

Guidelines for Manses

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1 INTRODUCTION

These guidelines have been produced to help Circuit and Manse stewards deal with issues relating to manses. It may not cover all issues in great detail, but is intended to raise awareness and offer guidance.

The District Property Secretary and District Manses Secretary are always happy to help and advise on matters connected with manses. The Methodist Resourcing Mission Office will also advise.

Throughout these guidelines the context is for a Minister; for brevity this also includes Probationary Ministers and Deacons; the Methodist Resourcing Mission Office is abbreviated to RMO and the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes to TMCP.

1.1 Provision of manses

Standing order 803 states:

(b) The accommodation to be provided shall satisfy the relevant accommodation guidelines approved from time to time by the Conference, unless permission for a departure from those guidelines has been granted under paragraph (c) below.

For the guidelines approved by the Conference of 2009, see Section 1C of Book VI, Part 2 'Guidance' below.

(c) In any case in which it is proposed that there be a significant departure from the approved accommodation guidelines, permission shall be sought by the Circuit or other responsible body from the district Policy Committee or, if the appointment is not a circuit appointment, the Methodist Council or other body or person to whom the council may delegate the granting of such permissions.

Whilst Standing Orders currently indicate that a bedroom may be used as a study it has been the recent practice that when buying a new manse, it is preferred that the study should be located on the ground floor. However with the increasing provision of offices in churches there is less need for a ground floor study. Wherever a study is provided it is essential that there is provision for Ministers to meet people at their manse on the ground floor, without interrupting the family.

2 PURCHASE OF A MANSE

2.1 Points to consider when looking at a property suitable to be a manse

- 1 Location - is it close/too far away from the main Church over which the occupant will have Pastoral charge? (within 1.5 miles or 15 minutes walk)
- 2 Does the house offer the right accommodation in respect of:
 - size
 - bedroom accommodation
 - living accommodation
 - study
 - bathroom/toilet accommodation.
- 3 Is the configuration of the rooms such that other members of the family can operate normally when the room(s) used by the Minister is/are in use?
- 4 Is the house suitable for all types/composition of manse family? (remember that the purchase of a manse should be a long-term investment and the likely needs of successive Ministers should be borne in mind).
- 5 Are there shops, schools, buses, doctors' surgeries and other facilities within a reasonable distance?
- 6 Is the garden adequate/too large/too small? Can children play in it safely? Is it easily maintained? (again bear in mind the needs of future manse families)

- 7 Is there appropriate garaging or parking facilities for more than one vehicle? Many families now have more than one vehicle. What about parking for visitors? Is this available 'within the vicinity'? If not will visitors' parking cause a nuisance to neighbours?
- 8 Does the house represent value for money in terms of:
 - its present condition?
 - the repairs/alterations required before initial occupancy?
 - long term maintenance?
 - likely running costs?
- 9 Considerations for future occupants who may have special needs:
 - its suitable access - external steps - on a slope?
 - width of internal corridors and doorways?
 - ground floor cloakroom - is it large enough to accommodate a wheelchair or walking frame?
 - ground floor accommodation - is there potential to convert room space to bedroom/en-suite?
 - if a house - is the staircase suitable to accommodate a stair lift?
 - bathroom or en-suite - is there a step-in shower unit or potential for one?

Although not of overriding importance, the location of a prospective property may be an important factor for Ministers who have children of school age and who wish to ensure the 'best education' in the area for their children.

2.2 Approvals prior to purchase

Buying a house is often fraught with problems. Buying a manse is even more difficult - but don't give up!

It is important to plan well in advance, both in terms of timescale and also other practical details. The Circuit Meeting should give authority to a small group (this may be the same group if also selling a manse) to look for an appropriate property, specifying both the area in which to look, and the financial limit.

There should be a Circuit Meeting Minute giving this group of named individuals authority to take all necessary action in connection with the purchase. This is important as decisions often have to be taken quickly and it is just not possible or practical to convene and report back to a Circuit Meeting. At the same time there should be:

- an outlined proposal indicating how the purchase will be financed
- qualified surveyor, valuer and solicitor appointed

The group then has the (unenviable!) task of finding the right house, in the right location at the right price.

When a house has been found for which the group consider making an offer, the Circuit's 'authorised person' should enter the details onto the Consents website <https://propertyconsent.methodist.org.uk> and the District Manses Secretary should be informed based on the information available to confirm its suitability as a manse. Once an offer has been put in and accepted by the Vendors the Surveyor should be instructed to undertake a full building (structural) survey and valuation. Normally a "Home Buyers Survey and Valuation" will be adequate. A copy of this will need to be submitted to TMCP in Manchester for their approval. Copies of any guarantees in respect of the house or elements of it i.e. National House Builders Council guarantee if the house is less than 10 years old, guarantees in respect of cavity wall insulation, double glazed window and door units, etc., will also be required.

Remember to list any works which need to be carried out in order to bring the property up to standard as specified in the Surveyor's report. It is recommended that a gas (where appropriate) and electrical installation inspection is carried out and costed to show up any hidden work requiring attention,

before the contracts are signed. (see Technical Information sheets T7 and T8A available on the Methodist website <http://www.methodist.org.uk>)

At some point in this process the Circuit Meeting will need to agree formally the purchase of the new manse and the necessary financial arrangements.

2.3 Financial arrangements

Advice on financial arrangements for manse purchase can be obtained from the RMO.

Sources of finance include:

- proceeds from the sale of existing or previous manses
- new money raised locally
- use of Circuit Model Trust Fund
- loans from Methodist Chapel Aid

2.4 After the purchase

Don't forget that the Circuit has a responsibility to provide certain items in each Manse. The minimum requirements are:

- Dining Room: carpet and underlay or rug(s)
- Lounge: carpet and underlay or rug(s)
- Study: desk of adequate size; chair; two additional chairs; foolscap filing cabinet: plenty of cupboard and drawer room; 30 yards (28metres) of bookshelves; telephone; carpet and underlay; waste paper basket
- Kitchen: modern sink unit with adequate draining facilities; efficient and economical gas or electric cooker; adequate shelf and cupboard room and good working surfaces; proper provision for food storage and kitchen utensils, preferably enclosed; suitable floor covering
- Bedrooms: these should be carpeted
- Bathroom: bath; wash basin: wc; hot and cold water; towel rail; toilet cupboard or shelf; suitable floor covering
- Hall: suitable floor covering where necessary; stair carpet; carpet on landing
- General: Study furniture should be free from woodworm, and springs and upholstery in good condition
Curtains for all windows (to be renewed after fair wear and tear). Electric light bulbs and properly fitted shades throughout – bulbs should be low energy wherever possible (refer to Part P of the Building Regulations)
An adequate supply of 13 amp sockets (especially in the study for office equipment)
A suitable TV aerial or cable facility for telephone/TV, and internet connection. The water heating system should be such as to provide constant hot water at minimum cost, with an immersion heater for summer use. If possible a shower should also be provided.
Plumbing for an automatic washing machine should be available. Draught excluders should be fitted where necessary. Security locks for external doors and ground floor windows must be fitted. A lawn mower, adequate for the size of the garden, should be provided.

Commonsense and flexibility needs to be exercised when providing the above equipment. It may be that the Minister already has some of this equipment of his/her own and would prefer to use it. In these circumstances it must be remembered that the Circuit will need to provide this equipment at some time in the future. Obviously the standard of furnishings and fittings provided may be dictated by the availability of financial resources. Every effort should be made to ensure that the best possible standard is provided as in the long term this should offer the best value for money.

3 THE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW MANSE

In addition to the specific requirements in Standing Orders for the accommodation and arrangement for a manse, it is recommended that Circuits refer to the Anglican “Green Book” on the design of parsonages <http://www.churchofengland.org/media/55250/designguide.pdf>

4 CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF MANSES

Having bought a manse it is essential that its capital value is protected by regular and appropriate maintenance. It is also important that proper financial provision is made for regular cyclical jobs (such as redecoration) and the eventual replacement of major building elements (such as central heating systems, new windows), or new carpets. There may be a temptation to only finance the actual expenditure in a given year, but this should not be done. An annual amount needs to be fixed and any money not spent should be retained in the Manses Fund for major work as outlined above. Sometimes, however, major work may need to be funded from other reserve funds held within the Circuit. Whilst appreciating other likely calls on such reserves the maintenance of Circuit Manses is an important activity and the need to accommodate Ministers and their families in suitable and well cared for houses must not be ignored.

The question is often asked ‘How much should we include in the Circuit budget each year for manse repairs/refurbishment?’ The RMO has issued some general advice on this subject but their estimates are based on the ‘mythical average manse’. *See Appendix 4*

4.1 General Repair and Maintenance Issues

The appropriate Circuit Officer should exercise an oversight on the local manses. It is important that this person establishes a good working relationship with the Ministers and their families. Clear lines of communication and responsibility need to be determined and there should be clarity regarding the ordering and undertaking of repairs. Special attention needs to be exercised where Probationer Ministers are appointed as they are likely to be unfamiliar with living in a manse. Some Ministers are keen and capable ‘DIY-ers’, others are not and these abilities need to be borne in mind when agreeing minor repair responsibilities.

A formal inspection by a small circuit team should take place on an annual basis. The team should consult with the Ministers and their spouses and should consider the state of repair and redecoration of each manse in the circuit. This inspection is invaluable when completing the annual Supplement to Schedule C.

Another point to remember is that Ministers incur taxation on the ‘Market Value’ (usually 1/3 of the cost) over 5 years for the redecoration of rooms (excluding the Study) and the replacement of some carpets. Sometimes this can be an issue and should be dealt with sensitively, but it should be remembered that the Circuit Stewards do have a responsibility to keep manses in good order.

4.2 Capital Expenditure Schemes

There will be occasions where kitchens, bathrooms and ensuites will need refurbishment and possibly major building works undertaken. These are classified as capital expenditure, and will not attract any tax consideration for Ministers. Financing these schemes will invariably come from the Circuit’s Model Trust Fund.

With a wide range of prices charged by tradespeople, it is difficult to decide if prices quoted for a job, however large or small, reflect value for money - Member’s money. A useful source of information as a guide to prices is the publication ‘The Property Makeover Price Guide’, referred to as the ‘blue book’. Prices quoted range from cleaning out gutters to building extensions.

Bearing the tax situation in mind it is important to ensure that, whenever possible, newly purchased manses are in good order before the Minister and his/her family take up residence. Similarly, if work

can be carried out between one family leaving and the next moving in, then again no Minister will be liable to pay tax.

4.3 Building Regulations Part P — Electrical Safety

Any electrical work carried out in the manse or its garden including garage/workshop/pond must be done by a competent person to meet the requirements of Building Regulations Part P — Electrical Safety. Completed work must be inspected and an appropriate BS7671 electrical installation test certificate issued by a competent person. Ensure that the appropriate test records are completed and are safely and securely stored. Provide these records when requested by the Manse Visitors along with other regulatory records.

4.4 Inspections (Quinquennial and Manse Visitors)

Every five years the Circuit is required to arrange for a Quinquennial Inspection to be carried out by a qualified person (usually a Chartered Surveyor or Chartered Architect). This should also include an inspection for timber decay if advised by the inspecting surveyor/architect. A formal report will be issued to the Circuit Property Secretary, together with a Schedule E which sets out any work required and the timescales in which the work should be completed. (see Technical Information sheets T16 and T17 available on the Methodist website <http://www.methodist.org.uk>)

A copy of each Quinquennial Report and the Schedule E should also be sent to the District Manses Secretary. On a five yearly cycle the District Manses Advisory Committee (sometimes known as Visitors) arrange for a visit to be made to every manse in the District. The intention is not only to look at the physical condition of the property but also to show pastoral concern, regarding housing, for Ministers and their families whilst they are with us in the District. As part of this inspection the action taken by the Circuit on the recommendations made in the last Quinquennial Report will be noted.

The Manse Visitors report on each of the manses visited in that year is sent to the Circuit Superintendent, who should send a copy to the person in charge of manses in the Circuit. These reports can act as a useful reminder of essential and recommended work to be carried out.

The person in charge of manses should make available before the visit, to the Visitors such information as (the District Manses Secretary will have informed the Senior Circuit Steward and the Circuit Superintendent prior to the visit):

- Summary of the current Quinquennial report and Schedule E
- Current Supplement to Schedule C
- Current annual gas inspection and servicing approvals
- Electrical installation check reports (required to be performed as a minimum every five years)
- Portable appliance test results for electrical equipment supplied by the Circuit (eg washing machines, dishwashers etc.)

After 12 months the Senior Circuit Steward is asked to provide information on what actions have been taken on the Manse Visitors report, which are then summarised and presented to the next District Synod, usually in the spring of that year.

4.5 Work Programme

The outcome of the various inspections should be the formulation of a Work Programme for each manse. This should include:

- work to be done on an annual basis - heating servicing etc.
- work to be done on a cyclical basis - redecoration etc.
- pre-planned major repairs/replacements of both building elements and carpets/fittings.

A rolling programme allows for some work to be undertaken each year which makes budgeting easier, shows ongoing care and concern for both the manse and the family, allows the personal taste

of the family to be expressed and is usually easier to organise. It does mean, however that a 'new' manse family may have to live with their predecessors' choice for a longer period. A 'blitz' on a manse change allows for much more personal choice to be expressed by the incoming family. It can be more difficult to organise - booking a decorator to decorate a number of rooms during the first week of August has its problems! It also needs the accumulation of reserves to fund the work - towards the end of a 5 or more year stay many of the rooms can be looking 'sad'.

4.6 Safety

The provisions of the 1998 Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations must be followed by ensuring that all gas appliances are checked and serviced on an annual basis by a competent person (a person/organisation holding 'Corgi' registration). This is an essential annual maintenance requirement as gas safety should be of paramount importance. (see Technical Information sheet T7 available on the Methodist website <http://www.methodist.org.uk>)

The electrical installations (the electrical wiring of the property) must be tested as a minimum once every five years by a competent person (NICEIC registered or similarly approved electrical contractor). Current thinking is that wiring in a house should be replaced after about 25 years. Certainly any rubber covered cabling should be removed immediately. (see Technical Information sheet T8A available on the Methodist website <http://www.methodist.org.uk>)

Any portable electrical appliance provided by the Circuit should also be tested annually by an appropriately qualified person (PATs testing). (see Technical Information sheet T8A available on the Methodist website <http://www.methodist.org.uk>)

Lapses or no evidence of the above, may invalidate the manse insurance cover.

Smoke detectors, which comply to BS 5446 Part 1, should be supplied and correctly fitted. Arrangements should be made for the batteries to be changed annually.

A fire blanket, as a minimum, should be provided near to the cooker. A small fire extinguisher may also be considered.

4.7 Security

Locks on all external exit doors should be 5 lever and comply with appropriate British Standards (most insurance companies require this standard before agreeing cover). Ground floor windows should also have locks fitted. Adequate lighting must be provided at front entrance doors - casual, unexpected visitors often call at manses and they need to be clearly seen when it is dark. Security lighting with passive infra-red detectors should be provided at appropriate points. A modern intruder alarm should be strongly considered. Where one is provided it should be covered by an annual maintenance agreement.

4.8 Contractors

A list of competent local trades people should be kept. Better value/quality of service is likely to be achieved as a result of a good working relationship built up with such firms. Seek several quotations when considering major works, but ensure that the work specified to each contractor is the same so that direct comparison of quotations is possible.

4.9 Grounds maintenance

Ministers and their families are human just like the rest of us! - some like gardening - others hate it! Ministers have more important tasks to do than cutting lawns so Circuits should consider having a contract with a local landscape contractor who would attend to routine garden maintenance. But remember, general garden maintenance by a contractor eg. lawn mowing, weeding etc. may incur the Minister paying tax (classed as a benefit in kind). The Landlord's responsibilities eg fencing, tree

lopping and driveways are not subject to tax. Please consult your Circuit Treasurer and Minister concerned before there is an argument about who pays the tax!

4.10 A Charter For incoming Ministers

At the Methodist Conference held in June 2000 a 'Charter for Incoming Ministers and Deacons' was agreed. This covered a number of administrative and practical points to be implemented on the change of Minister. *See Appendix 2 for details*

Circuit Officers should liaise with outgoing Ministers to ensure that the provisions of the above charter are satisfactorily implemented.

5 Letting a Manse

There are at least two occasions, when it may be necessary or advantageous to let out a manse on the open market. First, where there is a period of over six months when the manse would be unoccupied or secondly, when a Minister dies in service. This later occasion can be both stressful and emotional for the bereaved, the Church and the Circuit. On this matter Standing Orders state:

'On the death of a minister, deacon or probationer, the deceased's spouse and/or any dependants of the deceased then resident in the manse shall be entitled to remain there until the end of the current connexional year.' CPD 801 (5) 2006

Where a minister dies in service the deceased's family should be informed at the earliest opportunity, that they may stay in the manse and offer support to them. A situation may arise where the Minister dies in July, with only weeks to the end of the Connexional year.

If the deceased's family wish to live in the manse after the end of the Connexional year and the Circuit does not require the manse immediately, they have to become tenants (this is a requirement of the Charity Commission) of the Circuit and both parties have to go through the legalities of setting up a Residential Assured Shorthold Tenancy Agreement for a period of not less than six months. This need not necessarily involve the services of a solicitor.

You will need to keep Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (TMCP) and the District Property Secretary informed of the situation. The first step is to gain two valuations for the manse indicating the likely amount of rent per calendar month it would attract. The most authoritative valuation will be by a Chartered Surveyor and a second valuation can be sought from a well established local letting agent.

TMCP have a model tenancy agreement, which although similar to those used by letting agents, has an additional section relating to the Manse Stewards or Senior Stewards acting on behalf of the Landlord (i.e. Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes)

The Circuit officials may consider that they wish to use a letting agent, in which case most will be happy to issue the tenancy agreement with the amendments as above. Agency fees usually range from 8— 12% of the monthly letting rent plus VAT. As the Circuit is already looking after the maintenance of the property, it would seem a waste of money to ask the letting agent to do this as well. Most agents charge 2.5% just to handle invoices etc.

The deceased's family should be given an opportunity to review the tenancy agreement before both parties sign. It would also be wise to make a list of any 'damages' incurred by the family and any maintenance required to be carried out in an agreed timescale by the Landlord, signed for and actioned hopefully, before the tenancy agreement is signed.

As regard to the payment of rent, this is up to the Circuit. The widow/widower may have sufficient funds to pay the agreed rent, but if not the Circuit may decide to contribute to it or even pay the whole amount out of Circuit funds. If this is the case there should be an audit trail which clearly identifies the exact amount shown as expenditure and income as separate headings (in case of a Charity

Commission audit). The easy way of performing this is to pay it out of the Circuit's Benevolent Fund (if it has one, if not - create one)

In the case of an unoccupied manse most of the above is relevant, except that the property is empty. In this instance it would be wise to use the services of a letting agent, as they can provide a useful service, knowing the legal issues involved and also are able to advertise to a wider clientele. Remember, the Circuit will have to supply (if let unfurnished) a cooker, a hob, a washing machine and a refrigerator, plus curtains and carpets and possibly a lawnmower. It would also be wise to restrict the tenancy to non-smokers and specify that no animals are allowed in the house.

In either situation, if the tenancy goes ahead, the Circuit's 'authorised person' will need to enter the details onto the Consents website <https://propertyconsent.methodist.org.uk> and a copy of the signed tenancy agreement should be sent to TMCP, along with a certificate from the letting agent signifying that the best possible rent was obtained as required by the Charity Commission.

6 SELLING A MANSE

A situation may arise when a manse has to be sold: it may be surplus to the Circuit's current staffing requirements or it becomes prudent to purchase a manse of equal or lesser value to reduce the running and maintenance costs.

If an existing manse is to be sold, this requires the majority agreement at a Circuit Meeting, and recorded within the minutes. A small group (usually made up of Circuit and Property Stewards) on the authority of the Circuit Meeting, should construct a proposal of relevant information regarding the manse; why there is a need to sell the property and for what purpose(s) the resulting proceeds are to be used. This same group are usually authorised to take all necessary action regarding the sale, and the Circuit's 'authorised person' will need to enter the details onto the Consents website <https://propertyconsent.methodist.org.uk>. A valuation and report from a surveyor who is a member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors will also be required. At this time it is also advisable to check that the deeds of the manse are complete and readily available. Action can now begin to clarify issues such as rights of way, boundary fences etc., which if left until later may delay matters and could even result in a sale being not proceeding.

Remember, net proceeds resulting from a manse sale are forwarded directly to the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (TMCP) for capital projects only or towards the purchase of a new manse.

These funds are liable to a 'one off' or annual percentage deductions depending upon current Methodist Conference initiatives (your Circuit Treasurer will be able to inform you).

7 GENERAL

During the Connexional year, there will be an amount of paperwork generated to ensure the upkeep of manses within a Circuit. Ideally, with the capacity and technology of computing, most of the 'paperwork' can be produced, scanned on a computer and stored on portable media such as CD's, etc.

The responsible person should hold a logbook recording actions taken on each manse in their care. The logbook should also contain all certificates relating to manses statutory inspections, double glazing installations, loft insulation, planning and building regulations approval etc., annual and other schedules should be filed and stored securely and kept for as long as the manse is owned by the Circuit. See Technical Information leaflet T5 for Log Book sheets - <http://www.methodist.org.uk>.

Remember that if there is a need to pass on information to your successor, that person will have an easier task!

803 Accommodation and Furnishing. (1) (a) Subject to clause (2) below the Circuit or other body responsible for provision of the stipend of a circuit minister or deacon or other minister or deacon in the active work or probationer appointed to a station within the control of the Church shall provide a manse as a base for the work of ministry as well as a home.

(b) The accommodation to be provided shall satisfy the relevant accommodation guidelines approved from time to time by the Conference, unless permission for a departure from those guidelines has been granted under paragraph (c) below.

For the guidelines approved by the Conference of 2009, see Section 1C of Book VI, Part 2 'Guidance' below.

(c) In any case in which it is proposed that there be a significant departure from the approved accommodation guidelines, permission shall be sought by the Circuit or other responsible body from the district Policy Committee or, if the appointment is not a circuit appointment, the Methodist Council or other body or person to whom the council may delegate the granting of such permissions.

(d) Such permission shall only be granted if the committee or council (or other body or person) is satisfied:

- (i) that it is appropriate because of the particular local circumstances or nature of the appointment or for some other compelling reason; and
- (ii) that the matter has been fully discussed with the minister or deacon concerned and (if applicable) those responsible for his or her oversight, such discussion having taken place, in the case of an incoming minister, before an invitation has been offered and accepted, and, in the case of an incoming deacon, before the Warden of the Methodist Diaconal Order has made his or her recommendation as to stationing.

(e) No such departure shall be permitted in the case of an incoming probationer after the description of the appointment has been furnished under Standing Order 723(2)(a).

(1A) For the purposes of clause (1) above, provision of a manse 'as a base for the work of ministry' means that the minister, deacon or probationer concerned is expected to discharge the duties of the appointment in substantial part from the manse (whether or not he or she has a study available elsewhere) but does not oblige him or her to hold meetings or to conduct pastoral or other confidential interviews at the manse.

For inspection of manses by the District Manses Committee see S.O. 965.

(2) Where two persons, each of whom is a minister, deacon or probationer, married to each other are appointed to the same Circuit or to nearby Circuits they shall be entitled to one manse only and shall choose which of the available manses they will occupy. Where two Circuits are involved any question as to the financial arrangements between them not resolved by consultation shall be referred to a special committee appointed by the Synod and its decision shall be final.

See also the guidance in Book VI, Part 2, Section 3.

(3) *[revoked]*

(4) The Circuit or other such body shall, **having regard for energy efficiency**, also provide all carpets, curtains and other floor covering, lamp shades and light fittings, fixed fires (where fitted), study furniture, cooker and kitchen cupboards, as specified in clauses (6) to (8) below.

As to energy efficiency see also the guidance in Book VI, Part 2, Sections 1B.2 and 1C.3. The Conference of 2010 directed that Circuits should endeavour to use model trust money to put in place these high standards of energy efficiency. It also directed that Circuits should endeavour to provide smart meter devices to enable ministers to control their electricity use.

(5) *[revoked]*

(6) Guidelines as to the minimum requirements and best practice in the furnishing of manses shall be issued from time to time on behalf of the Methodist Council. Commonsense and flexibility should be exercised in applying those guidelines. It is the clear duty of the Circuit or other responsible body to see that each manse contains the items in the guidelines, but if a minister, deacon or probationer has any of these items and is willing that they should be used then it should be noted that these items may be required when there is a new appointment but are not needed now.

The Conference of 2009 received the guidelines intended to be issued under this clause by the Methodist Council (2009 Agenda p 203), which largely reflected the provisions previously contained in cl.5 above.

See also the 'Charter for Incoming Ministers and Deacons', in Book VI, Part 2, Section 1B below.

(7) Where the accommodation provided does not comply in all respects with the guidelines referred to in clause (1) above, whether as a result of a permitted departure from those guidelines or otherwise, the furnishings shall satisfy the requirements of clause (6) above as far as is reasonably possible and in any event shall be adequate for the accommodation and appropriate for the purposes of a manse.

(8) A minister, deacon or probationer bringing study furniture, cooker, carpets or curtains into a manse so as to render surplus manse furniture or furnishings (not considered inadequate by the district Manses Committee by reference to the guidelines as to minimum requirements) is responsible with the Circuit or other responsible body for the proper storage of such surplus furniture or furnishings and the cost of such storage shall be shared equally by the Circuit or other responsible body and the person concerned. He or she should consult the circuit stewards or other responsible officers so that an approved arrangement can be made for storage of this and any other manse furniture or furnishings which it is considered will not be used, to the extent that the stewards or other officers cannot find an alternative use for it or cannot themselves store it safely and economically. The Circuit Meeting shall receive and record the details for future use.

(9) This Standing Order and clause (2) of Standing Order 804 shall not apply to ministers, deacons or probationers permitted to serve in appointments that are not within the control of the Church, who shall be wholly responsible for the provision of their own accommodation and furniture.

(10) Where a minister, deacon or probationer does not wish to be provided with accommodation under this Standing Order, or a Circuit or other body applies for a minister, deacon or probationer to be stationed without its providing accommodation Standing Order 801(6) shall apply with any necessary adaptations.

804 Furniture. (1) A minister, deacon or probationer within the terms of Standing Order 803 (1) shall be responsible for supplying all furniture, with the exception of that provided under Standing Order 803(4).

(2) Ministers, deacons and probationers on being appointed for the first time to a station in the home work within the control of the Church shall be eligible to receive financial assistance according to need from the Methodist Church Fund. Assistance may be given by way of grant or loan or a combination of both, according to criteria approved by the Methodist Council. Payment shall be made by the Connexional Team which shall also deal with any related administrative matters which may arise. This clause shall not apply to any such person aged 55 or more (taking age as at 31st August next following acceptance as a candidate) unless the Methodist Council judges it necessary to give assistance in the light of special circumstances.

(3) The needs of mission partners returning from overseas to home service shall be a charge upon the World Mission Fund.
For this fund see S.O. 362(2).

Section 1B Charter for Incoming Ministers and Deacons

The Conference of 2000 (Agenda pp. 216–218), in response to a Memorial to the Conference of 1999, adopted a proposal that, to encourage good practice and to increase awareness, the following Charter be printed in this volume.

1. In the study/office ministers and deacons can expect to find:
 - all the information they need to begin their ministry in their new place
 - complete and up-to-date membership lists and pastoral rolls with a list of changes since November 1st last
 - complete and up-to-date committee lists
 - all files tidied with old material either deposited with the County Records Office or filed neatly and separately
 - the legal formalities about Authorised Persons for marriages completed
 - a list of work currently in hand giving whatever details are needed for them to take up that work
 - a pastoral list of those who are currently ill, recently bereaved or in need of a priority visit
 - a list of diary dates
 - a minimum of outstanding work

2. In the house ministers and deacons can expect to find:
 - all carpets cleaned (shampooed if necessary) and finally vacuumed before the minister leaves the property
 - all curtains cleaned and re-hung
 - all interior paintwork washed down
 - all cupboards empty, cleaned and washed out so that all shelves are usable immediately
 - a clean cooker
 - that all domestic refuse has been removed from the premises
 - that anything which had been disarranged by the previous occupants has been put back, rearranged and made good by those occupants
 - a list of useful information such as the name and address of doctor and dentist, the day for collection of refuse, details of local emergency contacts, etc
 - ***a current energy performance certificate***

3. In the garden ministers and deacons can expect to find:
 - that all hedges and shrubs have been trimmed or pruned at the appropriate time
 - all lawns cut
 - all beds weeded
 - all garden rubbish removed from the premises
 - all greenhouses and sheds emptied and swept out
 - the garage emptied and swept out

The care of manses is at all times a matter of partnership and co-operation between the occupants and the circuit stewards. To carry out their responsibilities, circuit stewards, for example, whilst respecting the privacy of the manse, must have whatever access is necessary to ensure that the property is kept in good repair and that an annual and ongoing programme of maintenance and redecoration is sustained. Such things should not be left to the few days when a manse may be vacant at a changeover. In this partnership it is the responsibility of the Circuit (as set out in Standing Orders 533, 803 and 954) to provide a suitable manse, to decorate it and to furnish it with carpets, curtains, a cooker, office furniture and a lawnmower. It is the clear responsibility of the occupants, on the other hand, to keep the manse clean and presentable and at a changeover to make sure that the manse and its circuit furnishings are left clean and tidy. Exceptional circumstances will occasionally arise in which, for various reasons, occupants are unable to fulfil this basic obligation – in which case arrangements should be negotiated with the circuit stewards. Normally, however, incoming ministers and deacons can expect to find that their predecessors have left the manse clean and habitable in the ways indicated above.

Section 1C Guidelines on Provision of Adequate Accommodation for Manses

In 2009 the Conference adopted S.O. 803(1)(b), which requires that accommodation to be provided as a manse for a minister or deacon in the active work or probationer appointed to a station within the control of the Church shall satisfy such guidelines as the Conference approves for the purpose, unless permission to depart from them has been granted under S.O. 803(1)(c). The 2009 Conference then approved these guidelines (derived in part from the previous S.O. 803(3)) and directed that they be printed in this volume.

Para. 3 was amended in 2010 (and see also the note to S.O. 803(4) on that specific matter).

1. Whilst it is impossible to prescribe exactly the number and use of rooms in a manse because of the wide variation in the internal arrangements of houses, a manse must provide adequate accommodation for a mixed family and visitors. This should include:

- enough bedrooms (normally four)
- at least two separate living rooms and a kitchen
- a separate study (one of the bedrooms may be used for this purpose provided that all other requirements of these guidelines are met).

2. Adequate garage or other parking facilities should be provided.

3. *Using Energy Performance Certificates and advice, Circuits should undertake measures to meet the potential energy efficiency ratings of their manses. Circuits should seek to provide manses to meet a minimum of a 'C' energy efficiency rating.*

4. Arrangements for the use of a manse for the work of ministry must be such as to protect the confidentiality of all parties.

5. If possible the study should be downstairs. There should be no necessity for anyone visiting the manse on church business to go upstairs.

6. If there is no study downstairs and a bedroom is used as a study it must be possible for pastoral interviews or church business to be conducted in one of the downstairs rooms without disturbing the privacy of other family members or compromising the minister or deacon's own privacy. These arrangements must be thoroughly explored with the prospective minister or deacon before a match is concluded in the case of a circuit manse. Circuits, Districts or other bodies providing manses should note that this requirement may cause difficulties in a house with fewer than four bedrooms.

7. If the arrangement of the rooms downstairs in the manse makes the above impossible, or in any case if there is no downstairs cloakroom, proper provision must be made elsewhere (e.g. a properly appointed study at a church).

8. Since the manse is to be used as a home as well as a base for the work of ministry, proper arrangements must be made for protecting the privacy of ministers and deacons and their families. Such arrangements must include:

- maintaining their safety
- allowing them to carry out the activities of daily life without undue restriction
- protecting them from intrusion and embarrassment.

9. Circuits must be aware that providing a small manse may lead to the need to change it with a change of minister.

Manse Annual Maintenance Costs

The October 1993 Property Board accepted the principle that future advice to circuits in respect of manse annual maintenance costs be based on current costs, with an inflationary element incorporated in the final figure.

We give below our estimate of current costs but they can be neither right nor wrong since all the criteria are based upon the mythical “average manse”. However, the final sum of £3,800 is probably a reasonable starting point to derive an annual figure for a specific manse. It will need adjusting depending on size, age and current general condition, the traditional weighting for the Southeast appears, at least for the present, not to be necessary.

Costs considered appropriate for a manse to the standards recommended in Standing Order 753 and of average size and reasonably modern in design and construction are:

	Replacement Cost £	Replacement Frequency	Discounted Replacement cost for 2010 £
Decorations (internal)	4305	5	860
Decorations (external)	1710	5	345
Floor coverings	4870	8	610
Curtains	2080	8	260
Kitchen fittings	3335	15	220
Cooker	1070	12	90
Utility fittings	1335	15	90
Study furniture	1190	10	120
Central heating boiler	1780	15	120
Central heating installation	3525	25	140
Rewiring	3120	30	105
Mower	300	10	30
Shed	555	15	40
Roof covering	3095	60	50
General repairs			1380
Manse Maintenance Costs (at Jan 2010)			4460

It is suggested that 2% compound be added annually for inflation.