

# Annual Returns Help and Guidance

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## Using the site

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### Navigation

#### Select Your Role

If you have more than one role, you will be asked to select which one you wish to use for completing the return. You can change roles at any time by clicking on the "Role:" display in the top right hand corner.

The effect of the different roles is outlined below:

**Managing Trustee** – This role will allow you to view and edit the returns for those churches that you have permission for.

**Circuit Trustee** – The Circuit Trustee role allows you to view all church returns within the circuit as well as completing the Circuit Return (see [Circuit Return](#) for further information). You can also view reports on any issues that churches may have through the Property Issue Summaries.

**District** – As a District user, you will be able to see the returns of all the churches and circuits within your district, as well as completing the District Return. You can also view reports on any issues that churches may have through the Property Issue Summaries.

If you find that you cannot edit a return, first make sure you are logged in as the correct role (circuit trustees cannot edit church returns for example) and if that does not resolve the issue, contact your superintendent (for churches) or district property secretary (for circuits) to make sure that **Update** permissions have been set.

#### Contextual Help

Purple questions marks contain further information that will help you answer the relevant question. This question mark will be visible whenever contextual help is available.



#### Required Fields

All required fields are denoted by a red asterisk (\*) adjacent to the question. Some fields will additionally have an orange background if they are required. Any field that doesn't have an asterisk next to it is not required.

#### Read-Only Fields

Some fields are for information purposes only and therefore read-only. Such fields will have a grey background and not be editable. If the information in these fields is wrong, please contact [onlinesuite@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:onlinesuite@methodistchurch.org.uk)

## Main Page – Circuit Users

This page will give you a list of all the churches within your circuit. The column headings will give you further information about each church.

**Church** – This is the name of the church.

**Overdue/Missing Quinquennial** – This identifies whether the church has either an overdue or missing quinquennial report.

**Information Issues** – These are items that are for information purposes only, such as the location of documents if stated as “Other”.

**Alert Issues** – These are items that will need some action from the trustees, circuit or district.

**Return Completed?** – This identifies which churches have completed their return.

**Options** – This will allow you to view the return for a particular church. Please note, you will not be able to edit the return.

**Sidebar** – On the left hand side of the page you will see a sidebar that will assist you in navigating the site, allowing you to filter for particular churches or issues as well as generating reports.

## Main Page – District Users

This page lists all the circuits within your district, as well as giving information on how many churches and circuits have completed their returns. The column headings will give you more information about each circuit:

**Circuit** – This is simply the name of the circuit.

**Church Returns** – This tells you how many churches within that circuit have completed their returns.

**Circuit Return Completed?** – This lets you know if that circuit has completed their circuit return.

**Options** – This will allow you to view the returns for a particular circuit or the churches within that circuit. Please note, you will not be able to edit the returns.

**Sidebar** – The sidebar here acts in the same way as the circuit sidebar, allowing you to filter for particular circuits, churches or issues, as well as generating reports based on the information provided within the returns.

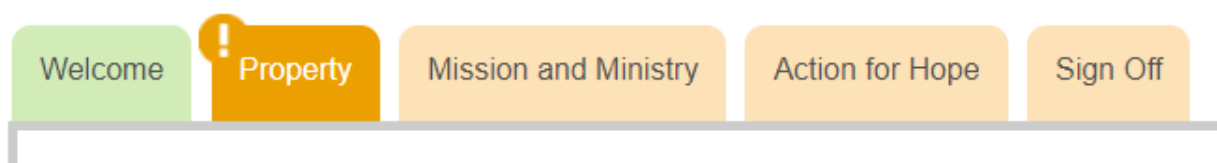
## Church Return

As a church trustee, you will be expected to complete and submit a return against the churches you are responsible for.

If your church has closed, please read the document on [Reporting a change of church status](#) for further instructions.

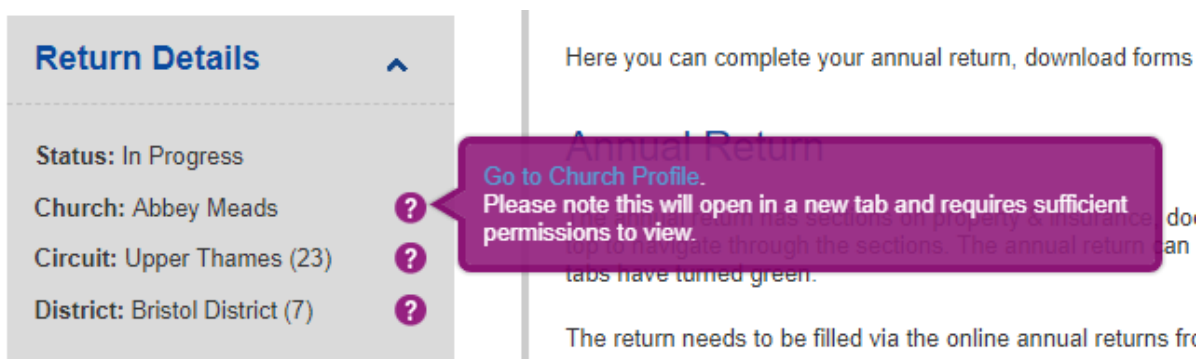
### Outline

The return itself is split up into separate tabs, each one representing a different area of responsibility. When a tab has been completed, it will turn green and display a tick. Incomplete tabs will be amber with an exclamation mark.



Once all tabs (except Sign Off) have been completed and turned green, you will be able to sign off the return.

The sidebar will give you basic information about the return, such as its status (**Not Started**, **In Progress** or **Complete**), the name of the church, circuit and district with links to the relevant profiles on the Statistics for Mission website.



You can also take a print out of the return as it stands by clicking on **Church Return** under **Print Reports**.



## Different Types of Church

The annual returns categorise Methodist churches in four broad types:

**Type 1** – Churches where the place of worship is under Methodist ownership.

**Type 2** – Churches that use a property for worship and contribute to its maintenance, but do not own the building. This includes churches that are part of a Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP) as well as those that have a Sharing Agreement in place.

**Type 3** – Churches that do not own any property, but lease property from a non-denominational third party.

**Type 4** – Churches that do not own or lease any property.

Depending on the type your church falls under, you will be asked a different number of questions, with Type 1 being asked the greatest number and Type 4 being asked the fewest.

If your church has a mixture of properties that fall under different types, then you will be asked questions relating to the type with the most questions. For example, if you are part of an LEP that has both Methodist owned property and property owned by another denomination, your church will be treated as Type 1.

## Circuit Return

You will need to have circuit permissions to complete the return. If you have multiple roles, i.e. district, circuit and church, you will need to make sure you select **Circuit Trustee** to access the returns.

The circuit return contains questions relating to the circuit responsibilities, including manses and churches where the circuit are the managing trustees. If you have access to one circuit only, you should immediately see the Circuit Return as well as all Churches after logging onto the returns site as Circuit Trustee.

> ONLINE PORTAL

Show Returns ^

Circuit: Poole Bay >

Select a Church >

Clear Selection ⊖

Issues Filter: ^

Overdue Quinquennials

Has Issues

Status Filter: ^

Not Started

In Progress

Completed

Clear Filters ⊖

Circuit Reports: ^

### Poole Bay Circuit Return

OVERDUE/MISSING QUINQUENNIALS	INFORMATION ISSUES	ALERT ISSUES	RETURN COMPLETED?	OPTIONS
Yes			No	<a href="#" style="background-color: #4a4a8a; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">VIEW RETURN</a>

### Churches within Poole Bay

CHURCH	OVERDUE/MISSING QUINQUENNIALS	INFORMATION ISSUES	ALERT ISSUES	RETURN COMPLETED?	OPTIONS
Bournemouth	Yes			No	<a href="#" style="background-color: #4a4a8a; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">VIEW RETURN</a>
Broadstone	Yes			No	<a href="#" style="background-color: #4a4a8a; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">VIEW RETURN</a>
Kinson	Yes			No	<a href="#" style="background-color: #4a4a8a; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">VIEW RETURN</a>
Lytchett Matravers				No	<a href="#" style="background-color: #4a4a8a; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">VIEW RETURN</a>
Poole				No	<a href="#" style="background-color: #4a4a8a; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">VIEW RETURN</a>
Swanage				No	<a href="#" style="background-color: #4a4a8a; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">VIEW RETURN</a>
Upton	Yes			No	<a href="#" style="background-color: #4a4a8a; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">VIEW RETURN</a>
Wareham	Yes			No	<a href="#" style="background-color: #4a4a8a; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">VIEW RETURN</a>
Wool	Yes			No	<a href="#" style="background-color: #4a4a8a; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">VIEW RETURN</a>

Displaying returns 1-9 of 9

Show Returns ^

Select a Circuit >

Select a Church >

If you have access to more than one circuit, you will need to choose a circuit from the left-hand menu first before arriving at the view pictured above.

## District Return

You will need to have district permissions to complete the return. If you have multiple roles, i.e. district, circuit and church, you will need to make sure you select **District** to access the returns.

The district return contains questions relating to the circuit responsibilities, including properties where the district are the managing trustees, such as the chair’s manse. If you have access to one district only, you should immediately see the District Return as well as a list of all Circuits after logging onto the returns site as District user.

[> ONLINE PORTAL](#)

[Show Returns](#)

[District: Bedfordshire, Essex and Hertfordshire District](#)

[Select a Circuit](#)

[Select a Church](#)

[Clear Selection](#)

[District Reports:](#)

[Issue Summaries](#)

[> CONTACT US](#)

### Bedfordshire, Essex and Hertfordshire District Return

OVERDUE/MISSING QUINQUENNIALS	INFORMATION ISSUES	ALERT ISSUES	RETURN COMPLETED?	OPTIONS
			No	<a href="#" style="background-color: #800080; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">VIEW RETURN</a>

### Circuits within Bedfordshire, Essex and Hertfordshire District

CIRCUIT	CHURCH RETURNS	CIRCUIT RETURN COMPLETED?	OPTIONS
Bishops Stortford	0 out of 4 complete	No	<a href="#" style="background-color: #800080; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">VIEW CHURCHES</a> <a href="#" style="background-color: #800080; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">VIEW CIRCUIT RETURN</a>
Chelmsford	0 out of 13 complete	No	<a href="#" style="background-color: #800080; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">VIEW CHURCHES</a> <a href="#" style="background-color: #800080; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">VIEW CIRCUIT RETURN</a>
Colchester	0 out of 11 complete	No	<a href="#" style="background-color: #800080; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">VIEW CHURCHES</a> <a href="#" style="background-color: #800080; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">VIEW CIRCUIT RETURN</a>
Herts and Essex Border Ecumenical Area	0 out of 9 complete	No	<a href="#" style="background-color: #800080; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">VIEW CHURCHES</a> <a href="#" style="background-color: #800080; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">VIEW CIRCUIT RETURN</a>
North Bedfordshire	0 out of 27 complete	No	<a href="#" style="background-color: #800080; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">VIEW CHURCHES</a> <a href="#" style="background-color: #800080; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">VIEW CIRCUIT RETURN</a>
North Hertfordshire	0 out of 14 complete	No	<a href="#" style="background-color: #800080; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">VIEW CHURCHES</a> <a href="#" style="background-color: #800080; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">VIEW CIRCUIT RETURN</a>

[Select a District](#)

[Select a Circuit](#)

[Select a Church](#)

[Clear Selection](#)

If you have access to more than one district, you will need to choose a district from the left-hand menu first before arriving at the view pictured above.

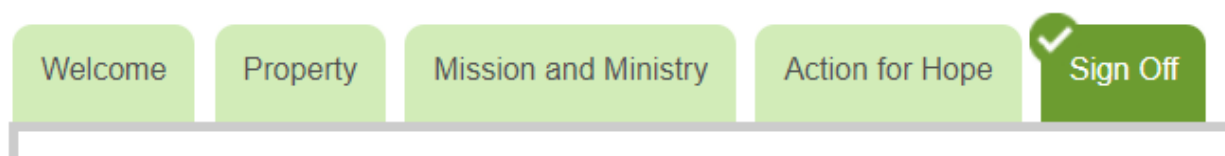
## Completing the Return

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There are two ways of completing the return; by completing the online form or by printing off a paper copy and completing it by hand.

If you complete it by hand, you will have to hand it back to someone to copy on to the online system for submission. Paper submissions are no longer accepted.

A return is complete if all tabs have turned green.



### Welcome

This tab outlines the expectations of the annual returns and allows you to download the following information:

- Paper versions of the old Annual Returns forms (PDF & Word)
- Paper versions of the new Annual Returns forms (PDF & Word)
- The property checklists (PDF & Word)
- Guidance documents

### Property (including Insurance)

The Property tab has two main sections to it.

#### Checking Property Information

Here you can check the details of each individual property under the managing trusteeship of the church. This includes the **Quinquennial Inspection** date (required for all Model Trust property) and questions regarding **Asbestos, Conservation, Ownership, Planning**, and (since 2019) **Insurance**.

Once all fields have been completed, you will need to tick the box at the bottom of the page (below "Please tick to confirm details checked and correct"), before clicking the **purple SAVE button**.

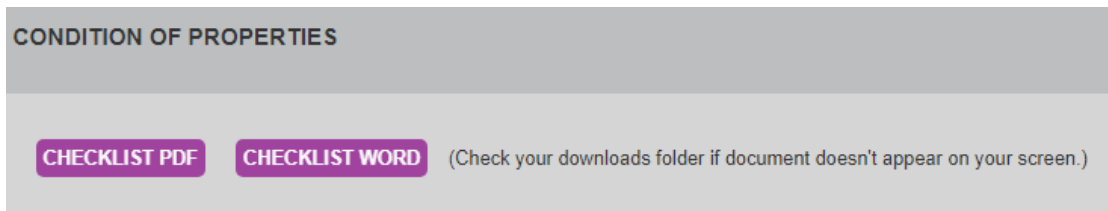
You will need to do this for each property. Once all the properties listed have a **Y** next to them under **Details Checked** then you will be able to complete the rest of the Property tab.

### Church Council / Circuit Meeting / District Synod

This information has not changed with the 2023 Update

Here you will need to answer questions relating to the condition of all properties. Since 2019, this also includes **Insurance Information**.

You can also download the CHECKLISTS here, via the **purple CHECKLIST PDF** and **CHECKLIST WORD buttons** (this is the same document but in different formats).



### Mission and Ministry

The Mission and Ministry tab asks trustees to report on their mission and ministry work, including any mission projects they are working on, and their engagement with New Places for New People.

### Action for Hope

Action for Hope is driven by the 2020 Methodist Conference target of reaching net-zero carbon emissions by 2030. The questions asked here are to help co-ordinate with that aim.

Here we ask about energy generation, energy expenditure and fuel usage.

### Sign off

Once all other tabs have been completed (indicated by them all being green), you will be able to sign off the return.

If you want to make any additional comments for your circuit or district property secretary to read, you can do so here.

Any comments you enter in to this section will not be seen by the Connexional Team. If you have any comments for the Connexional Team, please send an email to the appropriate officer or team.

In case you need to make any changes after submitting the return, you can do so by pressing the **UNSUBMIT RETURN button** which appears next to the SUBMIT RETURN button.

### Filters

Filters can be applied if you have access to more than one church.

The **Issues Filter** allows you to filter by **Overdue Quinquennials** or by **Issues** in general.

The **Status Filter** allows you to filter by **returns status** (Not Started / In Progress / Complete).

## Reports

### Church Reports

Churches can view and download their reports via the **Print Reports** section located in the sidebar. Two different reports are available: the **Church Return** report, which allows you to access previous years' submissions (2013 to current year) and the **Property Information** report, which shows the current information against your property.

Church: Abbey Meads ?

Circuit: Upper Thames (23) ?

District: Bristol District (7) ?

The annual return has sections on property & insurance, documents, safeguarding, tin. Please use the tabs across the top to navigate through the sections. The annual return submitted when all of these areas are completed and the associated tabs have turned

Showing report for year:  
2019

[CHURCH RETURN](#)

**Guidance Manuals**

[ANNUAL RETURNS HELP GUIDANCE PDF](#)

### Circuit Reports

The Circuit Reports section in the sidebar enables you to view and download reports by year and by subject (**Issue Summaries**) or by Church (**Issues grouped by Church**).

**Circuit Reports:** ^

Issue Summaries >

Issues grouped by Church >

[CONTACT US](#)

Showing reports for year:  
2019

DOCUMENTS	PROPERTY
INSURANCE	GENERAL ADMINISTRATION
SAFEGUARDING	OVERDUE QUINQUENNIALS
FINANCE	MISSING QUINQUENNIALS

### District Reports

The District Reports section in the sidebar enables you to view and download reports by year and by subject (**Issue Summaries**).

**District Reports:** ^

Issue Summaries >

[CONTACT US](#)

Showing reports for year:  
2019

DOCUMENTS	GENERAL ADMINISTRATION
INSURANCE	INCOMPLETE CHURCH RETURNS
SAFEGUARDING	OVERDUE QUINQUENNIALS
FINANCE	MISSING QUINQUENNIALS
PROPERTY	

## Contacts

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- Web Support: [onlinesuitesupport@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:onlinesuitesupport@methodistchurch.org.uk)
- Property Support: [property@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:property@methodistchurch.org.uk)
- TMCP Legal Team: [legal@tmcp.methodist.org.uk](mailto:legal@tmcp.methodist.org.uk)
- Methodist Church House contacts list: [www.methodist.org.uk/contact-us](http://www.methodist.org.uk/contact-us)
- Methodist Church House Reception: 0207 486 5502

## Useful websites

- Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes  
[www.tmcp.org.uk](http://www.tmcp.org.uk)
- Online Suite (returns, consents, statistics)  
[online.methodist.org.uk](http://online.methodist.org.uk)
- Online Suite guidance (returns, consents, statistics)  
[www.methodist.org.uk/onlinesuite](http://www.methodist.org.uk/onlinesuite)
- Property pages on the Methodist website  
[www.methodist.org.uk/ministers-and-office-holders/property](http://www.methodist.org.uk/ministers-and-office-holders/property)
- Managing Trustee guidance  
[www.methodist.org.uk/ministers-and-office-holders/managing-trustees](http://www.methodist.org.uk/ministers-and-office-holders/managing-trustees)
- Constitutional Practice and Discipline (CPD)  
[www.methodist.org.uk/for-ministers-and-office-holders/governance/cpd](http://www.methodist.org.uk/for-ministers-and-office-holders/governance/cpd)
- Methodist Insurance  
[www.methodistinsurance.co.uk](http://www.methodistinsurance.co.uk)