

EASTERN SYNOD MANSE POLICY

OCTOBER 2005

**Approved at Synod October 2005
Amended December 2007**

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1. Plan for Partnership

This document is published by The United Reformed Church. Its full title is “The Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration” It can be obtained from Tavistock Place or alternatively is available on the main church website www.urc.org.uk.

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Manses are held in trust for the purpose of housing URC ‘Church workers’ under the terms of the URC Act, Part II of Schedule 2 sets out the Trust provisions. Clause 5 relates to the sale of redundant manses and Clause 2(e) to lettings.

The Policy

1.0 Policy Objectives

- 1.1 To ensure the provision of suitable housing in accordance with the Plan for Partnership. (Ref 1).
- 1.2 To enable new manses to be provided in suitable locations to suit current and future pastorates.
- 1.3 The Policy will be operated through a Synod Manse Scheme and supported by a Synod Manse Fund

2.0 The Synod Manse Fund

- 2.1 A designated Synod Manse Fund, created by this Policy, will receive the proceeds from Manse sales, local Church manse funds and income from manses within the Scheme.
- 2.2 The Fund will be administered by the Synod Resources Committee through the Finance Officer, and will maintain a suitable working capital with the remainder of the Fund retained in property.
- 2.3 The Fund will be used to improve, replace or provide manses. Improvements will not normally be made against the wishes of the current occupiers, unless required on Health and Safety grounds or to carry out essential works.

3.0 The Synod Manse Scheme

- 3.1 The Scheme will be administered by the Synod Resources Committee through the Resources Officer.
- 3.2 When a pastoral vacancy is to be declared, the Pastorate and the Synod Resources Committee will agree if an existing manse meets the requirements of the Scheme and the Pastorate, or alternatively agree what measures are required to upgrade an existing manse, or provide a new property.
- 3.3 The Pastorate will continue to be responsible for general management and maintenance as set out in Appendix 1 of this Policy, including their responsibilities under the Plan for Partnership, through a locally appointed contact.
- 3.4 The Synod Manse Scheme will provide the capital for works as set out in Appendix 2 of this Policy. Whilst the Fund is being established it may not be possible to fully support these items. If that is the case the Synod Resources Committee will present a schedule to Synod, setting out the level of support and timing for the capital works to be supported by the Fund.
- 3.5 When a manse is vacant it will be let in the name of the Trust Company using an approved Assured Shorthold Tenancy agreement.

4.0 Joining the Manse Scheme

- 4.1 When a Church wishes to join The Scheme then it will be necessary for that Church to pass a Church Meeting resolution to join the Scheme. Prior to this, details of the property and funds, timing of the entry into the Scheme and any transitional arrangements would have been agreed with the Resources Committee. A Standard Resolution is given in Appendix 4 of this Policy, which will require approval by the Church Meeting and agreement by the Synod Resources Committee.
- 4.2 Some Churches currently rely upon rental income or income from local church manse fund investments. Transitional arrangements will be discussed and agreed with the Church and Synod Resources Committee.

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- 4.3 When a resolution to join the Scheme is passed, the approval of the Trustees will be required.
- 4.4 The resolution to join the Scheme will offer existing local manse funds, investment or future rental income and any sale proceeds to the Fund, subject to any transitional arrangements agreed.
- 4.5 Rental income generated during a ministerial vacancy will be used as necessary to offset the cost of preparation of a manse for occupation by a minister.

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Appendix 1

Schedule of Responsibilities of the Pastorate for manses in occupation by Ministers or Church Related Community Workers

Items in Plan for Partnership See Ref 1 (principally buildings insurance, Council Tax, water rates and certain maintenance or Housing Allowance.)

Provision of a contact person responsible for day to day matters in the manse.

General assistance in managing the property including being the local keyholder.

Annual buildings inspections.

Repairs to roof and rainwater drainage.

Internal & external redecoration.

General repairs, not covered by insurance (except major structural repairs normally paid by Synod).

The replacement of internal floor coverings or finishings.

Repairs and alterations to existing plumbing and central heating installations.

Regular servicing of the heating system and the annual testing and certification of gas installations.

Annual inspection and statutory periodic certification of the electrical installation and actions arising

Repair and alterations to existing electrical, telephone, computer, security alarm, etc. installations.

The installation and maintenance of smoke and carbon monoxide detection and alarm equipment.

The servicing and replacement of fire extinguishers and fire blankets.

Repairs to internal & external windows & doors, including repairs to glazing etc.

Repairs and alterations to external paths, hard standings, steps, fences, etc.

Note:-

When a manse is let in accordance with the Synod Manse Scheme the cost of the above will be the responsibility of The Scheme.

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Appendix 2

Schedule of Responsibilities of the Synod Manse Scheme

The Synod Manse Scheme will be responsible for the following items in consultation with the Pastorate.

The Synod Manse Scheme will be responsible for the letting of vacant Manses within the Scheme.

The Synod Manse Scheme will be responsible for capital works required to manses as follows:-

Extensions and alterations required to bring a manse up to the latest recommended National Manse Guidelines.

Refitting bathrooms and kitchens

Replacement of central heating boilers.

Replacement of roof coverings, including the replacement of existing flat roofs (with high performance finish or the installation of sloping roofs).

The replacement of existing external windows & doors, with new double glazed units.

The replacement of existing barge and gutter boards with UPVC if possible.

Electrical rewiring.

Installation of safety and security facilities, including where applicable the initial provision of fire extinguishers and fire blankets.

New fences and/or boundary walls where the replacement is necessary other than by damage covered by insurance.

The construction of external hard standings to allow or increase off-street parking.

Major structural repairs not covered by insurance.

Work required to comply with Health & Safety regulations.

Any professional, planning, building control fees, etc. in connection with the above items

Professional Quinquennial buildings inspections and reports.

Disabled Access Facilities when required.

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Appendix 3

Transitional Arrangements

Transitional arrangements may be negotiated between the Church and the Synod Resources Committee.

Such negotiations may include:-

- Development of an arrangement which will take full account of the needs of the Church
- Assisting the church in a financial review of their income and expenditure
- A shared approach of income apportionment
- Cancellation of manse loans
- Consideration of the current condition of the property
- Provision of documentation of legal and physical aspects of the property

Appendix 4

Church Meeting Resolution

The (name) Church Meeting held on (date).....agrees to place their manse * (address).....,and / or * their manse investment fund (value)..... into the Eastern Synod Manse Scheme in accordance with the Policy Approved by Synod. This agreement is subject to Transitional Arrangements agreed with the Synod Resources Committee as attached to this Resolution.

It is agreed that the responsibilities for the costs and maintenance, of any manse assigned to the Pastorate will be shared between the churches in the Pastorate and The Scheme as defined in Appendices 1 and 2 to the Synod Manse Policy.

At some future date it may be necessary to sell the Manse. It is agreed that this is acceptable, subject to consultation at the time with the Church, Pastorate and Area Partnership Pastoral Advocate.

It is agreed that the Eastern Synod Manse Fund will benefit from any rental income or interest arising from this property/investment. The date for this to become effective shall be

Signed.....Church Secretarydate.....

Approved by the Synod Resources Committee, signed.....date.....

* delete as appropriate.