

REPORT TO THE METHODIST COUNCIL FROM THE METHODIST CONNEXIONAL MANSE

Basic Information

Contact Name and Details	Andrew Thorneley, Chair of the Methodist Connexional Manse Trustees, alt@cartmells.co.uk
Status of Paper	Final
Action Required	Decision
Draft Resolution	The Council receives the report of the Connexional Manse Trustees.
Alternative Options to Consider, if Any	

Summary of Content

Subject and Aims	This paper is to report the activities of the Connexional Manse Trustees for the year ended 31 August 2009.
Main Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This report outlines for the information of the Methodist Council, the oversight and other activities of the Connexional Manses Trustees, including Manse purchases and sales. • The Trustees wish to pay tribute to the advice and support they have received throughout a difficult year from the Finance Dept. and the Support Staff at MCH. • The Trustees would welcome further dialogue to refine the guidelines on the allocation and management of the Connexional Manses.
Background Context and Relevant Documents (with function)	
Consultations	

Summary of Impact

Standing Orders	
Faith and Order	
Financial	
Personnel	
Legal	
Wider Connexional	
External (e.g. ecumenical)	
Risk	

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TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2009

1. Constitution and Operational Guidelines

- 1.1. The Trustees were established by The Methodist Council for the management, maintenance and sale/purchase of manses for presbyters and deacons who are members of the Connexional Team. (See Methodist Council minutes 95.3.29; 96.3.18; 98.2.19; MC/03/05).
- 1.2. Following the November 2007 meeting with David Deeks and his revised paper received at the February 2008 meeting the Trustees continued to be aware that care would be needed in dealing with sensitive issues such as the difference between a requirement for the Trustees to provide a manse and a request for that manse to be to a certain standard or in a particular location.
- 1.3. However, the meeting referred to in para. 10.2 of last year's Report between the Trustees and officers at MCH unfortunately has yet to take place. No doubt the implementation of the changes to the Connexional Team and the Strategy and Resources Committee (SRC) and those at MCH generally has been responsible. The Trustees now regard it as of the utmost importance that such a meeting with members of the SRC should be held at the earliest opportunity to discuss the Trustees' role in the new set-up, to review their "constitution" and the Guidelines for the sale/purchase/management of Connexional manses.
- 1.4. These and other pressing issues were also referred to in para. 10 of the Trustees' response to the Pro-forma for Review of Committees submitted on 27 May 2009. That the Trustees still await comments from the Connexional Team or the SRC on these issues demonstrates the frustration they experience at the lack of progress in tackling these issues.

2. List of Trustees

Mr Andrew Thorneley (Chair)
Mr John Bailey
Mr David Duxbury
Mr Harvey Allen
Mrs Hilary Porter
The Revd Dr Stuart Jordan

3. Trustee Changes

There were no changes during the year.
The Trustees were still trying to recruit a new trustee from the Birmingham/Warwickshire area.

4. Manse purchases and sales

The Trustees continued to be involved throughout this year not only in the management of some 34 Connexional manses but also in the purchase and sale of several manses.

4.1. Manse Purchases

4.1.1 Purchases completed during the year

December 2008 7, Bourne Close Thames Ditton KT7 OEA £598,000
April 2009 24, Bewicke View Birtley Co. Durham £293,000
June 2009 26, Andover Road North, Winchester £455,000
June 2009 11, Rockside Bristol-freehold reversion only-£850

4.1.2 Purchases in progress at 31 August 2009

None

4.2 Manse Sales

4.2.1 Sales completed during the year

September 2008 14, Rydal Gardens Wembley London £373,000

November 2008 54, Upper Cranbrook Road Bristol £387,500

April 2009 2, Wellington Drive Grantham £250,000

June 2009 138, Lambton Road Raynes Park London £769,000

4.2.2 Sales in progress at 31 August 2009

90, Rothbury Road, Newton Hall, Durham DH1 5QB

59, Albion Crescent Lincoln temporarily let on an Assured Short hold Tenancy (AST)

21, Park Road Stretford ditto, see Para. 5 below

5. Methodist Lay Employees Pension Fund (MLEPF)

At the direction of the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (TMCP) the Trustees continued to act as the Managing Trustees of the four manses owned by or on behalf of the Trustees for Methodist Connexional Funds (Registered) (TMCF) for the benefit of MLEPF, namely:-

1, Manor Drive, Wragby, Market Rasen, Lincs. LN8 5SL

1, Crest View, Greenhithe, Kent DA9 9QY

54, Tenbury Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham B14 6AH

21, Park Road, Stretford, Manchester M32 8FE

The Tenancy Agreements for the first three of the above manses, under which TMCF is the landlord and TMCP acting by the Trustees is the tenant, expired on 31 August 2008. Following negotiations the tenancies were renewed at increased rents for a further term of two years.

Note that after Rev. Trevor Dixon vacated 21, Park Road Stretford on his retirement in August 2008 that manse was advertised for sale but withdrawn from the market and is now let on an AST through Letting Agents in Stretford. The position will be reviewed in March 2010.

6. Model Trusts

The Trustees are indebted to Tim Warren and Tom Cadman at Solicitors Potheary, Witham, Weld (PWW) for their advice and expertise with regard to the MLEPF manses. PWW have also acted for the Trustees on the great majority of the sales and purchases during the year.

7. 14, Rydal Gardens Wembley

On 20 August 2007 the Willesden County Court made an order in favour of the Trustees for Methodist Missionary Trust Association against the former tenant Don Carrera for him to give vacant possession of this property on or before 3 September 2007 and for £17,426.40p arrears of rent and legal costs of £650, a total of £18,076.40p to be paid on or before 3 September 2007.

Note that:-

The Trustees were advised on 11 September that Mr. Carrera had returned the keys to the Letting Agents, Allan Howard & Co.,

Steps have been taken by PWW to recover the judgment debt of £18,076.40p from Mr. Carrera, but nothing has been recovered.

After due consideration and having taken legal advice from PWW, the Trustees with great regret wrote-off the judgment debt for accounting purposes.

8. Financial Matters, Quinquennial Reports etc.

- 8.1. The funding for the purchases of properties as manses has been provided from the General Fund and/or the Auxiliary Fund through the Finance Department at Methodist Church House. Sales are also channelled through the Finance Dept., liaising with the Property Office in Manchester.
- 8.2. At their meetings the Trustees have received Financial Reports, reviewed maintenance programmes and monitored budget performance on capital and revenue expenditure.
- 8.3. They have also monitored the carrying out of District Visits and Quinquennial Inspections, noting the reports and arranging for the recommendations for the repairs/specialist inspections agreed, to be implemented within the relevant timescale whenever practicable and reasonable.

9. Conclusion

Finally, the Trustees wish to pay tribute to the advice and support they have received throughout a difficult year from the Finance Dept. and the Support Staff at MCH and also to the assistance provided by the Local Contacts for the Connexional manses, who provide a valuable link between the manse occupants and the Trustees.

The Trustees are looking forward to continuing their role in support of the Connexional Team and the SRC during the coming year. They repeat what they expressed at the end of last year's Report that they would welcome a dialogue to refine the guidelines on the allocation and management of the Connexional Manses, which should also address the other issues raised in this Report.

Andrew Thorneley
Chair of the Methodist Connexional Manse Trustees
23 February 2010

Resolution: The Council receives the report of the Connexional Manse Trustees.