**USE OF CIRCUIT FUNDS**

This paper should be read alongside application form for a grant from the Circuit Model Trust Fund.

Several years ago, Conference decided that the Circuit Model Trust Fund (formerly known as the Circuit Advance Fund) could be used to fund projects within circuits. South West Tyneside Circuit decided that its funds could be used to support ‘missional activity’ within the circuit. Over the years, the definition of what constitutes missional activity has become blurred with some grant decisions being quoted as precedent in support of new applications.

The aim of this paper is to set out, in a simple two-stage process, what can be classed as missional activity and thus qualify for funding from the model trust fund. This will ‘clear the board’ of previous grants and we will be starting with a clean slate. No previous grants will be considered as having set a precedent from this point forwards.

**Criteria to consider when applying for a grant from the Circuit Model Trust Fund**

1. Would the work need to be done regardless of any missional activity? If the answer to this is ‘yes’, the work would probably be classed as general maintenance and thus not qualify for funding. e.g. There is evidence of damp ingress which needs to be remedied before an area can be used for missional work – this is work that needs to be done to maintain the fabric of the building regardless. This is the area that, in the past, has caused the most ‘blurring of the lines’ because it is recognised that in some respects everything that we do to our buildings is to support missional work – if the roof falls in, we can’t carry out God’s work!
2. Is there a missional purpose to the project you are seeking funding for? Does the work seek to spread the word of God or facilitate the work? In what way? If the answer to this is ‘yes’ the project could possibly qualify for funding. e.g. Alterations to a building to make it suitable for purpose.

If you have any doubt as to whether your project would qualify for funding from the Circuit Model Trust Fund, consult your minister or any of the Circuit Stewards who will be happy to give advice. Alternatively, complete and submit the grant application form and all applications will be considered on their merits and measured against the two criteria above.

It should be noted that the circuit would usually provide funding up to **one third** of the total cost. Churches are encouraged to seek other external funding and would usually be expected to provide a proportion of the funding themselves.

The same application form should be used whether you are seeking a large grant (usually considered to be more than £2000) or a small grant (less than £2000). The former has to come to the Circuit Meeting for approval. The latter can be approved by the Circuit Leadership Team, as delegated by Circuit Meeting, if it can be shown that the funding is urgently needed in advance of the next circuit meeting. This is not to be seen as a shortcut to by-pass the Circuit Meeting.

When funding is provided, churches would usually be expected to provide feedback to the Circuit Meeting on progress of the work and use of the funding.