

HULL WEST CIRCUIT MISSION POLICY

POLICY CONTEXT

The Hull West Circuit celebrates and cherishes the day to day life of our churches and the many ways in which they live out the gospel together and seek to be an effective Christian presence within their communities. Such loyal and loving service is the bedrock upon which this mission policy is built.

Traditional Churchgoing to Christian denominations has long since ceased to be a common activity for the younger generations in society, and faith itself is seen to be increasingly at variance with the secular worldview which predominates today. This mission policy provides a robust response to these trends and paves the way for building a bright and sustainable future in our Hull West Circuit and beyond.

POLICY

1. We believe that we are called together by God to be Spirit-led, with a heart for Jesus and a passion for mission. This belief shapes our decision making, our vision and the allocation of our God-given resources and leads us to identify our key priorities for mission. As a Circuit we will seek to support and resource work which meets one or more of the following objectives, and which can be either church or Circuit led:
 - a. Making new disciples and growing in discipleship
 - b. Establishing fresh expressions of church and church planting
 - c. Initiatives in mission-shaped ministry
 - d. Community focused social action
 - e. Work with families, young people and children, and older people
 - f. Reaching the missing generations
 - g. Building community cohesion
2. We will consider seeking both funding and partnership with other organisations that offer us the freedom to fulfil our gospel imperative, in order to maximise our impact and effectiveness.
3. We will encourage each of our churches to shape its life and witness around these priorities and to be active 'centres of mission' with the full support of the Circuit.

Notes to the Policy

- i. Only by honouring what we already have can we do justice to the faithfulness of the Methodist people who worked so hard to establish and maintain our witness in this area. Our predecessors pass on to us their precious missional inheritance and give us the responsibility of deploying these resources in order to do God's work today.
- ii. We recognise that major cultural shifts since the second world war have had a deep and abiding impact upon the context of our life and witness as Christians.
- iii. We are all well aware that we face a tough missional challenge if we are to survive, let alone prosper.
- iv. As a grassroots discipleship movement shaped for mission, Methodists have always been Spirit-led.
- v. Because our resources of staff and money are finite they must be deployed with great care. It follows that the Circuit will want to use its resources in pursuit of these priorities, as these are the ones which it has identified as being critical to us being an effective Christian presence in the area we are called to serve.
- vi. We recognise that some churches may prefer to identify themselves primarily as centres of fellowship rather than centres of mission and we value the support with which, by their prayer and worship, they nourish and enhance the life of the circuit. The designation, centre of fellowship, does not mean they will receive reduced pastoral care but it simply recognises what is true on the ground when it comes to mission. In such communities the Circuit would expect to take forward fresh initiatives in mission if it was deemed important to do so.