

**Whitehaven Circuit Meeting Minutes on Wednesday 20 September 2017
at 7.30pm at the Meeting Place, Egremont**

Present: David Andrews, Cyril Atkinson, Gillian Bounds, Alan Coyles, Barbara Coyles, Jackie Davies, Robert Fearon, Margaret Hargreaves, Wendy Kilworth-Mason (chair), Lorrie Larkham, Andy Lennox, Sandra McAdam, Jean Millie, Gill Mitchell, Dorothy Nevinson, Nan Pryde, Mary Snape, Mandy Taylor
Apologies: Grace Adamson, Philip Adamson, Alistair Bell, Katie Bell, Alec Bounds, Ian Coates, David Davies, Gwynneth Everett, Allison Hanshaw, Karen James, Doug McDevitte, Linda McDevitte, Alan Moore, Mavis Moore, John Pryde, Maureen Pyke
In attendance: Luke Bounds, Paul Bounds

Opening devotions were led by the chair.

Constitution of the meeting: the list circulated with the attendance sheet was confirmed.

Future of the circuits in West Cumbria

Further discussion took place which was open to all members in the circuit about possible changes to circuit boundaries in Cumbria including a YouTube video explaining the position from the Chair of the district.

These are our replies to the following questions:

1: What would be lost by this possible change in circuit boundaries in the mission of the church?

More remote

Less involvement because of longer distances for travel and meeting attendance

Sense of immediate loss of identity

Lack of ministerial presence eg for funerals and public events – need to use other leaders

Loss of ordained leadership

Could lead to closure of buildings – is that a loss?

Could lose preachers

2: What would be gained by this change in circuit boundaries in the mission of the church?

More preachers available throughout new circuit but may see less of current regulars

Less of a minister better than no minister – smaller numbers of ministers more likely to be able to be recruited

Jobs not being duplicated (eg circuit stewards) freeing some people for mission

Sharing with our neighbours

Improved training with more opportunities available

Buying in specialisms if needed – admin, finance, property, young people

Gives a breathing space before next generation

Wider range of ministerial talent possible than in single minister circuits

Equalise use of preachers (underused in some circuits and overworked in others)

Fits well with mission communities and ecumenical arrangements although ministerial involvement necessarily limited

Room to fund initiatives

3: How would you action a way forward which takes seriously the needs of ordained ministry for the future of Methodism in Cumbria?

Not clear of meaning of question but...

Difficult to provide attractive posts at present in west Cumbria particularly
Geography remains a hindrance

Larger circuits could provide some specialisation

Opportunity to recruit mix including probationers, deacons, pioneer ministers and lay
appointments

Should the invitation system be altered so that vacancies after a year have priority?

Less likely to end up with ministers who are tired at the end of their ministry

Creating fulfilling roles (lay ones too)

Business meeting

1. **Minutes** of the meeting of 21 June were approved.
2. **Matters arising** Minute 2 I a **Ron Pond bequest** Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes had reversed their decision and allocated the fund to Hensingham. It was decided not to contest this.
3. **Resources**
 - i. **People**
 - a. **Property steward** vacancy
 - b. **Circuit steward** vacancy (including financial steward): David Davies was appointed as an additional steward. Mandy Taylor would take responsibility for finance with Alec Bounds acting as bookkeeper. They were thanked for volunteering and David Andrews was thanked for his period as circuit steward with a gift.
 - c. **Link editor** Please contact Alec Bounds if you are willing to take over as Alec cannot continue to edit it as well as being bookkeeper.
 - ii. **Finance**
 - a. 2016-17 draft accounts were accepted subject to independent examination. Alistair was thanked for all his work as circuit treasurer. It was agreed to pay last year's and this year's district model trust fund levy from the model trust fund.
 - b. Mission accounts for 2016-17 were received. Maureen Pyke was thanked for her continuing work.
 - c. Loan to Shackles Off – it was agreed to loan up to £4,000 if needed until December to cover late payment of grants.
 - d. Dementia Project Officer – it was agreed to make a donation of £100 from the circuit Benevolence Fund in lieu of church collections.
 - iii. **Property**
 - a. **Moresby Parks** David Andrews reported that the sale of land should be completed by 16 November. A final church council is due to be held on 5 December.
We have got a qualified surveyor's report for a valuation of the building from Hyde Harrington which says
“We would not recommend the property be advertised for sale as it is unlikely that a higher bid be achieved by so doing...We are of the opinion that the current market value of the property with the benefit of vacant possession is £50,000...

We recommend that the property is sold for continued community and worship use, which would be within the aims and objectives of the charity, at the market rate stated above. It was agreed to recommend to the church council that we offer the chapel for sale to Moresby Parish for £50,000 and appoint Sintons as our solicitors.

If the sale goes through it was agreed to make a gift of £10,000 from the circuit to the parish towards ongoing costs of providing a place of worship in Moresby Parks.

b. **Manse** Ian Coates reported that the roof has been completed, patio and paved areas pressure washed and coping stones on patio walls re pointed, gas boiler and heating serviced and an outside hosepipe fitted. He was waiting for John Garner to fit loft light and fix electrical fault with sockets and hopes to paint shed and fencing ready for the quinquennial inspection.

c. **Worship** Leaders of worship and preachers' meeting 6 September: on **Moving Mountains** it was noted that mission teams will be available for Sunday morning on 11 March and churches should tell Gillian Bounds whether they will be using someone from the team.

During **Wendy's sabbatical**, probably February-April, it was agreed that a circuit service would be held at 2.30pm on the fourth Sunday afternoon each month as the only service that day except for any ecumenical arrangements but with churches able to have local arrangements if required in the morning or evening.

4. **Mission**

- i. **Public issues** It was agreed that Ian Parker would send a polite letter to the circuit's bank (NatWest) in support of Christian Aid's campaign for banks to make the Big Shift away from fossil fuels and into support for renewable energy.
- ii. **Safeguarding** Church councils were reminded to review policies at autumn meetings, to display them and let Jackie Davies have a revised copy. Refresher training on 11 October at 6.30pm at the Meeting Place is for those who did not attend in Workington.
- iii. **Church councils** are also reminded that churches which are not yet involved in Moving mountains should consider what to do, preferably ecumenically; whether they would like to continue having love feasts from time to time; and to review their mission priorities and report back in December.

5. **Networking**

- i. **Conference** The conference digest had been circulated. More information is on the Methodist church website.
- ii. **Synod** 9 September Gillian reported particularly on workshops on Equality, diversity and inclusion workshops and the launch of *A discipling presence* with good coverage of rural ministry.

- iii. **Celebrating together** Made in God's image: exploring gender and discipleship 7 October 10.00am-4.00pm at Ambleside church centre.
 - iv. **Christian Aid** Salome Ntububa, regional emergency manager for Central Africa (Churches Together in Egremont and district One world week event) 15 October 2.30pm at the Meeting place.
6. **Dates of meetings** 6 December at Gosforth including a speaker from this year's circuit charity, Calderwood House, 21 March 2018 at St Bees and 20 June at Frizington all at 7.30pm.

**Please send items and reports for the December meeting to David Andrews by
15 November**

The December meeting is also the copy date for the autumn *Link*