

## Role Description – Volunteer position

### ROLE

Chair of the Methodist Heritage Committee

### PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

To role of the **Chair of the Methodist Heritage Committee** is to provide leadership for the Methodist Heritage Committee in preserving and using the whole heritage of the Methodist Church (including buildings, artefacts, archives and intangibles such as hymnody) for mission.

### ROLE RESPONSIBILITIES

The chair of the Methodist Heritage Committee will be expected:

- To advocate for Methodist Heritage as a tool for contemporary mission in the Methodist Church.
- To lead on shaping the vision for the 5-10 years for Methodist Heritage, in its many facets, as tools for mission, across the Connexion, in order to help the Church to respond to *Our Calling* (specifically September 2024–August 2029, but mindful of 2032 and upcoming centenary of the Union).
- To keep up to date on developments in Mission in the Methodist Church and, in developing any strategy, to consider the impact on the Heritage work of the significant strategies adopted by the Methodist Conference to shape the life and mission of the Church since 2020/2021. As well as re-establishing the vision statement, *Our Calling*, as the strategic driver for the Church (2021), these have included the *Justice, Dignity and Solidarity* strategy (for EDI, 2021); *God for All* (for evangelism and church growth and development, 2022), and *Walking with Micah* (for social justice and social action, 2023). In addition, we expect the 2024 Conference to consider the next phase of development for the *God for All* strategy, which will reference Heritage as a setting/tool for evangelism.
- To have oversight of the support and review of work to deliver that vision.
- To chair in person meetings of the Committee (at least one per year).
- To chair online meetings of the Committee (up to three per year).
- To ensure effective conferring in the Committee: attentive scrutiny of the reports presented to it and bring the Committee’s discussions to points of resolution.
- To participate in email correspondence and electronic decision-making between meetings of the Committee, both as a member of the Committee and, when required, in an executive capacity.
- As appropriate, to serve on working-groups of the Committee.
- To be accountable to the Connexional Council via the Mission Committee for discharging the duties of the Committee as specified in the Standing Orders of the Methodist Church, particularly S.O.337. See: [The Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church](https://d1yuutt686hfi0.cloudfront.net) ([d1yuutt686hfi0.cloudfront.net](https://d1yuutt686hfi0.cloudfront.net))
- To report the work and recommendations of the Committee to the Mission Committee and on occasion to the Connexional Council or the Conference.
- To represent the Committee, its work and its decisions.

Key relationships will include:

- Methodist Heritage Committee members, in particular the chair of the Archives & Records Advisory Group (a sub-group of the Committee, convened under S.O.337(5)) and the Liaison Officers for Methodist Archives and for Methodist Collections (appointed by the Connexional Council according to S.O.337(4))
- Mission Committee, in particular the 'link member' allocated to 'walk alongside' the work of Heritage.
- The Connexional Team, specifically the Mission team through the Methodist Heritage & Collections Officer
- Trustees and curators/managers of key Methodist heritage sites, archives and libraries:
  - Four accredited Methodist museums identified as being of particular significance to the wider Connexion (whose representative trustees are members of the Committee), namely: Englesea Brook Chapel and Museum of Primitive Methodism; John Wesley's New Room, Bristol; Wesley's Chapel, John Wesley's House and the Museum of Methodism, City Road, London; The Old Rectory, Epworth, Lincolnshire.
  - Methodist Archives & Research Centre, John Rylands Research Institute & Library, University of Manchester (where the Conference archives are deposited)
  - School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) Library, University of London (where the Methodist Missionary Society archives are deposited).
- On an ad-hoc basis, 'internally': Methodist district archivists, circuit archivists (or circuit administrators with circuit archiving responsibilities) and individual historic site and chapel contacts.
- From time to time, other bodies 'externally' to the Methodist Church with interests in church heritage and faith tourism, e.g., RC Patrimony Sub-committee, CofE Cathedrals & Church Buildings Division, Arts Council, The National Archives, Churches Visitor & Tourism Association, Historic England (Places of Worship) or Heritage Alliance's Historic Religious Buildings Alliance.

## Person Specification

### Experience

Knowledge and experience of the heritage 'landscape' in Britain, preferably with some awareness of global issues in the sector.

Professional expertise in at least one aspect of the conservation and use case for heritage, or in heritage policy and funding, e.g., building preservation, collections care, or records management and archiving.

Preferably, some experience of Church heritage, such as conservation of church fabric or records, or advocating for access to places of worship for visitors.

### Abilities, Knowledge and Skills

Understand the work and issues outlined in the 2008 Conference report *Methodist Heritage and Contemporary Mission*, and be able to translate them into practical mission opportunities for heritage sites and archives according to the strategic priorities of the Methodist Church today.

Some knowledge of Methodist history.

Some knowledge of the strategies shaping Mission in the Methodist Church, and ability to apply them to the work of Heritage.

Understanding of the value of digital platforms for data and communications, and the use of social media. Preferably with user experience.

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| Understanding of Methodist policy and procedures at local and connexional levels.  |
| Good knowledge of Government policy and funding routes in the heritage sector.   |
| An experienced chair of meetings, able to ensure participation and bring discussions to points of resolution.  |
| Ability to absorb quickly a wide-range of detailed issues.   |
| Ability to think strategically.  |
| Ability to connect vision, aims and strategies through theological reflection.   |
| Ability to work as a part of team.   |
| Ability to communicate effectively, orally and in writing. Familiar with making presentations, and drafting reports for boards and committees.   |
| Basic computer literacy and familiarity with word-processing, email and internet access.   |
| <b>Personal Qualities</b>  |
| In sympathy with the ethos of the Methodist Church.  |
| Understanding of and sympathy with the strategic direction of the mission of the Methodist Church and a clear understanding of how the Church's heritage can contribute to this mission.   |
| Servant leader - able to show humility and offer direction.  |
| Organised and systematic in approach: meticulous administratively, with the capacity for a high degree of concentration and attention to detail.   |
| Works collaboratively and flexibly with staff and volunteers, encouraging communication and the sharing of information and expertise.  |
| Positive about connexionalism and the benefits of various interests working together at all levels (e.g., among the key heritage sites/museums or the Heritage Committee with other relevant committees, such as Listed Buildings Advisory Committee). |
| Demonstrates awareness of, and sensitivity to, issues of equality, diversity and inclusion with a commitment to the unique value of the individual in all aspects of the Church's life.  |
| Willing and able to travel occasionally by public or personal transport to meetings, to represent the Committee and for visits to heritage sites and archives, both in and outside office hours (expenses paid).                                       |