

The Methodist Church
Fund for Human Need (FHN)
Charity Registration No. 208866

Report to Spring Synod members, 2023

Over the past five years, FHN has made over 4,000 emergency payments to individuals and families experiencing personal hardship and, in many cases, destitution.

In **2021/22**, the trustees agreed a small increase in the amounts paid to those applying for help; that, and the continued high level of applications for support meant **£72,600** was paid out. It was **the highest figure of any year**.

In that year, 87% of the grants we paid were in response to applications - from local authorities, medical support services, Citizens Advice and charities (operating locally and nationally) - on behalf of their clients. The needs included help with buying food and other basics, like bedding and essential travel.

We continue to provide relief for those who are homeless, suffering from medical or mental issues, waiting for their first universal benefit, as well as women who have experienced domestic violence, and refugees and asylum seekers.

Given the cost-of-living crisis many are facing today, we anticipate that the demand for help that FHN seeks to provide will continue and increase. At the same time, we are aware that many who support the Fund are themselves under financial pressure. A not unexpected result of the coronavirus pandemic has been its effect upon the economy generally which has seen a consequential financial impact on charitable organisations. In the case of FHN this led us to report, in 2021, a drop in donations overall of £14,000. The recovery from this has been slow.

Our work involves some cost. We have a part-time Administrator to pay and every month we have applications to sift, judgements to make and payments to send. We invest in attending carefully chosen events to generate new support. We advertise also, the existence of the Fund. Through 'Friends' who voluntarily represent FHN in the Methodist districts, we look to develop new interest. Our costs are currently about 20% of income. To reduce them, we currently seek sponsorships for some of our functions and services and links too with organisations like will-making. Our ultimate aim is to allocate all donated monies to people in need.

In the current year, 2022-23, we pay out mostly between £100 and £130 per application. Each payment is limited in what it can do for anyone, we appreciate that, but it does 'tide people over'. We know this because of the responses we often receive. What we give is a 'life-line' to people who are desperate. As important as the money is to each of them, is the knowledge that others have understood their need and done something about it. Through FHN, Methodists and others show them concern, give them hope and share God's love.

Please visit FHN's website: <https://fundforhumanneed.org.uk/>

Or for further information, contact

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