

Urban Mission Review

Basic Information

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Status of Paper	Final
Action Required	Decision
Draft Resolution	The Methodist Council receives the report and adopts its recommendations
Alternative Options	n/a

Summary of Content

Subject and Aims	The review of urban mission was set up to evaluate the impact of the completed ecumenical Urban Mission Development Project and to make recommendations about the support of urban mission in Methodist and ecumenical contexts
Main Points	The decision was taken as part of the Team Focus process that the resourcing of Urban Mission should no longer be a core activity of the Connexional Team. This paper evaluates the work of the existing project and makes recommendations about the way forward in supporting and resourcing urban mission
Background Context and Documents	n/a
Consultations	District Chairs meeting, on-line survey of Methodist ministers in urban appointments, ecumenical partners, non-denominational agencies

Summary of Impact

Standing Orders	n/a
Faith and Order	n/a
Financial	Ongoing commitment to urban mission in Connexional Team budget ~£6.5k, applications to connexional and district grants committees for ongoing funding.
Personnel	n/a
Legal	n/a
Wider Connexional	All churches/ministers involved in urban mission
External (e.g. ecumenical)	New proposal for resourcing urban mission involves a wide consortium of churches and agencies (see paper)
Risk	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Funding is not forthcoming for proposed new way of working – this will have a negative mission impact, but no financial implications 2. No designated specialist in Connexional Team leads to marginalisation of urban mission agenda.

Urban Mission Review – Final Report

Introduction

1. The Urban Mission Development Project (UMDP) was set up on behalf of a consortium of 25 Christian agencies and denominational bodies, of whom two have funded it – the Methodist Church and the Evangelical Coalition for Urban Mission (ECUM). It operates on a non-aligned, kingdom-building basis – i.e. not to support urban mission activity within the Methodist Church or ECUM, but to develop and test support mechanisms across the whole Christian community in the UK.
2. The purpose of this report is to consider the Review recommendations as a basis for future urban mission work.

Review Terms of Reference

3. Within the resources available:
 - a) To evaluate the ‘footprint’ of the UMDP in order to examine how far the Project has furthered the calling of the Methodist Church as identified in “Our Calling” and “Our Priorities”. This will require identifying the extent of the current activities of the Methodist Church in urban mission in both ecumenical and secular partnerships.
 - b) Estimate the impact of the absence of the UMDP from 2010 on the Methodist Church in its internal (Connexional) and external working.
 - c) Explore what other support mechanisms including funding can be identified for urban mission beyond 2010.
 - d) Consider what can uniquely and best be done by the Connexional Team, within the resources available, beyond summer 2010 to further its work as identified in “Our Calling” and “Our Priorities” in urban settings for the future.
 - e) Make recommendations based on the findings of the review on how urban mission work in the Connexion and the wider Christian community can be best taken forwards in the new context.

Methodology

4. The evaluation of the Urban Mission Development Project was conducted by a small group, which met six times between June and October 2009. The UM Review Group began by agreeing terms of reference with the Methodist Church Projects Cluster who oversaw the process. The group then did a detailed analysis of the reports and papers produced by the project over its lifetime and performed an evaluation of the project against its own objectives (Part 1) and against Priorities for the Methodist Church (Part 2). Members of the group met with the Methodist District Chairs for informal consultation with them about future direction for urban mission. The group also commissioned a piece of research over the summer to evaluate the project against the needs and expectations of those involved with the project (in a variety of different ways) and the needs and experiences of Methodist ministers

involved in urban mission, although meeting their needs was not a direct objective of the project (Part 3).

Findings

5. The Urban Mission Development Project was set up as an ecumenical project. All three parts of the review, and the conversation with the Chairs' meeting, demonstrate agreement within Methodism and ecumenical partners that urban mission work in Britain will be diminished if there is not a central non-aligned urban mission hub which generates activities and energizes networks, facilitates the flow of information to urban mission practitioners, and identifies training needs and the resources to meet them. The UMDP has tested several elements of the hub, has demonstrated that this will be an effective way of working, and gathered widespread endorsement for the model.
6. Opinions expressed at the informal consultation with the Chairs' Meeting at Conference 2009, were in broad agreement with the results of the two Surveys, ie that provision was best made ecumenically with District and national engagement.
7. Part 1 (Terms of Reference 1) demonstrates that the Project delivered extremely well against its own objectives. Part 2 (Terms of Reference 1) also shows that, despite the fact that the UMDP was set up before the adoption of the Methodist priorities, it demonstrates remarkable effectiveness against all these priorities. Part 3 (Terms of Reference 3 and 4) demonstrates high levels of satisfaction from the wide group of people involved with the project. The second element of Part 3 relates to Terms of Reference 3 and 4 and has produced useful information about future provision to support Methodist ministers in urban contexts that provides material for further analysis by the Connexional Team.
8. The Project has helpfully redefined objectives in the light of on-going learning. It has worked hard not to duplicate work that other bodies are doing but has been a conduit through which others' work has been publicized, as well as delivering in its own right.

Review Recommendations

9. The Review, set out at Annex 1, lists a number of recommendations. These are:
 - i. That a non-aligned hub which focuses and disseminates the work of a number of different urban mission agencies is vital for the future. There was a clear consensus in favour of this amongst those surveyed.
 - ii. That the learning of the UMDP in terms of broad ecumenism, the non-aligned provision of resources and engaging with Black Christians and BMC denominations should be taken on board by the Connexion and fed into the Belonging Together process, and any new urban mission hub.
 - iii. That the Methodist Church encourages the UMDP Management Group to explore mechanisms to establish a new, non-aligned urban mission hub (see

Appendix 4 for the Outline model that has been developed through consultations to date).

- iv. That this report should be used to seek funding for this work from a variety of sources from within Methodism and beyond. Any such new work will not be part of the Connexional Team and the Methodist Council will not act as employers for any personnel.
- v. The first point of contact for liaison with any new non-aligned project and the Connexional Team will be the Coordinator of Evangelism, Spirituality and Discipleship, who will also act as contact person within the team for the Methodist City Centre Network and administration of the network continue to be funded by the Connexion.
- vi. That further analysis be carried out of the results of the Methodist ministers survey in Part 3; this contains valuable information for future planning for urban mission. The isolation of Methodist ministers in urban contexts revealed by this review needs to be addressed.
- vii. The categorization of churches should be evaluated – several of the ministers interviewed did not find them helpful.
- viii. Urban Bulletin or its successor should continue to be distributed to all Methodist ministers in urban stations at the Connexion's expense.

Recommendation

The Methodist Council welcomes the report and adopts the recommendations set out in paragraph 9 above.

ANNEX ONE: THE REVIEW

1. PART 1: AN EVALUATION AGAINST THE PROJECT'S OBJECTIVES

1.1 BACKGROUND

This joint Methodist / ECUM Project evolved from bringing together two streams.

Starting in February 2001 ECUM had drawn up with the Ecumenical Urban Forum proposals for the appointment of an Urban Mission Development Officer which after 4 drafts and a number of meetings was in February 2002 submitted to the Jerusalem Trust which awarded a grant of £15,000 a year for three years in April 2002.

Parallel to this David Deeks (as Co-ordinating Secretary for Church and Society) drew up a Methodist Paper in October 2001, on Urban Mission. A meeting suggested by Stuart Jordan at the Ecumenical Urban Forum brought together Michael Eastman and David Deeks in May 2002 from which a proposal for a joint project, a synthesis of the Methodist and ECUM initiatives, was drawn up initially in June 2002. This went through a number of refinements and resulted in an agreement set out in "Urban Mission: Towards a Joint Appointment" in October 2002. From this the Person Specification and Job Description for the appointment of an Urban Mission Development Advisor was drawn up and the post advertised in January 2004.

1.2 OUTCOMES FOR THE FIRST PHASE. SEPTEMBER 2004 – AUGUST 2007

Hoped for outcomes initially set for the Urban Mission Development Project after three years were:

Outcome 1

- **linked database(s) of projects and denominational officers active in urban mission for most of the major urban/metropolis areas**

A database of primary and second level contacts was created in two pilots in Yorkshire & the Humber Region and Wales, and of some mainly second level contacts in Scotland. These were the only regions where detailed networking was carried out.

Outcome 2

- **self-sustaining networks of practitioners at the urban/metropolitan level in those areas, supported by a Coalition of such networks**

The need for capacity to link such networks became apparent early on, i.e. they cannot be self-sustaining on other than a short-term basis. Detailed work to pilot this has happened in Yorkshire & Humber Region.

Outcome 3

- **the identification of the key issues for urban mission and theology**

The major issues identified concern the contextualisation of mission, church, theology and worship. This led to pooling experience in urban training through two national seminars attended by denominational adult education officers, theology colleges and agencies, giving rise to the need for a pilot project in collaborative work in this regard.

Jesus in the City (UK Urban Mission Congress) was seen as a key UK focus, and the Project supported a successful event in Bristol in 2007.

Urban Bulletin was supported as a reflective journal to further this.

Outcome 4

- **help for churches in interpreting government policies**

An early evaluation exercise by the UMDP (published as 'Next Steps' in June 2005) showed that others (e.g. Church Action on Poverty, Faithworks, and the Joint Public Issues Group of Baptist Methodist and United Reformed Churches) were better placed to analyse the impact of Government Policy. From year 2 onwards the UMDP concentrated on making Churches and practitioners more aware of what is available through these sources and connecting these agencies/bodies together to help them work more effectively.

Outcome 5

- **better access to information on funding for urban mission.**

The same evaluation found that others make this information available through the Web and e-news very effectively. The UMDP worked extensively with the Eccleston Group of agencies to provide pooling of information at a national level, and to promote their services into denominations. See phase 2 goal 2 for the outcome of this process.

General

The development of a Web-site for the UMDP, which carries the Directory of Urban Mission agencies and networks, gives links to a whole range of bodies and sources of information and resources. This is both a support for practitioners and a stimulus to building network links between those having the knowledge and expertise and those needing access to this.

1.3 GOALS FOR SECOND PHASE SEPTEMBER 2007 – AUGUST 2010

It was recognised from the outset that as this was a developmental project objectives would be reviewed and changed in the light of actual experience.

The seven major Goals were set for the second phase in the light of the first three years. These are grouped under three broad headings (but retain the original numberings):

Networking local practitioners

Goal 1.

- **to use the experience gained in Yorkshire and Humberside as a model for other regions to adapt to their own contexts as self-sustaining entities on an inclusive basis as well as within the Methodist Church.**

The Yorkshire and Humberside network has been piloted and written up as a model for others to adapt for their locality.

Goal 5.

- **to provide support for networks for Urban Mission practitioners, especially those whose denominations are supporting the Project financially (currently the Methodist Church)**

To this can be added the work in Wales and with the ecumenical City Centre Churches Network. The key is to find the person(s) with the vision, skills, time and facilities to maintain and service the network. Without this, networks cease to function. This has shown that a "one-at-a-time" strategy is needed.

Some denominations have taken wider ecumenical initiatives prompted and supported by the UMDP. The Catholic urban network is a case in point.

Some promotion of the Methodist City Centre Network outside Methodism has taken place since the MCCN opened its events to ecumenical guests using the City Centre Churches Network.

Goal 2

- **to help bring into being networks of networks in urban mission and ministry, exploring the basis, forms, means, methods involved.**

A wide range of key people are on a database which includes second level contacts – i.e. those who are the co-ordinators or motivators of both geographically located networks

and also those who act as hub people for aspects of urban ministry linking people across the nation – e.g. the Urban Church Planting group - the Forgotten Five¹

The UMDP worked to encourage agencies to engage with a common information system hosted by the Churches Community Work Alliance, which was found to be impracticable because of lack of staff capacity in participating agencies, after 9 months' consultation and 6 months' pilot.

Widespread consultation has led to the recommendation that a national hub be set up as a focal point both for networks of urban mission practitioners and also for the agencies and denominations. (see Appendix 2)

Training for Urban Mission

Goal 4.

- **to promote shared endeavour in recruitment, training and education for urban mission and ministry at lay and ministerial level with appropriate forms of recognition and accreditation and to further the outworking of the *Faithful Cities* report, Recommendation 2, on a wide and inclusive basis**

This has now taken concrete form with the creation of a Midlands Urban Mission Training Node, and its joint brochure, which will act as a pilot project for the development of Nodes in other key centres in the U.K.

This work has been done in conjunction with the West Midlands Ecumenical Regional Training Partnership and the Church of England Bishop for Urban Life and Faith.

UK Focus for Urban Mission

Goal 3.

- **to pay particular attention to Black-led congregations, churches and parishes and wherever possible to undertake the necessary proactive work to link them appropriately with general sources of support and networks.**

This has born fruit in the work with Black Majority churches, in Glasgow and Yorkshire and Humberside; in the participation of Black Majority churches who form the majority of the participants in the Midlands Training Node pilot, in the Church of God of Prophecy speaking at the *Seeking the Way Forward* 2009 event

Goal 6.

- **to further partnership in urban mission and ministry between the four nations of the U.K.**

This has been a major aspect of the UMDP. There is now agreement and wide-spread support concerning the basis, forms, means and methods of a U.K. wide Christian Urban Mission Grouping giving impetus to bring this about through the formation of an Urban Mission - Community Transformation Hub built on the work of the Project beyond 2010.

¹ This is an informal network of church planting agencies who are concerned that the bottom 5% of the population in socio-economic terms are 'forgotten' by the mainstream churches.

The successful Adfywio'n Trefi – Urban Refreshment Urban Mission event, held in Wales in June 2009 - was planned jointly, after a two-year development process, with Gweini (an Evangelical Alliance Wales project), CYTUN (Churches Together in Wales) and the Catholic Justice & Peace Networks for N and S Wales dioceses. It gives the potential for forming an inclusive urban mission network in Wales.

Goal 7.

- **to contribute to and promote the triennial U.K. Urban Mission Congresses in 2007 and 2010 as the focus for practitioners from all four nations of the U.K.**

The UMDP is a key player in planning and delivering the *Jesus in the City Conference*, Belfast, March 2010, leading to participation in the Edinburgh Conference, June 2010. The identification and encouragement of groups of urban mission enthusiasts and practitioners and the linking with E2010's Commission VII, has been via the UMDP. Their reflections on Commission VII themes will be fed into E2010 via *Jesus in the City 2010*.

1.4 General

The UMDP has helped to implement the recommendations of the Faithful Cities Report beyond the Anglican Church. The Joint Management Group's membership has been expanded and includes the Methodist City Centre Network and the U.K. Urban Mission Congress Trust. Others, including the Church Army, have endorsed the Project but do not have a seat on the management group.

Church Urban Fund and Church of God of Prophecy have also become Endorsers. It is hoped that this wider ownership with others will provide a strong base for the Urban Mission Hub for which funding is being sought. (See Appendix 2 for full list of UMDP endorsers)

2. PART 2: Evaluation of UMDP against 'Priorities for the Methodist Church'

The Urban Mission Development Project was set up as a non-aligned ecumenical project in 2003. The 'Priorities for the Methodist Church'² were not adopted by the Methodist Conference until 2004. However, a significant test of how well Methodist and other needs have been met by the project is to evaluate it against these criteria.

- **'In partnership with others'**

UMDP has gathered together what is almost certainly the widest coalition of Christian denominations (6) and agencies (19) working in an urban context.³ Some are official endorsers signed up to the Urban Coalition, others participate in an informal network. A particular strength of the Project is its engagement with Black Majority churches (the demise of ACEA makes this even more important). Ecumenical partners have commented that Methodism occupies a pivotal role as catalyst in an ecumenical forum for urban mission.

- **'Underpinning everything we do with God-centred worship and prayer'**

² See Appendix 1

³ See Appendix 2 for list

This is a significant emphasis in the work of many of the partners of the training node. The project officer has written a chapter on worship in urban settings in a book published by SPCK in 2006 in association with the Commission on Urban Life and Faith. All the events that the project has run have incorporated good examples of contextual urban worship.

- **‘Supporting community development and action for justice, especially among the most deprived and poor – in Britain and worldwide.’**

Rather than getting involved in direct action, the project has concentrated on networking and facilitating others who are involved. This is demonstrated particularly in the partners in the Midlands UM Training Node, the Urban Mission Bulletin and the *Jesus in the City* Conferences. This networking leads to much more effective campaigning and community development on the ground. The focus has been on Britain but the project has also been a key player in the Edinburgh 2010 international conference.

- **‘Developing confidence in evangelism and in the capacity to speak of God and faith in ways that make sense to all involved’**

This has been a central part of the networking and training nodes’ work. There has been an emphasis on relating to urban culture (with all the dimensions of multi-racial, multi-faith working that that encompasses) and speaking appropriately of God and faith in that context (Voice in the City, Cliff College, ICC Glasgow are involved in the Training node and have a particular emphasis in this area). The project has promoted ‘Time to Talk of God’ to other contacts outside Methodism, has been involved in Project 1 (part of the Team Focus process), linked with Fresh Expressions, and provided input via Team Meetings.

- **‘Encouraging fresh ways of being Church’**

The project has links with the ‘forgotten five’ church planting network. This network equips the churches for church planting in an urban context. It was involved in the 2nd training seminar on cross cultural church planting, involving Crucible and Household of Faith Church. Their involvement in the training node means that their resources are available to a much wider network than would otherwise have been possible.

- **‘Nurturing a culture in the Church which is people-centred and flexible’**

The key aim of the UMDP has been to resource networks and help them to be more effective. The very essence of this is in creating relational networks which facilitate flexible, interactive working. The steadily growing numbers of involved groups show that this has been regarded as effective by those involved. Urban mission groups are usually fragile and over-stretched – they only invest time and energy in networks that deliver! Work was undertaken with Anthea Cox (Coordinating Secretary) on networks as part of the Team focus process.

Despite the fact that the Project was set up before the adoption of the Methodist priorities, it demonstrates remarkable effectiveness against all these priorities.

It also fulfils an earlier recommendation (5:9) in 'The Cities – A Methodist report.' (1997) which states:

'New ways in which Churches can relate to each other in urban areas should be explored. These include ecumenical alliances and the renewal of Methodist interdependency relationships.'

3. PART 3: A SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS OF TWO SURVEYS CARRIED OUT IN AUGUST 2009

The remit for Survey One was to address Terms of Reference 1 and evaluate the 'footprint' of the project through a 'customer satisfaction process'. As some of those surveyed were from within Methodism, it also provides information to help answer Terms of Reference 2. It was conducted over the telephone. It contained mostly 'closed' questions that individuals responded to and the data pool was drawn from the UMDP database. 170 people were identified with whom the UMDP has worked with most closely: a cross-section of 54 people were interviewed, but with a much higher proportion of Methodists (over 50%) than on the database.

The remit for Survey Two was to address Terms of Reference 3 and 4. It provides data about what resources Methodist ministers in urban settings use currently (both from within and beyond Methodism) and an assessment of how adequate they consider these resources to be, and what they feel they lack. Further analysis would therefore inform the Connexion about which resources it produces are best continued, which from outside Methodism it might more actively promote/support, and where there are gaps in provision that it needs to address. It was conducted, in the main, online. It was an invitation only survey and the data pool was based upon a list of all Methodist ministers operating in areas of urban mission. 499 invitations were issued and 107 responded, thereby a response rate of 21%.

The first survey was looking directly at the impact of the work of the Urban Mission Development Project, evaluating its impact so far and considering the way forward. The second survey looked at the resourcing of Methodist ministers operating in the urban field and considered what support they found and needed.

3.1 SATISFACTION SURVEY OF THE UMDP MAILING LIST

- The initial question regarding interaction with the UMDP focused upon respondents' interaction with the UMDP staff workers. Respondents were asked what the nature of the interaction was with the Project and if they felt the work undertaken by the Project could be found anywhere else.
- 55% of respondents do not think that the work undertaken by the Project was being done anywhere else (46% of Methodists and 65% of others).
- When the sample is refined to select only those engaged in or supporting urban mission (ie those with more specialist requirements) the rate changes to 29% of urban Methodists and stays at 65% of other urban practitioners.

The Project **was not** set up to serve the local Methodist practitioners primarily who are relatively well supported by the Methodist City Centre Network, UTU, Urban Bulletin etc. However, with the primary target audience there is a much higher recognition of the uniqueness of the UMDP in its work to link and inform people nationally.

The first 5 services evaluated were printed or web based materials. These are produced or supported by the UMDP. The majority of people who had used these resources knew that to be the case. Using the scale 0 - 6⁴ and looking at those who rated the services at 4 or above for themselves or their organization, the following can be summarised.

About a third of those who had used Urban Bulletin (11 out of 32) and the Urban Mission Website users(7 out of 19), rated it at 4+. Almost two thirds who used Wired Up E News (16 out of 24) rated it as important. Over half of the Urban Mission directory users (8 out of 9) and the recently produced Training Node Brochure (5 out of 7)both of which the UMDP took the lead on and published, rated them at 4+.

The next four questions examined use and value of some special events supported by the project.

These were the Welsh Urban Refreshment Event, the UK Urban Mission Congress (Jesus in the City) 2007, the Yorkshire and Humber Urban Mission Network meetings and Urban Mission Training Seminars. The first three events selected were targeted at either specific groups or specific regions, so as anticipated just a few of the people interviewed had attended them. The UMDP had a significant input in all of these events.

The majority of those who had attended the events rated them at 4 or over for their work. This rose to 90% for the Urban Mission Training Seminars, which were planned and organized by the project. All events scored highly as being recognised and supported by UMDP.

The next section of the questionnaire focused upon respondents' use of the various networks supported by the UMDP.

These networks were for specific groups or urban situations, so as in the previous section just a few of the respondents had attended them. The UMDP's involvement has been in helping to promote them. The UMDP more recently did help to convene the Eccleston Group of national social action agencies meeting. The Network of Urban Evangelicals, the Methodist City Centre Network and National Estates Churches Network were the three networks to score highly in both assessment of value (the second of these scoring between 5 and 6) and awareness of UMDP support.

3.2 THE METHODIST MINISTERS SURVEY

The first section of the Survey asked respondents to identify first Methodist, then non-Methodist resources used, and evaluate the adequacy of the Methodist/non-Methodist resources overall (using a 0 – 5 scale)⁵. The areas addressed were bible study resources, discipleship materials, contextualizing theology and community transformation materials.

⁴ Scale 0=poor through to 6=excellent

⁵ Scale 0= no opinion/not sure, 1=no resource known, 2=fairly adequate, 3= adequate , 4=better than adequate, 5=much better than adequate

- For all the resources, the non-Methodist resource list was longer, indicating the wide range of materials available ecumenically.
- For all the resources, the majority of respondents scored 0 – 2, indicating ‘no opinion, no resource known to fairly adequate’.
- Many of the resources listed under ‘Methodist’ were general resources printed by the Methodist Church rather than urban specific resources.

The second section of the survey asked respondents to state Methodist and non-Methodist sources of information and then to rate how adequate they had found them. The three areas covered were Learning and Study resources, information on Funding, and Legislation and/or policy changes.

- The respondents gave a variety of sources used, both Methodist and non-Methodist.
- For Learning and Study resources, and Funding information providers over 40% of respondents scored 0 or 1 on the adequacy scale and this rose to over 50% for Legislation and/or policy change sources of information.

The third section of the survey asked respondents to identify Methodist, then non-Methodist Networks, and Events and Conferences, and Places which would give information about them.

- Less than half of the respondents identified anything in this section.
- More than 50% scored 0-1 on the adequacy scale for Networks, over 66% scored 0-1 for Events and Conferences and over 50% scored 0-1 for places to get information from.

When asked how important to their ministry it was to have the categories of resources, information and networks listed above, more than half of the responses showed these were considered to be important, very important or essential. This contrasted with the fact that the present resources are often scoring less than ‘adequate’ (scale 3 or below). When asked to consider what sort of focus is required for such resources, the high score was for urban specific resources produced ecumenically rather than those specifically tailored to Methodism and Methodist circumstances.

3.3 THE FUTURE

Those in the first survey who had a Methodist ‘connection’ were asked to think about what would provide the best support for them in the future and the Methodist ministers in the second were asked also about where information on resources would be best based. Both sets of respondents had a majority opting for ecumenical with Methodist input in terms of funding/staffing rather than just Methodist ‘information points’. For some of these resources, the issue is as much about promotion and advocacy as it is provision. There was the opportunity in the second survey for the ministers to raise any concerns which they had or to make final comments. Some of the comments showed that there are ministers who feel isolated and unsupported by the Church and it will be important that the issues raised are given further consideration.

APPENDIX 1

Priorities for the Methodist Church

In partnership with others wherever possible, the Methodist Church will concentrate its prayers, resources, imagination and commitments on this priority:

To proclaim and affirm its conviction of God's love in Christ, for us and for all the world; and renew confidence in God's presence and action in the world and in the Church

As ways towards realising this priority, the Methodist Church will give particular attention to the following:

Underpinning everything we do with God-centred worship and prayer

Supporting community development and action for justice, especially among the most deprived and poor - in Britain and worldwide

Developing confidence in evangelism and in the capacity to speak of God and faith in ways that make sense to all involved

Encouraging fresh ways of being Church

Nurturing a culture in the Church which is people-centred and flexible

APPENDIX 2

UMDP Project Endorsers and other main consultees on post 2010 UM provisions

Project Endorsers:

The Methodist Church; ECUM and its members: CURBS (Children in Urban Situations), Urban Saints, Frontier Youth Trust, Scripture Union Urban & Justice Ministries, Urban Vision, Unlock, Worth Foundation;

and the following bodies: Baptist Urban Group, Church Army, Church of England Board of Social Responsibility and Urban Bishops Panel, Church of God of Prophecy, Church Urban Fund, Churches Racial Justice Network, Churches Community Work Alliance, Methodist Urban Mission Strategy Group, National Estate Churches Network, Network of Urban Evangelicals, Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales Community Relations Committee, UK Urban Mission Congress Trust, Mission Committee of the United Reformed Church, Urban Bulletin, Urban Ministry Training Project (Newcastle), Urban Presence, Urban Theology Unit, World Vision.

Additional key consultees in the consultations on national provision to support urban mission post-2010

CARJ (Catholic Association for Racial Justice), CARITAS – Social Action, Catalyst Trust, Church Action on Poverty, Churches Regional Network, Evangelical Alliance, Faithworks, HOPE 08, Housing Justice, Livability, The Message/Eden Projects, Methodist City Centre Network, Tearfund, Urban Expression, Urban Presence

APPENDIX 3 Summary of Urban Mission Review Chairs' Consultation July 2009

As part of this Urban Mission Review a short survey was sent by email to Methodist District Chairs in June 2009 to get a snapshot of the current issues and need for provision to support this area of mission.

Ten responses were received – one from a completely non-urban District.

This was followed by a structured discussion at the Chairs' Meeting on 1 July 09 (attended by almost all Chairs) and a further informal meeting at Methodist Conference on 8th July attended by six.

1. Statistics from email survey

Each District was asked to number its churches in the five areas of urban mission used by the UMDP (following the Faithful Cities Report classification)

Category	Number of churches
Inner city communities	64
Town/city centres	90
Council/social housing estates	128
Post-industrial communities (including ex-ports, ex pit villages, ex-car manufacturing areas etc)	143
Deprived seaside towns	51

The first three categories are captured in the MCH database, which is used to target urban services. The last two are not. The database might usefully be adapted to ensure that a significant number of ministers in urban settings are not missing out on accessing current and future resources.

2. Need

Reported difficulties facing ministers in urban settings come under three headings and include:

People:

- lack of lay leadership – for traditional church roles, but felt especially acutely with regard to management of projects, and lack of lay support in mission (as opposed to maintenance)
- gathered congregations of ageing people (especially town/city centre churches) and lack of confidence and low self esteem within the congregation
- increasing demands on ministers from those needing help to negotiate the various systems – immigration, housing, social services etc.
- difficulties of attracting staff
- difficulties discerning appropriate models of effective Christian ministry

Funding and plant

- lack of funding – for projects, buildings & additional ministries (though through the sale of properties some are well resourced)
- vandalism and deteriorating property

What happens in church

- Church is an alien environment
- much of the worship is said to be poor quality / unimaginative

3. Resourcing the need within Methodism

The present:

Currently the Methodist Church funds a number of initiatives that particularly support mission in urban contexts:

- Methodist City Centre Network (MCCN)
- World Church Team – re liaison with Methodists settling from overseas (proposed ‘Belonging Together’ Project with Ermal Kirby)
- Personnel & Development Team - volunteer advisor on immigration issues, etc
- Joint Public Issues Group (Baptist, United Reformed and Methodist Church) – legislation advice and lobbying
- Urban Theology Unit – formal study resources
- Bradford Centre for Dialogue and Diversity – interfaith resources

In addition the current Urban Mission Development Project (UMDP) (funded jointly by the Methodist Church & Evangelical Coalition for Urban Mission) is working widely with other groups and denominations to develop support structures regionally and nationally. It does not provide direct support to local churches.

Responses revealed a very patchy awareness of resources from Methodists Connexionally

The future

Seven out of the ten respondents felt there was a gap in provision – most cited issues around personnel/staffing as being missing resources.

Specific gaps mentioned were:

- better co-ordination/signposting to resources
- better support for multi-cultural *and multi-faith* contexts
- better specialist training for people moving into paid posts in urban areas

4. Chairs’ Meeting Responses to the wider proposals

The proposals being consulted upon by the UMDP were outlined in very broad terms. Four Models specific to the Methodist Connexion were offered for a Straw poll **giving a non-binding indication of interest.**

The Model that received most Votes was Model 4 – *‘several District-based resources and other denominational and agency specialists all contribute to a non-aligned, shared support and information hub Project’* which equates most closely to the model favoured in the UMDP’s other Consultations (see Appendix 4 of this UM Review Interim Report)

Further discussion with a small group of Chairs on 8th July raised the following points:

- is urban mission an outdated concept – might we be better concentrating on community transformation as a way of doing mission rather than the context in which it’s done ?
- how can we hold on to the idea of holistic mission where the three elements of faith-sharing, practical service and action and community/civic/political engagement can be integrated ?
- how can we really connect all the different specialisms that are being developed in Methodism – esp. those based around particular people ?

e.g. Somewhere Else in Liverpool, Warrington Borough Ministry, Faith in the Economy work in Leeds (Philip Bee)

NB

The UMDP had conversations with Graham Jones of the Arthur Rank Centre in September 2007.

The ARC view is that there are sufficient contextual distinctives for the two areas of mission to be resourced separately. However, work on the common ground should be done collaboratively where beneficial.

Appendix 4: Resourcing Urban Mission – after 2010

1. Background

A wide range of agencies and denominations⁶ has been part of a series of conversations through autumn 2008 to September 2009. They were drawn from the Evangelical Coalition Urban Mission, the Eccleston Group of national Christian social action/community development/urban mission agencies and the Catholic Urban Round Table Network (mainly individuals), and the remnant of the Ecumenical Urban Officers Forum. From these a general consensus has emerged that:

- a) Eccleston Group would cease to meet on its own (last meeting May 08)
- b) ECUM would cease as a separate organisation in summer 2010
- c) a new project is needed that will:
 1. enhance **support** for ministers/practitioners to equip them for the particulars of urban ministry and mission for community transformation
 2. **strengthen** the confidence and capability of lay people to engage in urban mission and community transformation alongside, or in the absence of, paid leadership
 3. **encourage** large denominations to value and utilise resources in independent specialist agencies and the smaller denominations
 4. be a **voice** of prophetic challenge into the national denominations and agencies to prioritise the allocation of resources to this area of mission, and maybe into national government
 5. **implement** the learning of the Urban Mission Development Project
 6. add **value** to the existing agencies and networks
 7. **utilise** the strengths of the existing support mechanisms

2. Shape of the new project

A number of 'non-aligned' regional nodes (and possible one for each of N Ireland, Wales and Scotland) will be developed as demand arises, coordinated and supported through a central hub to –

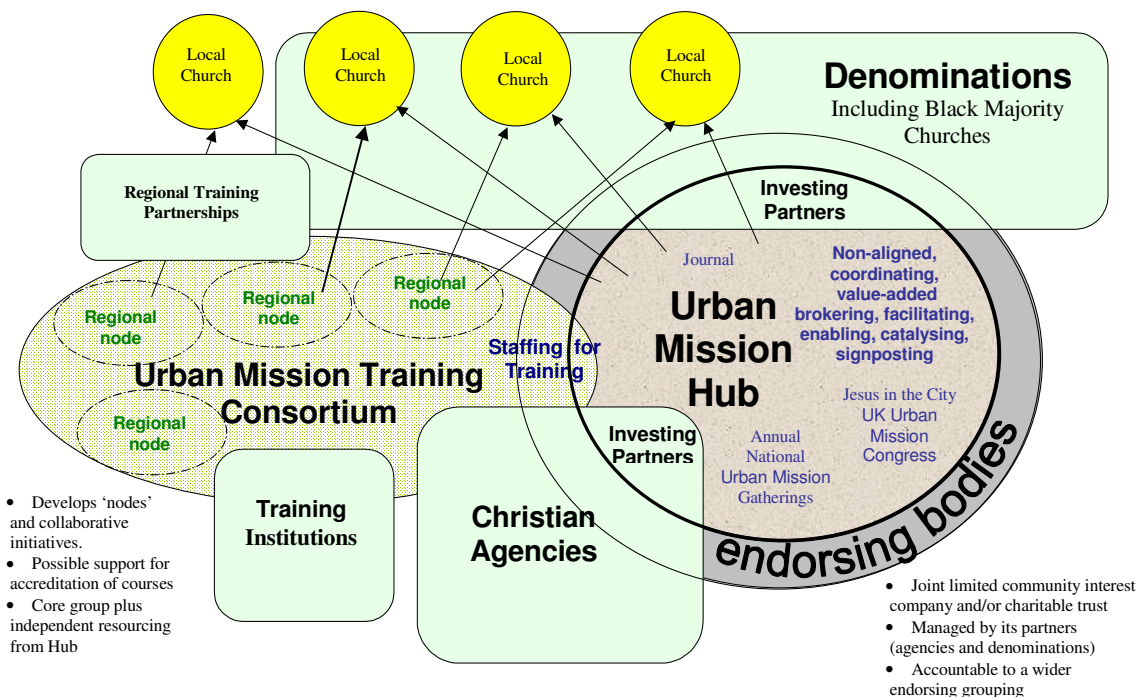
- support the provision and sharing of information on specialist training, and possibly provide accreditation routes (based on the Midlands UM Training Node pilot model)
- support a national coalition of agencies, networks and denominational bodies to work to achieve the above and do together what they cannot individually manage to resource on their own

⁶ See Appendix 2 of this Report

- support specialist and/or regional networks of urban mission practitioners to come together for support, equipping and encouragement
- to support gatherings of urban mission practitioner across the UK
- to provide web-based information on all of the above

Staffing

- envisaged as being:
 - a Christian community development/transformation/social action/urban mission specialist good at building and enabling broad-based networks;
 - a Christian community development/transformation/mission training specialist;
 - an admin specialist with web, IT, communication and marketing skills



Management structure

It is envisaged that the staffed central hub will be accountable to the organisations that came together in 2009, plus other interested parties. These will form a Forum (terms currently being explored include Forum for Mission and Ministry in Urban Contexts or Forum for Christian Presence in Urban Areas or Christian Community Transformation or some funky, one word name yet to be dreamed !)

The central hub will be managed on the Forum's behalf by a smaller group of denominations/agencies either as a charitable body with a trust deed, or a joint enterprise community interest company.

The new body would not take over the work of any existing body or compete with it, but it will inherit the database and knowledge of the existing non-aligned Urban Mission Development Project (UMDP). The UMDP is currently acting on behalf of the Forum to bring a Steering Group into being.

Development process

UMDP is actively fundraising to set this new Project up. At this stage, organisations are being invited by UMDA to send representatives to the Steering Group, which will gradually take over responsibility for bringing the new Project into being from the UMDP Management Group, as the existing UMDP ends in August 2010. The development of more regional nodes (in response to enthusiasm within a Region) will also be supported by UMDP until the new Project comes into being.