

**Minutes of the Whitehaven Circuit Meeting on Wednesday 14 December 2016  
at 7.30pm at Frizington**

Present: Grace Adamson, Philip Adamson, David Andrews, Cyril Atkinson, Alistair Bell, Katie Bell, Gillian Bounds, Ian Coates, Jackie Davies, Gwynneth Everett, Robert Fearon, Margaret Hargreaves, Wendy Kilworth-Mason (chair), Andy Lennox, Doug McDevitte, Linda McDevitte, Katrina MacEwan, Gill Mitchell, Michael Watts

Apologies: Alec Bounds, Alan Coyles, David Davies, Lindsay Gray, Alison Hanshaw, Karen James, Lorrie Ilarkham, Sandra McAdam, Alan Moore, Mavis Moore, John Pryde, Nan Pryde, Maureen Pyke, Mary Snape

1. **Opening devotions** were led by the Chair. The death of Ossie Coyles, a former member of the meeting was noted. His funeral is on Monday 19 December at 10.00am at the crematorium. Sympathy was also expressed to Gillian Bounds.
2. **Constitution of the meeting:** the list circulated was confirmed.
3. **Minutes** of the meeting of 14 September were agreed. There were no matters arising.
4. **Networking**
  - i. **Growing together** (God for all) The planning meeting for *Moving mountains* (the new name for the 8-11 March 2018 mission) is on 16 February at 7.00 for 7.30pm at St Andrew's Mirehouse. Rev Becky Gibbs' induction is at St Bees Priory on 3 March at 7.00pm. Whitehaven mission community launch is on 30 April at Whitehaven civic hall at 2.30pm.
  - ii. **Dementia awareness** meeting is on 11 January at 2.00pm at the Meeting place.
  - iii. **Circuit fundraising** Saturday 20 May at Cleator Moor (time to be arranged).
  - iv. **Nicolas Lowe appeal** was noted.
5. **Resources**
  - i. **Finance**
    - a. **Accounts** for 2015-16 (which have been independently examined with thanks to Glynis Hayton) were accepted. Some guidance would be circulated to churches for next year's shares.
    - b. The revised **reserves policy** was agreed (see below).
    - c. Churches were reminded to let Alistair have **standard forms of accounts** by the end of December.
    - d. **Ron Pond bequest** It was agreed our preference would be for the initial bequest from this former Lowther Street member of c£48,500 to be transferred to the circuit but if one congregation has to be specified then Hensingham would receive it with the request to Hensingham church council that they consider whether any of the money should be transferred to other churches.
  - ii. **Property**
    - e. **Moresby Parks** land sale is now awaiting signatures from the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes and the buyers.

*f.* **Manse** Ian Coates reported that the roof repairs have been postponed until spring. Several minor items have been done and other work is progressing.

**iii. People**

**a. Property steward** vacancy

**b. Circuit steward** vacancy from September – churches were asked to consider nominating someone, bearing in mind the congregations currently providing stewards.

**iv. Administration** The circuit safeguarding policy was adopted with the same wording as the current one (except for the new date – see below). It was noted that Jackie Davies needs to see church policies each year (even if it is on the Anglican model).

**6. Worship**

- i. Leaders of worship and preachers' meeting** 7 December - Gillian Bounds reported on worship aspects of mission that we are open to explore the breadth and depth of worship in our desire to draw closer to God. Churches generally enjoy a variety of worship and specific requests had been noted. From January Moresby Parks services are at 3.00pm and from February led by Methodists on the first Sunday and additionally by Anglicans on the second and fourth Sundays.
- ii. Spirituality** Gillian reported on Jeff Thomas' visit on 23 October. In view of the small attendance it was felt that this was not to time to move forward on spirituality.

**7. Mission**

- i. Circuit mission priorities** In the light of those of churches these would be edited by Wendy Kilworth-Mason, Philip Adamson and Andy Lennox and concise, constructive, measurable proposals brought back to the next meeting.
- ii. Moresby Parks future arrangements** Once the land sale goes through the church council is intending to ask the circuit meeting to take responsibility for the building and issue a licence to St Bridget's although work there is growing and payment being made to the circuit.
- iii. Public issues** report was received.

**8. Dates of meetings** 15 March at Cleator Moor, 21 June at Seascale and 20 September at the Meeting Place all at 7.30pm.

## **Reserves policy for general funds 2016-17**

For general funds the circuit policy is to hold six months' expenditure on stipends, utilities, manse routine repairs and district share (£32k) and one quarter's circuit running costs (£2,250) in addition to a maximum of a further £25k towards major repair and maintenance to the manse at Westfield Drive.

As such a transfer of £5,000 to the circuit model trust fund is to be made to increase the reserves held to designated to support the purchase of a diaconal manse as this remains an option for the circuit. These funds are not restricted to that purpose and can be put to any purpose permitted for model trust monies.

### **Reserves policy for restricted funds**

The circuit carries three restricted funds. At year end they were funded as follows:

Benevolence fund £107, Mission fund £710 and Model trust fund £129,585.

The Benevolence fund is in place by virtue of previous donations for the relief of poverty and distress and income is not actively sought.

The Mission fund receives regular donations and is used to support the missional work of the circuit, currently the Whitehaven cafe church in particular.

The Model trust fund is maintained in accordance with standing orders. In recent years monies have been used to support the ongoing work of the circuit and this support is likely to be required again in the near future. This is clearly undesirable since it is unsustainable in the relatively near term. Income to the Model trust fund has been received from sale of the Lowca chapel (£53,184) and this has been designated to support the work of the Children's and families' worker. Income from the sale of the Tillydrine manse (£116,746) is designated to be held to help fund the purchase of a diaconal manse should one be required in the future. This money can be supplemented for that purpose for the next four years by that taken as property fund levy after the sale, £44,500.

## Whitehaven Methodist Circuit Safeguarding Policy 2016-17

This policy addresses the safeguarding of all those who are vulnerable. It is intended to be a dynamic policy and to support the Circuit in being a safe supportive and caring community for children, young people, vulnerable adults, for survivors of abuse, for communities, and for those affected by abuse. It is to be read in conjunction with the *Methodist Safeguarding Handbook (2010)* with the summaries of responsibilities/actions to be taken at Circuit level to be found in Appendix C of the section *Safeguarding Children & Young People* (pp.46-47) and Appendix B of the *Safeguarding Adults* section (p.36). The handbook can be accessed on line at <http://methodist.org.uk/ministers-and-office-holders/safeguarding/methodist-safeguarding-policy>.

The Methodist Church, along with the whole Christian community, believes each person has a value and dignity which comes directly from God's creation of male and female in God's own image and likeness. Christians see this as fulfilled by God's re-creation of us in Christ. Among other things, this implies a duty to value all people as bearing the image of God and therefore to protect them from harm.

The Whitehaven Circuit fully agrees with the Connexional statement reiterated in *Creating Safer Space 2007*:

*As the people of the Methodist Church we are concerned with the wholeness of each individual within God's purpose for everyone. We seek to safeguard all members of the church community of all ages*

and is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and vulnerable adults, recognising that their needs are paramount. It will follow legislation, guidance and recognised good practice.

The Circuit recognises that none of us is invulnerable but that there is a particular care for those whose vulnerability is increased by situations, by disabilities, or by reduction in capacities. It acknowledges that this increased vulnerability may be temporary or permanent and may be visible or invisible, but that it does not diminish our humanity, and seeks to affirm the gifts and graces of all God's people.

The Circuit recognises the serious issue of the abuse of children, young people and vulnerable adults which may take the form of physical, emotional, sexual, financial, spiritual or institutional abuse, or neglect. It acknowledges the effects these may have on people and their development, including spiritual and religious development. It accepts its responsibility for ensuring that all people are safe in its care and that their dignity and right to be heard is maintained. It accepts its responsibility to support, listen to and work for healing with survivors, offenders, communities, and those who care about them. It takes seriously the issues of promotion of welfare so that each of us can reach our full potential in God's grace.

The Circuit commits itself to the provision of support, advice and training for lay and ordained people, which will ensure people are clear and confident about their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding, and to promote the welfare of those who may be vulnerable.

The Circuit commits itself to respond without delay to any allegation or cause for concern that a child, young person or vulnerable adult may have been harmed, whether in the Church or in another context; to challenge the abuse of power of anyone in a position of trust; and to provide informed pastoral care to those in need, including the supervision of those who have committed criminal offences.

The Circuit appoints Mrs Jackie Davies as Safeguarding Adults Coordinator and Mrs Lorrie Larkham as Safeguarding Children Coordinator and supports them in their roles.

This policy was agreed at the Circuit Meeting held on 14 December 2016. It will be reviewed annually.

Signed ..... Chair of Circuit Meeting

### Appendix

#### Definitions:

**Children:** A child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. (*Methodist Safeguarding Handbook (2010), Safeguarding Children & Young People* section, p.9.) Therefore, technically, the term 'children' covers 'children and young people'.

**Vulnerable Adults:** An adult is defined as vulnerable when they are in receipt of a "regulated activity" in relation to vulnerable adults. (*Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.*)

#### Regulated activity:

- the provision of health care treatment in any setting by a health care professional, or by a person acting under the direction or supervision of a health care professional such as a health care assistant in a hospital or care home . This includes first aid provided by organisations such as St John's Ambulance, as is the case for children;
- the provision of relevant personal care in any setting to a person who needs the care because of age, illness or disability. Relevant personal care is defined at new sub-paragraph (3B) of Schedule 4 to the SVGA and includes physical care such as assistance with eating, drinking, toileting, washing and dressing; prompting, together with supervision, for those activities, where such prompting and supervision are necessary for their execution; and any training, instruction, advice or guidance necessary for those activities (for example, a person given training on how to manage successfully their own chronic illness or disability);
- the provision of relevant social work by a social worker to clients or potential clients.
- the provision of assistance, in relation to general household matters, to a person who requires it because of age, illness or disability. This is defined as day to day assistance with paying bills, shopping or managing the person's cash;
- the provision of assistance to a person where there is a formal arrangement in place which allows a person to make welfare and/or financial decisions on behalf of another person;
- the transportation of individuals where that transport is provided because of age, health or disability. The Government has stated that regulations will set out the specific circumstances when this subsection applies, but broadly it is intended to cover ambulance services, transport to and from day care services where the transport is arranged by (or on behalf of) the day care provider, hospital porters and patient transport.

#### Responding to allegations of abuse:

Under no circumstances should anyone carry out their own investigation into the allegation or suspicion of abuse or neglect or interview the child/adult (other than listening to the initial disclosure) but should report as soon as possible to the Superintendent Minister, the Minister in Pastoral Charge or a Circuit Safeguarding Officer who will immediately contact the Social Services Department giving any details available. It is the task of Social Services to investigate the matter fully.

For further detail about responding to allegations of child abuse, see *Methodist Safeguarding Handbook (2010), Safeguarding Children & Young People* section pp.25-29 and pp.52-53 and for allegations of the abuse of a vulnerable adult, see *Methodist Safeguarding Handbook (2010), Safeguarding Adults* section, pp.25-27 and p.40.

### **Circuit Events involving Children, Young People or Vulnerable Adults**

Circuit events should follow good Safeguarding practice and be planned effectively with attention being given to staff/volunteer roles and responsibilities, risk assessments, insurance, leader to participant ratios, first aid personnel, and health and ability needs. Where volunteers have not received a DBS check and/or Safeguarding training through their local church then these need to be completed.

### **Summary of roles and responsibilities**

#### ***Circuit Meeting Secretary***

Circulate copies of Circuit policy to local churches.

#### ***Circuit Stewards/Leadership Team***

1. Ensure Circuit groups or events follow Safeguarding policy and procedures.
2. Ensure that training initiatives are developed and delivered and that office holders attend.
3. Ensure good practice.

#### ***Circuit Safeguarding Adults Coordinator and Circuit Safeguarding Children Coordinator***

1. Support and advise the Circuit Ministers, the Circuit Stewards and local church Safeguarding Coordinators in fulfilling their roles.
2. Provide a point of reference to advise on Safeguarding issues.
3. Liaise with the District Safeguarding Group.
4. With the support of the Superintendent ensure that any incidents and allegations are followed up or referred as necessary.

#### ***Superintendent***

1. Develop a policy on Safeguarding and an implementation plan, ensure that the Circuit Meeting reviews the policy annually, and inform ecumenical partners about it.
2. Ensure the Circuit Meeting appoints a Safeguarding Adults Coordinator and a Safeguarding Children Coordinator and that the details of those people are passed to the District Office.
3. Ensure that all Circuit Office holders (including Local Preachers) complete Safeguarding forms and vetting procedures before appointment (or approval for going 'on trial') and that records are kept.
4. Ensure training opportunities are in place for all workers with children, vulnerable adults, for staff of the Circuit and for members of the local churches and that records of attendance are kept.
5. Supervise and review Circuit workers with children, young people and vulnerable adults regularly.
6. Support the Safeguarding Adults Coordinator and the Safeguarding Children Coordinator in their work, providing access to resources to enable them to fulfil their functions.
7. Ensure all churches have appropriate and up-to-date Safeguarding policies.
8. Support those in pastoral charge in exercising responsibility for the implementation of Safeguarding policy and practice.
9. Ensure the provision of pastoral support for those involved in issues of abuse and in management of sex offenders.
10. Ensure records of Safeguarding concerns are kept indefinitely.