the meeting. The Chair thanked Richard for all the hard work in preparing the accounts. The copy of Draft Accounts and Budget for 2016/2017 was accepted by the meeting.

b. Statement of Circuit Model Trust Fund for year ending 31st August 2016

A statement of balance for the CMTF was previously circulated with agenda papers, showing where money has been spend in the past year and available balance at £44,158.90. The meeting accepted the report.

10. Circuit Safeguarding

Training update

Circuit Safeguarding Officer informed the meeting that the next Safeguarding Foundation Course will be held on Saturday 17th September from 10.00am – 12.30pm at St Mark's Church.

11. Reports from Circuit committees

a. Connexional Funds

The report for Connexional funds was previously circulated with the agenda papers. The report was accepted by the meeting. As Tom Styche has retired from role as Connexional Funds Treasurer, Richard informed the meeting that he has requested for Connexional paying in books, and once he receives them he will let the Churches in the Circuit know how to submit funds to the Connexion.

b. Risk Management Group

Report from the Circuit Meeting Risk Management Group was previously circulated with the agenda papers.

With regard to recommendations from the Risk Management Group, the following actions were also agreed:

1. That the Circuit Meeting adopts the report as a realistic assessment of the risks facing the circuit at this time;

2. That the Circuit Stewards put plans into place to mitigate or manage the identified risks;
3. That the Risk Management Group continues to meet at least annually to review the action taken by the Circuit Stewards and any new risks that may arise; and
4. The Circuit Meeting should encourage all Circuit Churches to nominate representatives to join the group.

In response to the fourth recommendation above, Rosemary Richter stated that it would be difficult to nominate a representative from St George's as it was a small Church and this was acknowledged by the meeting.

12. Confirmation of sub-committee appointments

a. Circuit Model Trust Fund Committee

The constitution of the CMTF Committee as detailed in the agenda papers was accepted by the meeting.

b. Risk Management Group

The meeting accepted the appointments to the Risk Management Group

13. Appointment of Circuit Stewards and appointment of Senior Circuit Steward

The Chair expressed his gratitude to Shirley Breeden for her time as Senior Circuit Steward and mentioned that she exercised the role with diligence, forthrightness and compassion. The Chair informed the meeting that Ravi has agreed to take on the role as Senior Circuit Steward. Dr David Gooch has been nominated by Trinity Church, Sutton. The meeting agreed to both these appointments. The meeting also agreed to the reappointment of Jan Angel, Chee Fui Hong, David Forty and Richard Smith to serve as Circuit Stewards.

14. Circuit Shares

The Chair reminded the meeting that at the Circuit Meeting held on 1st March 2016 there was a conversation about the nature of membership of local churches and a question about the relationship between membership and Circuit Assessments was raised. Circuit meeting invited the Circuit Leadership Team to explore an alternative way of raising Circuit funds. The Circuit Share document was previously circulated with the agenda papers, recommending an alternative. The Chair pointed out that a number of Staff in the Circuit have already experienced the Share System previously in other Circuits and found that it works extremely well, stopped any feeling of resentment, and encouraged people to be more generous and graceful to each other. The Circuit Meeting agreed that the Chair send an amended form of the statement to the secretaries of local Church Councils for discussion at their next meeting.

15. Date and place of next meeting

Thursday 2nd March 2017 at Wallington Methodist Church, refreshments at 7.30pm, meeting at 8pm
Wednesday 17th May 2017 – Venue to be confirmed

17. Closing devotions

Revd Dave Dickinson closed the meeting by saying together the Grace.

IMPORTANT. The Local Preachers' Meeting of 14th September recommended to the Circuit Meeting that John Dawson be admitted as a fully-accredited local preacher at the next Circuit Service on Sunday November 20th 2016 at Trinity Church. As there is no Circuit Meeting scheduled before that date, would members of the Circuit Meeting who do not approve this recommendation please indicate their objection to the superintendent minister - todaydickinson@gmail.com - by Friday 30th September 2016?