

May 2023

PROPERTY MATTERS

The Methodist Church 

Welcome to the May 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](#).

Organ Donation - Breathing New Life into our Historic Organs

Vital organs don't have to be limited to kidneys, livers and other bodily parts, but can mean the once beating hearts of our buildings – the historic pipe organ. Often, following closure these remain within the building, or are sold for recycling either to another local church or one some considerable distance away in Europe (with many now being re-housed in France,



Poland and elsewhere), where we have seen a resurgence in the interest and re-use of these cultural assets.

[Click here](#) to read about how one Methodist organ was relocated.

If you have an organ that isn't regularly being used, [click here](#) and look under the 'Empty Properties' tab to find a set of steps for maintaining organs.

Methodist Insurance Updates

Finding Funding for Your Church

We've updated our list of funders! Assembled by researching and cross-checking multiple sources, all funds on this list are open to churches. Each entry contains key information such as the funder's interests, contact information and how to apply.

[Download the list of funders](#)



Managing Volunteers

Volunteers support a wide range of diverse activities, many of which are low risk but may also be involved in higher risk activities such as work from height. Learn how to protect the safety of volunteers. Read more about health and safety legislation, typical hazards and how to manage the risks.

[Volunteer guidance](#)



Health and Safety at Events

Larger events or unusual fundraising activities can present additional risks. Proper management of the risks can ensure everyone remains safe and your event is a success.

[Read more](#)

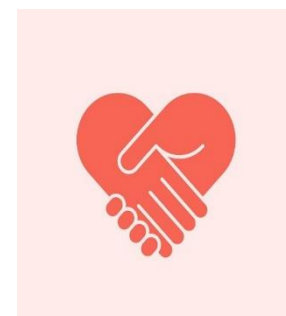


20% on Your First Year's Premium Donated to Your Church or Favourite Charity

When you buy a new buildings or contents policy with Methodist Insurance, we'll make it count by donating 20% of your first year's premium to a church or charity of your choice. So your home insurance policy not only protects your home but it also supports the Methodist community.

[Terms and conditions apply](#)

[Learn more about home insurance](#)



A Funding Boost for Methodist Churches

Benefact Trust has just awarded over £600,000 to Methodist churches in the latest round of Methodist Grants. See some of the inspiring projects to benefit from this latest funding boost.

[Read their stories](#)



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methodistinsurance.co.uk/charitydonation

HSE Update



Improved Guidance on Managing Health & Safety

HSE' has improved their guidance on Managing Health & Safety to help duty holders know what to do to comply with health and safety law. The improvements include a new, brief guide providing:

- [an introduction to managing health and safety](#)
- [common workplace risks guidance](#)
- [a new managing health and safety page](#)

Volunteering: Guidance on how to manage the risks

HSE has guidance on how to manage the risks to volunteers. It will help those who engage volunteers keep them, and those who work with them, healthy and safe. The guidance explains how [health and safety law applies to volunteering](#).

There is also information on:

- [when to report incidents involving volunteers](#)

- [including volunteers in your risk assessments](#)

For further information visit [HSE's volunteering web pages](#).

#NoMowMay

[#NoMowMay](#) is an initiative from Plantlife to encourage those with gardens to refrain for mowing during the month of May in order to encourage biodiversity. This will increase vital food needed by pollinators like bees and butterflies. [Click here to learn more.](#)



If your church has participated, you can upload images with the hashtag #NoMowMay and be sure to include either @MethodistGB for Twitter or @methodistchurch for Instagram.

Love Your Burial Ground Week

[Love your Burial Ground Week](#) is a celebratory week which has been running for many years. Caring for God's Acre has been encouraging all who help to look after churchyards, chapel yards and cemeteries to celebrate these fantastic places in the lovely month of June – in any way you choose. This year, it will be held from **Saturday, 3 June - Sunday, 11 June 2023**.



Burial grounds can be ideal places for introducing people to wildlife and local heritage. Activities in previous years have included teddy bear picnics, family bug hunts, dawn chorus (followed by breakfast!), illustrated talks, wildflower identification, tree trails, leaf bingo, tower tours, family history, memorial recording, volunteer work party sessions and more!

[Churches Count on Nature 2023](#) is part of Love Your Burial Ground Week, focusing on the brilliant wildlife to be found in churchyards and chapel yards. It is a joint initiative promoted by Caring for God's Acre, the Church of England, the Church in Wales and A Rocha UK.

[Click here to register and download free resources.](#)

Could your church help house some of the people QVSR supports?

The Queen Victoria Seamen's Rest provides housing and welfare support to active and retired seafarers, veterans of the armed forces and other homeless men in Poplar, London. The work of QVSR also extends to the Ports of



Tilbury, DP World London Gateway, Felixstowe, Immingham and Bristol and by working alongside other ecumenical partners, the QVSR aim to provide a "home from home" to seafarers whilst they are in port, offering them a warm welcome, port welfare services and pastoral support. If your church or circuit has a house in one of those areas, [please do get in touch.](#)

[Click here to learn more.](#)

New Guidance for Smaller Churches

Each small church has a gift to offer its community, a part to play in God's mission, and a share in God's hopeful future. Sometimes living into this hope will mean joining with another church to share resources. Sometimes it will mean letting go of a cherished building in order to worship in people's homes or in a community centre. Whatever the end result, each small church gets there by starting with its mission: its particular part of God's calling to share the love of Christ with the world.



These new webpages offer [guidance and resources for circuit mission planning, including different models of merger](#), and details of all the help that's available.

MHA Sunday

Join MHA, the UK's largest charity care provider, on **Sunday June 11** (or any other date to suit your calendar) to hear about MHA, pray for them and find out how to support them.



Everything you need for a service is provided: prayers, hymns, video, a quiz, and sermon. You can also order gift aid envelopes, download ideas for fundraising activities, and even for a primary school assembly.

[Click here to learn more.](#)

Historic Environment Grants (Scotland)

If you're a charity or are part of a community project, find out how you can apply for grants from £1,000 to £500,000. They support a wide range of projects and activities which will benefit Scotland's historic environment. [Click here to learn more.](#)



Some examples of typical project and activities include, but are not limited to:

- Archaeological excavations and research
- Repair and consolidation work
- Interim works (max.£50,000 grant)
- Skills and training
- Outreach and learning
- Interpretation
- Maintenance and management plans

Extra Energy Bill Support for Historic Buildings

In addition to the support offered under the Energy Bill Discount Scheme (see below), Historic Buildings can apply for extra support from the [Energy Bills Discount Scheme support for Energy and Trade Intensive Industries \(ETIIs\)](#). The discount will apply to 70% of energy volumes and does include historic buildings within the eligible [Standard Industrial Classification \(SIC\) code sectors](#).



Energy Bills Discount Scheme

The Government has put in place automatic energy bill relief for non-domestic customers until 31 March 2024, though the current level of support will be reduced after 31 March 2023, when the current Energy Bill Relief Scheme will be replaced by the [Energy Bill Discount Scheme](#). In brief:

- From **1 April 2023** to **31 March 2024**, all eligible non-domestic customers who have a contract with a licensed energy supplier will see a unit discount of up to £6.97/MWh automatically applied to their gas bill and a unit discount of up to £19.61/MWh applied to their electricity bill.
- The discount will be subject to a wholesale price threshold, set with reference to the support provided for domestic consumers, of £107/MWh for gas and £302/MWh for electricity. This means that businesses whose energy costs are below that level will not receive support.
- Customers do not need to apply for their discount. As with the scheme that it replaces, suppliers will automatically apply reductions to the bills of all eligible non-domestic customers.

Additionally, charities (including places of worship) can check whether they are currently paying the correct rate of VAT on the fuel that they purchase – [see VAT](#)

[for charities: What qualifies for VAT relief](#). Contact your supplier if you believe that you may qualify for a refund.

Building Improvement Grants

Benefact Trust's Building Improvement Grants programme provides essential support to protect and enhance churches and Christian charity buildings, ensuring their continued use, viability, and the safeguarding of their heritage.



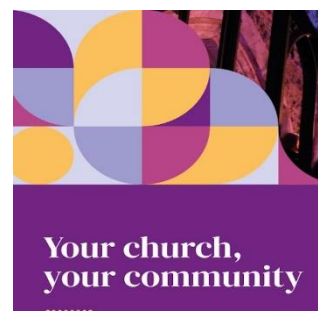
[Click here to learn more.](#)

[Building Improvement Grants](#) are able to support direct capital costs relating to the following types of work:

- Essential, one-off repairs to ensure the viability of a building
- Minor works or equipment purchases to meet accessibility requirements
- Conservation or restoration of historic features
- Other aesthetic enhancements to improve indoor or outdoor spaces for users
- Energy efficiency/renewable energy measures which improve the sustainability of church buildings

Guidance on Community Use and Redundant Church Buildings

There is a new publication produced by Historic Churches Scotland to encourage community use of active and redundant church buildings. It has some useful information for helping churches explore future uses for church buildings. [Click here to view.](#)



As well, a practical guide to the benefits and techniques for involving and consulting local communities has been produced by the Community Ownership Support Service. It has useful guidance on how to involve

communities and to reach out to them for consultation.

[Click here to read.](#)

The Great Big Green Week

10th - 18th June 2023

[The Great Big Green Week](#) is the UK's biggest annual call for action on climate change and nature, organised by the Climate Coalition. The week of action aims to show decision-makers that people from all walks of life are stepping up to take action -



and that we need them to step up too. We'd love our supporters to take part and hold an event during Great Big Green Week. If you are interested in having an event, [click here for more resources](#) and do keep us in the loop about any plans you have.

[Listed Building Advisory Committee \(LBAC\) Meeting Dates:](#)

- **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 legislation 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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