**Policy of the Wolverhampton Circuit Meeting**

**for**

**Application to the Circuit Model Trust Fund (CMTF)**

Adopted February 2025

The Circuit is committed to encouraging and enabling churches and groups to grasp opportunities for mission that accord with Local Church and Circuit Mission Policies. This includes supporting them with grant aid where it is appropriate and possible.

The Circuit Model Trust Fund (MTF) is primarily for ‘development’ rather than ‘maintenance’ and is an example of the Methodist principle of Connexionalism, whereby resources are shared in order to help and support those with least resources of their own and where there are strategic mission priorities. SO917 indicates that the Circuit Model Trust Fund is to promote the work of God.

The Wolverhampton Circuit is committed to:

* Inclusive and diverse worship
* Meeting people’s needs through justice seeking and service
* Courageous discipleship

These are underpinned by the Connexional strategies of God for All, Justice-Seeking Church, Safeguarding, and Justice, Dignity and Solidarity.

Any Local Church may request funds in order to undertake a project to promote the work of God in their locality; such applications will be scrutinised by the Circuit Leadership Team who may invite applicants to share their plans and vision. Formal recommendations will then be made to the Circuit Meeting.

The CLT may additionally bring applications to the Circuit Meeting, in order to fund core functions of the circuit (eg Finance officer), or to continue identified work in an area of the Circuit following the closure of the local church (e.g. City Centre Ministry).

Churches are expected to make effective use of their own financial resources and make applications for any other available grants for the support and development of mission and ministry, e.g. District and Connexional grants, and local or regional and national funders.

In order to avoid tying up funds unnecessarily, grants which have not been taken up within one year of approval will normally lapse. However, grants may be paid in instalments of up to 5 years.

Grants that will be considered are:

* Mission, outreach and growth (including New Places for New People circuit funding [NPNP’s])
* Community Engagement (prioritising, for example, Church at the Margins)
* Environmental sustainability (linking with EcoChurch and Action for Hope – the policy directing that the Methodist Church be net zero by 2030)

Property maintenance and upkeep is not usually considered, as local churches should be budgeting for repairs through core funding. Development projects with a mission focus may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Criteria

1. The project should promote growth in the life of the local church, which would include one or more of the following:

* Growth in spiritual depth
* Making more disciples of Jesus Christ
* Confidence in outreach into the local community

Priority will be given to projects which seek to engage in areas of marginalization, poverty and deprivation in the City.

1. The project will demonstrate being part of a clear strategy directed towards fulfilling God’s mission through the local church or circuit and are fully consistent with the Circuit Mission policy.
2. The project should consider what other organisations and ecumenical partners can be invited to participate in planning and delivery. This includes seeking engagement with District Missioners, community organisers, and the Evangelism and Growth Team (or Property Development Team) in the Connexional Team.
3. The project should be sustainable once the funding has stopped.
4. Churches should demonstrate to the Circuit Leadership Team that they have considered the following:

* Does the church have the human resources to support the project?
* Will other work need to be stopped to focus on the project?
* Is the church willing to adapt to support the success of project?
* Has the church offered measurable criteria and landmarks for success, including shared learning from the process?
* What challenges will the project face in planning and in years 1-3?

The CLT will expect to see the Church’s Mission Statement, the Church’s Reserve Policy and an up-to-date copy of the Church accounts.

For the **Local Church** applications, CMTF is available for up to 33% of costs of any given project. Each church can only apply for one grant in any Connexional year.

Application to the Wolverhampton Circuit Model Trust Fund

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| **Church name:** |  |
| **Project Lead Contact:** |  |
| **Contact persons contact details (phone or email):** |  |
| **Name of project:** |  |
| **Total cost of project:** |  |
| **CMTF Amount applied for:** |  |
| **Date of application:** |  |
| **Date considered by the CLT:** |  |
| **Recommendation of the CLT:** |  |
| **Date considered by the Circuit Meeting:** |  |
| **Decision of the Circuit Meeting:** |  |

In this application, have you included:

* Completed application form
* Audited accounts
* Current Account
* Local Church Mission Plan (you can find out more about how to develop a plan here: <https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/evangelism-growth/lead-churches-into-growth/write-a-great-mission-plan/mission-planning-toolkit/> )
* Local Church reserves policy
* Safeguarding policy
* For Lay Worker roles, copies of the Job description and notes from the District Lay Employment Secretary

**Turn over the page for the application**

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| **Outline of Project:** |
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| **This application relates to the following grant area:** |
| * Mission, outreach, and growth * Community engagement * Environmental Sustainability * Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| **How does the project fit in with the mission objectives of the Local Church and Circuit?** |
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| **In what ways does the Church have the human resources to support the project?**  **[this includes fundraising, volunteering, project management, line management, and project review]** |
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| **What changes, learning, and benefits do you expect from the project and how can this be shared by different parts of the Circuit?** |
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| **What work will stop in order to focus leadership and oversight on the project?** |
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| **In what ways is the Church willing to adapt to support the project?** |
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| **How will the Church sustain the project when the funding stops?** |
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| **What are the measurable criteria and landmarks for success agreed for your project? How will you celebrate your success, and share your learning?** |
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| **What challenges will be faced**   * 1. **in the planning**   2. **in year 1 of the project,**   **and how will these be risk assessed?** |
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| Date project approved by the Church Council |  |
| Lead Minister/Presbyter in oversight |  |