



CIRCUIT MEETING MINUTES

9th June 2026

Online via Zoom

1. Welcome – Rev Sarah Knebel welcomed Trustees to the Circuit Meeting
2. The meeting opened with a prayer led by Rev Sarah.
3. The membership of the meeting was agreed. It was noted that Sheila Slattery has resigned as Circuit Steward and Anne Bentley is the Treasurer for Swanage.
4. Apologies for absence were received from Judith Hewins, Tony Fernand, Bob Taylor and Eileen Osgood.
5. Letters of Greeting & Acknowledgement and Items for Prayer:
 - 5.1 Rev Maurice Weatherup: Circuit to send well-wishes as he relocates closer to family. Maurice is a Supernumerary and has been very much a part of this Circuit for many years.
 - 5.2 Sheila Slattery: Circuit to send thanks and prayer for reasons behind stepping down as circuit steward.
6. The minutes of the meeting held 3rd March 2026 were signed as a true and correct record
7. Matters Arising: There were no matters arising.
8. **News from Churches**
 - 8.1 **Swanage:** Report received and circulated prior to the meeting. The church enjoyed a busy and meaningful Easter season, including special Holy Week and Easter services, and a joyful Pentecost celebration. First Steps Toddler Group and Footsteps Fellowship continue to thrive, and planning is underway for summer services welcoming holidaymakers and visiting groups. Work on the enhanced accessibility lift is scheduled to begin in September.
 - 8.2 **Broadstone:** Fish and chips supper with quiz held; Messy Church ran during half-term (shortened due to heat).
 - 8.3 **BMC:** Completed first half of Bible course in Sunday worship and study groups; positive feedback and renewed appetite for Scripture. Teenagers now involved in band, tech team, and Bible readings; all BMC buildings now have consistent Wi-Fi.
 - 8.4 **Poole:** After school Story Café and work with the school has restarted this academic year (since Covid). 6-10 children & carers, read to volunteers or craft, parents relax with tea and cake. A small group at Poole have been piloting a Connexional course 'On the Way' (5 sessions completed); intergenerational course (teens to 80s) exploring Methodist identity and beliefs; national launch summer 2026.
 - 8.5 **Wool:** Sound system upgrade scheduled for Thursday - the preachers will be glad to hear!
 - 8.6 **Upton:** Daisy Chains successful with 27 children in half-term holiday. Hobbies at the Corner craft event ran Tuesday-Wednesday in foyer

9. Staffing

9.1 Stationing Process/Circuit Invitations Committee:

Rev Karen is currently discerning her next steps, including whether to enter the stationing process or seek a re-invitation. As part of this process, questionnaires have been circulated to churches to gather feedback, with responses requested by 30 June. The information gathered will help inform a Circuit profile should stationing proceed. It was also noted that some of Julian's responsibilities will be shadowed by another Circuit Steward to support skills development and succession planning. Michelle to coordinate with Julian to share online questionnaire.

9.2 Progress report on Property and Lay Worker Roles

Roles delayed due to priority focus on Wareham Church sale; now able to prioritise finalizing job descriptions, adverts, and funding plans for district submission.

10. Life of the Circuit

10.1 Mission Updates

Considering the current Circuit mission statement.

10.2 Report from Circuit Youth Group

Report received and circulated prior to the meeting. The Circuit are pleased that they are planning another trip to 3Generate 2026 in Birmingham in October. Rev Sarah confirmed that circuit funding covers all young people within age range (not just regular God Squad attendees) but requested they attend a few God Squad sessions first to build rapport with leaders before residential trip. The leaders thanked the Circuit for their support and Circuit thanked God Squad leaders for their commitment; event described as inspiring and heartening for future of Methodism. Great opportunity for our young people to meet and join other young Methodists.

10.3 Report from Local Preachers & Worship Leaders

- The Circuit is currently without a Local Preacher secretary – who must be elected from LP or Ws. Local preachers sharing note-taking duties; certain administrative functions (reports, certificates, Connexion updates) currently on hold until one or more people can take on the role.
- All preachers and ministers to focus on Philippians throughout July services; local preachers explored course material at recent meeting.
- Local preachers discussed recent Bible Society report; data collection errors acknowledged (outside company, not Bible Society); churches noting growing curiosity about Christianity despite flawed statistics
- Rev Sarah thanked Local Preachers and Worship Leaders for extra services during Karen's sabbatical and for churches offering/accepting local arrangements to fill plan gaps.

11. Governance

11.1 Safeguarding Officers Report

Report received and circulated prior to the meeting. The new Circuit Safeguarding Officer, Michelle Dobson, reported that initial work has focused on digitising training records, reviewing renewal requirements, supporting two Foundation Module training sessions (25 April and 6 June 2026), maintaining contact with Church Safeguarding Officers, and undertaking additional safeguarding training. Further work will focus on supporting local churches and completing training-record updates, with churches asked to prioritise submitting outstanding safeguarding training information.

11.2 Appeal for New Circuit Stewards

Sheila Slattery has stepped down; team now seeks nominations, especially from Poole and Purbeck churches to balance geographic representation. Please consider whether someone you know has the gifts and skills needed to be a Circuit Steward. Anne gave an overview of being a new Circuit Steward, enjoying learning and attending the training course – is now looking forward to getting stuck in!

11.3 Appeal for New Circuit Secretary

The role remains vacant. Michelle Dobson is continuing to provide interim support but is unable to do so on a long-term basis. No expressions of interest have been received to date. Churches were encouraged to consider potential candidates within their congregations and invite them to explore the opportunity. It was noted that the role could potentially be undertaken as a job share. For more information contact Rev Sarah Knebel or Chris Snape.

11.4 Approval of Annual Property Return 2025 (copy attached)

Vote taken place online. Circulated and ratified by a majority.

11.5 Approval of Risk Management Policy 2026-27

Not yet circulated; Michelle to distribute for email vote and ratification at September meeting

11.6 Approval of Charity Commission Checklist 2026

Not yet circulated; Michelle to distribute for email vote and ratification at September meeting

11.7 Compliance – Rev Sarah Knebel / Sheila Slattery

Sheila continues to support Sarah with this workstream. Work is progressing to review fire safety, health and safety, and other property-related policies to help ensure compliance across our church buildings. All required questionnaires have now been completed, and Elite is currently reviewing the information provided. A report outlining the compliance requirements for each church property will be issued in due course, identifying any actions needed to achieve compliance. Thanks were expressed to the Property Stewards for their work in completing the questionnaires.

12. Finance –

12.1 Update on Circuit Finances – paperwork circulated earlier in the day for review.

Finances in good shape; no concerns raised. Late sharing of documents acknowledged, if anyone has questions please feel free get in touch.

12.2 Appointment of auditors for PBMC 2025-26 Accounts (Full Audit)

Louise working on 2025-26 accounts; two auditor proposals presented to circuit

- Rothmans Audit, Southampton - £9,500 + VAT
- PPK Francis Clark, Poole - £11,000 + VAT (existing auditors)

Explained that it is good practice to change auditors for a fresh perspective needed; Alan raised concerns about PKF/PPK using juniors who repeated questions annually without maintaining circuit-specific records. PKF have been auditing Circuit accounts for 10 years+. Rothmans currently audit BMC accounts.

Motion: Appoint Rothmans as auditors for PBMC 2025-26 Accounts (full audit)

In favour- 20 unanimous in favour. Carried

13. Property

13.1 Update regarding sale of Wareham Church/Kinson Church/Lytchett Matravers Church

- **Wareham:** Building has deteriorated significantly. Advised to sell by auction. Various auctioneers have been considered, CLT approved for sale by auction through Symonds & Sampson due to deteriorating condition; estate agent yet to inspect building
- **Kinson:** CLT agreed to a standard sale with Symonds & Sampson, should it not sell by a set timescale, yet to be decided, we will move to auction.
- **Lytchett Matravers:** Clearance delayed; circuit hiring company to empty building after former congregation removes desired items. Will be seeking advice from surveyor for the type of sale we will be using. Further info to follow.

13.2 Update on Manses:

- **Browning Avenue | Sale:** Manse sale process helped by the TMCP streamlining process and flowchart. Thanks were expressed to Julian for his hard work on the sale.

Completion:	14 th May 2026
Gross Proceeds:	£703,767.80
Connexional levy:	£257,507.12
Net to Circuit Model Trust Fund:	£446,260.68

- **Cherry Hill | Conservatory:** Working on a leaking conservatory, cheaper to repair than look at other options. Scaffolding erected for leaking conservatory repair; work pending as of meeting date
- **Shaw Drive | Plumbing:** Plumbing incorrectly installed around water heater during pre-occupancy work; Michelle negotiating resolution with contractor before Karen's return.

13.3 Renewal of letting of Cherry Hill Grove to Rev Higgs:

Letting is now on rolling monthly renewals under Renters' Rights Act; circuit to review consents every two years – next due June 2027. Current rent is £900 per month. Methodist Council had approved this letting in July 2024 as the rent was below the market rate but the Rev Higgs is also giving assistance to the Poole Bay circuit.

A show of hands confirmed everyone happy to continue. One abstention.

13.4 Renewal of letting of Fernside Road manse:

Letting is now on rolling monthly renewals under Renters' Rights Act; circuit to review consents every two years – next due June 2027. Current rent is £1,625 per month.

A show of hands confirmed everyone happy to continue. One abstention.

13.5 Renewal of letting of Headswell Avenue manse:

Letting is now on rolling monthly renewals under Renters' Rights Act; circuit to review consents every two years – next due June 2027. Current rent is £1,625 per month.

A show of hands confirmed everyone happy to continue. One abstention.

14. Any other business: There was no other business

15. Date of next meeting:	29 th September	Circuit Meeting	Swanage
	23 rd July	Extraordinary*	Zoom
	1 st December	Circuit Meeting	Zoom

16. *A 'single item agenda' Extraordinary Circuit Meeting has been provisionally scheduled for 7.30pm on 23rd July 2026 on Zoom if required for Stationing Process. The Circuit Invitations Committee will advise if the meeting is needed. Please save the date in your diary as we may only have 24-48 hours' notice!

The meeting closed with The Grace at 8:20pm