

Derby Methodist Circuit Grants Policy

This document sets out the policy that the Derby Circuit will apply in making grants to churches out of the Model Trust Fund (formerly called the Circuit Advance Fund).

The Model Trust Fund arises largely out of sales of churches that have closed. As such, it is attributable to sacrificial giving by Methodist members of the past. It is appropriate that this money should be put to work to further the purposes of God in this area. It is also appropriate that the Circuit should exercise good stewardship of this fund, and ensure that the best possible use is made of it.

A. General Points

1. The Circuit will not normally entertain applications made retrospectively for grants towards personnel projects or property work already begun. In exceptional cases where work needs to be done urgently (for instance, to prevent further damage through water ingress) the Superintendent may give permission for work to go ahead without prejudice to a subsequent grant application.
2. In appropriate cases, churches will also be encouraged to apply for a District grant. It should be noted that the District will usually want to know before making a grant that the Circuit is supporting the project and has already agreed to make a grant.
3. If the Finance & Property Task Group considers that a grant should be made, it will make a recommendation to the Circuit Meeting, which the Circuit Meeting may accept, vary or decline.
4. Reports (verbal or written) will be given to the Circuit Finance & Property Task Group about how the money is being spent and the outcomes achieved.

B. Grants for Personnel

1. It is the policy of the Circuit to encourage mission and ministry that takes forward the work of God. Therefore the Circuit will consider requests for grants towards the employment of lay staff for mission and ministry, such as youth workers, outreach workers and pastoral workers.
2. Grants will be given for a maximum of three years at a time. The maximum that will be given will be 50% of the first year's costs, 40% of the second year's costs, and 30% of the third year's costs (i.e. 40% overall, but weighted towards more of the grant being paid in the first year than in the second and third). A fresh application can be made to cover a further period. However, it should be expected that the proportion given may continue to fall.

3. Nothing in the preceding paragraph should raise an expectation that the maximum grant will be given in every case. Each application will be considered on its merits. Factors to be taken into account may include:
 - (a) The mission potential of the work;
 - (b) The need for the work in that church and area;
 - (c) The financial resources of the church;
 - (d) How the remaining money will be raised.
4. The church will provide enough information for the Circuit Finance & Property Task Group to make a judgement on the matters listed above.
5. In the event that a worker leaves before the end of a period for which the grant has already been paid, the church will refund that proportion of the grant that relates to the remaining period.

C. Grants for Property

1. The Circuit recognises that mission can be advanced by improving our buildings. The Circuit also recognises that churches often face hardship in keeping their buildings in good repair. The Circuit will therefore consider grant applications for property work, whether for improvement or maintenance.
2. Grants will be given for a maximum of 30% of the cost of the work.
3. There shall not be an expectation that the maximum grant will be given in every case. Each application will be considered on its merits. Factors to be taken into account may include:
 - (a) The mission potential, if any, of the work;
 - (b) The need for the work to be done;
 - (c) The cost of the work as compared with the potential benefit;
 - (d) The future viability of the church;
 - (e) The financial resources of the church;
 - (f) How the remaining money will be raised.
4. The church will provide enough information for the Circuit Finance & Property Task Group to make a judgement on the matters listed above. In particular, if possible, three competitive quotations will be obtained. However, it is recognised that in some cases it may be difficult to get three quotations. It is also recognised that it is not always wise to accept the lowest quotation.
5. In the case of a large project, provisional approval of a grant may be made on the basis of estimated cost, and the approval revised once detailed costs are known.

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