

December 2020

PROPERTY MATTERS

The Methodist Church 

Welcome to the December edition of Property Matters with a focus on updates on guidance during the Covid-19 pandemic. If you have any feedback, please email the [Property Support Team](#).

Updates on Covid-19 Guidance

The government has published [Guidance for the Christmas Period](#) in England, which includes a section on [Carol Singing](#). Carol singing is allowed indoors & outdoors by professional and amateur choirs. **Additionally, the congregation can join in singing outdoors if the precautions listed in the [Performing Arts guidance](#) and the [Principles for Safer Singing](#) are followed.** This includes maintaining 2m distance between groups and ensuring that attendees can arrive & depart safely from the venue.



As well, we have published [Guidance for Christmas Celebrations](#) to assist with planning and preparations for the Christmas season. You can also listen to an interview with the Director of Property Support about the guidelines for the Christmas period. [Click here](#) to listen.

Lastly, the government has posted more details for [Tier 1 \(Medium\)](#), [Tier 2 \(High\)](#) and [Tier 3 \(Very High\)](#). Other government updates include the [Safe Use of Places](#)

[of Worship](#) and the [Safe Use of Multi-Purpose Facilities](#), which gives guidance on different groups using the site.

Please note this is for England only and please check the websites for [Scotland](#), [Wales](#), [Isle of Man](#) and the Channel Islands ([Guernsey](#) & [Jersey](#)).

Updated Guidance on Ventilation

HSE have produced further [guidance on ventilation](#). The new guidance will help identify poorly ventilated areas and provide steps you can take to improve ventilation while maintaining comfortable temperatures. [Click here](#) to read more.

Methodist Church Wins Award

Tenterden Methodist Church has been awarded the [2020 John Betjeman Award](#) for excellence in conservation at places of worship, which is an award organised by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB). We believe this is the first time the award has been given to a Methodist Church so it is rather special, and hopefully will encourage others to carry out such high quality repairs.



Residential Tenancy Update - EPC Ratings & Electrical Safety Checks

In April 2020, new legislation stating that all new residential tenancies must have a minimum EPC rating of E came into effect. **In April 2021, this legislation will extend to require existing residential tenancies to have a minimum EPC rating of E.** You can check the EPC rating for a

Energy Efficiency Rating		Current	Potential
Very energy efficient - lower running costs			
(92-100)	A		
(81-91)	B		
(69-80)	C		73
(55-68)	D		
(39-54)	E	37	
(21-38)	F		
(1-20)	G		
Not energy efficient - higher running costs			

property [here](#) and TMCP have produced some useful [guidance on MEES](#) (Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard).

In addition, the government is offering [Green Home Grants](#) which can cover up to 2/3 of the cost of making energy improvements. However, please note these improvements must be completed by 31 March 2021 to qualify for a grant. [Click here](#) to read more.

Electrical Safety Checks

From 1 July 2020, the legislation regarding Electrical Safety Regulations in residential tenancies has changed and **new safety checks will now need to be carried out every 5 years**. You can read the government guidance [here](#) and TMCP have produced helpful [guidance](#) on the new requirements.

Empty Buildings

As the cooler weather takes hold, it is recommended that any water systems which can not be fully drained will need to be kept at a minimum of 7° Celsius. It would also be worth reviewing the regular checks for any properties which are unoccupied at this time. More information can be found on the [Empty Properties tab](#) (at the bottom of the page).

Heritage Churches At Risk

The [Taylor Review Pilot](#) was a project funded by the DCMS and managed by Historic England. The aim of the pilot was to test some of the recommendations of the [2017 Taylor Review](#) and to provide free support & advice for listed places of worship. [Click here](#) to view the

[Evaluation Report](#) as well some [Advisory Documents & Templates](#) based and a [Maintenance Checklist](#), which was trialled during the pilot.



In addition, a [letter was published in The Times](#) warning that the future of many churches, especially in deprived areas, is under threat due to crumbling roofs, deteriorating church halls, and inadequate kitchen and toilet facilities.

Lastly, the 2020 publication of the [Heritage at Risk Report](#) stated that the number of places of worship on the list has increased. [Click here](#) to read more information Historic England website.

12 Days of Giving

[Ecclesiastical Insurance](#) have begun their 12 days of giving initiative from 8 - 20 December. Ecclesiastical will be donating a total of £1000 to 10 charities everyday over these 12 days. Nominations are now open and close at midnight the day before each draw. [Click here](#) to nominate.



Charity Commission Extension

Methodist charities with gross incomes under £100,000 are 'excepted' from registration with the Charity Commission. The Regulations which provide for this exception were set to end on 31 March 2021. The Charity Commission informed us that the deadline is being extended, which will be a great relief to many local churches. The Legal & Constitutional Practice team have updated their [Charity Registration page](#) on the website with more information.



Methodist Insurance News

Last month, we announced the winners of our Church Volunteer Awards in a virtual ceremony. The eleven regional finalists each won a prize of £1,000 for their church – two runners up gained a further £1,000 and our overall winner was awarded a further £2,000 for his church. [See who won](#)



Filling out a Fundraising Application?

We have created a series of guides to [help churches with fundraising](#). You can use the application checklist to identify some key elements to consider before completing your application. [Download the checklist](#)

Stay up-to-date on Risk Management with our Risk Calendar

Our risk specialists have put together a [calendar of key risks](#) for churches to manage throughout the year. As we enter December, it's important to ensure fire safety at your church. Fire risk assessments should be carried out annually and are a legal requirement. Are you up-to-date?

Home Emergency Cover

Our [Home Shield policy](#) provides home emergency cover as standard. Home emergencies can include failure of your main heating system, plumbing and draining issues and failure of the domestic power supply, provided these issues were not caused by wear and tear. [Find out what else is covered](#)

Autumn/Winter Dialogue

The latest edition of our twice-yearly newsletter is now available to read online. Discover a range of stories and information that provide helpful insight for your church. [Read Dialogue](#)

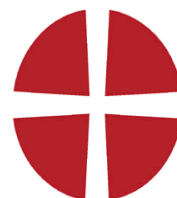
Prescot and Whiston Methodists fill Community's Heart

A £25,000 grant from [Allchurches Trust's Methodist Grants programme](#) helped transform the outdated Prescot Centre in Liverpool. The grant to Preston and Whiston Methodist Church has enabled the church to complete works on the fantastic redevelopment. The space is now home to the congregation for worship

and is also Prescott's largest community centre. Welcoming, environmentally sustainable and fit for the 21st Century. [Find out more](#)

Feasibility Funding

The Methodist Council has lifted the moratorium on grant applications from the CPF Feasibility Fund and Managing Trustees, Circuits and Districts are welcome to apply for funding. [Click here](#) for more information.



New Contact Details for TMCP

As part of the upgrade of TMCP's IT systems, they have recently moved to a new email domain which will be consistent with their website address of tmcp.org.uk. Email is still being redirected from the old email addresses but you should note that emails for the teams should now be sent to the following addresses:



Legal: legal@tmcp.org.uk

Finance: finance@tmcp.org.uk

Data Protection enquiries: dataprotection@tmcp.org.uk

General enquiries: admin@tmcp.org.uk

Hopeful Harvest

Hopwas Methodist Church, in the Tamworth and Lichfield Circuit, is a small but vibrant village church family, (28 members). Sadly, they have not felt able to reopen their chapel for worship. The chapel is very small with traditional pews, and if they sat socially distanced they could only fit 12 - 14 people in! Added to that they have some very elderly members, and



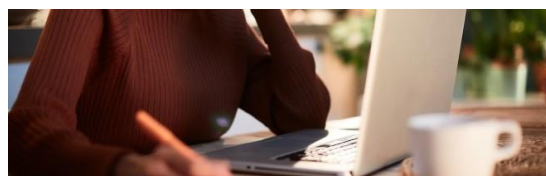
people who rely on lifts from others to get to church, and also a number who have health issues, which make them vulnerable.

However - as one of the stewards has said - they are holding together like a very strong net! People are in constant phone contact with each other. And over what should have been their Harvest Weekend (and in this village, Harvest is celebrated in a very traditional way) - a handful of chapel members decorated the outside of the church - it was beautiful! [Click here](#) to see more photos.

CHANGE OF DATE

Managing Trustees' Training Session

The planned date for this training session has been **postponed until Thursday 4th February 2021**. The event will be hosted by Capsticks and led by TMCP. The session will focus on the way TMCP and the whole panel of solicitors will be working together in the future to further streamline transactions such as the sale and purchases of manses as well as straightforward short-term leases. You will not only hear from TMCP and Capsticks but also the Connexional Team and Managing Trustees, who will give real life examples of their experiences of the panel. We do hope that you will be able to join us on the day. [Read more here](#).



Listed Building Advisory Committee

Meeting dates:

- **17 November 2020** - deadline for papers has passed
- **19 January 2021** - Deadline for papers - 22 December 2020
- **22 March 2021**- Deadline for papers - 26 February 2021

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. 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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