

Circuit Merger

NEWSLETTER ED 1



Hants-Surrey Border
Methodist Circuit



Berkshire Surrey Border
Methodist Circuit

Greetings!

We are pleased to bring you the first edition of the Circuit Merger Newsletter.

Our aim is to keep people informed of what is happening/planned to happen as the Berkshire Surrey Borders Circuit and the Hampshire Surrey Border Circuit merge to become one circuit in September 2025. Here you will find information about the progress of the merger, what is involved and the opportunities which will arise to help, guide and take up roles in the merger and in the new circuit.

THE STORY SO FAR

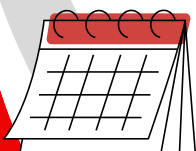
The possibility of merging the two circuits came about in 2024 when the Circuit Leadership Team of BSBC were discussing the likely impact of both Revd Catherine Bowstead, Superintendent Minister, and Revd Soba Sinnathamby 'sitting down' (that is, retiring) in the summer of 2025.

Since it was highly unlikely that BSBC would find a new superintendent, they approached HSBC to discuss the possibility of combining the two circuits with Revd. Nick Oborski then becoming superintendent of the resulting merged circuit.

Both circuits agreed to explore this and, following a series of meetings, the resolutions to enable this went to all 17 church councils in both circuits. All 17 church councils passed the resolutions.

This was then endorsed at the circuit meetings of both circuits and finally agreed at the District Synod on 13 March 25.

The next steps are for the circuit meetings to agree that the merger can go ahead, and then this will be taken to the next District Synod this spring.



IMPORTANT DATES

Circuit meetings - HSBC - 2nd April at
Ash Vale Chapel, 7.30pm

District Synod - 26th April, 10.00am

Methodist Conference - 26 June - 2 July
2025 in Telford

A NEW NAME...

We asked across the circuits to think about what name would bring the two circuits together. Thank you for all your suggestions. At the moment, the front runner is...

THE BLACKWATER VALLEY CIRCUIT

This incorporates most of the churches, and gives a recognisable geographical point which helps people know where the circuit will be. The question is, what will the logo look like? If you have an idea, and can draw, design a logo, please send your ideas to Revd Anne Day - anne.day@methodist.org.uk



Staffing News

Although we will be sad to bid farewell to Revds Catherine and Soba, we are pleased to announce that Revd. Wes Hampton will be stationed in Berkshire Surrey Borders Circuit from September 2025 and will have pastoral charge of Wokingham Methodist Church, as well as being the Methodist minister for two LEPs: Church @ The Pines and Woollahill Community Church. He will be joining at an auspicious time as the new circuit is just taking off!

OPPORTUNITIES



As the circuit comes together, there are many opportunities for people from both circuits to get involved. We are particularly interested if you have experience in or have skills of:

Graphic design - a new website will be needed and there are opportunities for new ways of communicating.

Finance - To help with the merging of the finance and finance procedures from both circuits.

HR - keeping the contracts of lay workers and other people in the circuits right, and recruiting, writing job descriptions and person specifications for the various roles is needed.

Youth work group - would you be interested in helping the youth work across the new circuit flourish? This includes getting all the young people ready for the next 3Generate Youth Assembly in October and other projects.

Circuit Leadership and Circuit Stewarding - new opportunities will arise for new people in the Circuit Leadership Team. Could this be you?

Safeguarding - Would you like to get involved in this crucial role within the new circuit, to assist and develop this vital role.

Property - No experience necessary, and you don't need to be handy with a paintbrush, it's more about overseeing the new circuits property assets, and making sure they are looked after and maintained well.

The lay of the land: What will the circuit look like?

