

From the Circuit Meeting

A Circuit Meeting was held on 17th September, hosted by Kingsdown Methodist Church.

Opening Devotions

Rev Steve Day welcomed everyone and led the meeting in prayer.

Finance

The Circuit gave warm thanks to Stephen Sears, who has agreed to continue as Treasurer for one final year. A successor must be identified by September 2026, ideally sooner so they can shadow Stephen.

Draft accounts for 2024–25 were presented; although showing a surplus, this largely reflects exceptional income, and an underlying deficit is expected after audit.

Property Matters

King's Hall

Since June's Circuit Meeting, significant work has continued on exploring redevelopment options at King's Hall. The Circuit is now receiving guidance from consultant Michael Gilbert of Rapleys, who has experience with Methodist projects nationally. Initial conversations have taken place with Ealing Council's planning development team, where it was suggested that partial demolition may be permissible with appropriate justification. Work is ongoing to clarify the Council's position. A possible Prior Notification of Demolition (PND) has been paused until the Circuit has a clearer understanding of the options and the likelihood of meaningful cooperation from the Council.

Pitshanger Methodist Church

Following Drama Studio London's withdrawal, three organisations have expressed interest in leasing the building, including a local charity, a tuition company, and a Montessori nursery.

The meeting agreed to delegate negotiations to a working group which will meet potential lessors, seek business plans, and progress towards draft heads of terms. The meeting also agreed that a fully repairing lease should be the strong preference, given limited capacity to manage the building. Flexibility on rent and

lease length may be considered to attract the right tenant, but trustees stressed the need for security and sustainability.

If no viable arrangement emerges by the end of the calendar year, the Circuit will consider appointing an external agent to market the property more widely.

Costons Avenue (Vacant Manse)

An offer of £720,000 has been accepted, and the sale will proceed through the streamlined Methodist panel-solicitor process.

Replacement Projects

The Connexion has approved use of sale proceeds for “replacement projects” including energy efficiency work. The Circuit will audit its estate to identify potentially eligible projects, for which funds from the sale of Costons Avenue could potentially be used.

Safeguarding and EDI

The meeting formally adopted the updated Circuit Safeguarding Policy, which remains based on the Connexional template, with only minor amendments. Foundation Module Safeguarding training will next take place at Ealing Green Church on Sunday 25th January 2026, with a further session likely in April.

The Circuit’s Memorial to Conference regarding safeguarding training, which sought permission for Foundation Module trainers to deliver the Advanced Module, was considered at Conference. The response confirmed that there was no barrier to such arrangements, and other Districts had already adopted this model. However, the London District had not done so, and no immediate change was being implemented. It was noted that safeguarding provision is being restructured nationally, with staff now being employed by the Connexion; however, Claire de Stefano remains the safeguarding contact for the London District.

The Circuit has been offering the mandatory Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training locally this autumn. The programme began with a café-style Circuit service at Ealing Green on 21st September, exploring themes of welcome and belonging. Ministers, preachers, worship leaders, stewards and safeguarding officers must complete the training; others are warmly encouraged to join in.

Stationing

The Circuit Invitations Committee recommended the re-invitation of Rev Ajay Singh for a further four years. Rev Steve thanked those who organised the consultations and paperwork. One query was submitted beforehand, but no objections were raised, so no vote was required. The meeting affirmed the recommendation and congratulated Rev Ajay, who expressed his gratitude for the Circuit's support and recognition of his ministry.

Local Preachers & Worship Leaders

Rev Margaret Dudley has been appointed as Secretary of the Local Preachers and Worship Leaders Meeting. Rev Dr Jen Smith, a former Circuit Superintendent, will lead worship at a Circuit Service at Ealing Green Church on Sunday 8th February 2026.
