



Version 3 (October 2023)

## **Stratford upon Avon with Henley-in-Arden Methodist Church Manual**

*The objective of this guide is to help all members of the Stratford upon Avon and Henley in Arden Methodist community have clarity on how to make things happen and carry out our vision and our aim.*

### **Our vision**

To share the Good News of Jesus Christ with those around us and to provide a place of witness and worship for all.

### **Our aim**

To have a dynamic, growing Church with warm fellowship & outreach where people of all ages and backgrounds can meet Jesus and feel part of a caring Church family.

### **Our safeguarding policy**

As the people of the Methodist Church we are concerned with the wholeness of each individual within God's purpose for everyone. We seek to safeguard all members of the church community of all ages.

The full safeguarding policy is available on website at: [Our Safeguarding Policy – STRATFORD UPON AVON METHODIST CHURCH \(wordpress.com\)](https://www.stratford-upon-avon-methodist-church.org.uk/our-safeguarding-policy)

### **Accessing our meetings, committees and groups**

All meeting organisers (chairpersons or secretaries) will publicise the date and venue of all meetings at least *two weeks* in advance of the meeting date. These details will be available on notice boards in our churches and will be included in weekly notices distributed by email.

If you wish to ask a question or add an agenda item to the next relevant meeting, then please contact the relevant Chair/Secretary.

## **Our Church organisation and its committees**

### **The General Church Meeting (GCM)**

**Role:** Held for fellowship, and to jointly review the condition of the church, including its financial affairs, and to elect church stewards and the representatives that sit on the Church Council.

**Frequency:** At least once per year (typically once, others may be called for specific issues)

**Attendees:** All members of the church, normally chaired by the Minister

**What do they do:** The General Church Meeting reviews an annual report from each committee, body and activity of the church, and from the Treasurer concerning the financial affairs.

Appoints two elected Church Members to join the Treasurer and a Church Steward as four attendees at Circuit meetings (both Stratford and Henley must be represented within these four places).



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## Church Council

*Role:* General oversight of all areas of both congregations' concern and activities.

*Frequency:* Meets at least twice per year (usually 4 times, quarterly)

*Attendees:* Ministers (The stationed minister plus others, as appointed by the Superintendent)

- All Church Stewards
- Church Treasurer
- Property Steward
- Secretary of the Resources Committee
- Secretary of the Pastoral Committee
- Secretary of the Church Council
- Between 6 and 15 elected members (elected annually by the General Church Meeting)
- One circuit steward (allocated by the circuit)
- Green Group Representative
- Church Representative for Wesleys
- Centre Administrator (non-voting)

*What do they do:* The Church Council is the source of all decision making, all other committees have their authority and decision-making abilities delegated to them, by the Church Council. The Church Council makes decisions to be followed and sets direction to other committees to work towards. The Church Council is normally chaired by a Minister. Other committees are formed to carry out detailed duties, as delegated by the Church Council.

Annual review and re-accepted of the Safeguarding Policy.

Appoint representatives to the Circuit meeting including our Treasurer, a steward plus 2 elected members. The 4 should include at least one representative from each congregation of Stratford and Henley.

All members of the Stratford upon Avon with Henley-in-Arden Methodist Church are Trustees of our local Church registered charity.

In between Church Councils, Designated Authority (limits agreed by the Church Council) to act on behalf of the Church Council is given to a **Church Leadership Team (CLT)**. The CLT make smaller, timely decisions as required in the day-to-day life of the Church.



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## Church Stewards

**Role:** To support the minister in the oversight of pastoral care and worship. To help ensure adherence to policies and legalities such as safeguarding and GDPR on both sites. To foster unity, drawing the ministers' attention to any potential issues, uphold and act on decision of the Church council, engage with circuit/district and draw others into leadership.

**Frequency:** To meet at least monthly, with the minister as appropriate/possible.

**How many:** Up to six, no less than 3, appointed annually by the GCM, ideally to serve for a maximum of 4 years.

At least one steward should be appointed to facilitate worship at Henley, this steward is not expected to attend the monthly meetings at Stratford. They should, however, maintain regular contact with the minister, making them aware of any pastoral or worship issues that arise.

### *What they do:*

- The stewards are responsible for assisting the minister exercise pastoral care and leadership.
- Attend church meetings.
- Uphold and act upon decisions of the Church Council.
- Engage with Circuit and District, keeping Church Council and Church members informed of any events etc, arranging/coordinating transport when necessary.
- Stewards should ensure appropriate notices are given each week (email/print/pulpit).
- As people 'on the ground' regularly, stewards are often the 'face of the church' more so than ministers, who cannot be at the main act of worship every week. As such they are encouraged to foster unity in the life of the church, informing the minister of any issues, and identify those who attend the church who may have a future role in leadership.
- Engage with visiting preachers and worship leaders, especially in giving feedback to local preachers 'on trial'.
- The stewards are responsible for facilitating the worshipping life of the church, ensuring local arrangements happen and alternative arrangements made if a preacher/worship leader cannot attend at short notice.
- Stewards should help the minister ensure that seasonal services are scheduled, special liturgies (e.g., Lent and Advent) are approved and circulated in good time, resources ordered (e.g., candles, palm crosses, Christingles etc) and appropriate seasonal banners etc displayed in church.

Note: '*responsible for*' does not mean '*do*'. The church stewards are to ensure appropriate people are in place to do the necessary roles.

The steward on duty on a Sunday at each congregation, as well as welcoming the preacher, should have an eye on all the roles required to facilitate worship. If any person is absent the steward on duty should be prepared to 'step in' or identify someone else to do so.



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## Pastoral Committee

*Role:* To provide pastoral oversight for the church membership

*Frequency:* At least twice per year

*Attendees:*

- Secretary of the Pastoral Committee
- Pastoral visitors (currently 9)
- Minister
- MHA home liaison.

*What do they do:* The Pastoral visitors exercises pastoral care of the church membership, visiting members and adherents. They encourage members to fulfil their membership commitments and inform our minister of any special need or change of address. They meet together to share information, offer mutual support to each other, identify any training needs and also to pray for our congregations.

## Resources Committee

*Role:* A sub-committee of the Church Council that co-ordinates how the church's resources (property and finance) are used within the guidance and objectives set by the Church Council.

*Frequency:* Meets at least four times per year

*Attendees:*

- Resources Secretary
- Property Steward
- Church Treasurer
- Minister
- Centre Administrator (non-voting)
- At least one steward
- Green group representative

Member volunteers of the resources council are predominantly 'ex officio', though others with relevant enthusiasm, experience and interest may be co-opted, as approved by the Church Council

*What do they do:* The Church Council delegates to the Resources Committee oversight of how the resources of the church are used. Responsibilities and tasks include repairs & maintenance, security, health and safety (including fire safety), cleaning co-ordination, church facilities usage (including bookings), technology. The Resources Committee activities take place fully aligned with the Finance Committee activities and budgets. Any expenditure is set by the Finance Committee within budgets and designated authority levels approved by the Church Council.



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### **Finance Committee**

*Role:* A sub-committee of the Church Council that reviews in more detail the financial affairs of the church, setting budgets, reviewing actual financial results and advises financial actions to other committees.

*Frequency:* Quarterly

*Attendees:* Church Treasurer

At least one Church Steward,

Member volunteers with appropriate financial experience/expertise

*What do they do:* by setting budgets and reviewing the financial results of the church the committee advises actions and strategies to other committees that are financially relevant to ensure the long-term and sustainable financial health of the church. The Committee may also carry out relevant actions if asked to do so by the Church Council.

The Finance Committee also administers the bank accounts for the church and Gift Aid of the membership.

### **Publicity Team**

*Role:* Co-ordinates publicity and communication both within the church but also to all external stakeholders and wider members of our community.

*Frequency:* At least twice per year

*Attendees:* Minister

Member volunteers with appropriate skills, experience and energies.

*What do they do:* Prepare and issue content to all communication media such as email, social media, written media, internet. Includes weekly notices, regular communications and occasional requirements.

### **Green Group**

*Role:* To uphold, maintain and promote the green environmental agenda of the Churches.

*Frequency:* Quarterly

*Attendees:* Member volunteers with appropriate skills, experience and enthusiasm.

*What do they do:* Maintain focus on environmental matters both as a Church and as a Congregation, providing proposals to other church committees as appropriate and actioning where requested. The Eco-Church Awards to date recognise the progress over 17 years and the objective is to enhance our impact still further.



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In addition to these committees there are a range of other roles and responsibilities. A full and up to date list is provided as an appendix to this summary.

However, to help find out who to turn to, select a subject from those below.

*Key contact points by subject (who to go to first...):*

**Church Stewards:** Jim Dobson, Jan Grant

**Pastoral requests:** Minister

**Safeguarding concerns or queries:** Liz Walker/Minister (Circuit Safeguarding Officer: Penny Sharples)

**Resources, including Health & Safety:** Graham Collins

**Property Steward:** vacant

**Repairs and maintenance co-ordinator:** Graham Collins

**Finance:** Phil Ledgard

**Church bookings:** Colette Inman

**Sunday Stewards co-ordination:** Church Stewards

**Communion Steward:** Malcolm Smith

**Music:** Carolyn Evans, Rebecca Ledgard

**Audio visual in Stratford church:** David Loader

**Sunday morning rotas and notices:** Adrienne Peacop

**Publicity:** Jane Mills

**Social Media:** Marion Homer & Janet Mee

**Website:** Vacant (covered by Adrienne Peacop)

**Bible Study:** Sheila Brown

**Prayer Group and prayer requests:** Kath Fraser

**Green Group:** Lim Ho

**Flowers:** Jan Grant



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### Church Leadership Team (CLT)

**Role:** A smaller representative team from the Church Council that provides decision making capabilities in between Church Council meetings, subject to limits of financial authority.

**Frequency:** As required (can meet by video conference)

**CLT members:** Minister

Church Treasurer

Secretary of the Resources Committee

Property Steward (when available)

Church Stewards

Pastoral Secretary (for relevant matters)

**QUORATE REQUIRED: Minister, Treasurer, Resources Secretary & 1 Church Steward (& a suitable member of the Henley membership for Henley related decisions)**

**What do they do:** to enable faster and effective decision making within day-to-day church life, for both Stratford and Henley churches, the CLT are empowered to make decisions on behalf of the Church Council, in between formal Church Council meetings, providing those decisions:

- i) Uphold the Vision and Aim of the Church.
- ii) Are consistent with decisions and objectives set by the Church Council.
- iii) Are within the delegated financial authorities.

### DELEGATED FINANCIAL AUTHORITIES

	Circuit	Church Council	CLT	Resources Committee	Finance Committee
Set the Annual Budget		Review and approve			Prepare and propose
Approval limits within approved budget:					
- Capital projects	>£25,000	<£25,000	None	<£1,000	None
- All other spend		>£3,000	<£3,000	<£1,000	None
Approval limits outside of approved budget		>£3,000	<£1,000	<£500	None