

Policy on Communication for the Wales Synod

- 1) As part of *Our Calling*, the Methodist Church affirmed as its central priority; “to proclaim and affirm its conviction of God’s love in Christ, for us and for all the world; and renew confidence in God’s presence and action in the world and in the Church.”
- 2) In addition the Synod Policy statement committed the Wales Synod to “encourage and enable the development of Circuits, local Churches and individuals to engage more effectively in worship, learning and caring, service and evangelism”
- 3) In light of these statements we recognise that communication is an important part of the Synod’s role and commit ourselves to communicate as effectively as possible.

At times we may be asked to pass on information through our communications networks. It is important to be aware of the source of any communication, particularly from outside organisations, and to assess whether this is something that it is appropriate to pass on.

- 4) We recognise there are different groups with whom we communicate, which include:
 - Synod Officers and members
 - Superintendents, presbyters and deacons
 - Circuit and Church administrators, leadership teams and lay employees
 - Local preachers, office holders, pioneers
 - Members of the Methodist Church
 - Synod Cymru and Y Cyngor
 - The wider Methodist Connexion
 - Ecumenical partners
 - The wider public
- 5) We recognise there are a variety of forms of communication available for us to use if we so choose. These include:
 - a. Email: Email good practice includes:
 - the use of appropriate wording in the subject line to identify the content
 - the appropriate use of cc, bcc and ‘reply to all’: avoid copying personal responses to all original recipients; use bcc to avoid sharing other people’s personal contact details
 - the use of a standard signature format which includes contact details
 - responding within three days, if only to explain the need for more time for a fuller response
 - avoiding “triangling in “ other people to conversations that ought to remain confidential
 - b. Email newsletters may be appropriate for certain groups of people; permission must be sought to add people to mailing lists and lists should be updated regularly
 - c. Social Media: *If you choose to use any form of social media the Methodist Church Social Media guidelines should be followed. If using Facebook or Twitter, please remember:*
 - Facebook: Facebook pages need to be regularly updated. Content for these pages should be appropriate and it should be agreed within the team who is responsible for responding to comments.
 - Twitter: This is most useful as a way of pointing people to items on Facebook or website pages.

- d. Web-sites: We will, through the Synod website, seek to share news of events in local churches and circuits, to inform people of Synod structures and officers, to have available details of current Synod policies and to enable enquirers also to contact the main Methodist Church website. As part of this policy we will also urge those churches and circuits to whom we have given grant support to provide for us publicity material to use on the Synod website. The website should be updated at least once a fortnight and old materials should be removed promptly. Access to editing the pages should be restricted to a small number of people. Facebook and Twitter feeds, if used, should be included on the home page.
- e. Video Conferencing: This is a useful communication tool for a dispersed team and should be used when appropriate.
- f. Printed media (reports, minutes, handbooks and letters)
- g. Telephone (through the Synod Office) We will, through the Synod Office, offer a contact point for telephone queries about the life of the Synod, the diary and meetings of the Synod Chair and queries about the wider Methodist Church.
- h. Meetings (of Synod, SPC, SLT and other committees)
We will endeavour to provide an agenda and calling papers for sessions of Synod and meetings of the SPC two weeks before the meeting and likewise to circulate minutes within two weeks of the meeting which has taken place. Copies of the agenda and minutes will be available to all members of the meeting and also to Circuits through circuit superintendents.
- 6) Our aim is to communicate as efficiently and economically as possible; to that end we will
- endeavour to do as much as possible using electronic media. However, we recognise that not everyone has access to electronic media and so we will also use printed media for those who request it and also for the sessions of Synod itself.
 - produce an annual Handbook and a book of Reports in hard copy which will be available to all members of Synod and ecumenical partners. The Handbook will contain the Synod Diary for the year. However since it also contains contact details for a range of people across the Synod, it will not be made generally available or sent to commercial or other interested parties.
- 7) We will, through the Synod Chair, send occasional pastoral letters giving an overview of developments across the Synod and raising awareness of events across the Connexion.
- 8) We will review this policy annually in light of further developments in the life of the Synod.