

RISK MANAGEMENT

The Circuit accepts the Jesus principle that, as His disciples, we cannot be averse to risk for the sake of the Gospel message. We also declare that human and material resources are precious in God's sight and that this requires risk assessment in our daily activities to ensure that we are providing protection of people and deployment of our resources that gives glory to God.

1. **The Methodist Church's Risk Management Policy for the Connexion** identifies 5 different Risk Categories as follows:
 1. **Strategic Risks** e.g. inappropriate organisation structure; lack of relevant skills; conflicts of interest.
 2. **Operational Risks** e.g. poor staff recruitment and training; data loss due to insecure device management; inadequate IT firewall protection.
 3. **Financial Risks** e.g. inadequate reserves and cash-flow; lack of accounts scrutiny which could conceal fraud; errors or omissions in transactions that are not identified and acted upon.
 4. **External Risks** e.g. changing of government policy; turbulent economic or political environment; bomb threats.
 5. **Compliance Risks** e.g. acting in breach of Trust; poor knowledge of legal responsibilities; poor knowledge of regulation and procedures.

2. **The Circuit Meeting** in the transaction of its business will incorporate risk assessment as appropriate in relation to each of the above categories together with:
 6. **Personnel Risks** e.g. the health and well-being of ministers and employees: appointment, training, supervision and health and safety.

 7. **Risks to reputation of Church and Circuit** e.g. poor practice in safeguarding; lack of clarity in media/press projection

3. **Responsibility for Risk Assessment**

While in particular instances risk management is delegated to members of the Circuit leadership team the Circuit Meeting has ultimate responsibility for risk and is expected to regularly review and assess the risks to the Circuit in all areas of its work.

4. Risk Assessment

Risk Category	Actions include
1. Strategic	Strategic planning by Circuit Meeting and Leadership Team; Review of activity focus; Regular reports to Circuit Meeting; Review of personnel structure and responsibilities; Discussion with District, Connexion and other Circuits re means to minimise strategic risks.
2. Operational Risks	Planning for stationing; Consistent recruitment policy and practice for lay employment appointments; Review of operational structure; Identification of training needs; IT and office management Review.
3. Financial Risks	Treasurer's reports to Circuit Leadership and Circuit Meeting; Annual Report; Auditing of Accounts Review of Annual assessment Establishment of Resources Committee Appointment of financial clerk
4. External Risks	Response to Connexional and District advice; Challenge to Connexion and District re good practice and a culture of ownership; Security of churches alert/risk assessment. Review of mission practice in the context of secular society.
5. Compliance Risks	Attention to Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church. Reference to Safeguarding, Employment, Data protection, Government and Charity requirements.

	Access to professional advice [See: Appendix 2]
6. Personnel Risks	Compliance with good employment practice [See Policy for Employment of Lay Workers] and Guidance Risk Assessment for Lone workers.
7. Health Safety and Welfare	Compliance with Fire and evacuation regulations in church buildings. Adherence to workplace health, safety and welfare regulations. Expectation of individual church awareness and management of health and safety including publication of awareness notices and risk assessments of buildings and activities.
8. Reputational Risks	Awareness by all of the need to behave and speak within the ethical and substantive norms of Christian living. The promotion of 'positive' messages and 'good news' relating to the Circuit/churches' activities. Adoption of Media Policy for managing adverse publicity.

5. Risk Reporting

It is expected that all members of the Circuit Leadership Team and the Circuit Meeting will play an active part in identifying potential risks to the organisation and reporting these to the Superintendent Minister or Senior Circuit Steward.

There is an expectation that such potential risks will be assessed and evaluated by the Circuit Leadership team with proposed actions to be taken to minimise risk. Potential risks and intended actions will be reported to the Resources who will record these and present an annual attestation and recommendations for improvement in practice to the Circuit Meeting.

6. Risk Governance

Circuit Meeting	Provides policy, oversight and review of risk management
Resources Group	Oversees regular review of risk management activities
Circuit Leadership Team	Drives culture of risk management and signs off on annual risk attestation

Senior Circuit Steward	Continuously improving risk management policy, strategy and supporting framework
Church Councils	Ensure church members comply with the risk management policy and foster a culture where risks can be identified and escalated
Ministers, Employees, Church Members	Comply with risk management policies and procedures

7. Risk Appetite

It is recognised that taking risks is vital when seeking to communicate the Gospel and that the Methodist Church was founded because of risks taken by John Wesley. It is policy to embrace risks which aim to advance the purposes of the Upper Thames Circuit Methodist Church whilst ensuring those risks that might have a negative impact must be avoided or minimised.

Key Drivers of the Organisation	Risk Appetite
The Upper Thames Circuit seeks to grow in the love of God to spread the Gospel of Christ and, empowered by the Holy Spirit, to reach out to others.	
Health, Safety and Welfare (inc. safeguarding)	Zero
Maximising staff potential	Medium
Achieving Financial Plan and funding targets	Low
Leading high quality worship which engages all	High
Exploring new forms of mission and outreach including community support	Medium
Compliance with legal requirements	Zero
Working with others in partnership	Medium
Maintenance and management of property in its remit	Medium

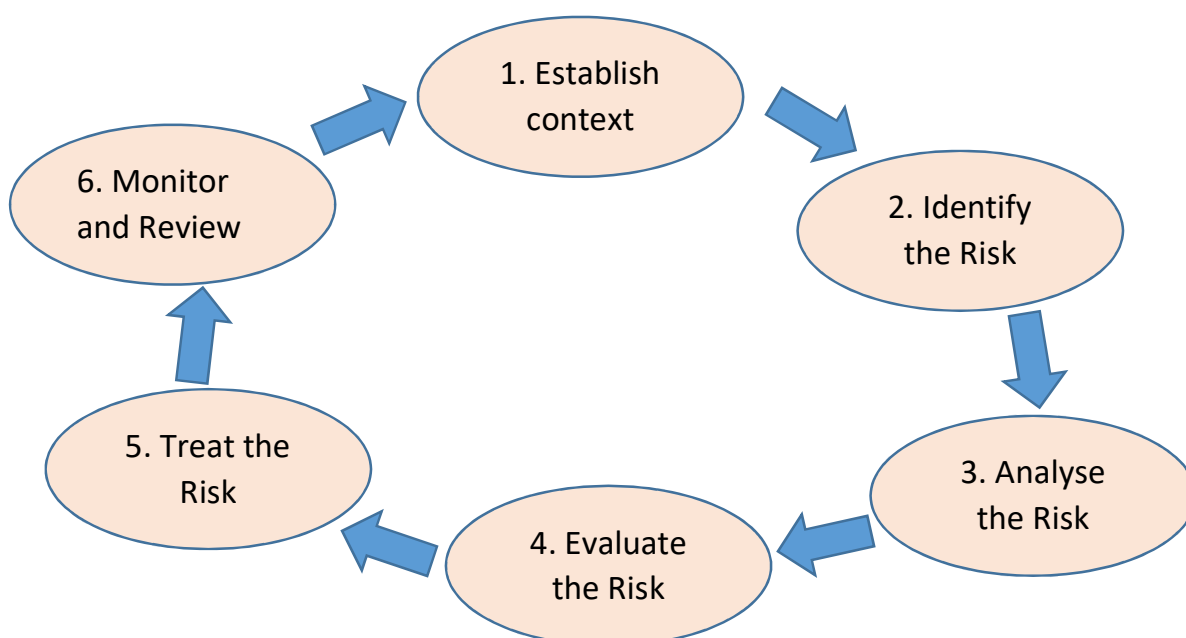
8. Risk Appetite Descriptors

Assessment	Description of potential effect
Very High Risk Appetite 5	accepts risks that are likely to result in reputation damage, financial loss or exposure, major breakdown in services, information systems or integrity, significant incidents of regulatory and / or legislative compliance, potential risk of injury to staff / service users.

High Risk Appetite 4	willing to accept risks that may result in reputation damage, financial loss or exposure, major breakdown in services, information systems or integrity, significant incidents of regulatory and / or legislative compliance, potential risk of injury to staff / service users.
Moderate Risk Appetite 3	willing to accept some risks in certain circumstances that may result in reputation damage, financial loss or exposure, major breakdown in services, information systems or integrity, significant incidents of regulatory and / or legislative compliance, potential risk of injury to staff / service users.
Low Risk Appetite 2	not willing to accept (except in very exceptional circumstances) risks that may result in reputation damage, financial loss or exposure, major breakdown in services, information systems or integrity, significant incidents of regulatory and / or legislative compliance, potential risk of injury to staff / service users.
Zero Risk Appetite 1	not willing to accept risks under any circumstances that may result in reputation damage, financial loss or exposure, major breakdown in services, information systems or integrity, significant incidents of regulatory and / or legislative compliance, potential risk of injury to staff, service users or public.

9. Risk Management Process

The procedures for assessing risk management will have the following components:



Appendix 1 Conflicts of Interests - Risk Register

Name of member	Area of Conflict	Nature of Conflict
Andrew Fleet	ICT installation and troubler shooting	Son's organisation engaged by Circuit

Appendix 2 Professional Advice and Services

The Circuit relies from time to time on the following professional service through which guidance it seeks to minimise risk:

Field of Advice	Nature of services	Advice Body
Financial services and compliance	Audit Legislative compliance particular in financial returns. Independent examination of Accounts. Tax issues.	Sue Plumb Haines Watts Chartered Accountants, Old Station House Station Approach Newport Street Swindon, SN1 3DU Tel: 01793 533838 Fax: 01793 434930 Email: swindon@hwca.com
Legal services and compliance	Specific briefing in respect of individual cases. Holding of Property Deeds	Bower and Bailey Cambridge House 4 College Court Regent Circus Swindon Wiltshire SN1 1PJ Tel: 01793 610466
Employment Law	Guidance on policy. Specific briefing in respect of individual cases.	Vaughan Fullager Star Legal 4 Cricklade St, Swindon SN1 3EY Tel: 01793 777007
Safeguarding	Methodist Church policy and practice. Specific case guidance.	Tim Carter Connexional Safeguarding Adviser

		<p>Methodist Church House 25 Marylebone Road London NW1 5JR Tel: 020 7467 5110 carter@methodistchurch.org.uk Kevin Maidment District Safeguarding Officer The Bristol District Tel. 07925 894 649 districtsafeguarding@gmail.com</p>
<p>Computer Systems and Information Technology</p>	<p>Office systems purchase and installation of ICT equipment. Software and communications. Security and fire-wall protection. Trouble shooting.</p>	<p>Mark Fleet Assistant Director of Finance and Property St Joseph's Catholic College St. Joseph's Catholic College Ocotal Way, Swindon, SN3 3LR Tel: 07891 054770 MFleet@stjosephscollege.net</p>

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