



The **United Reformed Church**
National Synod of Wales

Yr **Eglwys Ddiwygiedig Unedig**
Synod Cenedlaethol Cymru

The Wales Synod – Background information

‘Synod’ describes a geographical area, a collection of local churches, the meeting of representatives of those churches and an organisation that supports those churches and their officers. Synod comes from Greek roots meaning ‘together’ and ‘on the way’. The role of Synod Clerk is derived from being the secretary to the Synod Meeting, the gathering of representatives of the local United Reformed Churches to take action which supports:

- the spreading of the Gospel at home and abroad,
- the life and witness of the United Reformed Church,
- the interests of the Church of Christ as a whole,
- the well-being of the community in which the Church is placed

Synod Meeting takes place twice a year, Spring and Autumn, and its work is carried out through a number of boards, committees, groups and networks as laid out in the Synod Structure (see below).

Creating the connections for bringing possibilities to the meeting and taking forward action from the meeting, make the Synod Clerk a key strategic role in the Synod and one of the Synod Leadership Group.

The National Synod of Wales is one of the thirteen Synods of the United Reformed Church and is coterminous with the national boundaries of Wales. The functions of the Synod are set out in the [Structure of the United Reformed Church](#). The Structure also describes the other councils of the URC. The [Basis of Union](#) sets out some theological principles for the URC and the [Rules of Procedure](#) some of the relationships between the councils. Sometimes the different circles of belonging of local church, synod and denomination, function in their own sphere of influence, but they are also connected by decisions and procedures. The Synod Clerk helps the synod organisation and local churches to navigate when these apply. The Basis, Structure and Rules of Procedure form the ‘Scheme of Union’ of the United Reformed Church, and these are brought together with reference material about other aspects of URC life in [The Manual](#).

The charitable assets of the Synod are held by The United Reformed Church (Wales) Trust Company Limited, a charitable company limited by guarantee

incorporated on 11 April 1925 and registered as a charity on 5 July 1997. The Trust seeks to develop strategies that support the work of the United Reformed Church National Synod of Wales within the parameters of the objects of the charity. The Trust also acts as the employer for the staff.

The Trust provides resources for employing staff who promote ecumenical relations across communities; training and development; safeguarding; property management and legal compliance support, together with administrative support for the National Synod. Resources also support work with Children and Young People across Wales.

There are 14 URC stipendiary ministers of Word & Sacraments who serve their congregations and local communities through leading worship, pastoral care, discipling people and encouraging involvement in God's mission in their context. These ministers support chaplaincies in hospitals, universities, visits to schools and prisons in various places in Wales. In addition, there are:

- 1 URC church related community worker
- 3 URC non-stipendiary ministers and 1 retired minister from the Presbyterian Church of Wales
- 2 ministers serving on Certificates of Limited Service
- 22 ministers from other denominations working in Local Ecumenical Projects (LEP)
- 37 URC retired ministers

Elders and Congregations within the churches, number some 1,698 members, with 643 adherents and 577 connected Young People. 70% (71) of our Churches have less than 25 members. Thirty-four local churches (38%) are part of local ecumenical partnerships. An outline map is provided below, the numbers relate to those in the URC and Synod yearbooks.

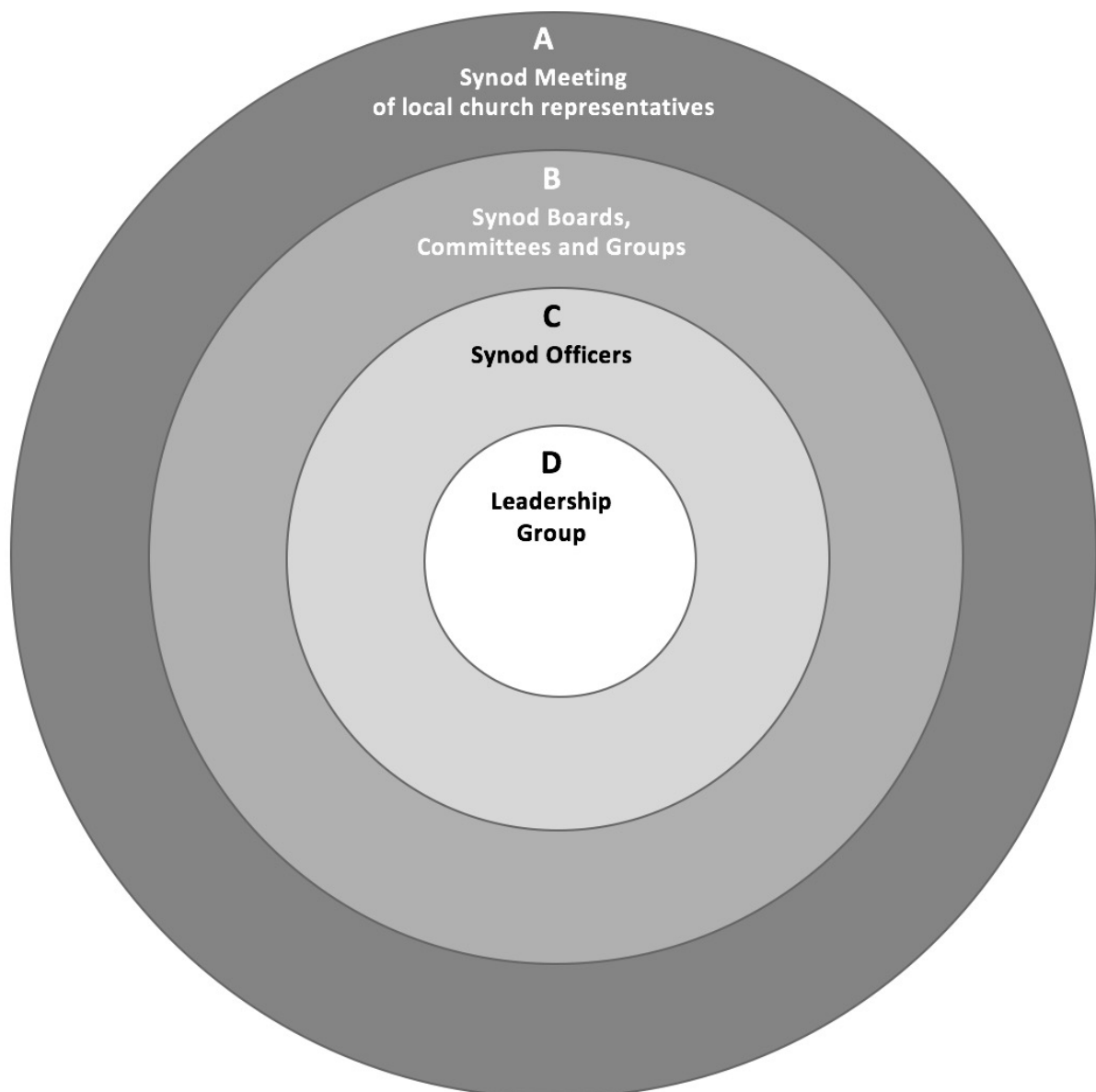
Elders are chosen locally, and they are increasingly important participants in how we respond to the changes within the URC and in our society.

Structure of the United Reformed Church National Synod of Wales

1. Preamble

- 1.1. This document is to be read in conjunction with the [Structure of the United Reformed Church](#) and the [Basis of Union](#).
- 1.2. This Structure is intended to be permissive and flexible, rather than restrictive. Hopefully, this will serve to reduce the amount of time that future Synod Meetings will need to spend on this matter.

2. Graphic Representation



3. Expansion

A Synod Meeting

Membership:

All serving Ministers/CRCWs alongside representatives of each local church, ecumenical guests, Synod Officers, etc. (as set down in the Basis of Union and Structure). Others may attend, but not vote.

Meeting:

At least twice each year

Responsible for:

- Setting mission strategy
- Setting priorities
- Approving policy
- Responding to decisions of General Assembly
- Receiving reports from Boards and Committees
- Receiving accounts and approving budgets
- Discussion and decisions relevant to the mission of the Synod and its churches
- Responding to matters raised by local churches

B Synod Boards, Committees and Groups

Expanded at 4 below.

C Synod Officers

Includes:

Synod Moderator (convener), Synod Clerk (Secretary), Trust Company Secretary, Synod Treasurer, Training & Development Officer, Officer for Ecumenical & Interfaith Relations, Children & Youthwork Development Officer, Safeguarding Officer, Property Officer and Office Manager.

Meeting:

At least quarterly

Responsible for:

- Oversight of matters related to priorities

- Developing communications strategy
- Listening and sharing local church news and issues
- To act on behalf of Synod Meeting as necessary
- Candidacy and vocations
- Safeguarding
- General Assembly representation
- Ecumenical relations and development (including link with Cytûn, etc.)
- Oversight of Transitional Ministry
- Decisions regarding use of Osborne Resource Fund
- Mutual accountability
- Reporting to each Synod Meeting

D Leadership Group

Meeting:

At least bi-monthly

Membership:

Synod Moderator, Synod Clerk, Synod Treasurer and Trust Company Secretary

Responsible for:

- Nominations
- Strategic oversight and development
- Maintaining an overview of the Synod and the URC generally
- Link with General Assembly

4. Synod Boards, Committees and Groups

4.1. Synod Pastoral Committee

Membership:

Synod Moderator (*ex officio*), Synod Clerk (Convener) (*ex officio*), Training and Development Officer (North) (*ex officio*), Transition and Training Officer (*ex officio*), Ecumenical Officer (*ex officio*), Lay Preaching Officer (*ex officio*), one representative of each Regional Pastoral Committee (Convener or deputy), one representative from each United Area.

Meeting:

Quarterly

Responsible for:

- Implementation of Synod priorities
- Co-ordinating, overseeing and supporting Regional Pastoral Committees
- Oversight of lay training and development
- Oversight of ministerial training and development
- Maintain a link with Northern College
- Lay preaching
- Lay presidency (on recommendation from Regional Pastoral Committees)
- Development of deployment strategy
- Vacancy declaration and concurrence to calls (on recommendation from Regional Pastoral Committees)
- Appointment of Interim Moderators (on recommendation from Regional Pastoral Committees)
- Appointment of NSMs (on recommendation from Regional Pastoral Committees)
- Approval of the continuing ministry of ministers beyond retirement age (on recommendation from Regional Pastoral Committees)
- Formulation of policies for consideration by Synod Meeting
- Supporting Regional Pastoral Committees in the implementation of the Local Ministry and Mission Review programme
- Written report to each Synod Meeting

4.2. **Regional Pastoral Committees**

Membership:

Flexible, to take account of local circumstances, with an identified convener.

Meeting:

As necessary

Responsible for:

- Implementation of Synod priorities
- Implementation of deployment strategy

- Implementation of Local Ministry and Mission Review programme
- Overseeing and supporting local congregations and their leaders
- Supporting retired ministers and their spouses, widows/widowers
- Vacancy declaration and concurrence to calls (recommending to Synod Pastoral Committee)
- Appointment and review of NSMs (recommending to Synod Pastoral Committee)
- Appointment of Interim Moderators (recommending to Synod Pastoral Committee)
- Lay presidency (recommending to Synod Pastoral Committee)
- Review of continuing ministry of ministers beyond retirement age (recommending to Synod Pastoral Committee)
- Identifying and supporting Lay Preachers (in consultation with the Synod's Lay Preaching Officer), Local Church Leaders and Worship Leaders
- Pastoral care and support
- Responding to matters raised by local churches
- Written report to each meeting of the Synod Pastoral Committee

4.3. **Finance and Property Board**

Membership:

Convener (*appointed by Synod*), Synod Moderator (*ex officio*), Synod Clerk (*ex officio*), Synod Treasurer (*ex officio*), Synod Ecumenical Officer (*ex officio*), Office Manager and Cashier (without voting rights) (*ex officio*), Property Officer (without voting rights) (*ex officio*), Trust Company Secretary (*ex officio*), four representatives from across the Synod (from nominations; chosen to ensure balance).

Meeting:

Quarterly

Responsible for:

- Implementation of Synod priorities
- Formulation of policies for consideration by Synod Meeting
- Property matters (approval, oversight, support and guidance)

- Manse policy (oversight and guidance)
- Ministry and Mission Fund contributions (direction, development and advocacy)
- Mission Development Fund grants (approval and monitoring)
- Financial matters (oversight, support and guidance) and reporting accounts to Synod Meeting
- Formulating budgets for approval by Synod Meeting
- Indicate need for a District Council meeting where required
- Close working with URC (Wales) Trust Company Limited
- Written report to each Synod Meeting

4.4. **Mission and Discipleship Board**

Membership:

Convener (*appointed by Synod*), Synod Moderator (*ex officio*), Synod Clerk (*ex officio*), Training and Development Officer (North) (*ex officio*), Transition and Training Officer (*ex officio*), Ecumenical Officer (*ex officio*), Children and Youth Development Officer (*ex officio*), representative to URC Mission Committee (*ex officio*), TLS (or successor) Co-ordinator (*ex officio*), four representatives from across the Synod (from nominations; chosen to ensure balance).

Meeting:

Quarterly

Responsible for:

- Implementation of Synod priorities
- Implementation of mission strategy
- Development of missional discipleship
- Development of Local Ministry and Mission Review programme
- Mission enabling
- Encouraging local churches to be missional communities
- Oversight of the Vision 2020 strategic framework
- Oversight of church and society issues and to encourage engagement
- Oversight of global links and partnerships
- Oversight of children, young people and families work
- Rural matters
- Written report to each Synod Meeting

4.5. **Task Groups**

Small, limited-term task groups will be convened for specific pieces of work as necessary (e.g. Big Day Out Planning Group, A More Able Church Steering Group, etc.).

4.6. **Synod Office Management Group**

Membership:

Office Manager (Convener), Synod Clerk, Synod Treasurer, Trust Company Secretary.

Meeting:

As necessary

Responsible for:

- Smooth running of Synod Office
- Fabric, including health and safety
- Staffing
- Respond to matters raised by staff

4.7. **Line Managers' Meeting**

Includes:

Those in the Synod with line management responsibilities for officers and staff.

Meeting:

Half yearly

Responsible for:

- Ensuring coherence across the Synod operation in line management and employment
- Individual line managers are responsible for developing work plans, for approval by Synod Officers

The United Reformed Church National Synod of Wales



Churches in and around Cardiff:

C07: City URC; C12: Bethel, Llanishen; C13: Parkminster, Roath; C14: Canton Uniting Church; C15: Beulah: Rhiwbina; C17: St Andrews, Roath; C40: Bethesda, Tongwynlais; C45: Elfed Avenue, Penarth.