

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

Yr **Eglwys Ddiwygiedig Unedig**
Synod Cenedlaethol Cymru

Cyfarfod Synod yr Hydref
Autumn Synod Meeting

Saturday 18th October 2025
The Priory Centre, St Mary's Priory,
Abergavenny NP7 5ND

or

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84074854303?pwd=E9ITfNxbQZ7gobctpQaGw5bFAabbQz.1>

ID: 840 7485 4303

Passcode: Synod12

Yr Eglwys Ddiwygiedig Unedig Synod Cenedlaethol Cymru
The United Reformed Church National Synod of Wales

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Resolutions

Resolution 1: 2024 Accounts

Synod Meeting receives the accounts for 2024 as summarised in [Appendix C](#).

Resolution 2: 2026 Budget

Synod Meeting approves the Synod General Fund Budget for 2026 as shown in [Appendix D](#).

Resolution 3: Synod Manse Policy

Synod Meeting accepts the changes highlighted in red in the Synod Manse Policy in [Appendix E](#).

1. Notices

1.1 Venue

The meeting will take place in The Priory Centre at St Mary's Priory, Abergavenny. Look out for the URC logo signs.

1.2 Food and Drink

A complimentary buffet lunch will be provided. If you have any special dietary requirements (other than vegetarian), please let Joel Sainsbury (joel.sainsbury.urcwailes@urc.org.uk) know before Monday 13th October. In addition, tea and coffee will be available on arrival and during the lunch break.

1.3 Directions:

By rail:

We encourage you to travel via public transport where possible and have timed the meeting to enable this from most parts of the synod.

Abergavenny railway station is on the main railway line between Newport and Hereford. From the station it is approximately 15 minutes on foot (0.6 miles) to the Priory Centre.

By road:

The Priory Centre is located on the A40 (the main road through Abergavenny). The Centre's post code is NP7 5ND.

1.4 Car Parking

Pay and Display parking is available in the Bus Station car park to the rear of the building.

Click here to find the car park on Google Maps:

maps.app.goo.gl/zTaRPFJpvMs8g9fB6

1.5 Visitors

Everyone is welcome to attend and participate in the Synod Meeting, although only members of Synod will be able to vote. All speakers are asked to identify themselves by name and local church.

1.6 On Arrival

- a) For Synod representatives: Please collect a label, to act as your name badge, and an expenses claim form. You may claim the cost of public transport, or car travel at variable rates depending on the number of people in the car. Please complete your expenses form with your bank details and leave it in the box before you leave: payment will be made electronically soon afterwards. If you would like the Synod to claim Gift

Aid on all or part of your expenses claim, please complete the relevant section of the form. Please exchange your completed attendance card for three voting cards, which should be returned at the end of the meeting.

If you require a printed copy of the meeting papers, please contact Megan Price at megan.price.urcwailes@urc.org.uk by Tuesday 14th October.

Printed copies will only be available for those who have requested one.

b) For visitors: Please collect a label, to act as your name badge.

1.7 **Quiet Space**

A Quiet Space will be available for anyone who feels overwhelmed or needs a moment of quiet during the day. This will be signposted at the venue or speak to a member of the Synod Support Team to find out more.

1.8 **Bookshop**

We will have a selection of items from the URC Bookshop for sale, including the 2026 URC Prayer Handbook and URC Diaries. We will be able to take card payments and would prefer that you pay in this way if possible.

1.9 **Photography**

Please note that we will be taking photographs throughout the day for use on our website and social media channels. If you would prefer not to appear in any photographs used for any reason, please speak to a member of the Synod Support Team.

1.10 **Synod eNewsletter**

If you are not already subscribed to the synod's monthly eNewsletter – with news of people and places, information and requests, events, resources, etc. – you may do so by following this link: bit.ly/2MGqveS.

1.11 **Forthcoming Synod Meetings are as follows:**

Saturday 21st March 2026	a hybrid meeting at Albany Church, Haverfordwest and on Zoom
Saturday 17th October 2026	a hybrid meeting at The Priory Centre, Abergavenny and on Zoom

2. Agenda

It would be helpful to those involved if any questions on the reports that are not the subject of resolutions could be supplied in advance to the Synod Clerk (megan.price.urcwailes@urc.org.uk).

10.30 **Gathering and Refreshments**

11.00 **Opening Worship**

Commemorations and Ministerial Anniversaries
Introductions and Notices

Response on behalf of Ecumenical guests
 – Cynan Llwyd, General Secretary of Cytûn

Minutes of Spring 2025 Synod Meeting [[click here to download](#)]
Matters Arising from the Minutes

Finance and Property Board/URC (Wales) Trust Company:

2024 Accounts ([resolution 1](#))

2026 Budget ([resolution 2](#))

Synod Manse Policy ([resolution 3](#))

Local church projects – Community Building and Synod Support

13:00 **Lunch** (see [Notices](#) 1.2)

14:00 **Young People at work in the Synod**

Reports to Synod

Closing Worship

15:30 **Finish**

3. Synod Support Team

FOR NOTING:

3.3 General Assembly 2025

The following continue to represent the National Synod of Wales at General Assembly 2025 (Fri 4 – Mon 7 July and Fri 14 – Sun 16 November 2025):

Minister/CRCW

Jason Askew
Susan Durber
Julie Kirby *
Lee Liddell
Martha McInnes
Johnny O’Hanlon
David Salsbury *
Kate Wolsey

Elder/Lay Person

Chris Atherton *
Sheila Kavanagh
Maggie Kirkbride
Wendy Marston-Phipps
Megan Price *
Bethan Trott
Jayden Williams †
Oreoluwa Kassim †

† <26

* Assembly Executive representative

3.4 General Assembly 2026

General Assembly will take place at The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire from Friday 12th to Monday 15th July 2026. The National Synod of Wales is able to send twelve representatives, at least four of whom should be Ministers/CRCWs and at least four of whom should be lay representatives. All the costs of attending are covered, including travel, accommodation and meals.

A leaflet – ‘They’ve asked me to be a Member of General Assembly’ – which gives an overview of the role and obligations of being a member, as well as the work of the General Assembly itself, can be viewed and downloaded here:

bit.ly/4pvlftp

Expressions of interest are now invited from those who would be interested in being part of the synod’s delegation next year. Please contact the Synod Clerk (megan.price.urcwales@urc.org.uk) before Monday 5 January 2026. The final decision about the synod’s representation at General Assembly will be made in January 2026, taking account of balance and when an individual last attended.

3.2 Moderator of General Assembly 2027-2028

Nominations are now sought from the churches in the Synod of candidates to serve from the close of General Assembly 2027 until the close of General Assembly 2028. Local churches are invited to consider whether they would like to nominate to Synod a person in either category – Minister/CRCW and Elder – or in one or other category. Full details and nomination forms are included at

FOR INFORMATION:**3.5 Synod Membership**

The Synod may co-opt up to twenty-four additional members, being people with a particular role or responsibility within the Synod. Those who are at present co-opted members of Synod for the duration of their respective appointments are as follows:

- Ian Lloyd-Parry (Convener of FPB)
- Megan Price (Synod Clerk)
- Judy Harris (CYDO)
- Maggie Kirkbride (Synod Lay Preaching Advocate)
- Hunyoung Park, Carolyn Ridding, Pete Fawcett, Jill Shelton, Verena Walder and Helen Dowdell (Local Church Leaders)

3.6 Nominations

The up to date (at the time of the compilation of these papers) report of Nominations is included at [Appendix A](#).

3.7 General Assembly 2025 Resolutions which have implications for local churches

General Assembly met from Friday 4th to Monday 7th July at the Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire.

The following resolutions which were passed have implications for local churches (and some for Synod) and should be considered at Elders Meetings.

For more information on any of these, you can find the full General Assembly papers on the URC website at: www.urc.org.uk/general-assembly-assembly-executive-assembly-committees/general-assembly/general-assembly-papers

Paper H5, Resolution 30 – Sabbaticals

General Assembly agrees to ministerial sabbaticals being seven years from the previous sabbatical.

Previously, ministers were entitled to a sabbatical every ten years. This is now reduced to seven years.

Paper T2, Resolution 36 – Safeguarding training framework

General Assembly adopts the amended Safeguarding Training Framework for use across the United Reformed Church.

The URC Safeguarding training framework specifies what level of Safeguarding training those in particular roles (e.g. Elders, Lay Preachers, etc.) are required to undertake. The newly adopted framework can be found [here](#). Please note that there is specific guidance for Wales.

Paper X2, Resolution 42 – **Emergency Statement on Israeli Military Activity**

General Assembly:

(a) commends the June 2025 statement from the World Council of Churches with its call to ‘End Apartheid, Occupation, and Impunity in Palestine and Israel’ including the assertion that the Government of Israel’s military campaign in Gaza has entailed grave breaches of the Fourth Geneva Convention which may constitute genocide and/or other crimes under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC)

(b) Calls for a peaceful resolution to the continuing conflict in the Middle East through dialogue and diplomacy.

The June 2025 statement from the World Council of Churches can be found [here](#).

Synod Moderators’ report

The Synod Moderators’ report is offered to General Assembly and to local churches to encourage us to be a people ‘full of grace’ and to challenge us to be counter-cultural in practising grace and gratitude in a context of the famine of grace.

You can download the report [here](#).

4. Synod Pastoral Committee

FOR NOTING:

4.1 **Authorised Elders**

The list of Authorised Elders, approved by Synod Pastoral Committee, can be found at [Appendix B](#). All those listed have signified that they agree to abide by the 'Guidelines on Conduct and Behaviour for Authorised Elders'. All those listed have either provided a valid Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate, or completed a safeguarding self-declaration.

FOR INFORMATION:

4.2 **Ministerial changes**

Revd Julie Kirby will continue to serve the Brecon Beacons pastorate as sole Minister in Pastoral Charge.

Revd Clare Nutbrown-Hughes was Ordained and Inducted to serve the Valleys Pastorate and Valleys and Vale Region on Saturday 30 August 2025. Clare will convene the Valleys and Vale Regional Pastoral Committee.

Revd Johnny O'Hanlon presided over his final service at Rivertown on Sunday 7 September 2025. Johnny will be inducted to serve as part of the Sheffield Team Ministry on Saturday 4 October.

Revd Lee Liddell began a part-time post serving Barry United Church on behalf of the Methodists on 1 August 2025. Lee continues to serve Pontprennau Community Church as Transitional Minister alongside this role.

4.3 **Church closures**

Tabernacle URC Holywell held a final service on Sunday 10th August and will formally close at the end of September 2025.

4.4 **Church changes**

Penuel URC, Llanwrthwl, have entered into a covenant with St Gwrthwl Church in Wales. The LEP will be known as Penuel with St Gwrthwl and a Sharing Agreement is being drawn up.

A final service was held at Libanus Chapel Brecon on Sunday 30 March 2025. The congregation continue to meet at Cwm Cwmlais Union of Welsh Independents and are exploring forming an LEP with that chapel.

4.5 **Vacancies**

There are no current ministerial vacancies.

4.6 **The Future of the Commission of Covenanted Churches**

After introducing the proposal for Supplemental Ordination at Spring Synod Meeting, the issue was discussed at Ministers' Summer School. We are currently waiting for other denominations to make progress before circulating a full consultation to our churches for consideration.

4.7 **Pioneer Ministers**

The Committee have discussed General Assembly 2025 Paper H2: *Criteria for the 13 new pioneering posts to intentionally grow new Christian communities* and are exploring how best to discern where such a post might be needed most in Wales. Further information will be circulated in due course.

5. Mission and Discipleship Board

Mission and Discipleship Board continues to meet 4 times a year both in person and on Zoom.

FOR NOTING:

5.1 **Mission Enabler**

The synod continues to look for a new Mission Enabler. For more information, please contact either Julia Bartholomew or the Synod Office.

5.2 **Gold Eco Church Awards**

Two churches in the National Synod of Wales (Barry Uniting Church and Beulah URC) have now been awarded Gold Eco Church Awards.

FOR INFORMATION:

5.3 **Lay Preaching**

The next Lay Preaching weekend is due to be held on the first weekend in November at the Metropole Hotel, Llandrindod Wells. Revd Dr Susan Durber will be the guest speaker.

5.4 **A More Able Church**

The latest webinar was held on Wednesday 24th September 7pm and was on the topic of Autism. Previous webinars have been held on Living with Dementia, Physical Disability, Neurodiversity and Gracious Hearing, Active Listening. All are available to watch on the [Synod YouTube channel](#).

5.5 **Children, Young People and Families Work**

Godly Play training is taking place at Coleg Trefeca in October. 300 Advent Packs have been ordered and should be available soon.

5.6 **Synod Stepwise**

It is hoped to offer another Faith Filled Worship stream in the New Year with the possibility of working across neighbouring Synods.

There are also conversations taking place with neighbouring synods about doing on-line Stepwise courses across synods.

5.7 **Eco Roadshows**

Most regions across the Synod have now been visited but one or two are still outstanding.

5.8 **URC Mission Committee**

The URC Mission Committee met in June which was the last meeting of the committee in its current form. Items discussed included Modern Day Slavery and the car wash app: theclewerinitiative.org/campaigns/safe-car-wash

We discussed evangelism, ecumenism and interfaith engagement and there were updates on Net Zero and Anti-Racism Training.

There was a report from JPIT (Joint Public Issues Team) which included details of their conference at Derby in November entitled 'For Goodness Sake'. Details can be found here: jpit.uk/events

6. Finance and Property Board/Trust Company

FOR DECISION:

6.1 **2024 Accounts**

The United Reformed Church (Wales) Trust Company Accounts were received by FPB and approved by Trust Company Directors, noting that all funds were operating within budget and that the last year of operation had returned to surplus. A summary is included at [Appendix C](#). The full accounts are available upon application to the Treasurer (chris.atherton.urcwailes@urc.org.uk). [Resolution 1]

6.2 **2026 Budget**

The Synod General Fund Budget is presented for approval by the Synod Meeting. This can be found at [Appendix D](#). In line with resolutions passed at previous Synod Meetings the budget is a balanced one. The request to Inter Synod Resource Sharing is at the same level as the 2025 Budget request which recognises the current financial pressures across the denomination. In seeking the same sum as 2025, the budget has drawn income from sales of redundant buildings to enable the levels of activity across the Synod's priorities to remain the same despite increased base costs. [Resolution 2]

6.3 **Synod Manse Policy**

Synod Meeting is requested to consider changes to the Synod Manse Policy, in which grants for a wider range of manse works will be considered by Finance and Property Board. [Resolution 3]

FOR NOTING:

6.4 **Grant for repairs**

In April, a grant for boundary wall repairs at St John's URC, Buckley, was agreed.

6.5 **Drone Surveys**

In April, it was agreed that the synod would fund drone surveys of church roofs.

6.6 **Mission Development Fund**

A grant from the Mission Development Fund towards the A Rocha Eco Church Officer role in Wales was approved in April.

6.7 **Daphne & Bethan Fund**

Grants from the Daphne & Bethan Fund were approved for Easter activities at Rivertown URC, Shotton, in April and to Sing Youth Gospel Choir in June.

6.8 **Synod Manse Fund**

A grant from the Synod Manse Fund for remedial works at the Tiers Cross URC manse was agreed in June.

6.9 **Manse Sale**

The sale of 13 Iron Way, Tondy, was completed in May.

6.10 **Church Building Sale**

The sale of Bethesda URC, Tongwynlais, was completed in July.

6.11 **Church Building Transfer**

The transfer of the former St David's Uniting Church building in Pontypridd to the Presbyterian Church of Wales was completed in August.

6.12 **Ministry and Mission Fund**

Ministry and Mission Fund contributions in 2026 were agreed at £449 and £171 per member respectively for those with URC Ministry and those whose ministry is provided by other dominations. The 5% cap year on year increase would continue to be applied, as would reductions in the level requested of Ministry and Mission contributions for those within the bottom 25% of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD).

FOR INFORMATION:

6.13 In April, a resolution from Libanus URC to vacate their premises in Libanus, Brecon, and form a Local Ecumenical Partnership with Sardis Chapel UWI, Cwm Camlais, was received.

6.14 In April, the transfer of the former Libanus URC premises in Libanus, Brecon, to Glyn Tarell Community Council was agreed.

6.15 In May, like-for-like repairs to windows at St John's Church, Tenby, were approved.

6.16 A resolution for closure from Tabernacle URC, Holywell, was received in June.

6.17 **Church Life Review Fund**

In April, the following resolution regarding the Church Life Review was passed:
'As proposed by CG and seconded by DM, Finance and Property Board with the United Reformed Church (Wales) Trust Company Limited resolves to:

1. Agree with the resolution received from the Spring Synod Meeting and concur with making an in-principle decision to contribute to the Church Life Review Fund.
 2. From the potential funding model provided by the Steering and Working Finance Groups of the Church Life Review Process, it agrees to offer a contribution within the range of £50,000 to £200,000 per year for a five-year period equating to an overall commitment of between £250,000 and £1,000,000. This represents up to a 1/9th of the available unrestricted reserves of the Trust based on the 2023 Annual Accounts.
 3. The actual level is to be dependent on conversations with other Synods and the Central Trust of the United Reformed Church, coupled with agreed scope and reach of the activity streams of the Church Life Review.
 4. This commitment is to be met by taking funds from the unrestricted reserves of the Trust.
 5. Whilst the Trust's preference is to pay its agreed contribution to the Church Life Review Fund in the manner that local churches pay into the Ministry and Mission Fund, thus strengthening the Family Ethos of the work, it is open to reducing its call on Inter Synod Resource Sharing (ISRS) for a five year period that equates to the agreed commitment, thus freeing those contributions that other Synods would have generously made to the ISRS process to fund other work.'
- 6.12 FPB continue to maintain an overview of the Synod Budget and receive Management Accounts for the Synod General Fund and the Training Fund on a quarterly basis.

Resolution 1

Synod Meeting receives the accounts for 2024 as summarised in [Appendix C](#).

Resolution 2

Synod Meeting approves the Synod General Fund Budget for 2026 as shown in [Appendix D](#).

Resolution 3

Synod Meeting accepts the changes highlighted in red in the Synod Manse Policy in [Appendix E](#).

Appendix A: Nominations Report

Synod Support Team

Synod Moderator

David Salisbury

From 1 April 2024

Synod Clerk

Megan Price

2022 –

Trust Company Secretary and Synod Treasurer

Chris Atherton

2006 –

Training and Development Officer

Jason Askew

2020 –

Children and Youth Development Officer (CYDO)

Judy Harris

2014 –

Safeguarding Officer

Appointment in progress

Deputy Safeguarding Officer

Judy Harris

Officer for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations

Martin Spain

2021 –

Moderator's PA, Office Manager and Cashier

Joel Sainsbury

Property Officer and Assistant Company Secretary

Claire Boot

Finance Administrator

Joanna Harris

Administration Officer

Maggie Kirkbride

Synod Boards and Committees

The Synod Moderator and Synod Clerk are ex-officio members of all Boards and Committees

Synod Pastoral Committee

Representatives of Regional Pastoral Committees:

North Wales	Paul Robinson
East Wales	Branwen Rees
Cardiff and Penarth	Martha McInnes
Valleys and Vale	Clare Nutbrown-Hughes
Swansea	Verena Walder
Pembrokeshire	Stella Hayton
Mid Wales	<i>vacant</i>
Bridgend United Area	Richard Gillon
Brecon Beacons	Julie Kirby

Northern College (co-opted) Graham Adams

Ex officio

Training and Development Officer

Officer for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations

Lay Preaching Advocate

In attendance: representative of the Youth and Children Working Group, Synod

representative to the Commission of Covenanted Churches Faith and Order Group

Finance and Property Board

Convener	Ian Lloyd-Parry	2008 – 2026
Secretary	Property Officer	
Members:	Sheila Jones	2018 – 2027
	Alison Tansom	2021 – 2027
	<i>2 vacancies</i>	

Ex officio

Trust Company Secretary and Synod Treasurer

Office Manager and Cashier

Property Officer

Mission and Discipleship Board

Convener	Branwen Rees	2021 – 2026
Members:	Julia Bartholomew	2021 – 2026
	Judith Dolben	2018 – 2026
	Martin Spain	2021 – 2026
	<i>1 vacancy</i>	

Ex officio

Training and Development Officer
 Children and Youth Development Officer
 Officer for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations
 Representative to URC Mission Committee
 Green Advocate
 Rural Advocate
 Lay Preaching Advocate

Synod Office Management Group

Synod Clerk (Convener)
 Office Manager (Secretary)
 Trust Company Secretary and Synod Treasurer

Wales District Council

Officer for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations (Convener)
 Synod Clerk (Secretary)
 Synod Moderator
 Synod Treasurer
 Together with others drawn together relevant to the location of the church being considered.

Safeguarding Reference Group

Safeguarding Officer (Convener)
 Deputy Safeguarding Officer
 Trust Secretary
 Line managers of Synod Safeguarding roles
 Pat Davies
 Lyn Evans
 Liz Jones
 Bethan Trott

Other Appointments

To General Assembly Councils/Committees/Panels, etc.

Assembly Commission for Discipline Panel	Martha McInnes
Disciplinary Investigation Panel	Martin Spain
Interfaith enabling group	Officer for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations
Safeguarding Committee	Safeguarding Officer

To other URC networks, etc.

Green Advocate	Eileen Newington
Rural Church Advocate	Julie Kirby
Lay Preaching Advocate	Maggie Kirkbride
Racial Justice Advocate	<i>vacant</i>
A More Able Church Advocate	Julie Kirby
PLATO	Property Officer
URC Youth Representative	Leo Munnik
Synod Mission Enabler	<i>vacant</i>
URC Spirituality representative	<i>vacant</i>
Pilots Officer	Children and Youth Development Officer
Stepwise Co-ordinator	Training and Development Officer

Appointments made by General Assembly

Resource Sharing Task Group	Chris Atherton (secretary)
Net Zero Task Group	Judy Harris (for URC Children) Eileen Newington (for Synod Green Apostles)
Ministries Committee Leadership in worship advocate	Maggie Kirkbride
Equalities Committee	David Salisbury (secretary)

URC (Wales) Trust Company Limited

Convener	Ian Lloyd Parry	
Company Secretary	Chris Atherton	
Assistant Secretary	Property Officer	
Trustees:	<u>Trust Appointed:</u>	
	Colin Grimes	annual appointment
	Ian Lloyd-Parry	annual appointment
	<u>Synod Appointed:</u>	
	Donna Jones	2025 – 2027
	Diane Moverley	2021 – 2027
	Sandra Wallace	2017 – 2026
	Simon Walkling	2025 – 2027
	<i>1 vacancy</i>	

Synod Panel for Interviewing Ministerial Candidates

Co-ordinator:	Training and Development Officer
Members:	Julie Kirby
	Judith Negus
	Kathryn Price
	Branwen Rees
	Christine Roberts
	Jill Shelton
	Margot Seabourne

Ecumenical Appointments Made by Synod

Christian Aid	Ceri George	2019 – 2027
Commission of Covenanting Churches	Synod Moderator Officer for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations <i>Vacancy</i>	
Commission of Covenanting Churches – Faith and Order Group	Officer for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Susan Durber	
Cytûn Trustee	Officer for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations	
Cytûn Racial Justice Network	Megan Price	
Cytûn Laser Group	Chris Atherton	
URC/PCW Liaison Group	Synod Moderator Officer for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Lynda Bull Julie Davies Helen Dowdell Wendy Tansill <i>Vacancy</i>	2020 – 2028 2025 – 2027 2025 – 2027 2021 – 2028
URC/Methodist Liaison Group	Synod Moderator Officer for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Noel Davies Colin Harrison Stella Hayton	2021 – 2025 2016 – 2025 2021 – 2025
Church in Wales Governing Body	Officer for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations	
Covenanted Baptists	Officer for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations	

Appendix B: Authorised Elders

AUTHORISED ELDERS 2026 - 2028

			Conduct & Behaviour	Safeguarding
North Wales				
St John's Buckley °	Chris Byrne	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
St John's Flint °				
Gloddaeth, Llandudno	David McKinlay	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
Horeb, Dyserth °	Jennifer Jones	to 31/12/2026	✓	✓
Mold, Tyddyn Street	Julie Davies	to 31/12/2026	✓	✓
Rhos-on-Sea	Pete Fawcett *		-	-
	Carolyn Ridding *		-	-
United Church in Rhyl °	Tony Barkley	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
	Christine Randall	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
Rivertown, Shotton	David Clarkson	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
	Linsey Ann Dentith	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
	Janet Gray	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
	Donna Jones	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
	Sheila Kavanagh	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
Salisbury Park, Wrexham	Shirley Devaney	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
	Barbara Jones	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
East Wales				
Cwmbran	Diane Brain	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
	Lyn Oelmann	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
Stow Park, Newport	Maggie Kirkbride	to 31/12/2026	✓	✓
	Ron Prosser	to 31/12/2027	✓	✓
	Helen Dowdell *		-	-
Cardiff and Penarth				
Bethel, North Llanishen	Sue Welpton	to 31/12/2026	✓	✓
Beulah, Rhiwbina °	Richard Edwards	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
	Sarah Edwards	to 31/12/2028		

	Andrew Glanfield	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
	Louise Morgan	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
			✓	✓
Canton, Cardiff	Chris Atherton	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
City, Cardiff °	Beth Charles	to 31/12/2027	✓	✓
	Nici Lintern-Gittens	to 31/12/2027	✓	✓
	Alison McQueen	to 31/12/2027	✓	✓
	Liz Meek	to 31/12/2027	✓	✓
	Bethan Trott	to 31/12/2026	✓	✓
	Rhoda Henson	to 31/12/2026	✓	✓
Parkminster, Cardiff °	Sylvia Abel	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
Penarth, Elfed Avenue	Clive Curtis	to 31/12/2026	✓	✓
St Andrew's, Cardiff	Christine Clarke	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
	Jill Shelton	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
Valleys and Vale				
Bethesda'r Fro	Christine Clarke	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
	Clive Curtis	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
	Russell Davies	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
	Nigel Williams	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
St. David's Uniting	Iestyn Henson	to 31/12/2027	✓	✓
	Alan Hills	to 31/12/2027	✓	✓
	Michael Howells	to 31/12/2027	✓	✓
	Claire Hughes	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
Senghenydd	Sandra Gough	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
	Carol Thomas	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
	Jill Shelton *		-	-
Van Road, Caerphilly	Lewis Lewis-Head	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
	Rob Moverley	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
Hope and Market Sq MT	Lyn Evans	to 31/12/2027	✓	✓
	Lewis Lewis-Head	to 31/12/2027	✓	✓
Swansea				
Christ Well, Manselton	Mary Jeffreys	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
	Elaine Jones	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
Tabernacle, Mumbles	Phyllis T. Roberts	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
	Lindsey Walder	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
	Verena Walder *		-	-
Temple, Gowerton	Lindsey Walder	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
Mid Wales				
Penuel, Llanwrthwl	Sally Tolson	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓

Tabernacle Rhayader	D Michael Bennett Dawn Jones	to 31/12/2028 to 31/12/2028	✓ ✓	✓ ✓
Bridgend				
Ogmore Vale	Heather Phillips	to 31/12/2027	✓	✓
Brecon Beacons				
Brecon Beacons Pastorate	Judith Negus	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
(Abergavenny URC	Margot Seabourne	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
Plough Church Brecon)	Liz Tadd	to 31/12/2028	✓	✓
	Russell Davies	to 31/12/2026	✓	✓
	(Maesyrnnon only)			

- * indicates those included for the duration of their term of service as Local Church Leader, although no renewal is required.
- o these churches have resolved that any person who is authorised to preside at the sacraments in a United Reformed Church (or LEP involving the URC) within the Regional Pastoral Committee be also authorised to celebrate the sacraments in their own church.

Appendix C: 2024 Accounts

Summary of the Annual Report and Financial Statements for the United Reformed Church Wales Trust Company Limited for the year ended 31 December 2024.

Administrative and Reference Information

This section provides essential details about the United Reformed Church (Wales) Trust Company Limited, including registration numbers and key contacts.

- Charity registration number: 1063214
- Company registration number: 00205248 (England and Wales)
- Registered office located in Cardiff, Wales.
- Key contacts include bankers, auditors, management accountants, solicitors, and investment managers.

Trust Directors and Governance Structure

This section outlines the governance structure and the roles of the Trust Directors within the organization.

- The Trust is governed by a board of directors, with a mix of Synod and Trust appointed members.
- Directors meet quarterly to manage the charity's operations.
- The Senior Leadership Group provides strategic support to the directors.
- Recruitment of directors is conducted by the United Reformed Church National Synod of Wales.

Risk Management and Objectives

This section discusses the Trust's approach to risk management and its charitable objectives.

- A risk matrix has been developed to identify and manage major risks.
- The Trust aims to advance the Christian religion and support community welfare.
- The organization acts as a custodial trustee for 73 churches and manages various funds.

Financial Overview and Performance

This section summarizes the financial performance of the Trust for the year ended 31 December 2024.

- Total unrestricted income: £953,475 (2023: £857,919).
- Net unrestricted surplus: £291,589 (2023: £633,104).
- Total restricted income: £1,560 (2023: £17,980).
- Free reserves at year-end: £3,282,260, covering 48 months of operating costs.

Achievements and Community Support

This section highlights the Trust's achievements and its support for local communities.

- The Trust supports 14 stipendiary ministers and various community projects.
- It acts as a custodial trustee for 25 listed churches.
- The Trust has implemented a Warm Spaces scheme to assist communities during energy cost increases.

Future Plans and Strategic Development

This section outlines the Trust's plans for future development and strategic initiatives.

- The Trust is developing a common database for personnel and property information.
- Focus on connecting with local communities and enhancing support for churches.
- Plans to explore innovative ways to achieve charitable objectives and better resource utilization.

Investment Policy and Performance

This section details the Trust's investment strategy and performance metrics.

- The Trust has transitioned to ethical investments, disinvesting from fossil fuels.
- A bespoke ethical investment account was opened with Brewin Dolphin.
- Net increase on revaluation of Trust investments: £167,803 (2023: £403,872).

Connected Charities and Financial Relationships

This section describes the Trust's connections with member churches and financial relationships.

- The Trust holds funds for various United Reformed Churches in Wales, valued at approximately £1,470,233.
- No assets or liabilities of these churches are incorporated in the Trust's accounts.
- The Trust acts as a trustee for churches with similar charitable objects.

Overview of Funds and Their Purposes

The United Reformed Church (Wales) Trust Company manages various funds designated for specific charitable and operational purposes.

- **Types of Funds:** Includes Unrestricted, Designated, and Restricted Funds.
- **Unrestricted Funds:** General Fund can be used for any charitable work.
- **Designated Funds:** Specific purposes such as the Manse Fund for purchasing and maintaining manses, and the Mission Development Fund for local church projects.
- **Restricted Funds:** Specific uses like the Training Fund for ministerial training and the Glamorgan Chaplaincy Fund for university ministry support.

Financial Performance Overview for 2024

The Trust reported a net income of £263,944 for the year ended December 31, 2024, reflecting a decrease from the previous year.

- **Total Income:** £955,850, up from £880,277 in 2023.
- **Total Expenditure:** £859,709, an increase from £643,957 in 2023.
- **Net Gains on Investments:** £167,803, down from £403,872 in 2023.
- **Net Movement in Funds:** Increased by £263,944, compared to £640,192 in 2023.

Balance Sheet Highlights as of 2024

The Trust's total assets and net assets increased, indicating a stable financial position.

- **Total Assets:** £10,012,043, up from £9,748,099 in 2023.
- **Net Assets:** Also £10,012,043, reflecting a healthy balance sheet.
- **Fixed Assets:** Decreased to £3,224,376 from £3,433,879 in 2023.
- **Investments:** Increased to £5,523,685 from £4,614,909 in 2023.

Cash Flow Statement Insights for 2024

The Trust experienced a net cash outflow, indicating challenges in cash management.

- **Net Cash Outflow from Operating Activities:** £158,088, compared to an inflow of £113,607 in 2023.
- **Investing Activities:** Significant cash outflows due to purchases of investments totalling £1,532,533.
- **Net Cash Outflow for the Year:** £483,502, a decrease from a net inflow of £235,655 in 2023.

Fund Movements and Transfers in 2024

The Trust saw various movements in funds, reflecting operational changes and strategic allocations.

- **Total Funds at Start of Year:** £9,748,099, with a net movement of £263,944 by year-end.
- **Transfers Between Funds:** £27,242, indicating reallocation of resources.
- **Endowment Funds:** Increased to £187,263, with specific income allocations.

Accounting Policies and Financial Management

The Trust adheres to strict accounting policies to ensure transparency and compliance.

- **Accounting Standards:** Follows FRS 102 and UK Accounting Standards.
- **Income Recognition:** Income is recognized when legally entitled and measurable.

- **Expenditure Recognition:** Expenditure is recognized in the period incurred, including VAT.
- **Pension Contributions:** Contributions to defined contribution schemes are charged in the period they relate to.

Related Party Transactions and Governance

The Trust engages in transactions with related parties, ensuring compliance with governance standards.

- **Consultancy Costs:** £53,380 paid to Atherton Consultancy Services Limited for support services.
- **No Trustee Remuneration:** No trustees received remuneration during the year.
- **Audit Fees:** Total audit fees amounted to £13,990, reflecting governance costs.

Prior Year Adjustments and Restatements

The Trust made prior year adjustments to correct financial statements, impacting reported figures.

- **Adjustment Amount:** £194,219 to reflect the sale of a property not previously recorded.
- **Restated Total Funds:** Adjusted to £9,748,099 from previously stated amounts.
- **Impact on Financial Statements:** Adjustments affected both the balance sheet and income statement figures.

THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH (WALES) TRUST COMPANY LIMITED
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)
YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £	Total Funds 2023 £ (restated)
Income from:						
Donations and grants	2	356,246	1,275	-	357,521	291,978
Investment income	3	124,346	245	815	125,406	123,841
Other income	4	472,883	40	-	472,923	464,458
Total income		953,475	1,560	815	955,850	880,277
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds		2,927	-	-	2,927	-
Charitable activities	5	819,369	37,413	-	856,782	643,957
Total expenditure		822,296	37,413	-	859,709	643,957
Net gains/(losses) on investments	12	160,410	3,231	4,162	167,803	403,872
Net income/(expenditure)		291,589	(32,622)	4,977	263,944	640,192
Transfers between funds	18	(27,242)	27,242	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		264,347	(5,380)	4,977	263,944	640,192
Total funds at start of year (as previously stated)		9,625,232	134,800	182,286	9,942,318	9,302,126
Prior year adjustment	24	(194,219)			(194,219)	(194,219)
Total funds at start of year (restated)	18	9,431,013	134,800	182,286	9,748,099	9,107,907
Total funds at end of year	18	9,695,360	129,420	187,263	10,012,043	9,748,099

The Charity has no recognised gains or losses other than the results for the year as set out above.

All of the activities of the charity are classed as continuing.

Appendix D: 2026 Budget

The United Reformed Church (Wales) Trust Company Limited General Fund - Budget 2026

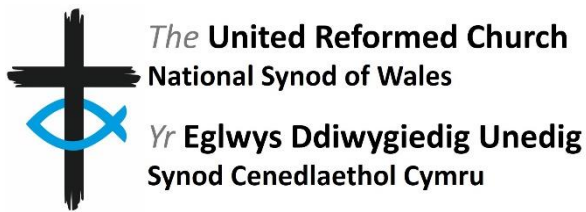
	2024 ISRS figure 320,000	2024 Actual	2025 ISRS figure 320,000	2026 ISRS figure 320,000	Explanatory Notes and Comments
	2024 Budget £	2024 Actual £	2025 Budget £	2026 Budget £	
Incoming resources					
Dividends and interest	120,750	105,149	97,248	110,406	2024 Actual +5%
Inter Synod Resource Sharing	202,000	234,500	203,000	203,000	£100k Base Figure. £84k Staffing.£19k Trans Mins.
Inter Synod Resource Sharing (CYDO)	64,000	64,000	61,000	62,000	Underwriting achieved through Buffer ISRS Fund - rolling 3yr. Model
Inter Synod Resource Sharing (Safeguarding)	21,500	21,500	23,500	23,500	75% of Safeguarding costs
Inter Synod Resource Sharing (Mission)	32,500	-	32,500	31,500	Regional Ministry, Training Events, Synod Priorities, Youth Events
Sales revenue & donations	400	98	400	400	Gift Aid not claimed 2018-25.
Property Sales Fees	10,000	14,400	10,000	10,000	3% Fee levied on gross sale proceeds received.
Property Rental Income	-	3,735	-	-	
Property Sales Revenue	-	381,873	-	-	Proceeds from Stow Park Manse held for church
Church contributions	1,000	6,140	3,500	6,000	Extra focus on M&M working better
Other Grants	10,000	4,677	10,000	10,000	EO 50%, CME 100% refund, DDF Core Grant. Some grant claim in arrears
Solar Panel income	900	498	400	400	Revised figures to take account of tariff chagnes
Miscellaneous income - Redundant Chs	19,000	132	89,000	79,000	2025 Bethesda Tongwynlais £96K (1of 3 of net proceeds)
Miscellaneous income	12,500	843	13,500	12,500	
CBF Grants	25,000	25,000	25,000	-	CBF scheme altered
Total Income	519,550	862,545	569,048	548,706	
Charitable Expenditure - Mission					
Mission grants/Digital Ministry/LEP Ministry	4,500	17,100	15,000	0	MDF £17k in 2024
Transitional/Regional Ministry Support/MoM Pilot	37,500	9,335	35,000	35,000	
D&BJ, Livingston & other grants		44,534		-	£39k RMPF
Regional Events/Church Support - Mediation	13,000	1,190	5,000	2,500	
CBF grant due to churches	25,000	-	25,000	-	CBF Scheme altered
Ecumenical & Interfaith Officer's Expenses	10,954	11,117	11,500	11,500	EO extensive mileage
Cytun/Free Church Federal Council	1,100	4,696	2,500	5,000	Central funding support reduced
Chaplaincies	1,000	360	1,000	500	Cytun Rural Chaplaincy ended - 2024 Pay expenses direct to RWAS Chaplains
Training Events	10,000	1,149	16,500	5,000	
Synod Priorities	15,000	3,753	7,500	7,500	
CYDO	61,000	59,276	61,000	62,000	Post maintained via ISRS Funding.
Synod CYDO/ Youth costs	5,000	6,831	5,000	5,000	
Training costs	8,100	3,439	9,500	4,500	To balance TDO Housing Costs/Expenses/Training Costs
Safeguarding	5,000	17,728	3,500	3,500	Events & Training & GP6 Wales Edition
	197,154	180,508	198,000	142,000	
Charitable Expenditure - Property					
Property Insurance/ legal fees	1,672	14,558	2,000	2,000	Insurance of St David's old building
Graveyards and closed churches	2,420	29,794	2,500	2,500	
Dona Lola cost (Other Trust Costs)	4,980	4,233	5,000	5,000	Pastoral Support scheme
Property Miscellaneous Costs		3,504			
Manse Policy Grants		5,272			
Quinquennial Inspections	4,624	7,276	8,928	-	
Trust legal fees	1,000	480	1,000	1,000	
	14,695	65,117	19,428	10,500	
Synod Related Costs					
Synod Day + Synod Meeting	2,735	6,103	2,900	7,500	
Boards and committees	2,000	1,786	1,750	2,000	
General Assembly	500	70	-	-	
Synod - task groups	500	249	150	150	
Moderator Support	770	-	-	-	
Trust Insurance	3,807	1,157	4,500	4,500	
Other Trust Expenses/Contingency	2,500	3,278	150	150	
Synod publications					
	12,812	12,643	9,450	14,300	
Total Charitable Resources Expended	224,661	258,268	226,878	166,800	-
Personnel Costs					
Office Manager & Moderator PA	33,739	33,427	35,042	38,352	
Property Officer	2,009	22,329	27,947	30,450	

The United Reformed Church (Wales) Trust Company Limited
General Fund - Budget 2026

	2024 ISRS figure 320,000		2025 ISRS figure 320,000	2026 ISRS figure 320,000	
	2024 Budget £	2024 Actual £	2025 Budget £	2026 Budget £	Explanatory Notes and Comments
Incoming resources					
Training Officer					
Clerk & treasurer costs	3,623		37,585	41,183	
Admin staff	43,462	80,574	43,399	54,007	
Appt Levy	864		890	890	
Safeguarding Officer	28033	37,395	30307	27979	
Staff Salaries	111,730	173,725	175,170	192,861	5.00% pa COL 2026. Includes Telecoms Allowance
Employer's NI Contributions	19,171	11,996	20,914	28,286	based on 15% Averaged Contribution. 3% more.
Employer's Pension Contributions	37,543	31,026	38,417	39,137	based on 23.5% Employer's Contribution.
Employees' Expenses	3,750	6,760	7,500	7,500	
Staff training	1,000		-	-	
	173,194	223,507	242,001	267,784	
Premises					
Heating, Light and Water	1,172	1,552	1,500	2,000	
Cleaning	1,398	1,767	1,500	1,900	
Ground Rent for church land	3,850	3,850	3,850	3,850	
Building Maintenance	1,000	10,494	1,000	1,000	
Depreciation on Office Building	6,730	1,402	1,402	1,402	
	14,149	19,065	9,252	10,152	
Office Costs					
Printing, postage & stationery	2,280	6,076	2,500	2,500	
Telephone	2,100	2,397	4,000	4,000	
Consumable Equipment	-	2,438			
Equipment Rental (photocopier)	2,000	504	1,560	1,560	
Equipment Depreciation	2,755	2,684	2,500	2,500	
Computer Running Costs	2,359	2,504	1,750	5,250	Church House Costs added
Sundry Expenses	1,000	1,891	2,500	2,500	
Ministry & Mission Arrears		32,963			
Bank charges	226	163	200	200	
	12,720	51,620	15,010	18,510	
Legal and Professional Fees					
Accountancy fees	6,750	10,073	6,750	15,000	Burton Sweet Audit Fee
Consultancy fees	3,000	12,255	6,900	6,900	
Finance/Governance Support	50,960	53,380	58,240	61,880	Hourly rate change + £2.50 ph (Sept 2025)
	60,710	75,708	71,890	83,780	
Total Administration Expenditure	260,773	369,900	338,153	380,226	
Total Operating Expenditure	485,434	628,168	565,031	547,026	
Net (Deficit) for the year - being from brought forward unrestricted reserves	34,116	234,377	4,017	1,680	Synod Meeting resolution requires a balanced budget to be set

Green figures based upon Q4 Management Accounts
(for indicative purposes)

Appendix E: Synod Manse Policy



Manse Policy and Procedures

Introduction

This Policy and the following procedures form a combined document adopted by the National Synod of Wales ('the Synod') and the URC (Wales) Trust Company Limited ('the Trust'). The responsibility of local churches who benefit from the use of the manse is defined in law through the URC Acts and through custom and practice over the life of the URC ('the pastorate').

Policy

The URC National Synod of Wales does not want a pastorate formed by the Synod Pastoral Committee to be unable to call a stipendiary minister because the churches in the pastorate lack the capital funds to purchase a manse.

Manses are held in trust for the purpose of housing URC 'church workers' under the terms of the URC Act. Part II of Schedule 2 of the Act sets out the provisions determining the actions of the Trust: Clause 5 relates to the sale of redundant manses and Clause 2(e) to letting (see Appendix I).

The Synod and Trust shall be satisfied that the provision of a manse will further the mission priorities of the pastorate and the charitable purposes of the United Reformed Church.

The Trust permits the use of Synod funds to purchase manses and support pastorates with grants as defined in the Manse Policy and Procedures document, provided there is money in the Synod Manse Fund to cover the costs, or other funds that can be designated for the purpose.

Pastorates are responsible for funding the repair and upkeep of the manse designated to them, and the Synod is responsible in relation to manses housing workers in agreed Synod posts (Acts Schedule 2 Part II 4).

Where any manse held in trust for a pastorate is unsuitable or unlikely to be used to house a church worker for the foreseeable future, consideration should be given by the pastorate and the Synod to requesting the Trust to dispose of the property to release resources for continuing the charitable purpose of housing church workers elsewhere. The pastorate may make a case to the Synod and Trust for retaining the property and it being let out, if the manse is on the church site or they can show how it will be used for charitable purposes in connection with the URC.

A: Background

Manses are properties held in trust for a charitable purpose. The charitable position of URC churches has its roots in religion being one of the charitable purposes accepted over centuries of case law. Charity begins with the giving of a gift for a purpose. The gift is for the beneficiaries, and if it is not given directly to the beneficiaries, it is held on trust that it will be used for them. The people who are trusted with ensuring the gifts are used for the purpose given and for the people intended to benefit are the trustees. The Charities Act 2011 has consolidated previous legislation and clarified charitable purposes, the range of charitable organisations, and the role of the Charity Commission.

Most local churches are unincorporated associations, and the Elders are charity trustees of the funds given for the purposes of the church. However, only individuals can buy and sell land and property, so

chapel buildings can only be held by a group of individuals or by a corporate body which can act as a person in law. This is a general rule and noted in the Charity Commission 'Essential Trustee' leaflet CC3 (see Appendix II).

Some churches have retained individual trustees but most have nominated the URC (Wales) Trust Company Limited as the corporate trustee to avoid legal fees when trustees change.

When churches joined the URC, the URC Acts transferred the charitable purposes for which property was held before to be the charitable purposes of the URC (see Appendix II).

The URC sets out the expectation of manse provision in 'The Plan for Partnership for Ministerial Remuneration' which reflects General Assembly policy and is updated annually in January.

In the late 1990s, the shape of pastorates was changing with churches being grouped together. Manses were not always needed or in the right place and some were no longer in line with denominational recommendations about manses. At the same time, it emerged that some manses were being let without the necessary involvement of the trustees. The Synod Meeting in October 1999 agreed to set up a Manse Fund and adopted a Manse Policy. The fund was created with the generosity of churches committing their manses to the scheme and with the proceeds of the sale of manses where churches had closed. This policy builds on the 1999 policy and its successors.

In the 2010s, it became more difficult for pastorates to set up a shared bank account and change signatories, unless they had a group pastorate constitution. The need for clarity about how the Trust takes direction from Church Meetings has also meant that new pastorates need to be clear about who among them is responsible for inspection and maintenance of the manse, how the expenses are to be shared, and how direction is given to the trustees.

Currently, there are two groups of Manses held within the URC National Synod of Wales (see Appendix V):

Group 1 – are manses that were brought into the Manse Policy via gifts from Churches at the time of inception of the Manse Policy and those that have been purchased subsequently with proceeds that are designated to the Synod Manse Policy and appear on the Asset Register of the URC (Wales) Trust Company.

All aspects of the policy contained within this document apply to such manses.

Group 2 – are manses that continue to be held outside the Manse Policy under the direction of a local Church Meeting. Many of these manses are not suitable for use as manses for Ministers under the current Plan for Partnership standards and therefore are technically redundant or are physically connected to Church buildings which means that generally they could not be made redundant.

The section regarding the application of the proceeds of disposal would be different in these circumstances. Approval would need to be given by Finance and Property Board following a Church Meeting resolution to dispose and the Trust would sell the property. The net proceeds of the sale would be available to the Local Church within a Custodial Fund for local mission use.

The only exception to this route for the proceeds would be where a Local Church was part of a Pastorate requesting a manse to be provided by the Manse Policy and in such circumstances, it would be appropriate for those proceeds to be applied to meet part of the costs of providing a manse for that Pastorate.

B: Policy Implications

1. Manses bought from the Synod Manse Fund should not be regarded as investment vehicles, as agreed in the 1999 manse policy.
2. A manse may be let only according to the appropriate legal agreement and subject to the regulations of Rent Smart Wales. The landlord in any tenancy agreement must be the Trust.

3. A redundant manse should normally be sold except where it stands on land that is an integral part of other church property.
4. When a manse is not redundant, but is not immediately required for occupation by a minister or other church worker, four possibilities arise:
 - a. It may be let on a short-term basis during a ministerial vacancy. In this case the net income should be used for the maintenance of the manse with any balance normally accruing towards future maintenance of the manse or related capital purpose. After meeting these costs, the balance of any rental income together with any interest that has accrued may be transferred to the local church general funds at the end of the period of letting.
 - b. The manse may be let for the duration of a ministerial appointment when not required by a minister. In this case the net income should be used in the following order of priorities:
 - i. to assist the church in the payment of any housing allowance, or in the cost of renting alternative accommodation for a minister;
 - ii. for the maintenance of the manse;
 - iii. for the repayment of loans;
 - iv. towards future maintenance of the manse or related capital purpose.

After meeting these costs, the balance of any rental income together with any interest that has accrued may be transferred into the local church/pastorate general funds at the end of each financial year.
 - c. The manse remains vacant with the pastorate meeting the standing charges and undertaking the checks required by their insurance company.
 - d. The manse may be sold with 100% of the net sale proceeds going to the Wales Synod Manse Fund.
5. Manse lettings, including the use of rental income, must be reviewed by the local church/pastorate, Regional Pastoral Committee and Synod Finance and Property Board every two years. This review should include consideration of the adequacy of the accommodation, the suitability of the manse, with regard to location and access as changes may have taken place within the pastorate. The condition of the manse must be reviewed to ensure that rental income is being properly utilised on maintenance and repairs. The review will be conducted by the local church/pastorate and a written report submitted to the RPC and FPB.
6. Applications for the purchase of a manse or provision of a housing allowance must be dealt with as part of the process of declaring a pastorate vacancy. The Moderator and Synod Pastoral Committee will not accept pastorate profiles which do not set out clearly the Manse provision. Pastorates will not be declared as a vacancy until this is done. It is acceptable for the manse to be let, but the notice period and likely time for any work to be done on the manse must be clearly stated in the Pastorate Profile Summary. It is acceptable to identify the source of funds for the purchase of a manse, but this should be clearly stated in the Pastorate Profile Summary. It is acceptable for a choice of manse to be offered, but all the details should be in the full profile.

Whenever a minister vacates a manse, the use and suitability of the manse should be reviewed by the Regional Pastoral Committee. Suitability means considering whether the manse is located in the right area for the pastorate, the adequacy and condition of the accommodation provided.

After consultation with the local church/pastorate, the Regional Pastoral Committee will, if appropriate, make its recommendation for one of the three options set out in 4 above.

The Regional Pastoral Committee will bring any recommendation to the Synod Pastoral Committee for approval and action, who will then inform the Trust for implementation.

C: Maintenance of Manses

Policy

1. The local church/pastorate is responsible for the maintenance of the manse property. Where the manse is occupied by a Synod Officer, Church-Related Community Worker or Special Category Minister the manse will be maintained by the Synod.
2. Each local church/pastorate responsible for a manse will nominate one person to be the contact person for the manse property. The local church/pastorate will also nominate a contact person to liaise with the Trust regarding manses occupied by a Church-Related Community Worker or Special Category Minister serving a local setting.
3. Each manse will have a Manse Information Folder, one copy of which is to be held by the resident in the manse and one by the nominated contact person in the local church/pastorate.
4. Good stewardship of resources means that maintenance of property is not only advisable but makes economic sense.
5. Charitable legislation places a duty on Elders of each local church/pastorate to ensure that any property is maintained in good condition. In addition, there are other duties which demand observance of health and safety issues e.g. regular inspection, servicing and certification of gas and electrical appliances or installations. An Annual Property Inspection Checklist should be completed (see copy at Appendix III).
6. Regional Pastoral Committee and Synod Finance and Property Board must give concurrence to repair/maintenance costs of more than £10,000, regardless of who the trustees are.

Procedure

1. Each local church/pastorate should have a Manse Information Folder. This will contain such information as:
 - a. relevant copies of the title deeds e.g. defining boundaries of property and responsibility for repair;
 - b. covenants affecting the use of the property;
 - c. details relating to any guarantees provided on or after purchase e.g. double glazing or window replacement, damp proofing, re-wiring, or, if new build, NHBC guarantee;
 - d. details of maintenance contract for heating system/boiler or plumbing e.g. 24-hour emergency call out contact.
2. Each local church/pastorate will nominate one person to be responsible for that property and their contact details will be shown in the Manse Information Folder and also quoted in the Terms of Settlement which is part of every pastorate profile.
3. The Terms of Settlement sets out responsibility for the maintenance and decoration of the manse, according to an agreed programme. The programme should include details of who is responsible for doing the internal decoration and paying for it, as there may be tax implications for the incumbent minister. A suggested programme of redecoration should be included in the draft Terms of Settlement, to be negotiated with the prospective minister

through the Interim Moderator. In addition, the Terms of Settlement will also provide details of how the costs are to be met e.g. the proportions to be paid by each local church in group situations.

4. The local church/pastorate is responsible for:
 - a. interior and exterior redecoration;
 - b. roof repairs;
 - c. replacement of boiler;
 - d. cavity wall insulation;
 - e. roof insulation
 - f. rewiring;
 - g. servicing of boilers, central heating systems and main appliances.
5. Regular inspections of the property, with the permission of the occupiers, means that maintenance issues can be dealt with swiftly and with minimum expenditure and trouble.
6. The local church/pastorate will inspect the manse each year.
7. Division of cost between churches in a group pastorate should be dealt with at the vacancy stage. An agreed programme of repairs/redecoration should also be agreed.
8. For repair/maintenance costs of more than £10,000, concurrence should be sought through completing a Property Form available from the Synod Property Officer.
9. Grants may be available from the Synod Manse Fund for certain work. Section F details eligible expenditure.

D: Selling a Manse

Policy

1. The selling of manses is determined by the needs to provide housing for ministers or other church workers in an appropriate place for the church/pastorate and/or to meet the standards expected by the URC.

Procedure

1. The permissions for selling manses are determined by the URC Acts.
2. It is illegal for a local church/pastorate or its officers to offer a manse for sale. Only the Trust has the power to do this and it must fulfil all the requirements of the Charities Act 1993 (see Appendix IV). The Trust should only act after the Synod Finance and Property Board has given approval for the sale.

E: Manse Letting

Policy

1. Manses may be let during a vacancy, after taking into consideration how soon it may be required for its primary purpose of housing a minister.
2. If it becomes clear that the next minister will not need the manse, but there is no case for disposing of the manse, it can be let.

3. The manse should be let legally. The Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 came into force at the end of 2022 which supersedes the Assured Shorthold Tenancy under the Housing Act 1988 with regards to the type of contract that can be issued. All tenancies are required to use the Model Occupation Contract drawn up under the Renting Homes Act provisions. The minimum period for which a manse can be let is six months and this period is known as the 'Term Certain' in the Tenancy Agreement. Current regulations ensure that tenants receive a six-month notice period, which cannot be served until the Term Certain is completed. As a result, the earliest date that a tenant can be required to vacate a property is thirteen months after the tenancy began.
4. The permissions for letting a manse are determined by the URC Acts.

Procedure

1. It is illegal for a local church or its officers to enter into a Tenancy Agreement for a manse. Only the Trust has that power and it must fulfil all the requirements of the Charities Act 1993 (see Appendix IV). The Trust should only act after the Synod Finance and Property Board has given approval for the letting of a manse. If the local church decides it would like to let the manse, it should make application to the Regional Pastoral Committee as soon as possible. Once approval at Regional Pastoral Committee and Synod Finance and Property Board level has been given the Synod Finance and Property Board will advise the Trust.
2. **Finding a Tenant**
Following the introduction of the Rent Smart Wales scheme in November 2017, it is the responsibility of the local church to choose and appoint a licensed agent to let and manage the property. Details of the RSW scheme have been made available to each local church. It is the responsibility of the Trust – acting as Landlord – to register the property on the RSW website when it is to be let during a ministerial vacancy. Local churches must keep the Trust fully informed of any changes to occupation. The appointed letting agent will be provided with details of these requirements and it is the Trust, as Landlord, which issues Tenancy Agreements. Please contact the Property Officer at Synod Office for full details before taking any action.
3. **The Rent**
The Charities Act 1993 requires the Trust to seek advice on the best level of rent to be obtained on the open market in the area (see Appendix IV). The agent should be able to supply this information. The rent should be reviewed annually and one month's clear notice of rent increase must be given to the tenant. Council Tax is paid by the tenant. The rental income should be used as indicated previously.
4. **Local Church/Pastorate Responsibility**
External redecoration and structural repairs are the responsibility of whoever collects the rent, i.e. the local church or the Trust as the case may be. Periodic inspection should be made. The cost of any such works will be met from the rental income. The local church is obliged to advise the Insurers that the manse is let.
5. **Termination**
Bearing in mind any need for redecoration or other works, at least two clear months' notice should be given to the tenant to ensure vacant possession when required.

F: Purchase of a Manse

Policy

1. The ideal accommodation and facilities for a manse is described in the URC Plan for Partnership for Ministerial Remuneration, available from www.urc.org.uk/the-plan-for-partnership.html. The features are:
 - a. a modern property;
 - b. two reception rooms;
 - c. three/four bedrooms;
 - d. a study on the ground or first floor;
 - e. a ground floor WC/cloakroom;
 - f. garage;
 - g. central heating;
 - h. access and facilities for the disabled, or the property being readily adaptable if required;
 - i. security locks and alarm;
 - j. smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.
2. In addition, the following are desirable:
 - a. a medium-sized garden;
 - b. adequate car parking space for visitors;
 - c. good thermal insulation.
3. The manse should be in an appropriate location.

Procedure

1. The Regional Pastoral Committee and the Trust need to be involved at all stages of the process. A decision to purchase a new manse requires a resolution of the Church Meeting(s). This should be passed to the Regional Pastoral Committee and if it is endorsed the approval of the Synod Finance and Property Board should be sought. Provided this Committee endorses the proposal it will then approve the necessary funding.
All the above should be dealt with before a pastorate is declared as a vacancy. The Moderator and Pastoral Committees will not accept pastorate profiles which do not set out clearly the manse provision.
2. The Synod Finance and Property Board will ask the Trust to deal with the purchase. They are responsible for the purchase and only they can instruct agents, surveyors and solicitors. They are responsible for ensuring the provisions of the Charities Act 1993 are complied with (see Appendix IV). It is illegal for the local church to make an offer for a property or agree to purchase a property.
3. The manse will be designated to a particular church / pastorate and a Church Meeting nominated to give direction to the Trust. In a group pastorate (URC Structure 1.(1)(b)) an appropriate mechanism for giving direction from the pastorate may be agreed.
4. **Local Church/Pastorate Responsibility**
 - a. The local church together with representative(s) of the Regional Pastoral Committee will identify modern suitable properties and view them.
 - b. They will draw up a list of these properties in order of preference, a brief report on each property and the Estate Agents specifications and submit them to the Trust.

- c. The local church together with representative(s) of the Regional Pastoral Committee and the Trust will inspect them before deciding to proceed with the purchase. A standard property checklist is available for those who are inspecting properties with a view to purchase.
- d. Where market conditions mean that properties are selling quickly, appropriate good practice will be agreed between the Synod Property Officer and the local representatives.

G: Synod Manse Fund

1. The following is a guide to the use of monies from the Synod Manse Fund, and also a list of maintenance matters that are deemed to be the responsibility of the local church.
2. **Requests for grants from the Synod Manse Fund will be considered towards:**
 - a. **buying new manses and necessary exchanges;**
 - b. **providing a housing allowance for a minister;**
 - c. **extensions;**
 - d. **roof repairs;**
 - e. **cavity wall insulation;**
 - f. **roof insulation;**
 - g. **rewiring;**
 - h. **provision of new double glazing;**
 - i. **replacement of boiler and/or central heating system (including lower carbon options);**
 - j. **provision or upgrade of security features, such as burglar alarms and external lighting;**
 - k. **modernisation of bathroom;**
 - l. **modernisation of kitchen;**
 - m. **installing carbon reduction measures, such as solar panels and electric car chargers.**
3. **Grants will not be provided towards redecoration, replacement carpets or curtains (this is not applicable to Terms of Settlement).**
4. **The provision of grants will be subject to the funds available. This aspect of the policy will be reviewed every two years.**
5. Applications for grants for extensions or repairs should be made on the normal Synod grant application forms with the support of the Regional Pastoral Committee. The Synod Finance and Property Board meets quarterly and any applications for grants which have received Regional Pastoral Committee approval will be considered at the earliest opportunity.
6. Applications for the purchase of a manse, or provision of a housing allowance, must be dealt with as part of the process of declaring a pastorate vacancy.

Appendix I: The United Reformed Church Act, Schedule II, Part II, Clauses 2.(e) and 5.

1. The trustees may if in their discretion they think fit, but not without the authority of a resolution of the Church Meeting and (except as to work on or in a building which does not substantially alter its character, appearance or value) not without the approval of the Provincial Synod [Synod of Scotland] (which approval shall be sufficiently evidenced by a

document signed by the Chairman or the Secretary for the time being of the District [Area] Council and stating that such approval has been given), and subject to any statutory restrictions, do any of the following things from time to time:

- e. Let the premises or any part thereof for any period not exceeding twenty eight years [for any period from time to time permitted by law] and pay the income arising from such letting to the local church as an addition to its general funds.
5. If the Provincial Synod [Synod of Scotland] on the recommendation of the District [Area] Council made to it after consultation between representatives of that Council and the Church Meeting resolves that the use of the premises as aforesaid is or if continued would be no longer useful and that the premises ought to be disposed of the trustees shall sell or let the premises under the direction of the Provincial Synod [Synod of Scotland] and shall apply the net proceeds of sale or letting in the manner prescribed by paragraph 2(d) hereof.

Appendix II: Extracts from Charity Commission publications and URC Act 1972

1. Extract from Charity Commission leaflet CC3:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/866947/CC3_feb20.pdf

“11.2 Unincorporated charities (trusts and unincorporated associations) - holding land

Charities set up by a trust deed, constitution or similar governing document are unincorporated. This means they are not legal bodies in their own right and can't hold property in their own name; it must be held for the charity by trustees.

If the charity trustees don't want to hold legal title for any land or other property themselves, they can appoint a nominee, holding trustees (other individuals) or a custodian trustee (a company or other corporate body that has power to hold property for the charity).”
2. Section 8 of the 1972 Act is an example of the way the URC Acts changed the charitable purposes for which land and property were held:

“8.—(1) All land which immediately before the date of formation is held in trust for or for the purposes of or in connection with a uniting church ... shall on and from that date, and in accordance with the following provisions of this section, be held in trust for or (as the case may be) for equivalent purposes of or in connection with the local church corresponding to the uniting church or uniting congregation in question.

(2) (a) The trust deed of any land to which subsection (1) of this section applies being either land held in trust for use as a church, chapel, church hall, mission hall, preaching station, Sunday school or other place of religious worship or land held in trust for use as a manse or place of residence of a minister, lay worker or caretaker shall on and from the date of formation have effect as if the provisions contained either in Part I or (as the case may be) in Part II of the Second Schedule to this Act were substituted for the operative provisions previously contained in that deed and the references in either part of the said schedule to “the trustees” and “the premises” shall be construed (notwithstanding any definition in the deed) as references to the trustee or trustees for the time being of the deed and to the land and, where appropriate, the buildings, to which the deed relates, and references to “the local church” shall be construed as references to the local church corresponding to the uniting church or uniting congregation to which the deed relates.”

Appendix III: Annual Manse Inspection Checklist

1. The inspection should be undertaken regardless of occupancy – whether the manse is used to house a Church Worker (the purpose for which it is held on trust), or whether it is temporarily let.
2. Dates of Inspection and Action Advised and Taken should be recorded, with copies retained by the pastorate, occupant (if a Church Worker) and copied to the Wales Synod Office.
3. Initial inspection can be undertaken visually by the Pastorate Manse Representative and other officers, together with the occupant (if a Church Worker), unless the item by its nature requires professional expertise. If the initial inspection suggests it, more detailed and specialist inspection on specific item(s) can then be obtained.
4. The purpose of the inspection is not simply to provide a record. Remedial action on any items requiring it should be taken, and then reviewed at the next Inspection. This is good practice for the pastoral care of the occupant and for property stewardship.
5. The pastorate may require the occupant to undertake action where appropriate (e.g. where items in use create a property safety hazard).
6. The following items should be included in the Annual Manse Inspection:
 - a. Exterior:
 - i. external paths and driveways;
 - ii. condition of grounds;
 - iii. boundary fencing / walling and gates;
 - iv. external lighting (if fitted);
 - v. external walls and stonework (pointing, clear of plant growth etc);
 - vi. external window frames;
 - vii. drains and guttering (checked and cleared every six months);
 - viii. roofing (loose materials, weatherproof);
 - ix. chimney stacks;
 - x. fascias and bargeboards (condition, decoration);
 - xi. external decoration;
 - xii. condition of garage (fabric/fittings) and other outbuildings.
 - b. Interior:
 - i. internal walls and ceilings (stability, cracking, dampness);
 - ii. internal woodwork (doors, stairs, window frames);
 - iii. internal decoration;
 - iv. kitchen fittings;
 - v. bathroom and other sanitary fittings;
 - vi. loft and other insulation.
 - c. Utility services:
 - i. electrical testing (required every five years by approved contractor);
 - ii. electrical appliance testing;
 - iii. heating system condition and servicing (annual contract possible);

- iv. gas installation and appliance testing (if applicable).
- d. Safety:
 - i. smoke / carbon monoxide alarm testing;
 - ii. security alarm testing (if fitted);
 - iii. firefighting equipment (if present);
 - iv. security locks.
- e. Administration and other items:
 - i. review property and contents insurance cover;
 - ii. review maintenance and other contracts;
 - iii. review of items advised in previous inspections;
 - iv. other items as reported by occupant.

Appendix IV

1. There are important sections of the Charities Act 1993 that must be complied with when buying, selling or letting. Most of the relevant points regarding property are contained in Section 36 of the Act. It requires the Trust, prior to entering into an agreement to dispose of charity property to:
 - a. obtain a professional valuation and survey and consider the written report;
 - b. follow the professional advice given in respect of marketing the property;
 - c. unless the sale proceeds of the property are to be used to purchase a replacement property give public notice of the intended disposal and consider any representations received in response to the public notice;
2. It also requires the Trust, prior to entering a lease of charity property to:
 - a. take advice on valuation;
 - b. give public notice of the intended lease if it is for a period exceeding two years.
3. This summary of the requirements of the Act is for information. It is the responsibility of the Trust, not the local church, to conform to these requirements. But it is only with information from and co-operation with the local church that this is possible.

Appendix V

Manses held under the Manse Policy (referred to in Section A as Group 1):

79 Laburnum Way, Penarth, CF64 3NF	Cardiff & Penarth Pastorate
30 Nant y Wedal, Cathays, Cardiff, CF14 3QU	Cardiff & Penarth Pastorate
12 The Shires, Gilwern, NP7 0EX	Brecon Beacons Pastorate
3 Russell Court, Rhyl, LL18 3EN	Uniting Church in Rhyl
2 Lamack Vale, Tenby, SA70 8DN	South Pembrokeshire Pastorate
2 Swallowfield Drive, Hengoed, CF82 6AW	Valleys Pastorate
32 Clos y Pinwydd, Abergavenny, NP7 5JP	Training & Development Officer

21 Llwyn y Bioden, Morriston, Swansea, SA6 6TD	Christ Well URC, Swansea
4 Valley Way, Wrexham, LL13 7GW	Wrexham Group Pastorate
7 Kenelm Road, Rhos-on-Sea, LL28 4EE	Bay of Colwyn Pastorate
90 Coed Camlas, Pontypool, NP4 8RR	East Wales North Pastorate
47 Whiterock Avenue, Pontypridd, CF37 2EL	St David's Uniting Church, Trefforest
64 Tasker Way, Haverfordwest, SA61 1FE	Landsker Pastorate

Manse / properties held outside the Manse Policy under the direction of a local Church Meeting and with the URC (Wales) Trust as a trustee (referred to in Section A as Group 2):

72 Mill Lane, Buckley, CH7 3HE	Alun Vale Pastorate
The Manse, Queensway, Shotton, CH5 1HT	Rivertown URC, Shotton
Flats A, B, C, 84 Church Street, Flint	St John's URC, Flint
3 Rosecroft Drive, Langstone, NP18 2LQ	East Wales South Pastorate
Tabernacle Cottage, Llanvaches, NP26 3AY	Tabernacle URC, Llanvaches
9 Beulah Road, Rhiwbina, Cardiff, CF14 6LT	Beulah URC, Cardiff
8 Minster Road, Roath, Cardiff, CF23 5AS	Parkminster URC, Cardiff
83 Kimberley Road, Roath, Cardiff, CF23 5DP	St Andrew's URC, Cardiff
Christ Well flat, Manselton, Swansea	Christ Well URC, Swansea
The Manse, Tiers Cross, SA62 3DA	Tiers Cross URC
The Manse, Llanwrthwl, LD1 6NT	Penueel URC, Llanwrthwl
The Manse, Bridge Street, Rhayader, LD6 5AG	Tabernacle URC, Rhayader
122 Victoria Avenue, Porthcawl, CF36 3HA	Bridgend United Area
Ascalon, 1 Highfield Avenue, Porthcawl, CF36 3AE	Bridgend United Area
The Manse, Libanus, LD3 8EW	Brecon Beacons Pastorate
Chapel House, Pennorth, LD3 7EX	Tabernacle URC, Pennorth
2 Lion Street, Brecon, LD3 7AU	Plough URC, Brecon

Properties for which the URC (Wales) Trust is not a trustee:

The Manse, Wolfsdale, SA62 6JJ	Wolfsdale URC
Chapel Cottage, Wolfsdale	Wolfsdale URC
Chapel House, Nolton Haven, SA62 3NH	Nolton Haven URC
7 Wye View Terrace, Church Street, Rhayader, LD6 5BE	Tabernacle URC, Rhayader

Policy Issue No: 6
Policy Reviewed: April 2025
Approved by Synod Meeting: October 2025 (TBC)

Appendix F: Nomination of Moderators of General Assembly 2027-2028

Every year local churches have the opportunity to nominate people for election as Moderator of General Assembly. We are now seeking nominations from the churches in the Synod of candidates to serve from the close of General Assembly 2027 until the close of General Assembly 2028.

In the coming months Elders' and Church Meetings are invited to consider whether they would like to nominate to Synod a person in each category (i.e. Minister/CRCW and Elder), or in one or other category. One nomination from each church in each category is sought, and only one nomination in each category will be accepted. Please note that nominees do not need to be from within the National Synod of Wales, and they should not be approached to give their permission before nomination.

Your nomination/s should be sent to the Synod Clerk (through the Synod Office or by e-mail to megan.price.urcwailes@urc.org.uk) using the nomination forms on the following pages, and should include a 100 word (maximum) pen portrait of the nominee which will be presented to Synod Meeting. Nominations must be received by the Synod Clerk **by noon on Wednesday 7 January 2026.**

If the Synod has more than one nomination in either category, an election will take place at the Spring Synod Meeting. If only one nomination in each category is received, a simple vote will be taken. The result/s will then be communicated to the General Secretary.

This call for nominations is part of the privilege of being the United Reformed Church, and it is hoped that local churches will engage enthusiastically with the process over the coming months.

**LOCAL CHURCH NOMINATIONS FOR
MODERATORS OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2027-2028**
for ballot at the Spring 2026 Synod Meeting

**NOMINATION FOR
A MINISTER or CHURCH RELATED COMMUNITY WORKER**

Name of Minister or CRCW:	
Nominee's Local Church: <i>(i.e. Church where nominee has membership)</i>	
Statement in support of your nomination (not exceeding 100 words):	
Name of Church submitting this nomination:	
Please indicate whether the nomination comes from Elders' Meeting or Church Meeting:	
Contact details of person submitting this nomination <i>(in case the Clerk needs to liaise before publication of Synod papers)</i>	

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF NOMINATIONS TO THE SYNOD CLERK:
NOON on Wednesday 7 January 2026**

Email: megan.price.urcwailes@urc.org.uk

United Reformed Church, Synod Office, Minster Road, Roath, Cardiff CF23 5AS
Telephone: 029 2019 5728

**LOCAL CHURCH NOMINATIONS FOR
MODERATORS OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2027-2028**
for ballot at the Spring 2026 Synod Meeting

NOMINATION FOR AN ELDER

Name of Elder:	
Nominee's Local Church: <i>(i.e. Church where nominee has membership)</i>	
Statement in support of your nomination (not exceeding 100 words):	
Name of Church submitting this nomination:	
Please indicate whether the nomination comes from Elders' Meeting or Church Meeting:	
Contact details of person submitting this nomination <i>(in case the Clerk needs to liaise before publication of Synod papers)</i>	

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF NOMINATIONS TO THE SYNOD CLERK:

NOON on Wednesday 7 January 2026

Email: megan.price.urcwailes@urc.org.uk

United Reformed Church, Synod Office, Minster Road, Roath, Cardiff CF23 5AS

Telephone: 029 2019 5728

Appendix F: Standing Orders for Hybrid Meetings

Standing Orders for Meetings of General Assembly of the United Reformed Church

1. The agenda of the Assembly

- 1.1 At its meetings the Assembly shall consider reports and draft motions prepared by its committees which include the Assembly Executive or by Synods, and motions and amendments of which due notice has been given submitted by individual members of the Assembly.

2. In-person, virtual, and hybrid meetings

- 2.1 A meeting may be in-person, virtual, or hybrid. The boundaries between these descriptions are not always clear. A generally in-person meeting may have a minority of members joining the meeting by virtual means. A virtual meeting may have some participants gathered together in one place. In any event, what is always strictly essential is that all participants, both in-person and virtual, can fully see and hear each other in all directions, and that the Moderator is totally confident that participants are able to see and hear each other effectively. The Moderator must also be content and comfortable that they can manage full and proper participation from all participants in the meeting.

3. Records of meetings

- 3.1 Any streaming and/or recording of meetings, including subtitles or captions, does not replace the formal minutes of the meeting and is not a record of the decisions made. Formal minutes shall continue to be maintained and retained.
- 3.2 Meetings should not normally be recorded, in order to comply fully with both safeguarding and data privacy policies.

4. Operating procedure

- 4.1 Meetings will commence when the Moderator opens the meeting, within the requirements set out in the Rules of Procedure.
- 4.2 At the start of any meeting the Moderator shall make reasonable efforts to confirm that any members attending virtually can see and hear, and be seen and heard. The meeting shall not start until the Moderator is so satisfied.
- 4.3 Where available, participants joining a meeting virtually should normally use video as well as audio. Where video is not available, or it is not safe for the attendee to use video, then audio only may be used.
- 4.4 The Meeting will finish when the Moderator formally closes the meeting.
- 4.5 All microphones should be set to mute at the start of the meeting, apart from the Moderator and any necessary technical staff. Microphones should only be unmuted when a participant is speaking.

4.6 The Moderator has absolute discretion to pause or adjourn the meeting at any time, and to remove any attendees from the meeting if their conduct falls short of the standards expected in church.

4.7 In all but the smallest meetings, it is helpful if the Moderator is not also the online host. The host may be a staff member(s) or volunteer(s) who are not a member of the meeting in the same way that such people may assist with stewarding meetings.

4.8 In any event, no technical failure shall invalidate any decisions made.

5. Attendance

5.1 All meetings are required to meet any previously agreed quorum, where such a quorum has been specified.

6. Interpretation of Standing Orders

6.1 Where the Moderator is required to interpret any Standing Orders they shall take advice from the Clerk before making a ruling. The Moderator's decision in all cases shall be final.

7. Presentation of business

7.1 All reports of committees, together with the draft motions arising therefrom, shall be delivered to the General Secretary by a date to be determined, so that they may be circulated to members in time for consideration before the date of the Assembly meeting.

7.2 A Synod may deliver to the General Secretary not less than twelve weeks before the commencement of the meeting of the Assembly notice in writing of a motion for consideration at the Assembly. This notice shall include the names of those appointed to propose and second the motion at the Assembly.

7.3 A local church wishing to put forward a motion for consideration by the General Assembly shall submit the motion to its Synod for consideration and, if the Synod so decides, transmission to the Assembly, at such time as will enable the Synod to comply with Standing Order 7.2 above.

7.4 A member of the Assembly may deliver to the General Secretary not less than 21 days before the date of the meeting of the Assembly a notice in writing of a motion (which notice must include the name of a seconder) to be included in the Assembly agenda. If the subject matter of such a notice of motion appears to the General Secretary to be an infringement of the rights of a Synod through which the matter could properly have been raised, the General Secretary shall inform the member accordingly and bring the matter before the Business Committee which shall advise the Assembly as to the procedure to be followed.

7.5 Proposals for amendments to the Basis and Structure of the URC, which may be made by the Assembly Executive or a committee of the General Assembly or a Synod, shall be in the hands of the General Secretary not later than 12 weeks before the opening of the Assembly. The General Secretary, in addition to the normal advice to members of the Assembly, shall, as quickly as possible, inform all Synod Clerks of the proposed amendment.

7.6 It shall not be in order at any time to move a motion or amendment which:

7.6.1 contravenes any part of the Basis of Union, or

7.6.2 involves the Church in expenditure without prior consideration by the appropriate committee, or

7.6.3 pre-empts discussion of a matter to be considered later in the agenda, or

7.6.4 amends or reverses a decision reached by the Assembly at its preceding two meetings unless the Moderator, Clerk and General Secretary together decide that changed circumstances or new evidence justify earlier reconsideration of the matter, or

7.6.5 is not related to the report of a committee and has not been the subject of 21 days' notice under Standing Order 7.4, or

7.6.6 simply reaffirms existing work.

The decision of the Moderator (in the case of 7.6.1, 7.6.2, 7.6.3, 7.6.5, and 7.6.6) and of the Moderator with the Clerk and the General Secretary (in the case of 7.6.4) on the application of this Standing Order shall be final.

7.7 In advance of the meeting, the General Secretary shall, in consultation with the Moderator and Clerk, prepare a proposal for a Facilitation Group for that meeting, for appointment at the beginning of the meeting. Some or all of the members of the Facilitation Group may be called upon by the Moderator at any time to help the Assembly reach a mind upon a question. The Assembly may add or remove members of the Facilitation Group at any time. The Facilitation Group may consult with whoever they deem it appropriate. Draft revised wording of motions should be checked by the Clerk, and by the Legal Advisor where appropriate, before being proposed to the Assembly.

8. En bloc business

8.1 The Moderator, Clerk, and General Secretary shall together decide which items of business shall be taken en bloc. Placing business in the en bloc category does not imply anything about the importance of any item of business, merely that those planning the meeting think that it may be possible to agree the business without discussion. Any members wishing to have items removed from en bloc business should notify the Clerk by a stated time in advance of the meeting. If six or more members have so notified, then the business shall be added to the agenda of the meeting, otherwise en bloc business shall be voted upon without any discussion.

9. Business requiring discussion

9.1 It is not possible to use full Consensus Decision-Making during many meetings, since Consensus Decision-Making relies upon the Moderator being able to sense the mood of the meeting, and the members also being able to sense that and trust the Moderator, which requires senses not always available in online meetings or meetings with online participants. However, all meetings should still be conducted in the spirit and ethos of seeking consensus.

9.2 To ensure that all meetings always operate to the same procedure, noting the blurred boundaries referred to in Standing Order 2, all meetings will use the information session and the discussion session from Consensus Decision-Making, and then take a vote for the actual decision-making.

9.3 All decisions shall be made by vote, using the procedure set out in Standing Order 10. The Moderator, Clerk, and General Secretary shall together decide in advance which items of business require a simple majority, and which require a two thirds majority, using the principle

that routine formal decisions such as agreeing the minutes of the previous meeting might reasonably be taken on a simple majority, whereas matters of policy require a greater level of support than a simple majority. This Standing Order does not override any other provision for a specific majority set out elsewhere in the Standing Orders, particularly procedural motions.

10. Information and discussion sessions

10.1 The first stage is the information session. During the information session, members of Assembly may ask questions only to seek clarification or further information.

10.2 Once the Moderator decides that the information session has ended, the Assembly moves into the discussion session, in which the substance of the matter may be discussed.

10.2.1 The methods used may include prayer, buzz groups, group discussions, speeches to the whole Assembly, time for thinking during a break, etc. The Moderator may invite Assembly to indicate opinions by the use of coloured cards at this stage or electronic equivalent, and shall ensure that the full ranges of voices are given opportunity to contribute.

10.2.2 Minor changes of wording may be agreed as the discussion proceeds. If a proposed change is, in the opinion of the Moderator upon the advice of the Clerk, a major change, then a proposer and seconder are required and it is an amendment.

10.3 When the Moderator senses that the Assembly may be ready to reach a decision, the Moderator shall state that Assembly is moving into the decision session.

11. Decision session

11.1 All decisions shall preferably be made by vote. Those participating virtually should normally use any built in voting mechanism in the software. In a very small meeting, where the Moderator can see everyone at once, it may be possible to resolve this informally.

11.2 Voting on any motion whose effect is to alter, add to, modify or supersede the Basis, the Structure and any other form or expression of the polity and doctrinal formulations of the United Reformed Church, is governed by paragraph 3(1) and (2) of the Structure.

12. Business and procedural motions

12.1 If notice has been given of two or more motions on the same subject, or two or more amendments to the same motion, these shall be taken in the order decided by the Moderator on the advice of the Clerk.

12.2 A report presented to the Assembly by a committee or Synod, under Standing Order 7.1, shall be received for debate, unless notice has been duly given under Standing Order 7.4 of a motion to refer back to that committee or Synod the whole or part of the report and its attached motion(s). Such a motion for reference back shall be debated and voted upon before the relevant report is itself debated. To carry such a motion two-thirds of the votes cast must be given in its favour. When a report has been received for debate, and before any motions consequent upon it are proposed, any member may speak to a matter arising from the report which is not the subject of a motion.

12.3 During the meeting of the Assembly and on the report of a committee, notice (including the names of proposer and seconder) shall be given to the Clerk of any new motions which arise

from the material of the report, and of any amendments which affect the substance of motions already presented. During the course of the debate a new motion or amendment may be stated orally without supporting speech in order to ascertain whether a member is willing to second it.

- 12.4 No motion or amendment shall be spoken to by its proposer, debated, or put to the Assembly unless it is known that there is a seconder. The only exceptions to this are motions presented on behalf of a committee, of which printed notice has been given, and the procedural motions in Standing Orders 12.12, 12.13, and 12.14. The procedural motions in Standing Orders 12.12, 12.13, and 12.14 may be moved and spoken to without the proposer having first obtained and announced the consent of a seconder. They must, however, be seconded before being put to the vote, and precedence as between the procedural motions is determined by the fact that after one of them is before the Assembly no other motion can be moved until that one has been dealt with.
- 12.5 A seconder may second without speaking and, by declaring the intention of doing so, reserve the right of speaking until a later period in the debate.
- 12.6 An amendment shall be either to omit words or to insert words or to do both, but no amendment shall be in order which has the effect of introducing an irrelevant proposal or of negating the motion. The Moderator may rule that a proposed amendment should be treated as an alternative motion or as a further motion.
- 12.7 If an amendment is carried, the motion as amended shall take the place of the original motion and shall become the substantive motion upon which any further amendment may be moved. If an amendment is rejected, a further amendment with a different outcome may be moved.
- 12.8 An amendment which has been moved and seconded shall be disposed of before any further amendment may be moved, but notice may be given of intention to move a further amendment should the one before the Assembly be rejected.
- 12.9 The mover may, with the concurrence of the seconder and the consent of the Assembly, alter the motion or amendment proposed.
- 12.10 A motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the proposer with the concurrence of the seconder and the consent of the Assembly. Any such consent shall be signified without discussion. It shall not be in order for any member to speak upon it after the proposer has asked permission to withdraw unless such permission shall have been refused.
- 12.11 Alternative (but not directly negative) motions may be moved and seconded in competition with a motion before the Assembly. It shall be for the Moderator, on the advice of the Clerk, to rule when motions shall be considered as alternatives under the Terms of this Standing Order.
 - 12.11.1 When such draft alternative motions have been received by the General Secretary, the Moderators may ask the General Secretary to convene a meeting (in-person or virtual) of the proposers, to ascertain if it may be possible to agree on a single draft motion to put before the Assembly, or to clarify the areas of disagreement.
 - 12.11.2 If the Assembly has alternative motions before it, each proposer shall be given the opportunity to present their motion in an order decided by the Moderator.
 - 12.11.3 After any amendments duly moved under Standing Order 12 have been dealt with and debate on the alternative motions has ended, the movers shall reply to the debate in reverse

order to that in which they spoke initially. The first vote shall be a vote in favour of each of the motions, put in the order in which they were proposed, the result not being announced for one until it is announced for all. If any of them obtains a majority of those voting, it becomes the sole motion before the Assembly. If none of them does so, the motion having the fewest votes is discarded. Should the lowest two be equal, the Moderator gives a casting vote. The voting process is repeated until one motion achieves a majority of those voting.

12.11.4 Once a sole motion remains, further discussion is permissible and votes for and against that motion shall be taken in the normal way.

12.12 In the course of the business any member may move that the question under consideration be not put. This motion takes precedence over every motion before the Assembly. As soon as the member has given reasons for proposing it and it has been seconded and the proposer of the motion or amendment under consideration has been allowed opportunity to comment on the reasons put forward, the vote upon it shall be taken, unless it appears to the Moderator that an unfair use is being made of this rule. To carry this motion, two-thirds of the votes cast must be given in its favour. Should the motion be carried, the business shall immediately end and the Assembly shall proceed to the next business.

12.13 In the course of any discussion, any member may move that the question be now put. This is sometimes described as “the closure motion”. If the Moderator senses that there is a wish or need to close a debate, the Moderator may ask whether any member wishes so to move; the Moderator may not simply declare a debate closed. Provided that it appears to the Moderator that the motion is a fair use of this rule, the vote shall be taken upon it immediately it has been seconded. When an amendment is under discussion, this motion shall apply only to that amendment. To carry this motion, two-thirds of the votes cast must be given in its favour. The mover of the original motion or amendment, as the case may be, retains the right of reply before the vote is taken on the motion or amendment.

12.14 During the course of a debate on a motion any member may move that decision on this motion be deferred to the next Assembly. This rule does not apply to debates on amendments since the Assembly needs to decide the final form of a motion before it can responsibly vote on deferral. The motion then takes precedence over other business. As soon as the member has given reasons for proposing it and it has been seconded and the proposer of the motion under consideration has been allowed opportunity to comment on the reasons put forward, the vote upon it shall be taken, unless it appears to the Moderator that an unfair use is being made of this rule or that deferral would have the effect of annulling the motion. To carry this motion, two-thirds of the votes cast must be given in its favour. At the discretion of the Moderator, the General Secretary may be instructed by a further motion, duly seconded, to refer the matter for consideration by other councils and/or by one or more committees of the Assembly. The General Secretary shall provide for the deferred motion to be presented again at the next Meeting of the General Assembly.

13. Timing of speeches and of other business

13.1 Save by prior agreement of the Business Committee, speeches made in the presentation of reports concerning past work of Assembly committees which are to be open to question, comment or discussion shall not exceed five minutes.

- 13.2 The Assembly may meet in parallel sessions or breakout rooms to consider the past work of Assembly committees for questions and comments. Any draft motions arising therefrom must be dealt with in a plenary session of the Assembly.
- 13.3 Save by the prior agreement of the Business Committee, speeches made in support of the motions from any Assembly committee, including the Assembly Executive, or from any Synod, shall not exceed five minutes per resolution, and in aggregate not exceed 15 minutes (e.g. a committee with four motions may not exceed 15 minutes), unless a longer period be recommended by the Business Committee or determined by the Moderator.
- 13.4 Each subsequent speaker in any debate shall be allowed five minutes unless the Moderator shall determine otherwise; it shall, in particular, be open to the Moderator to determine that all speeches in a debate or from a particular point in a debate shall be of not more than a different specified number of minutes.
- 13.5 When a speech is made on behalf of a committee, it shall be so stated. Otherwise a speaker shall begin by giving name and accreditation to the Assembly.
- 13.6 Secretaries of committees and members of staff who are not members of Assembly may speak on the report of a committee for which they have responsibility at the request of the Convenor concerned. They may speak on other reports with the consent of the Moderator. Staff should not normally seek permission from the Moderator to speak outside their area of responsibility.
- 13.7 In each debate, no one shall address the Assembly more than once without the permission of the Moderator, except that at the close of each debate the proposer of the motion or the amendment, as the case may be, shall have the right to reply, but must strictly confine the reply to answering previous speakers and must not introduce new matters. Such reply shall close the debate on the motion or the amendment.
- 13.8 The foregoing Standing Order (13.7) shall not prevent the asking or answering of a question which arises from the matter before the Assembly or from a speech made in the debate upon it.
- 13.9 An invited speaker, whether speaking to a draft motion or not, may address the Assembly for such period of time as may be agreed by the Business Committee.

14. Questions

- 14.1 A member may, if two days' notice in writing has been given to the General Secretary, ask the Moderator or the Convenor of any committee any question on any matter relating to the business of the Assembly to which no reference is made in any report before the Assembly.
- 14.2 A member may, when given opportunity by the Moderator, ask the presenter of any report before the Assembly a question seeking additional information or explanation relating to matters contained within the report.
- 14.3 Questions asked under Standing Order 14 shall be put and answered without discussion.

15. Points of order, personal explanations, dissent

- 15.1 A member shall have the right to call attention to a point of order, and immediately on this being done any other member addressing the Assembly shall cease speaking until the

Moderator has determined the question of order. The decision on any point of order rests entirely with the Moderator. Any member calling to order unnecessarily is liable to censure of the Assembly.

- 15.2 A member feeling that some material part of a former speech by such member at the same meeting has been misunderstood or is being grossly misinterpreted by a later speaker may request the Moderator's permission to make a personal explanation. If the Moderator so permits, a member so rising shall be entitled to be heard forthwith.
- 15.3 The right to record in the minutes a dissent from any decision of the Assembly shall only be granted to a member by the Moderator if the reason stated, either verbally at the time or later in writing, appears to the Moderator to fall within the provisions of paragraph 10 of the Basis of Union.
- 15.4 The decision of the Moderator on a point of order, or on the admissibility of a personal explanation, or on the right to have a dissent recorded, shall not be open to discussion.

16. Admission of the public and closed sessions

- 16.1 Only those who are members of the meeting, staff members in attendance, or invited guests may join a meeting. However, a meeting in open session may allow guests or be shown as a live stream.
- 16.2 A closed session is one in which the business is highly sensitive. Only members of Assembly, the Legal Adviser, and any technical staff required to enable Assembly to function may be present. Neither content nor process may be divulged to non-members, save specific information authorised by the Moderator in consultation with the Clerk and the Legal Adviser. No social media in any form may be used during a closed session, nor to report upon such closed session. Any live streaming must be switched off. Minutes will be taken, but these will be held in retentis by the Clerk, and shall not be made available to non-members.
- 16.3 A closed session may be called for at any time in any decision-making mode, and voted upon by the Assembly, requiring a simple majority. This motion takes precedence over every motion before the Assembly. As soon as the member has given reasons for proposing it and it has been seconded, and the proposer of the motion or amendment under consideration has been allowed opportunity to comment on the reasons put forward, the vote upon it shall be taken, unless it appears to the Moderator that an unfair use is being made of this rule. Should the motion be carried the business shall immediately pause while non-members leave the meeting.
- 16.4 If a matter is known to be highly sensitive in advance, then the Assembly Officers, consulting the Legal Adviser if necessary, may announce in advance that a certain piece of business will be conducted in a closed session giving their reasons.

- 16.5 Members of Assembly who leave during a closed session may not be re- admitted.

17. Communications during the course of debate

- 17.1 The primary responsibility of members is to attend to the business and participate in the decision making. Those present must refrain both from posting on social media sites during business sessions and from commenting upon partially completed business. It is the responsibility of the communications committee's staff to make official announcements. This restriction is only in place when in session; those attending are free to join in the online

debates during breaks and after the close of business in respect of business that the Assembly has completed. Everything written and shared on social media sites at any time is the sole responsibility of the author, and is subject to the same defamation laws as any other form of written communication.

18. Record of the Assembly

18.1 A record of attendance at the meetings of the Assembly shall be kept in such a manner as the Business Committee may determine.

18.2 The draft minutes of each day's proceedings shall be made available in an appropriate form normally on the following day. They shall, after any necessary correction, be approved at the opening of a subsequent session. Concerning the minutes of the closing day of the Assembly the Clerk shall submit a motion approving their insertion in the full minutes of the Assembly after review and any necessary correction by the Officers of the Assembly. Before such a motion is voted upon, any member may ask to have read out the written minute on any particular item.

18.3 A signed copy of the minutes shall be preserved in the custody of the General Secretary as the official record of the Assembly's proceedings.

18.4 As soon as possible after the Assembly meeting ends, the substance of the minutes together with any other relevant papers shall be published as a "Record of Assembly" and a copy sent to every member of the Assembly, each Synod and local church.

19. Suspension and amendment of Standing Orders

19.1 In any case of urgency or upon proposal of a motion of which due notice has been given, any one or more of the Standing Orders may be suspended at any meeting, provided that three-fourths of the members of the Assembly present and voting shall so decide.

19.2 Motions to amend the Standing Orders shall be referred to the Clerk of the Assembly for report before being voted on by the Assembly (or, in case of urgency, by the Assembly Executive). The Clerk of the Assembly may from time to time suggest amendments.

Person responsible for editing document: Clerk of the General Assembly

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