

Paper L1

URC Trust

Report on properties

United Church 2017
Church 2018
Reformed Church 2018
Church 2018



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Basic Information

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Action required	For information.	
Draft resolution(s)	None	

Summary of Content

Subject and aim(s)	Report on remedial works at Church House and on steps taken towards a sale of the Windermere Centre building.
Main points	The Trust has a clear proposal for remedial works at Church House.
	The Windermere sale has proved a more complex matter than we expected, but progress is being made.
Previous documents	Paper L1, November 2017.
Consultation has taken place with...	Legal Adviser

Summary of Impact

Financial	See detail below.
External (e.g. ecumenical)	

Report on properties

1. **The ground and first floors** of the refurbished Church House are proving an excellent space from which our central staff can serve the congregations and synods of the URC. The layout and design are working well.
2. **The second floor** now houses offices of the Greenbelt festival, Street Child United (organisers of the Street Child World Cup), International Justice Mission, Single Friendly Church and the Trussell Trust. We are very glad to host reputable and high-profile ventures of this kind that share so many of the concerns and values of the URC. Their presence will surely enhance the wider reputation of the building and indirectly of our Church.
3. The Fred Kaan Room on the ground floor now has a **remote meeting facility**, and we have software licensing to enable this to be widely used. Whilst we have invested in some hardware for Church House the facility can also be used with standard PC equipment, tablets and smartphones for individuals wishing to join a video conference. Synods were offered the opportunity to share the available licences, and this opportunity was seized so eagerly that the demand has exceeded the supply. We are exploring the acquisition of additional licences. We are grateful to the Congregational and General Trust for contributing generously to the cost of this facility. Once the matter below has been resolved, we intend to install similar kit in the main downstairs meeting room.
4. The major snag after the completion of refurbishment work has been intrusive damp in part of the **lower ground floor**. After careful survey work, the Trust has declared its support for a scheme of remedial works, which it looks to the building contractors to commission. This work will take a couple of months, once it starts. Staff who would normally work in the lower ground floor are coping in other spaces at the moment, but all of us look forward keenly to having the entire building sound and deployable.
5. **The Windermere building** is still URC property, although we have for some months been in serious discussion with a potential purchaser. The delay has been due to the building's planning categorization. Apparently for all the years we used it, the local authority had it listed as a non-residential training centre. An application for change of use has been made, and is being pursued with the necessary care, advice and expertise. Meanwhile a local estate agent attends to monitoring and maintenance.