

September 2022

# PROPERTY MATTERS

The Methodist Church 

Welcome to the September edition of Property Matters with a focus on property-related updates and guidance.

For the latest property guidance, please refer to the [Property pages](#).

If you have any feedback, please email the [Property Support Team](#).

## Warm Spaces

Churches across the country are responding to the unprecedented rises in fuel costs by offering to become warm spaces. [The Warm Welcome project](#) has been coordinated by the Churchworks Commission, of which the Methodist Church is a part, to ensure that those who are unable to heat their homes this winter may find a warm, free and friendly welcome in their local church. The Warm Welcome network will offer churches that sign up free practical advice and resources to help set up and run a warm space initiative. [Click here to find out more.](#)



The Connexion are working on ways to support churches involved in this project and with their own increased energy bills, details of which will be made available as soon as possible. The Evangelism and Growth team have produced helpful resources, including a videos and advice on how to set up a warm space.

[Click here to learn more.](#)

## Energy Bill Support

The government has published guidance on the energy bills support package that was announced by the Prime Minister. For consumers, the Energy Price Guarantee will “ensure that a typical household in Great Britain pays an average £2,500 a year on their energy bill, for the next 2 years, from 1 October 2022.”



A new six-month scheme for businesses and other non-domestic energy users (including charities and public sector organisations like schools) will be offered support as is being provided for consumers. After this initial six-month scheme, the Government will provide ongoing focused support for vulnerable industries. There will be a review in three months' time to consider where this should be targeted to make sure those most in need get support. [Click here to read more.](#)

## Energy Cost Survey

Trevor Cooper, Chair, and Becky Payne, Development Director, of the [Historic Religious Buildings Alliance](#) (HRBA) are seeking hard evidence about the likely extra energy costs that will be incurred by historic churches and other places of worship this winter for its parent organisation, the Heritage Alliance, to present to Government, as follows:



### ENERGY COSTS THIS WINTER

1. We would like to know your energy costs last winter and your best estimate of costs this coming winter. These are total costs, not price per unit of energy.
2. We would also like to know if at present you foresee or are considering any reduction in your activities because of increased bills, and any details you can give us.

3. We need to know on whose behalf you are responding, though all information will be anonymised. That simple information will be very useful in making a case. However, if possible . . .
4. Please tell anything else you think it would be useful for us to know to present a case to government. Here are some possibilities, but none of this is essential:
  - whether your building is a cathedral, or in any other way of unusual size or complexity
  - roughly how many people are financial supporters of the building (alternatively, typical congregational attendance)
  - some idea of the size of your annual income and of your annual surplus (if any)
  - whether you would describe the location of your building as village, small town, suburbs, urban, city centre - or any other descriptor of location
  - if your building is the only place of worship in the community (this will tend to be in villages and some small towns), the approximate number of people living in the community
  - anything you might know about local levels of deprivation
  - anything else you want to tell us.

Please respond to Trevor and Becky direct on [hrb@theheritagealliance.org.uk](mailto:hrb@theheritagealliance.org.uk).

## An Eco-Church Journey

Tamsin Morris from [Arocha UK](#) which runs the [EcoChurch scheme](#), shares the journey of a Methodist Church that recently gained a bronze award.

[Hathersage Methodist Church](#) in Derbyshire is one example of a small church that has used the EcoChurch

scheme to help them with ideas and inspiration for environmental action. Hathersage is a village in the Peak District and many church members have long been involved in local conservation work and wildlife initiatives. Over



more recent years the congregation has become increasingly concerned about the climate crisis. Conversations between church members and with other local churches led them to decide to sign up to the EcoChurch scheme as a way of getting some new ideas and giving focus to their efforts. [Click here to read more.](#)

## TMCP Updates

### **Incoming Volume of Work**

As many Managing Trustees may already be aware of the Legal Team at TMCP are again experiencing a large upturn in correspondence and workflow. This is as a result of the 'perfect storm' of the already high volume of sales following the post lockdown review of property with the annual peak in Manse sales and purchases in readiness for the start of the new Connexional Year.

[Click here to read more.](#)



### **It's Contentious! New Litigation Page**

While Managing Trustees try to fulfil their roles as prudent charity trustees harmoniously, sometimes matters become contentious. As Managing Trustees, you may find yourselves with little option but to issue a claim against somebody to protect the best interests of the charity

[Click here to read more.](#)

### **Year End Statements**

TMCP plans, in line with previous years, to make annual statements available to you as soon as we have received all the necessary information from external sources.

[Click here to read more.](#)

## Grant Opportunities

### **Grants for Churches for the Conservation of Decorative Features and Monuments (UK)**

Grants of between £500 and £5,000 are available to churches, chapels and other places of worship built before 1896 to carry out small programmes of conservation work to decorative features and monuments. All work funded must

be directed by a professional architect or established conservator and completed according to the principles of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB). The funding is being made available through the William and Jane Morris Fund. Applications can be submitted at any time however the **next closing date for applications is the 31st March 2023**. [Click here to read more.](#)



### **Applications Re-Open for the Co-op Community Fridge Fund (UK)**

The Hubbub Foundation, in partnership with the Co-op, has re-opened the Co-op Community Fridge Fund to build on their existing network of Community Fridges around the UK. Grants of £4,000 are available to support an additional one hundred not-for-profit organisations across the UK to establish new Community Fridge projects and help redistribute surplus fresh food within deprived communities. Donations are provided by local food businesses, producers, households and gardens, saving food from going to waste and bringing people together. Hubbub will also provide support, guidance and resources to help organisations establish their Community Fridge. **The closing date for applications is the 30th October 2022.**

[Click here to find out more.](#)

### **Funding for Churches Supporting Refugees Arriving from Ukraine & Afghanistan (England)**

Grants of up to £5,000 are available to Christian churches and registered Christian charities offering activities and services to welcome and support refugees arriving in England from Ukraine and Afghanistan. This could include services and activities such as supplying accommodation, clothing, food, mobile phones, and baby care items; befriending support; English language classes; baby and toddler groups; welcome parties; drop-in sessions; and expenses for volunteers or facilities. The funding is made available by the Church Urban Fund in partnership

with the Benefact Trust, through the Refugee Support Small Grants Programme. **This is a rolling fund and applications will remain open until the 9th December 2022**, but may close earlier if all funding is allocated before this date. [Click here to find out more.](#)

### **Funding for Charity Building Projects (London)**

Registered charities and exempt bodies in London undertaking building projects of less than £200,000 can apply for grants of between £5,000 and £10,000. The building work can include general refurbishments or a specific scheme; repairs; creating disabled access; or fulfilling of Health and Safety requirements or fire protection. The funding is being provided through the Rose Foundation and **the next closing date for applications is the 31st March 2023.**

[Click here to find out more.](#)

### **£25,000 Grant for Christian Reflection on Independence (Scotland)**

Christian charities and educational establishments are invited to bid for a one-off grant of £25,000 to organise events reflecting on Scotland's constitutional future. The funding is made available by the Paristamen Charity through their Blue Sky Grant: Christian Reflection on Scotland's Constitutional Future, to enable a charity with specific experience in the field of Christian debate and social action to co-ordinate events with the support of local churches and Christian groups across Scotland in the run-up to the proposed independence referendum in October 2023. The project should enable both sides of the independence debate to be heard in a context of Christian reflection. Charities interested in submitting proposals are asked to contact Paristamen as soon as possible for an informal discussion, with **proposals due by the 17th October 2022.**

[Click here to find out more.](#)

## **Upcoming changes in Legislation for Smoke and CO2 Alarms in Rented Housing**

[The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm \(Amendment\) Regulations 2022](#) will come into force on 1 October 2022. From that date, all relevant landlords must:

- ensure that at least one smoke alarm is equipped on each storey of their homes where



there is a room used as living accommodation. This has been a legal requirement in the private rented sector since 2015;

- ensure that a carbon monoxide alarm is equipped in any room used as living accommodation which contains a fixed combustion appliance (excluding gas cookers); and
- ensure that faulty smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms are repaired or replaced.

The requirements are enforced by local authorities, which can impose a fine of up to £5,000 where a landlord fails to comply with a remedial notice. The Government has issued guidance for landlords and tenants on how the Regulations will apply in practice, [here](#). The guidance confirms that there will be no grace period: compliance is required from 1 October 2022 on all applicable rented properties (ie, not just those that are let from that date). [Click here to find out more.](#)

## Annual Charity Return (Scotland)

Every registered charity in Scotland is required to submit an online annual return to OSCR of its accounts, trustees' annual report and external scrutiny report. The upgraded version of OSCR Online went live on 25 July 2022, and every person listed with OSCR as a principal contact for a charity was sent an e-mail with new login instructions. People who are the principal contact for multiple charities were also sent a separate e-mail listing all the charities with which they are associated.



- If you are a principal contact and have not received for these invitations, please check your e-mail inbox and junk e-mail folders.
- If you are a principal contact of a charity and did not receive an invitation to the new system by 31 July 2022, please e-mail [info@oscr.org.uk](mailto:info@oscr.org.uk).

When you log in OSCR Online after the upgrade, you will be asked for the Scottish charity number for the charity on whose behalf you want to submit information. If you do not know this number, you can find it on the Scottish Charity Register (it begins SC0 [ZERO]). [Click here for further details.](#)

### **Listed Building Advisory Committee (LBAC) Meeting Dates:**

- **11 October 2022** - Deadline for paper is 20th September 2022
- **24 January 2023** - Deadline for paper is 3 January 2023
- **18 April 2023** - Deadline for paper is 28 March 2023
- **18 July 2023** - Deadline for paper is 27 June 2023

### **Supporting the Methodist Connexion**

Methodist Insurance has been protecting the property of the Methodist Church since 1872. We are a Public Limited Company owned by shareholders and independent of the Methodist Church. The company operates like a mutual by returning most of our profits back to our community in the form of a significant financial contribution to the Methodist Connexion. [Find out more.](#)



**Property Matters is a monthly newsletter focused on giving updates on property related guidance and legalisation as well as providing information and links to related subjects. To view the most current content, please refer to the [Property pages](#) on the website. We cannot know about everything that's going on, so please do [email us](#) if you have any feedback or ideas for items to include.**

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