



The Church of Scotland

Presbytery of Ardrossan

Presbytery Mission Plan

Draft v.1
February 2022

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Introduction

1.1 Background

The General Assembly of 2021 required every Presbytery in the Church of Scotland to create a Presbytery Mission Plan. This Presbytery Mission Plan is to be approved by 31st December 2022 with the number of Full-Time Equivalent posts (FTE) to be within mandatory limits by 31st December 2025.

As the Presbytery of Ardrossan is due to join with five other Presbyteries to create the Presbytery of the South West Scotland in September 2022, the aim is to have a Presbytery Mission Plan approved before the new joint Presbytery comes into being. The implementation of the Presbytery Mission Plan will lie with the new united Presbytery.

Nationally, the Church of Scotland is reducing to 600 FTE posts with room for 60 vacancies.

The Presbytery of Ardrossan was informed that the number of centrally funded posts would be reduced to 13.5 FTE posts from a current level of 23.1 FTE posts in the most recently approved Presbytery Plan.

1.2 Why are we doing what we are doing?

The Church of Scotland faces many challenges. There is a falling membership (from a peak of 1.3 million in 1956 to under 300,000 now) and dwindling attendance at church services. There are buildings which are not well-equipped spaces for the 21st century and which are in the wrong place. Many ministers are due to retire in the next 5 to 10 years with few ministers being called to replace them.

Ardrossan Presbytery is not immune to these challenges. Membership in our Presbytery has fallen in line with the rest of the church with few professions of faith. We have a number of vacancies alongside a number of ministers who will be looking to retire in the not too distant future. We also have a surplus of buildings.

1.3 The Priority of Mission

Despite the obvious challenges that the church nationally and locally is facing, there is also an opportunity to do things differently in the church which, under God, might allow for the arrest of decline and instead see growth in the church. To this end, in putting together our Presbytery Mission Plan, we have been encouraged first and foremost to prioritise mission. Section 2 of the 2021 General Assembly, Faith Nurture Supplementary Report states that: “The Faith Nurture Forum wishes to be clear about the priority of mission, and in particular the Five Marks of Mission” in the formation of Presbytery Mission Plans. The Five Marks of Mission are outlined below:

The mission of the church is the mission of Christ:

- 1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom*
- 2. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers*
- 3. To respond to human need by loving service*
- 4. To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation*
- 5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.*

The Presbytery Mission Plan Act Guidance is clear that:

Mission must be the priority, followed by people and congregational structures with buildings last.

1.4 Where we are

The Presbytery of Ardrossan presently comprises 27 congregations, currently organised into 20 charges.

As of February 2022, there are 9 vacant charges. There are 11 stipendiary parish ministers in post. There are 2 Deacons in post and a further 3 Mission Development Staff (MDS).

In terms of non-stipendiary ministries, we have 10 Readers - though not all may be currently active.

The Presbytery has two recognised Urban Priority Area (UPA) parishes (Ardrossan and Saltcoats: Kirkgate and Stevenston: Ardeer).

The Presbytery also has two island communities (Arran and Cumbrae).

The rest of the Presbytery is made up of more urban areas (Ardrossan, Saltcoats, Stevenston / Kilwinning / Largs) and small towns (Beith, Dalry, Fairlie, Kilbirnie, West Kilbride).

The Planning Process

2.1 Timeline

After the instruction of the General Assembly 2021 to create a Presbytery Mission Plan, the Appraisal Committee of Ardrossan Presbytery was entrusted with carrying out this task.

The following timeline was adopted:

September 2021

- A meeting took place for Ministers, Deacons, MDS workers and Interim Moderators. At this meeting, the process was described and Angus Mathieson and Karen Campbell from the Presbytery Mission Plan Implementation Group joined remotely via video link.

- A meeting was held with two representative elders from each congregation in Ardrossan Presbytery. At this meeting the process was explained and elders were encouraged to report back to their own Kirk Sessions and congregations.

October 2021

- A survey was sent to each Kirk Session for completion.¹

November 2021

- Completed surveys were collated along with statistical information about each congregation.

December 2021 - February 2022

- Visits made by representatives of the Appraisal Committee to all Kirk Sessions in the Presbytery for consultation.

- Meetings held with all Ministers, Deacons and MDS workers to update them on the process and to take into consideration their input into the plan.

¹ Please see the appendix for the survey which was adapted from one produced by Lothian Presbytery.

January 2022 - April 2022

- AMBA building audits completed on all church buildings in the Presbytery.

February 2022

- Draft Presbytery Mission Plan completed (not including buildings) and presented to March Presbytery, Presbytery Mission Plan Implementation Group and sent to Kirk Sessions for consultation.

May - June 2022

- Decisions on buildings added into Presbytery Mission Plan.
- Final Presbytery Mission Plan approved for Ardrossan Presbytery.

2.2 Planning Process

The Appraisal Committee has held consultations with Kirk Sessions as well as Ministers, Deacons and MDS workers.

These meetings were done in four 'Mission Groups' that had been put together in a previous Presbytery Plan some years ago on a geographical basis and a team from the Appraisal Committee was sent to each Mission Group as we felt this was a good starting point.

At the meetings with Kirk Sessions, a 10 minute video was shown to outline the process and the parameters that the Presbytery was working towards (13.5 FTE ministry posts) as well as outlining the wider picture in the Church of Scotland. This was to give some consistency in the visits to Kirk Sessions.

There was then discussion on the survey that each Kirk Session had previously completed to ensure that the discussion remained focussed upon mission as its main driver.

Each Kirk Session was then given various options as to what might allow mission to flourish in their local area within the given parameters.

The Mission Groups as they were visited are below:

Mission Group 1

Cumbræ
Fairlie
Largs: Clark Memorial
Largs: St. Columba's
Largs: St. John's Church
West Kilbride

Mission Group 2

Ardrossan and Saltcoats: Kirkgate
Ardrossan: Park
Saltcoats: North
Saltcoats: St. Cuthbert's
Stevenston: Ardeer
Stevenston: High Kirk
Stevenston: Livingstone

Mission Group 3

Beith
Dalry: St. Margaret's
Dalry: Trinity
Kilbirnie: Auld Kirk
Kilbirnie St. Columba's
Kilwinning: Abbey
Kilwinning: Mansefield Trinity

Mission Group 4

Brodick
Corrie
Kilmory
Lamlash
Lochranza
Shiskine: St. Molios
Whiting Bay and Kildonan

Although these Mission Groups were our starting point, we tried to keep in mind the Presbytery as a whole and in one area in particular (West Kilbride) it was felt that there was a more natural fit with the congregations in Mission Group 2 rather than Mission Group 1.

2.3 Mission, People, Buildings

The Presbytery Mission Plan Act Guidance is clear: mission is the first priority, followed by people and congregational structures with buildings last.²

Throughout this process, we have tried to make sure that Mission has been the driver for the decisions that we have made and to ensure that the right posts are placed in the correct areas to allow Mission to flourish.

With the reduction of ministry posts from 23.1FTE to 13.5FTE, we have also sought to ensure that each post has appropriate support which is why we have focussed upon placing each charge within a grouping or created team ministries.

We have met with and consulted with Ministers, Deacons and MDS workers to get their input and to inform them of the process and tried to do this in a pastorally sensitive way.

We have a number of Readers in our Presbytery and would hope to use them alongside other non-stipendiary ministries (such as OLM's if available) to give additional support as well as to encourage the gifts and talents amongst the eldership and wider membership within the Presbytery.

We have sought to make decisions on posts first with the decisions on buildings coming later. We have engaged with the General Trustees to ensure that an Asset Management Building Audit (AMBA) has been done on each church building and hall. Alongside the feedback from the AMBA audits, we will make decisions using the Buildings Toolkit which will help

² PMPA Guidance & Code of Practice section 6.5

us to ensure that we make decisions on buildings which ensure that we have 'well-equipped spaces in the right places'.

The Plan

In this section, we will outline the Presbytery Mission Plan for the Presbytery of Ardrossan. This will show where we are currently and what we hope to implement.

The table following this will show the draft plan along with population details, membership, financial details, staffing structure and buildings.

3.1 Mission Group 1

Current:

	<u>FTE Posts</u>
Cumbrae linked with Largs: St. John's	1.5
Fairlie linked with Largs: St. Columba's	1.0
Largs: Clark Memorial	1.0
(West Kilbride	1.0)*

**As stated above, it was felt that West Kilbride should be taken out of this Mission Group and assigned to Mission Group 2. The reason for this was that West Kilbride is geographically closer to the churches in Mission Group 2, the catchment secondary school for West Kilbride is in Mission Group 2 and the people of West Kilbride look more naturally towards Mission Group 2 for shopping and other amenities. Joining West Kilbride with Mission Group 2 also gave more options to FTE posts in that area.*

Proposed:

	<u>FTE Posts</u>
One united charge covering Cumbrae, Fairlie and Largs.	2.0

Rationale

In Mission Group 1, we would envisage a team ministry with 2 FTE posts with three places of worship (Cumbrae, Fairlie and Largs) and one Kirk Session.

Though a united parish, Cumbrae and Fairlie would be afforded a measure of independence in the form of Local Leadership Teams who would be subject to the Kirk Session.

As there is a good income base between the current charges, we would hope that there would be scope for a 0.5 locally funded post to supplement the team ministry and ensure that the team has the capacity to fulfil ministry across a parish which also includes an island community. These posts would ensure that Cumbrae is assured of ministerial support on a regular basis alongside Fairlie and Largs. We also hope that there would be a broadening out of the team to include OLM's and Readers as appropriate.

The congregations at present are doing a lot in terms of mission and outreach. Fairlie has a very successful Messy Church for example and Cumbrae has strong links with the local primary school. Some mission is already done jointly in Largs (such as Summer Missions, School Chaplaincy and more) and there is already a united Guild with over 130 members.

By coming together in Largs, this would give combined resources, people power, skills and finance and hopefully foster a unity which would be a powerful witness to the community.

One of the advantages to Cumbrae and Fairlie is that they will be relieved of the overall responsibility of buildings maintenance and administration which will allow them to focus on existing forms of mission and developing them further.

A team ministry of 2FTE (alongside a possible 0.5 locally funded post to recognise the needs of the united parish having an island community) allows appropriate support whilst having one Kirk Session (rather than 5 currently alongside Congregational Boards) will lessen the administrative burden.

3.2 Mission Group 2

Current:

	<u>FTE Posts</u>
Ardrossan and Saltcoats: Kirkgate	1.0
Ardrossan: Park	1.6
Saltcoats: North	1.0
Saltcoats: St. Cuthbert's	1.0
Stevenston: Ardeer linked with Stevenston: Livingstone	1.5
Stevenston: High Kirk	1.0
West Kilbride*	1.0

**Added from Mission Group 1*

Proposed:

	<u>FTE Posts</u>
One united charge covering Ardrossan, Saltcoats, Stevenston and West Kilbride.	4.5

Rationale

In Mission Group 2, we would envisage a team ministry with 4.5 FTE posts with multiple places of worship and one Kirk Session.

Though a united parish, there would be Local Leadership Teams for each worshipping community within the charge.

Currently in Ardrossan, Saltcoats and Stevenston, there are parish boundaries that make little sense and there are difficulties in envisaging how these areas could be defined in terms of bringing together existing congregations into various united charges. Instead, it seems that joining Ardrossan, Saltcoats and Stevenston into one parish alongside West Kilbride would give the best and most sustainable solution.

By having one parish, it will allow working together across these four towns and allow the focus to be upon mission rather than upon who would be joining with whom. It will also allow important questions to be

considered - such as the movement of the residential population away from the sea toward more inland areas.

It is clear that West Kilbride has more links with Mission Group 2 than other Mission Groups. One of the major advantages in having West Kilbride as part of this Mission Group is that it allows an increased total of FTE posts in this area which would offer an enriched team approach which would be of benefit to the whole area.

There are good mission initiatives happening across the whole area including Messy Church, supporting the Foodbank, Care and Share for the homeless and more which shared resources could enhance. There are also existing links between the churches and some ecumenical working (particularly in Ardrossan).

Although across this area the possibility of having one charge per town was carefully considered, there was also a recognition that in the longer term one parish with a larger team ministry would allow working together, appropriate support to be in place for those in FTE posts, and encourage working together rather than across town boundaries. As in other areas, the use of non-stipendiary ministries would enhance any team working.

It should be recognised in this area that a short-term form of adjustment is being sought for Stevenston: Ardeer because of the unsustainability of the building which needs considerable work on it to make it wind and watertight and because of a shortfall in Ministry and Mission payments. The General Trustees have agreed to take on full responsibility for the Ardeer building when any form of adjustment has been enacted.

3.3 Mission Group 3

Current:

	<u>FTE Posts</u>
Beith	2.0
Dalry: St. Margaret's	1.0
Dalry: Trinity	1.0
Kilbirnie: Auld Kirk	1.0
Kilbirnie St. Columba's	1.0
Kilwinning: Abbey	2.0
Kilwinning: Mansefield Trinity	2.0

Proposed:

	<u>FTE Posts</u>
Parish Grouping: Beith	1.0
Dalry	1.0
Kilbirnie	1.0
One united charge in Kilwinning .	2.0

Rationale

In Mission Group 3, there are two main adjustments that we see in this area.

Beith, Dalry, Kilbirnie

In the Garnock Valley area (Beith, Dalry, Kilbirnie) we would envisage unions in Dalry and Kilbirnie to create one charge in each town. Between Beith, Dalry and Kilbirnie, we envisage a Parish Grouping with the possibility of closer working in the future (perhaps a Team Ministry beyond 2025). However, there were two main reasons why it was felt that individual charges with 1 FTE post would be preferable at present.

Firstly, each town has its own distinct identity and the importance of having an identifiable person as a FTE worker was desirable.

Secondly, within two of the towns (Dalry and Kilbirnie) there are at present two churches which will need to be united into one. It was felt important that a united charge was consolidated first before any other adjustment was considered.

The amalgamation of charges (Dalry and Kilbirnie) alongside reduction of posts (from 2FTE to 1FTE in each area) was why a Parish Grouping was felt to be desirable to allow the three charges to support one another as appropriate and also to allow those in FTE posts to support one another.

There were many good examples of mission currently happening across these churches - Messy Church, youth initiatives, Christianity Explored as well as an innovative partnership between one of the churches with a couple from Latin America via Latin Link.

By joining the churches in Dalry and Kilbirnie, these strengths could be enhanced as well as allowing a united Christian witness in the community. All churches expressed some anxiety about ageing membership and struggle to find officebearers and combining resources should alleviate this.

In Beith, where two congregations have already united into one, there are lots of mission activities and engagement with the community. The congregation has a wide range of skills that it was felt could be utilised further to support the FTE post. We would also envisage there being non-stipendiary support working across the Parish Grouping to give support.

Kilwinning

Though Kilwinning is in the same Mission Group as Beith, Dalry and Kilbirnie demographically it is quite different being a much larger town. Though we considered whether Kilwinning could join with a larger grouping, it has no natural connection and so it was felt that Kilwinning was demographically big enough to be viable on its own.

Currently Kilwinning has two churches (Kilwinning Abbey and Kilwinning Mansfield Trinity) which we would envisage becoming one united church with a team ministry of 2 FTE and two worship centres. The

congregations in Kilwinning are quite different. The Abbey is a long established traditional church whilst Mansefield Trinity has developed from Kilwinning: Mansefield and a New Charge Development becoming a parish called Kilwinning: Mansefield Trinity in 2007. Both congregations have different strengths - and there is already a measure of working together and crossover between the two churches. A union between the two congregations would strengthen these links.

The size of the Kirk Sessions are quite different but both churches expressed their difficulties in filling key officebearer roles and moving to one Kirk Session could provide an amalgamation of skills and talents.

Both churches are reaching out to the community through church cafes, Messy Church and schools work and there is some excellent work being done by the existing ministry teams to engage with the community.

In recognition of the large population and specific demographics it would also be desirable to use non-stipendiary ministries to support the proposed ministry team.

3.4 Mission Group 4

Current:

	<u>FTE Posts</u>
Brodick linked with Corrie linked with Lochranza and Pirnmill linked with Shiskine	1.7
Lamlash and Kilmory	1.0
Whiting Bay and Kildonan	1.0

Proposed:

	<u>FTE Posts</u>
One united charge for Arran.	2.0

Rationale

There were two possibilities for Arran. In a previous Presbytery Plan, what was being worked towards was the possibility of a parish in the north of the island and a parish in the south. However, after discussion, the Appraisal Committee felt that there was no real advantage of this over having one united parish on Arran with a team ministry of 2FTE. This would allow more flexibility in terms of ministry posts and what is needed on the island. For example, most Kirk Sessions reflected that there needed to be a greater emphasis on youth work. As well as paid posts, it is recognised that Arran is blessed with the availability of Readers who may be willing to become part of the team.

In an island community, presence is clearly important. A team ministry should allow good co-ordination between the team for holiday periods and when a member has to be off the island (for a funeral or hospital visits for example).

There is already some collaboration between the churches through Arran Churches Together and the churches (particularly in the north) are already used to some kind of team working together.

There are pockets of mission happening currently - links with Scripture Union in Whiting Bay, the Guild in Shiskine, the Foodbank in Brodick, coffee mornings and more. There is a desire to reach islanders young and old and engage with holidaymakers.

One parish will allow a united voice on Arran and allow the church to combine resources - financially and in terms of skills. All Kirk Sessions spoke about increased use of technology for example - and combining their resources and having a united leadership could allow them to do this in a co-ordinated way.

At present, there are 7 Kirk Sessions on Arran. Clearly this is a big ask for one minister, and so the proposal to have one Kirk Session should alleviate this.

Concern was raised about people having to travel to worship. Clearly there are a surplus of buildings on Arran that will need to be addressed. Though Arran is perhaps unique in the Presbytery of Ardsrossan, it is not unique in the wider Church of Scotland context in rural areas where people may have to travel a considerable distance to worship. Again, the use of technology may help in this regard.

Draft Presbytery Mission Plan

4.1 Mission Group 1

Cumbræ linked with Largs: St. John's
 Fairlie linked with Largs: St. Columba's
 Largs: Clark Memorial

→ One United Charge covering Cumbræ, Fairlie and Largs.

<u>Name of Congregation</u>	<u>2020 Membership</u>	<u>Population (2011)</u>	<u>Income(£) ³</u>	<u>M&M(£) ⁴</u>	<u>Staffing Structure</u>	<u>Building Classification</u>
Cumbræ	207	1376	57378	38207		
Fairlie	171	1564	71579	49034	2 FTE	
Largs: Clark Memorial	571	3353	138323	84798	(+ 0.5 locally funded)	
Largs: St. Columba's	289	5116	74389	56612		
Largs: St. John's Church	600	2958	125694	79627		
<u>Total</u>	1838	14367	467363	308278		

³ 2019 figures.

⁴ 2019 figures.

4.2 Mission Group 2

Ardrossan and Saltcoats: Kirkgate

Ardrossan: Park

Saltcoats: North

Saltcoats: St. Cuthbert's

Stevenston: Ardeer

Stevenston: High Kirk

Stevenston: Livingstone

West Kilbride

→ One united charge covering Ardrossan, Saltcoats, Stevenston and West Kilbride.

<u>Name of Congregation</u>	<u>2020 Membership</u>	<u>Population (2011)</u>	<u>Income(£) ⁵</u>	<u>M&M(£) ⁶</u>	<u>Staffing Structure</u>	<u>Building Classification</u>
Ardrossan & Saltcoats: Kirkgate	176	5461	73287	53791		
Ardrossan Park	358	6768	74508	47087		
Saltcoats North	215	4935	62594 ⁷	30960		
Saltcoats: St Cuthbert's	223	6674	84853	54333	4.5 FTE	
Stevenston: Ardeer	118	1821	35546	27619		
Stevenston: High	198	4403	75468	59829		
Stevenston: Livingstone	200	3194	55362	34458		
West Kilbride	368	5233	115327	74331		
<u>Total</u>	1856	38489	576945	382408		

⁵ 2019 figures.

⁶ 2019 figures.

⁷ 2018 figure.

4.3 Mission Group 3

Beith

Dalry: St. Margaret's

Dalry: Trinity

→ Union to form one Dalry Church.

Parish Grouping

Kilbirnie: Auld Kirk

Kilbirnie St. Columba's

→ Union to form one Kilbirnie Church.

Kilwinning: Abbey

Kilwinning: Mansefield Trinity

→ Union to form one Kilwinning Church with two worship centres.

<u>Name of Congregation</u>	<u>2020 Membership</u>	<u>Population (2011)</u>	<u>Income(£) ⁸</u>	<u>M&M(£) ⁹</u>	<u>Staffing Structure</u>	<u>Building Classificatio</u>
Beith	610	7369	74058	47087	1 FTE	
Dalry: St. Margaret's	463	3757	-	90201	[1 FTE	
Dalry: Trinity	135	2495	96618	53597		
Kilbirnie: Auld Kirk	255	4324	49564	37930	[1 FTE	
Kilbirnie: St. Columba's	460	3406	64806	39761		
<i>(Total</i>	<i>1923</i>	<i>21351</i>	<i>285046¹⁰</i>	<i>268576</i>		
Kilwinning: Abbey	466	10377	102833	70655	[2 FTE	
Kilwinning: Mansefield Trinity	175	6831	54957	36436		
<i>(Total</i>	<i>641</i>	<i>17208</i>	<i>157790</i>	<i>107091</i>		
<u>Total for Mission Group</u>	2564	38559	442836 ¹¹	375667		

8 2019 figures.

9 2019 figures.

10 This figure is minus any figure from Dalry: St.Margaret's. This figure was not available.

11 This figure is minus any figure from Dalry: St.Margaret's. This figure was not available.

4.4 Mission Group 4

Brodick I/w Corrie I/w Lochranza and Pirnmill I/w Shiskine
 Kilmory I/w Lamlash
 Whiting Bay and Kildonan

→ One United Charge for Arran.

<u>Name of Congregation</u>	<u>2020 Membership</u>	<u>Population (2011)</u>	<u>Income(£) ¹²</u>	<u>M&M(£) ¹³</u>	<u>Staffing Structure</u>	<u>Building Classification</u>
Brodick	115	1196	48087	34864		
Corrie	24	249	23718	11490		
Lochranza and Pirnmill	57	303	35073	14209		
Shiskine	59	602	27029	24701	2FTE	
Kilmory	26	297	-	8702		
Lamlash	75	1116	-	26038		
Whiting Bay and Kildonan	65	897	40280	26869		
<u>Total</u>	<u>421</u>	<u>4660</u>	<u>174187¹⁴</u>	<u>146873</u>		

12 2019 figures.

13 2019 figures.

14 This figure is minus any income from Kilmory and Lamlash. Figures for income were not available.

Summary

Ardrossan Presbytery

Congregation

FTE Posts

Cumrae, Fairlie, Largs	2.0*
Ardrossan, Saltcoats, Stevenston, West Kilbride	4.5
Beith	1.0
Dalry	1.0
Kilbirnie	1.0
Kilwinning	2.0
Arran	2.0
<hr/> Total	<hr/> 13.5

**Recommendation of a 0.5 locally funded post to acknowledge the island community.*

Appendix

5.1



The Church of Scotland

Presbytery of Ardrossan

Mission Plan Kirk Session Consultation – Discussion Questions

Ardrossan Presbytery intends for our Presbytery Mission Plan to be developed collaboratively and progressed from the grassroots. You are invited to complete the below questions, provided as part of early consultation with Kirk Sessions, to inform and influence our Mission Plan. This is a first opportunity for Kirk Sessions to inform and influence the process. We are grateful for your time and contribution. Please complete these questions, as you feel appropriate, and return to Ardrossan@churchofscotland.org.uk by 7th November 2021.

Mission:

As a Kirk Session,

What do we think of the Five Marks of Mission? (see: Presbytery Mission Plan Handout for Kirk Sessions)

What would we like to achieve in mission in 5 years' time?

Which of the Mission Plan principles should Presbytery prioritise?

How can we develop new ways of being church, ie. Pioneering initiatives/Fresh Expressions?

Future Sustainability + Adjustment:

In what ways are you sustainable or otherwise beyond 31st December 2025? (We are aware that Covid-19 has disrupted plans, but we are looking for an honest assessment).

- Mission? (Please note what you are currently doing and have recently done (last 4 years).
- Kirk Session?
- Congregation?
- Property?
- Finances?
- Other?

What can we share and who can we share with?

Why would we wish not to embrace change?

What adjustments do we propose? (See: *Presbytery Mission Plan Act Section 7*)

Which churches are nearby to us and who are our ecumenical partners?

What is the extent of these relationships?

Open Consultation

Please provide any feedback, comment or information that could help influence and inform the Mission Plan process, as you feel appropriate.

Presbytery Mission Plan Ardrossan Presbytery

Why are we doing what we are doing?

The Church of Scotland faces many challenges - falling membership, lack of ministers, lack of finance and too many buildings and too many buildings which are not fit for purpose.

Because of these issues, the General Assembly of 2018 called for a 'Radical Action Plan' which was presented at the General Assembly of 2019.

The Presbytery Mission Plan is a direct result of the Radical Action Plan to try to enable the Church to carry out its core purpose: to follow Jesus and to encourage others to follow Jesus.

The General Assembly of 2021 requires all Presbyteries in the Church of Scotland to produce a Presbytery Mission Plan, to be approved by the end of December 2022. The number of ministry posts within the plan are to be within mandatory limits by the end of December 2025.

With Ardrossan Presbytery joining with five other Presbyteries to form the Presbytery of South West Scotland by September 2022, we need to have our plan in place before then.

Our Presbytery Mission Plan has to be shaped by Mission and be in line with the Five Marks of Mission.

The Marks are as follows:

The mission of the Church is the Mission of Christ

- 1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom*
- 2. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers*
- 3. To respond to human need by loving service*
- 4. To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation*
- 5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth*

What does this mean for Ardrossan Presbytery?

The Presbytery of Ardrossan presently comprises 27 congregations, currently organised into 20 charges.

In September 2021, there are 8 vacant charges. We have 12 stipendiary parish ministers in post. There are 2 Deacons in post and a further 3 Mission Development Staff (MDS).

In our existing Presbytery Plan, we have been allocated 23.1 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) posts.

In our new Presbytery Mission Plan, this must reduce to 13.5 FTE posts.

We also must reduce our number of buildings.

How do we do this?

The Presbytery Mission Plan Act Guidance is clear: Mission must be the priority, followed by people and congregational structures with buildings last.

Timeline

- September 2021 - Meeting with Ministers / Deacons / MDS / Interim Moderators.*
- Meetings with Representatives from Kirk Sessions.*
- October 2021 - Survey sent to Kirk Sessions for completion.*
- November 2021 to January 2022 - Visits to Kirk Sessions.*
- February 2022 - Begin the process of approval of Presbytery Mission Plan.*
- June 2022 - Fully Completed and approved Presbytery Mission Plan.*

Buildings

Alongside this timeline, Presbytery will be working closely with the General Trustees to help determine which buildings should be retained in line with our Mission Plan.

In each Mission Plan, a determination must be made on each building:

Category A - to be retained for the lifespan of the Plan.

Category B - to be disposed of in the lifespan of the Plan.

With the Presbytery Mission Plan needing to be completed in a relatively short period of time, this is going to be a challenge.

Please be assured that Ardrossan Presbytery intends for our Presbytery Mission Plan to be developed collaboratively and progressed from the grass-roots within the parameters that have been given to us.