



Impact Report  
5 April 2019  
- 31 August 2020



Methodist Ministers'  
Housing Society

[mmhs.org.uk](http://mmhs.org.uk)

# Contents

Who we are	3
Welcome from the Chair	4
Message from our CEO	4
What we do	5
How we make an impact	5
How we manage resources	6
The difference we made	7
Offering pastoral support	11
Working with others	12
Where we are now	12
Caring for the planet	13
Our finances	14

# Who we are

Methodist Ministers' Housing Society ('MMHS') was founded in 1948. Our story from the very beginning has been one of extraordinary generosity and far-reaching vision. Our purpose is set out in our mission statement below.

## OUR VISION

*'There was not a single person in need among them'. (Acts 4:34)*

## OUR MISSION

To meet the housing and housing-related needs of retired Methodist Ministers of limited means, their spouses, widows and widowers – and to offer support for their wellbeing in the key areas of mobility and independence.

## OUR CORE VALUES

We have a Christian distinctiveness of which we are proud and it underpins who we are and what we do. Our concern is to show high standards of care in all we do and to be professional both as individuals and as an organisation.

## OUR PLAN

We have an ambitious five-year plan. From September 2017 to August 2022, we are focusing on achieving five main strategic objectives that will enable us to deliver our vision and mission.

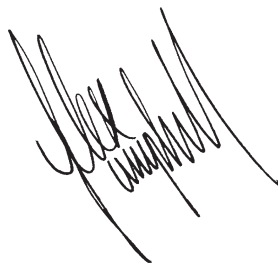
- 1 We wish to meet the housing and housing-related needs of 50% of retiring ministers and will do so incrementally over the five years of our plan. How will we do that? We will continue to provide houses and permit equity interests in them, but we will add to our mission by taking equity shares ourselves in houses owned by ministers. It may be that we will also offer loans in due course.
- 2 We also plan to offer more wellbeing support so the ministers we serve can keep their mobility and independence for as long as possible. Physical ageing presents considerable challenges, and we aspire to be the 'go to' place for ministers for advice and recommendations – as well as provide well thought through assistance.
- 3 Recognising we cannot do everything ourselves, we will establish collaborative relationships with other agencies, charities and groups we know will help us achieve our objectives. Any collaborations will have to be a good 'fit' with our vision, mission and core values.
- 4 We know if we are to succeed, we must have the right mix of experience, skills and knowledge. To that end, we will invest in and develop our Board and staff team so they are fully equipped to deliver what is required of them.
- 5 We also know we must continue to be good stewards of our considerable assets. To that end, we will ensure we have a number of well-managed sources of income and that our capital assets, in particular our housing stock, are equally well-managed.

# Passionate about people

I am writing to you at an unparalleled time in MMHS's history. The Covid-19 pandemic has caused havoc.

It was such a shock when we received the tragic news that our friend and fellow trustee, Revd Glynn Lister, had passed away in hospital on 7 April 2020 from Covid-19. Glynn gave so generously of his time – and himself – to the work of MMHS. As well as making full use of his number-crunching skills as Chair of Finance, in summer 2019 the staff team were delighted to make use of his creative skills. They commissioned him to write a prayer resource, *Octave*. Little did we all realise this would become part of his legacy, mere months later.

Against the backdrop of our difficulties, I am delighted to present our Impact Report which is based on the Trustees' Report and Financial Statements for the period 5 April 2019 to 31 August 2020. I hope you enjoy reading our Report which sets out how we are making a real difference for good. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I would like to wish you and your families the very best in these uncertain times.

**Alexander Campbell OBE**

The pandemic has challenged our sense of self, as well as our sense of belonging – to family, friendship groups, church and local communities, nations, and the world. We face immense health, economic and social consequences which we can't yet measure.

Yet, in the middle of all the mess, we have witnessed humanity at its best – in the expressions of kindness all around us, in powerful demonstrations of faith in action, and in the skill of innovators breaking through usual boundaries. Everywhere, there is need to be met – and it is growing. As you will see from our Vision Statement, our vision is to eliminate need. Need arises in so many different ways and, of course, MMHS is focused on meeting housing and housing-related needs for all those within our mission reach.

Housing is of profound importance, and it is a privilege to be involved in charitable work that centres on it. One of our former Board members, Revd Dr John Harrod, wrote the following in our regular news publication *Roof 'n' Roots* – 'Our house feeds our wellbeing in so many ways. It's a place where friendship, family and love are deepened and enjoyed...our wholeness involves the house – the home'. John captured so well, the importance of the place we call home.



I hope you enjoy reading this Report. We have packed it full of interesting facts and figures, interspersed with inspiring stories. You will see that, as well as being good stewards of our assets, we are passionate about the people at the heart of our mission.



**Mairi Johnstone**

# What we do

As well as providing for those who retire at a usual retirement age, we also care for those who retire early on health or compassionate grounds. We care, too, for widows, widowers and dependants of ministers who die in active service – as well as those who die during retirement.

MMHS operates in the United Kingdom, the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands. We are really pleased to be able to provide housing and associated services across this wide geographical area.

Our equity sharing scheme, whereby ministers can have an equity interest in the properties we provide, extends our mission very effectively.

Finally, we make sure our properties are suitably adapted for our ministers and their families' use, and are also fully accessible, so that all can live independently for as long as possible. Wellbeing support is very important to us, particularly when it comes to assisting with mobility and independence.

# How we make an impact

We would like to highlight the positive impact we have on the lives of our ministerial residents – as well as report on the sound management of MMHS's assets.

We would also like to report on some of our collaborations. Our property numbers can be summarised as follows:

<b>Number of properties at the start of the reporting period</b>		<b>925</b>
<b>Transactions through the reporting period</b>		
<b>Sold</b>	<b>28</b>	
<b>Purchased</b>	<b>14</b>	
<b>Bequests</b>	<b>7</b>	
<b>Number of properties at the end of the reporting period</b>		<b>918</b>

Of that number of 918, 736 were occupied by our ministerial residents, 145 by market rent tenants and 37 were empty. Empty properties are unavoidable due to transitioning periods between residents and during marketing periods for sale or rent. Empty property numbers are always kept to a minimum and the time they are left empty is kept as short as possible.

We were pleased to provide housing for 37 new ministerial residents, including two medical retirees. We transferred nine ministerial residents.

Our equity sharing scheme enables our ministerial residents to acquire a financial interest in their retirement homes. During the reporting period, 16 new interests were acquired and 29 were repaid.

# How we manage resources

Best possible management of our property portfolio is at the heart of our mission. We strive to get things right.

In making the best use of all our resources, we prioritise using our existing portfolio when offering accommodation to new ministerial residents. Occasionally, however, we will purchase properties for those who have medical or other valid reasons for requiring a particular type of property in a particular area. Our purchasing budget is allocated mainly to transferees. We find life can be very difficult for our older ministerial residents, especially if they are advancing significantly in age – they want to be near to their close family members.

We have a rolling programme for maintaining our properties, including kitchen and bathroom refits. We also take the opportunity when properties are empty to undertake major refurbishments to avoid disturbance to our residents. These refurbishments comprise the replacement of kitchens and bathrooms with upgrades to joinery, heating, plumbing and electrical installations together with building fabric repairs, complete redecoration and replacement of finishes.

This is a comprehensive specification. It prevents projects drifting beyond refurbishment into remodelling, extensions and structural alterations requiring external consultants to design and manage. Although this may be a consideration in highly exceptional circumstances, this is not the norm.

	<b>5 April 2019 to to 31 August 2019</b>	<b>1 September 2019 to 31 August 2020</b>	<b>Over the whole 17-month period</b>
<b>Number of homes refurbished</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Average spend per property</b>	<b>£38,850</b>	<b>£33,580</b>	<b>£35,180</b>

We also made great strides in the tighter control of refurbishment contracts by ensuring our documentation of works included all that they should, at the time of tender. We are also pleased that most of our refurbishment projects are now delivered on time – or even ahead of time.

Almost 2,800 jobs were recorded relating to the repair and maintenance of our properties. These jobs ranged from £10,000 roof replacements down to fixing a leaking tap.

In addition to repair and maintenance, all our properties are routinely inspected to ensure compliance with respect to electrical and gas safety standards.

Electrical inspections and associated remedial works are administered and undertaken by HES Fire Protection Limited.

Boiler Plan UK Limited took over our gas compliance checks from British Gas at the beginning of 2020. Boiler Plan make use of the management software Job Logic which is available to us, too, and provides us with real-time information on compliance and appointments.

The pandemic has inevitably had an effect both on access to properties and the availability of engineers. We are constantly working with our partners to ensure as many properties as possible are fully compliant.

# The difference we made

We use our regular publication *Roof 'n' Roots* to communicate our news and views and pass on the many inspiring stories that our ministerial residents share with us. We never cease to be amazed at the lives our ministerial residents have lived and how, well into retirement, they continue to make significant contributions to churches, local communities and society in general. Here are just some of the stories we have shared in *Roof 'n' Roots*...

## CASE STUDY 1

Pictured is one of our ministerial residents, Margaret Parkes, who was overjoyed with her kitchen refurbishment. 'My grateful thanks for the hard work and attention given to my kitchen,' said Margaret, who lives in the West Midlands. 'It's beautiful.' She said it made her want to dance!



Our responsibilities as landlord do not normally cover internal decoration. We have become aware, however, that some of our ministerial residents struggle with this matter both physically and financially. So, we have been developing plans to launch a new grant scheme in 2021 to help residents with internal redecoration.

Access to the scheme will be subject to means and other testing. The new grant scheme will be separate from the external decorating programme to maintain the external fabric of our properties, which is our responsibility as landlord.

## CASE STUDY 2

Our MMHS's *Residents' Handbook* used to be a heavy, plastic manual weighed down by laminated pages and complex graphics.

This publication has now been totally revised and refined and is available as a free download from our website. Ministerial residents without online access can request a paper copy. The new Handbook remains essential reference material for ministerial residents.



### CASE STUDY 3

The pandemic meant the Methodist Conference 2020 had to be held virtually. This meant no physical exhibition stand for MMHS or any other exhibitor. That presented us with a challenge.

We heard via colleagues in the Methodist Church there would be a need to play videos between the online Conference sessions. We had a short film about the presentation of the MMHS grandfather clock to Wesley's Chapel – a still from the video shoot shows our CEO Mairi Johnstone with Museum Curator Christian Dettlaff.



Museum Curator Christian Dettlaff with our CEO Mairi Johnstone

Our film was screened online as part of the first ever virtual Methodist Conference. The cameras were rolling when one of our ministerial residents Revd Neville Pugh (pictured) set up the MMHS clock at Wesley's Chapel in London. A special edit of the movie was screened online as part of Conference. Hundreds – maybe thousands – of viewers saw it.

MMHS was also listed on the official



Revd Neville Pugh

Conference website. We booked advertisement space in and around Conference literature and beyond. For the first time, we took out an interactive advert on the Methodist Publishing website where delegates would be downloading related resources.

In addition, we sent every delegate a copy of a special MMHS edition of a new colouring and activity book, *The Flowing Tide*, which carried our logo and background story. This new resource from Lindisfarne Scriptorium went out with each copy of the Conference Agenda.

We also sent a card to every ordinand, together with a copy of *The Flowing Tide*. Every year at Conference we make contact with new ministers in this way, by sending them a small gift and card.





## CASE STUDY 4

Making masks from knicker elastic, telling Groucho Marx jokes, sharing 'worship workout' YouTube clips, cooking Bali-style on Zoom, trampolining for charity and recording a song a day are among the ways people have been coping with the Covid-19 crisis.

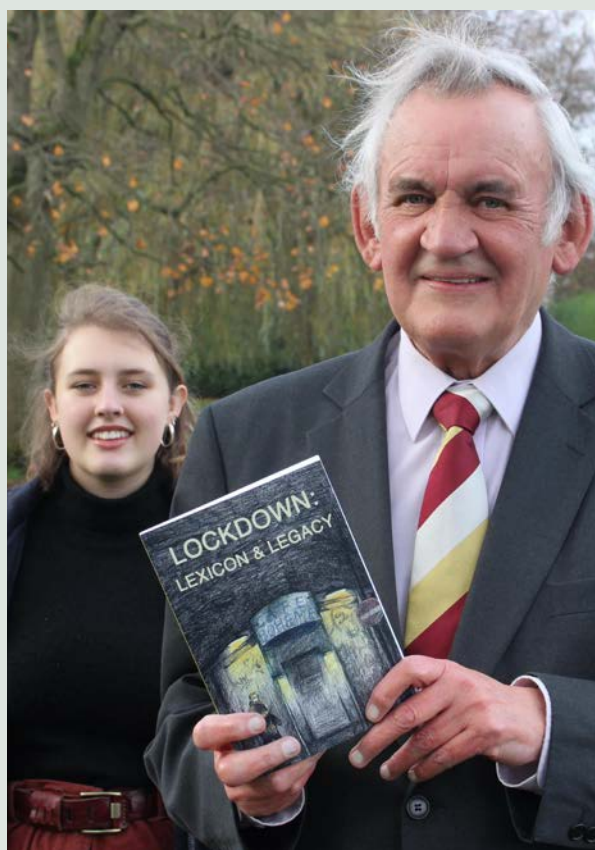
Such pandemic adventures are revealed in a new A-Z called *Lockdown: Lexicon & Legacy*. More than 400 copies have already been sold by publisher Revd Robert Davies, an MMHS resident. He shared his story in the Winter 2020 edition of *Roof 'n' Roots*.

Bob (pictured with his granddaughter Emily) had already written an A-Z of football as fanzine articles for his favourite club Wrexham. 'I always thought I'd love to do an A-Z of something else,' he said. 'I got this inspiration - why not about lockdown?'

He knew many people with stories. 'It came together in a haphazard way,' Bob confessed. 'I didn't make a list. I kept thinking of people - and pestering them with emails!'

Some folk wrote prayers, others stories - such as church bells silenced for the first time since World War II. There were ripping yarns, like a father creating 'cuddlesticks' with gloves mounted on long poles. There was a simple gift of flowers for a couple who felt alone. Bob's granddaughter Emily created the cover, son Peter wrote the foreword, son Martin and grandson Leo both contributed to the book. Although Bob saw it as an A-Z of lockdown, a friend told him he had made a document of our time.

Feedback has been overwhelming. 'I'm getting letters, cards and emails,' he said. Success has come without any major advertising. Bob



Bob Davies and granddaughter Emily

simply told friends, colleagues and churches.

North Wales born and bred, Bob felt drawn to Methodist ministry at an early age: 'I was influenced by parents, Sunday school teachers, youth leaders and ministers'. He attended Hartley Victoria College, Manchester, at age 20 in the early 60s.

Ordained at 26, Bob engaged in mainly circuit ministry for 17 years in Buxton, where the publishing started under the name of the main church in the Market Place. He was a prison chaplain for many years. On retirement, he sought MMHS's assistance for a home, and was shown a property in Oldham in 2009.

'The house needed a lot done to it,' Bob laughed. 'I made a list. Straight away MMHS said, "We're going to do a lot more than that"... MMHS were excellent.'

## CASE STUDY 5

Part of Glynn Lister's legacy to us is *Octave* – a little prayer book that became a big story for MMHS.

Glynn produced material for eight days of prayer, to encourage people to reflect on MMHS's work and the housing needs of others. The book encouraged prayer not only for MMHS residents, staff and trustees – but also for carers, homeless people, refugees and housing policy makers.

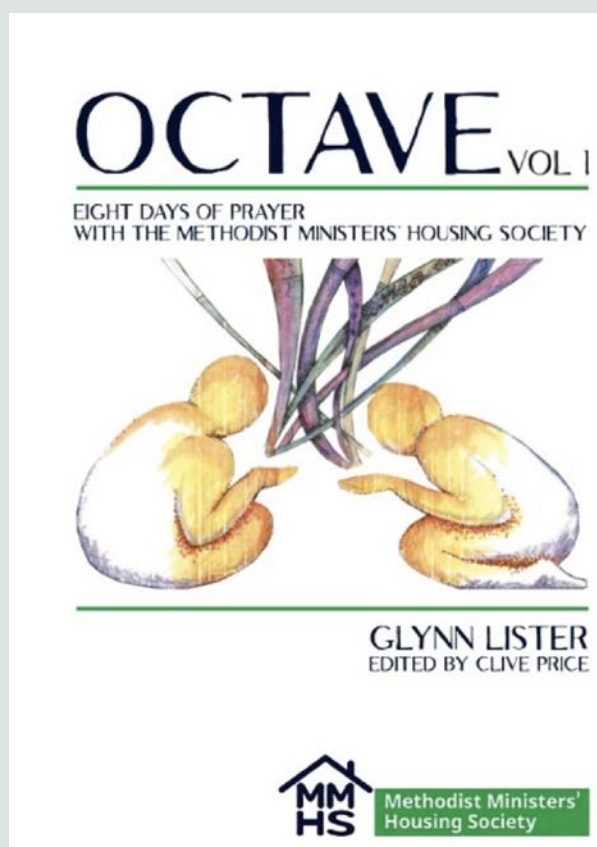
Lindisfarne Scriptorium designed and packaged Glynn's notes and prayers into a beautifully crafted 12-page book.

We launched it as a limited print edition at the Methodist Conference in Birmingham – at the same time making *Octave* available as a free download from the MMHS website. Stories about Glynn's prayer resource were shared by congregations up and down the UK. We held a second launch at the Christian Resources Exhibition in Esher, Surrey, distributing postcards that carried a QR code for people to download *Octave*.

'I chose an "octave" as it's been a Christian tradition since earliest times,' said Glynn at the time. 'From the Latin octava (eighth), "octave" is the eighth day after a feast. The word is also applied to the eight-day period of the feast.

'In those pioneering centuries of the Church, octaves were created for Easter, Pentecost, Epiphany, Christmas, saints' days – and in modern times, the Octave Of Prayer For Christian Unity. Even The Beatles sang *Eight Days A Week!*'

*Octave* offers the same template for each of any chosen eight days – a reading, a prayer



and an extract from a hymn. Glynn said the idea is that if the prayer pattern is the same, you can 'wear' it like a cosy suit or outfit. '*Octave* should be comfortable clothing, not a straitjacket,' he explained.

'One person might find the reading enough to open up the way of prayer for them. Another person might want to look up a whole hymn and that will expand the prayer topic for them. Start somewhere and finish somewhere. If you get lost in the middle, that's fine, too.'

That was very much part of Glynn's character and part of his legacy to us – making a deeper spiritual life accessible for everyone. 'You might have a favourite spot where you feel you can pray – perhaps a fireside armchair, a kitchen bench or, on nice mornings, a corner of the garden,' he said. 'Prayer is all about letting your mind wander in the presence of God.'

## CASE STUDY 6

Gwenda grew up on Ynys Enlli, the 'Island in the Currents', better known as Bardsey. This legendary 'Island of 20,000 Saints' is situated two miles off the Llŷn Peninsula. While the name sounds magical, Bardsey was without running water, gas or electricity.

'There were ten houses, a chapel, a school and a lighthouse,' Gwenda smiled as she remembered a special childhood, but wondered how her mother coped, especially when her father died of tuberculosis. She now realises that taxing existence prepared her for mission and church work.

Gwenda went on to study social science at Leeds University. There she met Vic, who was training to be a Methodist minister at nearby Wesley College, Headingley. They married in 1956. Later that year, Vic was appointed as a missionary to Panama. 'We had three bags – my clothes, his clothes and the third contained Vic's books,' said Gwenda.

Following various ministry appointments, Vic's next major mission was to Walworth Methodist Church, London. It was known as Clubland because of its pioneering youth work. In its early days, Clubland had become associated with showbiz figures like Michael



Caine, a former member, and Bob Hope, a generous benefactor.

Gwenda and Vic worked hard to reconnect with the multicultural community, who started to form a congregation. In time, Walworth became one of the UK's fastest growing Methodist churches. 'It grew and grew and grew,' said Gwenda. 'Vic was just blessed with a gift.' It was a proud moment when Vic received the MBE in 1993. The following year, the Watsons retired to an MMHS property in the north of England.

# Offering pastoral support

Offering pastoral support is a key part of our relationship with our ministerial residents. We deal with the whole breadth of life's experiences; many ministers and their households are with us for a third of their lives.

Sometimes the need to offer support crops up in the most unexpected contexts – in the middle of a refurbishment project, for example. Ministers, on reaching retirement, experience all kinds of emotions and we are right there at the centre of all the changes that are taking place. It can be overwhelming for some.

We help with loneliness and isolation, often a debilitating consequence of older age. There can be a stigma with loneliness. The various lockdown rules during the pandemic have impacted older people terribly.

Our staff are skilled in listening. We know a call about a repair might be the only conversation the caller will have with another person that day.

We also help with disability linked to older age, moving into care, and death and bereavement – all are enormous life events. One of the core values of MMHS really comes into its own when we are being pastorally supportive; showing a high standard of care. We believe we do.

## Working with others

Collaborations are really important to us. The primary reason is our own small resource base. We have big ambitions in terms of the quality and quantity of our output and we know we have to rely on others to achieve our objectives. There are secondary reasons too – one is the huge benefit of learning from the knowledge and experiences of others and another is benefitting from the creativity and skill of others.

We would like to share a few examples:

- working with the Methodist Church media team – as a result of doing so, a number of our stories have appeared in 'The Methodist News', an electronic news service that reaches about 5,500 subscribers across the Methodist Church;
- meeting regularly with the housing teams in the Church of England and the United Reformed Church to exchange ideas and resources, and offer mutual support;
- working with Lindisfarne Scriptorium who have provided us with contemplative artwork, lifting the quality of our publications;
- attending the Methodist Church retirement courses where we have a wide audience; as well as talk about our services to those who need them, we can also 'market' to those who don't need us but can spread the news of what we offer.

## Where we are now

We have a 16-point plan for Year 4 of our five-year Strategic Plan and we will highlight the key points in summary form, as follows:

- as in all previous years, we will ensure we meet the housing needs of all those who are eligible for and seek our assistance. We will also continue to operate our Equity Sharing Scheme;
- we will seek to meet the ongoing housing-related needs of the c730 ministerial households in our care. We will continue to offer pastoral support where we can, as a continuing expression of our values;
- we will continue to use our Wellbeing Fund (capped) to support our Wellbeing Programme which this year is focused on IT access and use, and alleviating poverty;
- we will continue to work on our Asset Management Strategy which supports our main Strategic Plan.

# Caring for the planet

We remain very committed to 'greening' our property portfolio. Energy efficiency and insulation levels are constantly being upgraded whenever works are undertaken. We are pleased to confirm the following:

- we have a rolling programme of boiler replacement, taking out old inefficient boilers and replacing with modern combination boilers and we are also eliminating cold water storage tanks which can harbour diseases such as legionella;
- heating systems are being upgraded to provide better controls including thermostatic radiator valves throughout to allow our residents to minimise their use of fuel while still remaining comfortable;
- instantaneous low flow shower fittings are being provided;
- loft insulation is being installed when missing, and also increased where appropriate;
- our window and external door replacement programme provides modern double-glazed units that improve insulation levels and eliminate draughts;
- all light fitting replacements to kitchens and bathrooms are safe, compliant, low energy in type.

# Our finances

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020

	Unrestricted funds 2020 £000	Restricted funds 2020 £000	<b>Total funds 17 month period ended 31 August 2020 £000</b>
<b>Income from:</b>			
Donations, legacies and grants	2,508	-	2,508
Charitable activities	3,412	-	3,412
Investments	1,803	-	1,803
Gain on disposal of properties	233	-	233
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,956</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7,956</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>			
<b>Raising funds</b>	133	-	133
<b>Charitable activities</b>			
Wellbeing	128	-	128
Maintenance of existing properties	8,546	-	8,546
Purchase and sale of properties	519	-	519
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,326</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>9,326</b>
<b>Net income before revaluation and investment gains</b>	<b>(1,370)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(1,370)</b>
Unrealised gain/(loss) on fixed asset investment	40	-	40
<b>Net movement in funds</b>	<b>(1,330)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(1,330)</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>			
General funds	10,892	9	10,901
Revaluation reserve	11,719	-	11,719
Equity share investment revaluation reserve	-	-	-
Designated funds	1,000	-	1,000
Designated fixed asset reserves	64,134	-	64,134
Fair value adjustment on transfer	96,097	-	96,097
Total Funds transferred from MMHS (Co-operative & Community Benefit Society) on 5 April 2019	183,842	9	183,851
<b>Total Funds carried forward</b>	<b>182,512</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>182,521</b>



Methodist Ministers'  
Housing Society

### **Contact Details**

Place of business and normal mailing address

Methodist Ministers' Housing Society, 109 Baker Street, London W1U 6RP

### **Registered office**

Methodist Ministers' Housing Society, Methodist Church House, 25 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5JR.  
Company no 11929754.

### **Registered charity**

Numbers 1186758 (England and Wales) and SC050661 (Scotland).