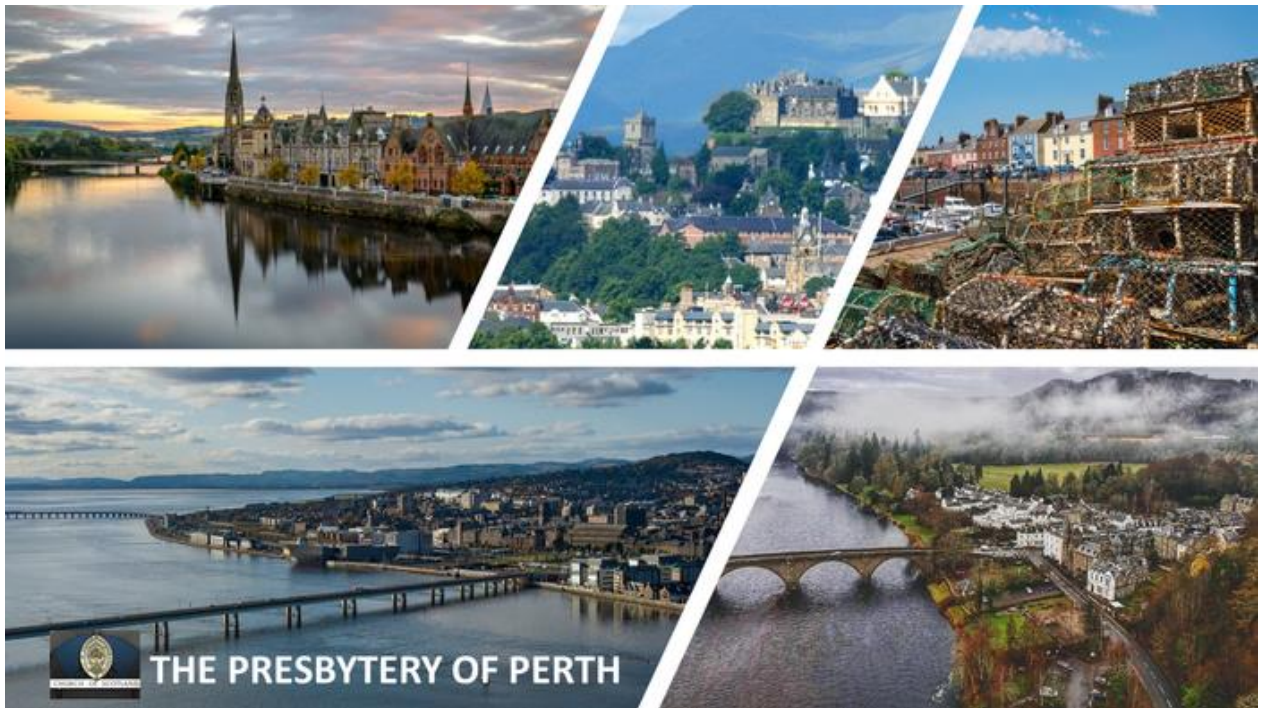


# Presbytery of Perth

## *Presbytery Mission Plan*



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## Introduction

The Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act 8 2021) requires each Presbytery to develop and annually review a strategic deployment plan for ministries within its bounds. Each Legacy Presbytery which constitutes the new Presbytery of Perth had their initial Presbytery Mission Plan (Plan) approved by the national Presbytery Mission Plan Implementation Group. Not all Plans were approved at the same time, some towards the end of 2022 and others through to the late spring of 2023. Each Legacy Presbytery had to wrestle with the significant challenge of developing a Plan that maintains ministry presence across their bounds while having to implement significant reductions in ministry allocation to achieve this goal. Each Legacy Presbytery developed their own approach to the process, and now the challenge of the enlarged Presbytery is to bring these individual Plans together into one, and to provide a uniform approach across the Presbytery to ensure fairness and consistency of approach.

As a reminder to ourselves, the Act of Assembly details how the process is to be engaged with and the factors to be considered in the process of development. Section 2.1.1 outlines the key factors that the PMPs are to include;

- i. ensure that the life of the Church of Scotland is shaped around Mission and adequately reflects the outcomes of Local Church Review and ideas for local mission;*
- ii. sustain the commitment to a territorial ministry as described in the Third of the Articles Declaratory appended to the Church of Scotland Act 1921 and affirmed in Declaratory Act V 2010 including its commitment to ecumenical working;*
- iii. make appropriate use of such ministry posts as may be permitted by the General Assembly so that the number of post holders in each Presbytery conforms to the numbers and time-scales set by the General Assembly;*
- iv. ensure that new ways of being Church, other than stipendiary Ministers of Word and Sacrament or traditional MDS appointments, are reflected in the Mission Plan;*

The clear thrust of the Act emphasises the need and role of mission in the life and expression of local churches, and also the Church of Scotland's understanding of itself as a national Church and the commitment to serve the whole of the nation's island, rural and urban contexts. It also addressed the issue of the infrastructure that the Church presently owns and the need to tailor that to best match the changing shape of the Church. To accomplish this, an assessment of the buildings of the Church is to be included in the Plan and a clear indication to be given of their necessity and otherwise they are to be released;

*2.1.2 In doing so the Presbytery is to categorise each ecclesiastical building as either:-*

*(a) to be retained beyond the five years from the date at which the Mission Plan is approved or annually reviewed, or*

*(b) to be sold, let or otherwise disposed of by a specified date which is within five years from the date at which the ecclesiastical building is first categorised as (b).*

*2.1.3 In order to arrive at these categorisations the Presbytery shall use, and reference, resources and advice provided by the General Trustees, including the Land and Buildings Toolkit (or any successor guidance issued by the General Trustees).*

All those involved with the Church of Scotland must now be fully aware of the issues that we face. The highwater line of membership from the later 1950's has been on a trajectory of decline and accelerating decline since. The profile of decline is significant within the adult age groups, it is catastrophic in under 25's. The decline in children's participation has been

precipitous. A few congregations still have a vibrant ministry to young people, but many now find themselves in a position where there are no children regularly connecting with the church, and with that their families are also absent. The net result being the 'aging' of the membership with active involvement being confined increasingly to older age groups. As they themselves decline in numbers and ability to support the work of the church, income has declined significantly for most. More concerning is the reduction in those who could succeed the local leadership in congregations and indeed those who may feel a call into whole-time ministry. There will always be exceptions to these generalisations, however, they are exceptions and not the lived experience of the majority.

The ability of the Church nationally to provide ministers for past number of parishes is gone. The reality of the internal context of the Church is that the numbers of ministries of all types that can be sustained is being placed at around 600. Presbytery is now charged with the difficult process of aligning congregation and ministry numbers.

Moreover, congregations are increasingly being faced with the cost of maintaining old buildings built for much larger congregations, and many being 'listed' by Historic Environment Scotland as having historical or architectural merit, bring additional restrictions and burdens on diminishing congregations and declining resources. What former generations may have regarded as a future inheritance and positive platform for present generations to undertake ministry are now a costly burden, draining local congregations of resources. In many locations **our Ecclesial Complex is no longer fit for purpose**. This issue is highlighted within the General Trustees reports to General Assembly in recent years and their shorthand slogan of 'well equipped spaces in the right places'. This Presbytery, therefore, also faces the difficult process of assessing our Ecclesial Complex, its quality, its location, and its future usefulness and make the hardest of decisions to close and relinquish a large number of buildings.

The Presbytery of Perth is having to oversee the implementation, review and consolidations of the five legacy Plans approved to reduce the number of ministries within its bounds from 124.2 to 78, representing a reduction on 37%. Each of the legacy Plans constrained themselves to those charges within their bounds, whereas now there is an opportunity to review the enlarged Plan to ensure that it is consistent, sensible, and paying close attention to the areas around the former boundaries to ensure that adjustments are logical and practical.

As the engrossed Plan is developed, it is the appropriate time to define and clarify the principles of allocation that the Presbytery of Perth will use, and the understanding we have of mission and the contexts in which we operate and seek to advance the Kingdom of God. The themes of Christ's mission, the marks of mission, and the context in which we operate within Presbytery will be explored. Thereafter we will seek to develop an allocation policy that can be applied across the disparate nature of our Presbytery. **The Committee makes no apology for this being an extensive document, for we believe it is the most crucial aspect of the work of Presbytery and requires extensive and considered thinking about the process and the issues we face.**

## The Church's Mission must be the Mission of Christ in the World

The Notes of Guidance accompanying the Act 8 2021 of Assembly clearly states, *'The Act is a means to this end which is the Church's participation in Christ's mission'*. We are reminded by this statement that the call to mission is a direct one from God to all His people, wherever they are, to share and to live the gospel before others with authenticity and faithfulness. The Missio Dei, or mission of God, is a work of the Spirit in the continuing work of God as Trinity expressed in creation and reaching its fulfilment in the complete establishment of the Kingdom of God and the return of our Saviour. The responsibility of the body of Christ, which is the Church, is to participate in this redemptive work of God and Presbytery seeks to establish a sustainable network of worshipping communities within its bounds, strategically placed to create a viable platform for mission of all kinds expressed within the Marks of Mission detailed in the Act.

We affirm the centrality to the work of the Holy Spirit in the enabling, resourcing and empowering of the Church in the world and call on Church members and adherents alike to commit themselves to prayer, worship, discipleship and witness in the communities in which God has placed them, seeking to share in the building of the Kingdom of God.

The mission of Christ was an active engagement with humankind and creation and therefore, the mission of the Church must also be one of engagement. The Church, in all its parts, can no longer sit back and wait for people to come to us, we must activate the Body of Christ in all its parts to take the gospel, spoken and embodied, to the communities we seek to engage with. The Five Marks of Mission provide a rubric by which we can measure and assess our strengths and weaknesses in this area.

### *Five Marks of Mission.*

The five Marks of Mission defined within the Act 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 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."**

Whilst these 'Marks', at first glance, may seem quite straightforward and non-contentious, how they are realised and made manifest in different areas and contexts is not as straight forward as first may be thought and indeed understanding and interpretation of what they mean will vary.

- 1. Proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom** – The natural assumption may be that this is the role or function of the ordained clergy. However, it is the activity and responsibility of the whole Church in faithful obedience to the commission of Christ (Mat 28:18-20). It also assumes, or presumes, a presence in all the communities of the nation to proclaim to (given our territorial presumption), and to reach beyond itself to the community it sits within. With reductions in the Full Time Equivalent (FTE) ministries deployed in communities, a greater emphasis will be placed on the contribution and work of the individual congregation's

membership and affiliates to fulfil this in both word and acts of gracious service. The institutional Church can balk at the idea of evangelical mission, images of the old Tent Mission may come to mind. But clear and focused mission is a part of the Church of Scotland's tradition, Summer Mission and Seaside Mission are examples of where the Church activated its people to 'go and tell'. It is not everyone's natural gifting to be able to do this effectively and comfortably, however, it is a part of the Church's ministry, we have to rediscover our heart and passion for. At its core it is a heart and passion for those who have not experienced the transforming love of God. This, as a form of mission, must sit alongside the wider issue of community connection and activity.

2. **Baptise and nurture new believers** - The role of discipleship is critical for the future longevity of the Church. If the drawing in of new disciples is restricted, then the likely movement through to future whole-time ministry will be directly impacted upon, as well as Eldership, office bearers and the general health of the congregation. The local church has a dual function, proclamation (kerygma) and instruction (paraenesis) in terms of discipleship. The mature believers' role is to fulfil the great commission as they are gifted by the Holy Spirit (Eph. 4:11) thus contributing to the undertaking of mark 1 above. We must, at all levels, challenge the historic presumption that Sunday attendance is sufficient, or that ministry is something that only Ministers do, or, at a push, the Eldership. The nurturing of new believers needs to have a focus on activation, participation and involvement. This may present a challenge to the leadership of local congregations to allow and extend participation to the membership. In moving from a context where there were 1600 parishes to one where the church can only afford to sustain a combined ministries level of nearer 600 it is clear that the demands being placed on those in ministry will increase significantly for the basic function of ministry, focusing on that which they alone are permitted to perform, therefore the wider working of the church will have to be left with the congregation, this may require a significant shift in both the understanding of the minister and the presumptions of the congregation.

3. **Respond to need by loving service** – To respond in acts of service would require the Church to be present among those it sought to serve at the micro level, whilst also participating in the greater and wider work of the body of Christ in supporting Christian service in other places and contexts at a macro level. Again, this emphasises the critical role that active congregations have, and that the Church can no longer be some place to retreat from the world, but to be 'training centres' for the equipping of each individual for outward Christian engagement in the community in which they are placed. This mark also requires the Church to be actively present in communities. This does not mean that it must be a congregation with a building, but there should be a gathering community in localities that are supported and equipped by its wider church family, to serve locally.

4. **Transform unjust structures** – This seems like a broader aspect than any single congregation can fulfil. However, each congregation acts as a light in the world shining in its dark places and brokenness as well as the places of plenty and ease. Though it may be unable to change the whole world individually, it can contribute to societal change through campaign and challenge to the systems of power for the betterment of humanity and to set and live an example of the same in their own communities. Moreover, the Church is called to be a vibrant presence in those communities disadvantaged by the present systems and to bring change to the lives of those living there. This can be clearly seen in the rise of foodbanks, many of which are located and run within faith communities. Our faith demands that we speak truth to power, but also to stand in solidarity with the weak and marginalised, to support the work of sister congregations where they find themselves at the coalface of that kind of Christian witness.



5. **Safeguard creation** – The growing awareness of the environmental challenge before us can put the Church in a pivotal place to communicate a different vision and godly purpose behind the concept of the stewardship of creation rather the traditional industrialisation of nature and treating it as a disposable commodity. In a local setting the church can actively be involved in the renewal of the ‘earth’ in practical ways that are context appropriate. It can also mean a practical response to the issue of buildings where inefficient and poorly equipped buildings are either released or improved to reduce the carbon footprint of the congregations. The recent injunction from General Assembly to urge congregations to move to a net zero carbon profile can only increase the need for the complete overhaul of the Ecclesial Complex within the bounds.

These ‘marks’ are to be critical and key measures and guides to the reshaping of the church locally, but even at the most basic level they are redolent with concepts of relationship and locality. This then immediately creates a tension in the demand to fulfil this and yet also reduce paid staffing and the number of potential places of worship within which this work is done. Hard choices must be made, but they should be informed and considered choices, and the most appropriate starting point is to form a vision for the Church moving forward that seeks to honour the demands of the planning process and also the missional focus of the Church. This highlights the need for the resourcing of local people to ‘be’ the church in their communities, and to work together where this can be more effective.

The General Assembly also instructed Presbytery to give a priority to engagement with the under 40’s and to the poor, this too, will or should challenge our thinking about the deployment and placement of ministries. This may be something that can more imaginatively be achieved in the urban context which may more readily allow differentiated ministries to overlap. In the rural context the likelihood is that the demand to maintain the local, to sustain points of community contact will reduce the options of creating such complementary ministries and other alternatives need to be considered.

## **Our Differentiated Presbytery Context**

The newly expanded Presbytery of Perth has some unusual features, it has three cities, a number of towns, as well as expansive rural areas and smaller communities. It embraces East Coast and more West Coast areas, the central belt to the Highlands. Each different context brings its own unique set of challenges and opportunities. Even a superficial consideration of the difference between rural, urban and semi-rural communities highlights the scale of the challenge of developing a consistent policy for deployment. It is worthwhile to consider and explore some of the differences these variations present as they will underpin the development of our deployment policy.

### *Rural Context*

Our rural communities operate in a very different way from more urbanised areas. They have different pressures and demands on congregations and ministry.

For the purposes of definition, a rural community, for our purposes, is one that has a historic root in a rural setting, generally with a farming background. While much farming still takes place, it has to be acknowledged that these businesses have had to radically diversify over the years to maximise their income and tourism related functions now represent a larger element within their portfolio. This though is not consistent across the country. Rural areas located to the west, tend to be smaller enterprises, and have had to diversify to a greater extent. To the east, farms tend to be larger with arable and softs fruits making up a larger element of their work than elsewhere. It is clear that even within the rural classification there is significant diversity. To the west, rural villages and pockets of housing can be more closely located, whereas, to the north of Presbytery, due to geography, they can be more isolated and located along the main arteries of transport, and the east more widespread due to the size of the worked landscape. Over the past fifty years or so there has been a modern 'clearance' from the land. With greater industrialisation and smaller margins, farms which would have supported a number of families, are now managed by one family often contracting specialist services as needed. This has resulted in farming becoming a 7 day a week operation with little time for recreation and leave for those actively involved in working the land. The former casual land workers have, over that time, had to reskill to find other employment or to act as a service sector to the farming industry. Recent national analysis of income levels shows that rural and highland areas contain lower levels of income than urban ones making rural poverty a more widespread issue, with more living close to the 'bread line' and yet due to its dispersed nature, it can be a hidden issue.

It seems likely that the Church has not fully responded to these changes. Within these agrarian sweeps a number of historic villages formed to service the needs of the farming community with labourer specialist skills. This can be traced back to the restructuring of the rural economy at the end of the 18th century. These villages have a sense of self definition and a deep understanding of who they are. Over the years of industrial expansion, these villages also expanded but with the improvements in transport links and the democratisation of personal travel, many also have an element of population that travels to the urban centres for work, shopping, and recreation to the nearer large urban centres. During and since the Covid19 pandemic, there has been a shift by a large number moving to more rural setting for the

perceived quality of life, and yet working in the urban centres, even if part of that work is homeworking.

Though people may travel for work and other needs, they still retain a sense of a particular connection to a local community, and even if they move away, often that connection is sustained, and with the pandemic response of congregations to put services on-line this has even been strengthened for some. Rural communities have a clear connection to the agrarian hinterland in which they sit and are often more integrated into the lives of those working the land, but many now have a wider range of residents who will live in the countryside and yet work in other places, shifting economic activity from these communities into the nearby urban centres. It has to be noted that the rise in reliance on private transport and the privatisation of public transport services have resulted in the reduction of public transport links and some communities have no direct public transport connection with neighbouring ones, which is a factor when it comes to mobility and rural poverty.

**Rural considerations for the development of the Presbytery Mission Plan Act are:**

- **Community identity.** With each community possessing a distinct identity, potential forced closures in readjustment will, most likely, result in people not travelling to a nearby centre of worship. That is unless it is something the communities agree on together as a natural response, imposed restructuring will accelerate decline. To sustain worship centres will require the inclusion of additional resources such as Ordained Local Ministry (OLM) and or recognised Local Worship Leaders (LWL) operating under a supervising minister. This will bump into the issues of reducing church buildings as being a priority, but the priority is also 'well equipped spaces, in the right places'. Though many travel daily, there is also a significant level of older age groups in the villages who are less likely to be able to or willing to travel. We must also be honest as to the reluctance, indeed almost hostility, held by some towards neighbouring churches which makes travel from one to another even less likely.
- **Rural spread.** In contradistinction to urban centres where pastoral demands occur in a more compact area, rural ministry can demand significant travel and as such population numbers is not a good indicator of demands. It may be an equitable objective to make ministry areas of similar size and yet this may be too simplistic an approach. The reality is that the demands for pastoral support in dispersed rural contexts creates a time impact and demand that does not exist in the urban setting. This is why the original weighting system was formed to allow rural ministries a bit more capacity to deal with the demands. For our rural areas that weighting, of 1.5, would mean that a rural population base of 6.6K would be equated to a 10K urban setting. While not exact it does make an allowance for the significantly dispersed nature of the rural context and is something we will need to reflect on as we develop our Plan.
- **Natural hubs (particularly the <40 age group).** While noting the individuality of the villages, they do share natural hubs, particularly for the <40 age group. Many in this age group will have children and so schools, primary but more especially secondary schools, act as a natural hub which transcends the local community but still connects people into a wider community around a shared purpose. To connect the local community and the church to the high school serving that community potentially creates natural points of connection.
- **Rural poverty.** The increase in foodbanks in urban settings is well known but the issue of rural poverty is just as acute even if for a smaller numerical group. Rural poverty impacts upon the ability to travel and the use of limited disposable income. A danger in moving the church away from these more local settings is that the people we are meant to have a 'ministry of loving service' to are actually at a greater distance and thereby increase the issues of social

isolation. The current rise in fuel costs may disproportionately impact rural areas where the quality and condition of the housing stock has been recorded as historically and consistently poorer than other settings, thereby increasing this element's impact on the lives of people.

- **Developing the body of Christ (Paraenesis).** While we have to recognise and face the reduction of whole-time ministers in the Church, this does not mean an equivalent reduction in ministry to the people. We have OLMs as a non-stipendiary form of ministry and with a more cohesive training of local people and allowing them to work under the supervision of a minister would allow more local worship centres to remain functional, sustaining the regular meeting for worship while concentrating other ministry functions under the Ministerial function. This is not to say that all current venues will or should remain open; there needs to be a viability threshold determined, or that such venues have a less frequent diet of worship. The use of digital platforms can also help sustain existing venues, though this would need the investment in the technology and most particularly the broadband feed which is poorer and less consistent than in the built-up areas.

- **Witness (Kerygma).** Relational witness is regarded as one of the most effective means of bringing others to faith. The least effective is the shipping in of a witness team who rush in, do stuff, and quickly move on. To have an effective witness in the rural communities, it has to be founded in and flow from the community. This demands an investment in the discipleship of the present body of Christ to equip and release them into the ministry in their community. The highland revival of the 1790's was not minister led, but Elder led. The witness of those living in the community was the springboard for that movement (an old example, but still relevant in its principle). To fulfil the missional proposition of the Act actually means that we have to invest more effort and resources in the development of the local, not to simply withdraw from it. We have to recognise that the ministry of the non-stipendiary and laity is critical in the witness of the Church and within our Plan we need to consider how we maximise this.

- **Environmental rootedness.** Rural communities have always been environmentally connected, and this is something the urbanites of the country are catching up with. However, Brexit and the changing of farming funding will put pressure on this and likely create a higher pastoral demand for those involved within the industry.

### *Semi-Rural Context*

There is no clear boundary between rural and urban contexts. There exists between them gradations, which present different challenges for our planning process. Semi-rural communities, be that large villages, or towns, act as bridges between the rural and the urban. Changes in the patterns of working have had direct impacts into these communities. There has been a reduction in those providing the services that farming communities seek, and their diversification has seen tourism becoming a more important revenue source and are having to restructure how they operate to meet that. The challenges they face are similar to those above.

#### **Semi-rural considerations for the development of the Presbytery Mission Plan Act are:**

Many of the issues for these communities will have much in common with the rural settings considered earlier, though with a degree of nuance.

- **Community identity.** With each community possessing a distinct identity, the likelihood of potential forced closures in readjustment will, most likely, result in people not travelling to a nearby centre of worship just as in more rural settings. However, with many in

the community having had to, where possible, re-skill after the reduction in demand from historic sources. The increasing reliance on tourism creates issues of seasonality and generally lower levels of remuneration. It is likely though that these larger communities will contain more than one church centre, and the congregations have been historically in a more 'competitive' relationship. Given the need to consolidate resources, it is likely our Plan will seek to bring these congregations together.

- **Rural location.** Though these communities are rurally set, the population tend to be closer to one another and more compact in nature. Even so, with the traditional application of the parish system as the means of governance and the provision of the offices of religion, there is a hinterland surrounding these communities which will change the demand on the call on ministry services. However, such communities may well not have a clear and significant connection with that rural hinterland.
- **Social deprivation** can often be a more hidden issue within semi-rural communities. Changes in work opportunities can result in higher unemployment levels or people moving away decreasing economic activity and employment opportunities.
- **Natural hubs (particularly the <40 age group).** This is the same issue and factor as the rural context above.
- **Developing the body of Christ (Paraenesis).** While, in general terms, this theme is constant across all sectors as outlined above.
- **Witness (Kerygma).** This is a constant theme as outlined above.
- **Environmental rootedness.** Though located in a larger community, historically they have strong connection and understanding of the farming industry and the changes still evolving in this industry.

### *Post-Industrial Semi-Rural Context*

In addition to the rural and semi-rural communities, there exists within this Presbytery what might be classed as post-industrial semi-rural communities. Such communities in Scotland were not naturally established from an agrarian background. Though these communities may have, at their core, an original village, they were greatly expanded artificially to provide a workforce supply to sustain the industrial complex in that area, such examples include mining and mill working. With the decline or cessation of these industries in these areas, there has been a significant social impact. These communities tend to have an unbalanced demographic, a housing stock that is of a similar age and often of poorer quality. With the end of the traditional employment source there may be higher levels of deprivation and a lack of opportunity in these communities. Consequently, such communities have a strong sense of individual identity and have perceptions about neighbouring communities, due to the physical distancing between them and the separation by green spaces. The sense of particular identity may be strong. This may be particularly so where some communities are identified as the 'worker' community and others the 'supervisor' or management 'class'. Whilst such communities are semi-rural, there is often little actual connection with the rural hinterland due to the nature of their formation, and the clear industrial nature of their work supply and reward.

### **Post-industrial semi-rural considerations for the development of the Presbytery Mission Plan Act are:**

Many of the issues for these communities will have much in common with the rural settings considered earlier, though with a degree of nuance.

- **Community identity.** With each community possessing a distinct identity, the likelihood of potential forced closures in readjustment will, most likely, result in people not travelling to a nearby centre of worship just as in more rural settings. However, with many in the community having had to, where possible, re-skill after the demise of major industry employers, there can be a tendency for there to be lower levels of income, and the congregations in these areas having to work 'harder' to sustain their buildings in these areas.
- **Rural location.** Though these communities are rurally set, they tend to be closer to one another and more compact in nature. Even so with the traditional application of the parish system as the means of governance and the provision of the offices of religion, there is a hinterland surrounding these communities which will change the demand on the call on ministry services. However, such communities may well not have a clear and significant connection with that rural hinterland.
- **Social deprivation.** Post-industrial communities generally relied heavily on the presence of a single industry providing the main source of paid work and then a range of service sector businesses providing specialist services to support that industry and the needs of the local population. Such services sector may well continue in some form, even after post-industrial restructuring. It is likely though that such employers will not absorb all the available workforce. Consequently, unemployment levels are likely to be higher; attainment levels tend resemble more urban contexts and have, what might be seen as, lower aspirational levels. More families and individuals are likely to rely on the support of the third sector providers such as foodbanks. With lower disposable incomes, they are less likely to be mobile and more likely depend on public transport. These comments should not be regarded as derogatory, but simply seek to reflect the complex nature of these communities and those who live in them and highlight the potential scope and missional opportunities available to the churches located in them.
- **Natural hubs (particularly the <40 age group).** This is the same issue and factor as the rural context above.
- **Developing the body of Christ (Paraenesis).** While, in general terms, this theme is constant across all sectors as outlined above, the particular issue within these communities is that of having a low starting point by way of being communities who have experienced significant employment and economic turmoil and the knock-on effects it has on confidence and attainment. More investment has to be made in people to release their potential.
- **Witness (Kerygma).** This is a constant theme as outlined above.
- **Environmental rootedness.** Though located in more rural settings these communities tend to have a history in the industrial complex and the known impact this had on the environment. This links to the issue of releasing the potential of others in congregations and creating a focus within the worshipping communities of being places of personal, local and environmental transformation.

### *Urban Conurbations*

Though urban settings may be simply defined as villages which have grown through the definition of town and continued to increase to a certain size, the impact of size is significant. Size brings with it a range of services and support services which may not otherwise exist. Increased commercial activity provides more diverse work opportunities. The relatively compact nature facilitates ease of movement and so residents are often more discriminating in their choices and allegiances. Public transport is generally more frequent and easier to access. The larger population base will tend to mean the presence of other denominations and

independent Christian churches, as well as other faiths. With such a complex and diverse population, it is clear that only a proportion of that total would think to approach the local Church of Scotland for the offices of religion as they have other choices. Urban centres contain a higher mix of economically active people covering a broader range of skills, educational attainment, and experience. Changes in work opportunities can more readily be absorbed. This wider range of skills and abilities, when part of the church community, also resources the church to be able to manage its affairs effectively.

At the same time, the urban setting also is more likely to hold areas of relative deprivation. Areas or schemes of housing established to hold workers for main employers historically generated working-class estates, often with higher socio-economic needs, issues of deprivation, substance misuse, lower educational levels and reduced attainment aspirations. Such areas provide a great challenge for the Church to connect with and seek to serve. This issue is recognised by government who have a focus on narrowing the attainment gap between those from deprived areas and others.

This has a clear demand on resources. Many areas within urban settings will have a distinctive sense of their own identity, usually formed around a sense of 'class' distinction, wealth, and opportunity. In the largest urban settings such community identity manifests itself in a lack of mobility between communities, areas that are 'no go' or to be avoided. We have clear pockets of communities experiencing multiple forms of deprivation.

**Urban considerations for the development of the Presbytery Mission Plan Act are:**

- **Community identity.** This theme is more fluid in urban settings, where identity can be linked to the larger conurbation than a particular suburb or section of it. The exception to this can be seen in places that have historically experienced extreme deprivation and those living there see their life experiences as being very different from their neighbouring communities. Consequently, people tend to be willing to travel to churches that they have a connection with, be it family or theological or ecclesiology, often passing the door of a number of others to get to that church.
- **Social deprivation** tends to be concentrated in 'pockets' of the urban community as outlined above, which usually face issues of poorer housing and a feeling of disconnection from the wider community. This does not discount that any individual family can experience deprivation in any location, but rather highlights the compounding effects of such on communities. But these 'pockets' often attract higher levels of attention due to their scale in relative terms.
- **Natural Hubs.** Urban areas create a wider range of hubs. They do exist around the High Schools as previously outlined, but we also have suburbs which presently contain a number of churches that can be regarded as a natural geographic and socio-demographic hub which is not as prevalent in the rural and semi-rural contexts. Due to the higher levels of population, people congregate to form their own hubs around interest or activities, and this presents the problem that these can be harder to identify.
- **Developing the body of Christ (Paraenesis).** While, in general terms, this theme is constant across all sectors as outlined previously, urban areas have the benefit of having a larger population base to draw on, and within that a wider range of skills and abilities to maintain the organisation of the church.
- **Witness (Kerygma).** This is a consistent theme as outlined previously.

- **Environmental rootedness.** Urban areas face challenges in this area which are different from other settings. The ability to make active choices in this context for churches is more limited. For example, rural areas could consider renewables as a viable choice for heating, ground source, geothermal etc. Urban areas tend not to have areas of 'green' space in which to locate these. Moreover, these centres can hold many of the listed buildings with the impact that brings in terms of listing and imposed restrictions and at the same time the highest number of 60's Church Extension buildings which have been built with poor materials and unproven methods. This can mean we have buildings that are not well equipped or even having the potential for adjustment, nor are they in the right places given the shift in the location of populations and housing in the intervening years to the outskirts and yet in the suburbs have church buildings of poor quality and with limited future potential life.

The natural development of urban areas can generally be defined as ring or radial, depending on the geography. The largest amount of church building was in the post-disruption period when the Presbyterian churches competed with one another and so many of these buildings are located in those parts of the urban areas built at that time. With the increased population and demand for housing of acceptable standards that emerged in the post-war period ('Homes for Heroes') new developments and schemes of houses were built and people vacated the cramped centres to move to the suburbs. The churches, in terms of buildings, were left behind and only a few peripheral churches were built. The net result is that we have too many churches in the old centres of the urban areas away from the residential areas. Though these churches may have strong historical roots they were established around smaller populations and with the Act of Union of 1929 the parish system was reworked to include these buildings forming small parishes and buildings in close proximity. It has long been argued by some that a reluctance to deal with the buildings issue at that time has greatly hampered the Church since. Given the issue of proximity, it is most likely that such areas will be more impacted by the rationalisation of buildings as the PMP is implemented.

### *General Comments*

Much is made of the impact on ministry of any proposed reductions in provision, however, we have to be open about changes in demand that have emerged in recent years. Comment is often made about the impact of funerals on workloads. In the last 20 years the general demand for a funeral to be led by a Church of Scotland minister has declined significantly. The increasing number of Humanist and Civil Celebrants has seen many people select that option, or the growing trend of direct cremations with no accompanying service of any kind. The usual reason is either that people don't have a faith and therefore do not want a religious service, or they do not have and have never had a live church connection and do not feel that they can ask the local minister to undertake the service. This issue is often directly affected by issues of deprivation where the 'free' option of a minister is the only affordable one for a family than the fees charged by others. This demonstrates the ghettoization of churches in communities. They seem closed off to others and if you are not a part of them you have no right to access them. This disconnect is most profound in the urbanized areas where alternatives are more available, less so in rural settings where there still is a remnant of a sense that the local church is where life events are marked, but these communities are smaller and therefore generate a lower routine demand, but even here the practises of the past are changing. Similarly, the connection to schools is not as clear as it has been in the past. There may still be a degree of contact, but fewer ministers are being invited to be involved in the life of the local



school on a weekly basis, as may well have been the case in the past. Though some would contest this in their location, a change in ministry or head teacher can dramatically impact on the relationship between church and school. In a post-pandemic environment, it is still not clear whether the levels of contact of the past will fully or ever return. As we have the radically restructure our church presence in communities, it may be that the hidden impact of a further separation from school communities is unconsciously sown.

We have to be aware that enlarging Parishes may well distance ordained ministry from the population and community with time having to be spent on the core functions of ministry rather than engagement. Moreover, the closure of buildings in discreet communities will effectively mean that we, as a Church, fail to meet our self-declared aim of bringing the offices of religion to the whole of Scotland. Simply looping the boundary around a community does not establish a connection. Therefore, as we have to manage a process of change, we have to do so with sensitivity and awareness, while not shirking the responsibility.

While we encourage ecumenism and support the development of bonds between the differing Christian traditions, we must also be clear that in some places, particularly the rural areas, that we represent the only Christian community. The opportunity to work more ecumenically is an aspect that only larger communities and urban context will be able to explore. We therefore cannot assume that something of the work of mission will be shared by other denominations as, quite literally, we are the 'only show in town'.

## Vision

Proverbs 29:18 reminds us that where there is no vision the people perish. Without a sense of vision or the big picture work of God in His Church, there is always a danger that the planning process becomes a management process rather than a prophetic work of the Spirit within the body of Christ leading to new life and growth. If we are to fulfil the remit of the Presbytery Mission Plan Act with reduced resources then we need to develop a Plan that is creative, (using new and innovative models of ministry) flexible, (that can maintain a minimum of core resource that can be increased or flexed upwards as needed) contextual, (that uses models and pattern that are specific to the needs of the differing contexts and communities within Presbytery) and consistent, (having set the terms and defined the parameters, it is consistently applied).

A missionally focused Plan is one that will seek to establish or sustain kerygmatic (proclaiming) and paraenial (discipling) communities, rooted and grounded in local definable communities.

Where such communities are of sufficient size to warrant whole-time ministry, these can be allocated, but it also must ensure that all worshipping communities can call on ordained ministry as needed, sustaining as local a context as possible. Failure to do so undermines the reality of the intention of the Acts Declaratory. To simply loop a parish boundary around an area does not in itself provide a territorial ministry; it merely spreads scarce resources thinner and so a more sophisticated approach is needed. It would also run contrary to the intention of the General Assembly who expressed the view that increased linkages are not the desired solution. Increasing the size of parishes through linkage would simply increase the managerial commitments of the minister through increased oversight of Kirk Sessions etc.

We should therefore seek to alter parishes in such a way that the oversight is not burdensome and thereby allow more time and energy to sustain pastoral ministry and develop the 'equipping of the saints' Ephesians 4:12-13 'to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.'

In summary;

Perth Presbytery seeks to deploy available ministry sympathetically to the needs of the different contexts within the bounds, whilst developing and deploying the gifts of the body of Christ and freeing them to work in the building of the Kingdom where they are. We recognise the need to maintain a minimum critical level of ordained ministry across our Presbytery. We also seek to create a Plan where the future shape of ministry provision can be sustained financially at the local level, address the issue of buildings so that we develop a stock that is well equipped and correctly located to sustain and support the ministry of the body of Christ. We will explore in a little more detail the thinking behind the key factors affecting the development of the Presbytery Mission Plan.

## **Developing our Assessment and Allocation Policy**

### *Regionalisation of Presbytery*

Given the size and spread of our Presbytery it is clear that a centralised system is unlikely to create a Plan that is clear and creates local identity. Given that we have three cities, Dundee, Perth and Stirling, it seems logistically reasonable to focus our Plan around these three centres. It may be useful that future training and conferencing focus around this approach to strengthen the Presbytery as it develops. This will see our Plan structured into three sections and aggregated, as a whole, at the end. In essence the Plans of Dundee and Angus will be combined, and those of Perth and Dunkeld and Meigle will be combined, and Stirling will be taken as it is. These three zones of Presbytery will allow closer scrutiny of the Plan at a local level, but also allow consideration of adjustments to the Plan around, what used to be the boundaries of the individual Plans.

### *Parish size*

Adopting a simplistic numerical system of parish size is not sophisticated enough to hold together the varying contexts within the Presbytery. To carry on the weighting system originally used in the allocation of ministries by the national Church, would see Priority Areas given a weighting of 2, rural areas a weighting of 1.5 and all other areas given a weighting of 1. While we may start from this position in our broad planning, we have to retain a degree of flexibility to organically fit around specific areas and issues, but we will use this as a principle.

It is challenging to predetermine an average parish size for any context. Over and above the issue of the size of the population is also the reasonableness of the adjustment. Does the adjustment make logical, sociological, community and potential demand sense. If it were to be argued that urban parishes should be no larger than a population base of around 12,000, Priority Areas, with a double weighting, would be no more than 6,000 and rural parishes with a weighting of 1.5 means it equates to 9,000. These can only be a guide and neither a target or a limit. Whereas consolidation in urban areas brings issues of scale, in rural settings we will face the issue that population centres would have sufficient scale to warrant a place of worship, but not necessarily on dedicated whole-time ministry, in such cases we will be asking ministers to sustain multiple worship centres, and we must face the reality of how many such centres are manageable by one person.

### *Future financial stability*

Part of our Plan has to address the issue of the long-term stability of the new charges that are devised. We recognise that radical adjustment will likely see some remove themselves from the church for a range of reasons and so it would be foolish to suggest that simple aggregation of congregational numbers and income will be accurate. This will especially be the case where the Plan seeks to close centres of worship and a working figure of a reduction of 30% may be a reasonable hypothesis.

In looking at financial stability, the gross income of charges to be adjusted will be reduced by 30% as an indicative figure for future initial income.

## *Locations*

The urban context gives the greatest degree of flexibility with regard to the adjustments of buildings. It is there that the highest level of over supply exists. However, there will be instances in rural settings where the future of buildings is highly questionable. Where we have communities of sufficient size and financial viability the Plan may adopt a policy of charges with multiple centres of worship in rural areas, which would not be the case in town or city settings. This is in order to maintain the integrity of the Third Article Declaratory and to address the issues of mobility and identity particular to smaller and scattered communities. This may also mean that public transport networks will need to be overlaid in some areas to identify which communities are connected and how readily they can be accessed.

## *Supporting Ministries*

In some areas, the future success of the restricting will depend on the ability and opportunity to deploy additional non-stipendiary ministries such as OLM, Reader and LWL. Though these are not a part of the Presbytery Mission Plan allocation of ministries, it is essential to see how ministries will be balanced across Presbytery to ensure that it is a workable Plan.

## *Achieving adjustment*

The Presbytery Mission Plan Act 8 2021 allows for a range of possible options for achieving adjustment in addition to the usual union or linkage of congregations. The Act, and the accompanying guidance to it, encourages Presbytery not to rely on the use of linkages as a way of achieving the reduction in Ministry numbers as the constitutional arrangements of the individual component congregations would still have to be maintained and result in more of the time of the clergy being consumed by administrative functions rather than ministry. The Act identifies and specifies a range of options;

*7.0 The Mission Plan may specify any of the following forms of Adjustment and other arrangements: –*

*(1) UNION*

*Two or more congregations may be united to form one congregation under the Unitary Constitution, and such union shall involve the union of charges, parishes, Kirk Sessions, Financial Boards, property and funds and, except in special circumstances where provision is made to the contrary in the Basis of Union, all congregational agencies and organisations.*

*(2) LINKING*

*Two or more charges may be linked to form one charge in terms of a Basis of Linking, so that the congregations are served by one ministry, the constitutions of the said congregations being in no other way affected.*

*(3) DEFERRED UNION OR DEFERRED LINKING*

*(a) When for any reason it is not possible to unite a vacant congregation with another congregation under the minister of the other congregation, the Presbytery may decide to unite them on the understanding that the implementation of such decision shall be deferred to take place as soon as practicable after that minister's interest has terminated.*

*(b) The Basis of Deferred Union shall provide*

*(i) that the congregations to be united shall elect a minister who shall be inducted in the first instance as minister of the vacant congregation, and*

*(ii) that on the termination of the other minister's interest the Union shall immediately be effective under the minister so elected and inducted.*

*(c) If another vacancy occurs in the originally-vacant congregation before the termination of the other minister's interest, the Basis of Deferred Union shall remain in force and the congregations shall elect another minister as in (b) above; subject to the proviso that the Presbytery may decide to recall the Basis of Deferred Union with a view to making another Adjustment decision.*

*(d) A linking may be deferred in the same manner as a union in terms of subsections (a) to (c) above.*

#### **(4) LOCAL MISSION CHURCH**

*The Presbytery may determine in its Mission Plan that a Local Mission Church shall be created, either*

*(a) following a union or dissolution effected in terms of this Act, or*

*(b) as a new venture. Such a Local Mission Church shall be established in terms of the Local Mission Church Regulations and shall be governed by a Basis of Local Mission Church. The process to create a Local Mission Church shall be as specified in the Guidance.*

#### **(5) GUARDIANSHIP**

*A charge may continue without the right to call a minister under the Guardianship of the Presbytery. There shall be a Basis of Guardianship which shall include the timing and scope of the how the guardianship shall be reviewed. In such a case, the Presbytery will appoint an Interim Moderator who will ensure that appropriate arrangements are put in place to enable the ongoing ministry and Mission of the congregation(s). For the avoidance of doubt, a Guardianship shall count as 0.25 towards the total ministry allocation for a Presbytery. A Guardianship shall be subject to a separate five yearly review process at the instigation of Presbytery, alongside the normal annual evaluation and development of the Mission Plan.*

#### **(6) NEW CHARGE DEVELOPMENT**

*Those new charges which have been established prior to the passing of this Act in terms of Act XIII 2000 may be included in the relevant Mission Plans, but no new charges under Act XIII 2000 may be specified in a Mission Plan after the passing of this Act.*

#### **(7) TRANSPORTATION**

*(a) The Presbytery may move a congregation from one place of worship to another, and, where that involves a change of parish, it shall be designated "transportation".*

*(b) Where transportation is effected, the Presbytery shall take such steps of Adjustment as may be necessary to ensure that the parishes involved are allocated to defined charges.*

#### **(8) PARISH GROUPINGS**

*The Presbytery may declare that two or more charges shall have responsibility for a single area. The Basis of such an Adjustment shall determine the extent to which the charges shall operate as a Parish Grouping, for instance in the sharing of worship, personnel, education resources, mission initiatives, congregational organisations etc.*

#### **(9) DISSOLUTION**

*A charge may be dissolved by the Presbytery of the bounds. The Basis of Dissolution shall provide for: -*

*(a) The issuing of certificates of transference to all members of the congregation;*

*(b) The allocation of the parish to another charge or charges;*

*(c) The transfer to the General Trustees, prior to dissolution, of any heritable property held by or on behalf of the congregation title to which is not yet vested in the General Trustees;*

*(d) The transfer, prior to dissolution, of funds to enable the General Trustees to discharge their obligations (including maintenance, security and insurance) in relation to any heritable property held by or on behalf of the congregation which is designated as a Historic Property; provided that such funds shall include (i) all restricted funds (including organ funds) held for fabric purposes and (ii) such proportion of all unrestricted funds as may be reasonably required for such purposes by the General Trustees; and*

*(e) The destination of all other property and funds of the charge(s)*

#### **(10) TEAM MINISTRY**

*(a) The Presbytery may determine, in respect of any charge, the amount of ministerial time required by the charge, and the number and nature of posts necessary, provided that (except in the case of job-sharing) the Presbytery shall identify one of the inducted ministers as moderator of the Kirk Session.*

(b) Presbyteries are encouraged in designing a Team Ministry to consider the significance of the role which might be played by those other than Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Ministries Development Staff.

(c) The terms under which a Team Ministry will operate shall be set out in a Basis of Team Ministry agreed by the Presbytery and all members of the Team prior to any such Team Ministry being established; the Basis shall include a dispute resolution mechanism.

(d) A Team Ministry may be created in one or other of the following two ways:

(I) a Presbytery may create a Team Ministry with an inducted parish minister (who shall be the moderator of the Kirk Session) and which may include a deacon, MDS appointments, the appointment of an Ordained Local Minister or such other appointment as may be deemed appropriate in Mission Plan discussions, or

(II) alternatively, the Presbytery may create within the charge a Team Ministry consisting of two or more Team Ministry Charges, to each of which a parish minister shall be inducted, provided always that one of the Team Ministry Charges shall be identified in the Basis as the one providing the moderator of the Kirk Session. The Team may also include a deacon, MDS appointments, the appointment of an Ordained Local Minister or such other appointment as may be deemed appropriate in Mission Plan discussions.

(e) Where there are Team Ministry Charges created in terms of paragraph (d)(II) above, the following shall apply:

(A) The Team Ministry Charges shall share the same congregation and Kirk Session and be part of the same Church life.

(B) The ministers inducted to a Team Ministry Charge shall each occupy the manse provided for their use.

(C) The ministers of the Team Ministry Charges shall be appointed in one or other of the following two ways:

(i) the ministers may be called, with appropriate changes, through the vacancy processes set out in Act VIII 2003, or

(ii) where a new charge is being created by a union of charges and where there are at the time of the proposed union minister(s) inducted to one or more of those charges with unrestricted tenure, it shall be competent for the Presbytery to create Team Ministry Charges within the new charge and to include such minister(s) within the new charge subject to their agreement to the Basis of Team Ministry.

(D) The Team Ministry Charges, save for any exception at (e)(C)(ii) above, shall be Reviewable Charges in the terms set out in section 9(1) of this Act and may be part-time.

(E) For the avoidance of doubt, the minister(s) who are not inducted to the Team Ministry Charge providing the moderator of the Kirk Session will not automatically succeed to that Team Ministry Charge on the occurrence of a vacancy but would be entitled to apply for that Team Ministry Charge through the vacancy processes set out in Act VIII 2003.

#### (11) NEW FORMS OF CHURCH LIFE

After consultation with the Forum, the Presbytery may devise a new form of Adjustment or ministry, ensuring that such form is consistent with the Acts and deliverances of the General Assembly. This may include the provision of online Church, where the Presbytery seeks to coordinate and resource the provision of online worship and Mission by identifying congregations, partnerships or agencies which will be given lead responsibility for such provision; this may include the allocation of a Mission Plan post or posts. The Mission Plan should demonstrate how the Presbytery will relate to those whose belonging is primarily through networks or the virtual world.

#### (12) PRESBYTERY MISSION INITIATIVE

The Presbytery may set up a Presbytery Mission Initiative in terms of the Presbytery Mission Initiatives Act (Act V 2015).

The Plan presented by the committee should be seen as a step on a transformational journey, bringing congregations together into area groupings with a view to seeing them move from individual component parts into a more integrated whole. This would see congregations move from linkages to union over time as relationships are built and the issue of buildings engaged with. Some congregations moving from independent units to linked charges sharing the

increasingly scarce ministry resource. It may ask congregation to enter completely new models of relation and ministry where a cluster of congregations are served by a team of ministers. It is the view of the committee that this evolutionary process is best located at the local level than imposed from a regional or national body. However, if insufficient progress is made in this area, then Presbytery may have to revisit the issue at its annual review of the Plan, which is required by the Act.

The key benefit of such a coming together is the releasing of people in all congregations to the work of mission and witness rather than administration and function. For example, where there are multiple congregations at present each must have a range of office bearers to comply with the requirements of the institution including a Clerk, treasurer, safeguarding officer, property convenor, etc. As these congregations come together these diverse compliance activities can be consolidated and though the revised form may have small teams dealing with the work, thereby sharing the load, ensuring continuity and even succession planning, more will be released to sustain witness, worship, and the mission of the church in their community. As will be observed in the Plan there is no standard parish size used and that different approaches are being used in different areas building on the work of the legacy Presbyter's Mission Plans.

As the Plan is annual reviewed and revised in considering changes to allocations a complex balance had to be struck about parish size in terms of population and also geography, the specific demands a parish may hold, schools, nursing homes etc, the demands changes may make of ministers and whether that is sustainable. Every effort will be taken to ensure that the decisions taken in the future will be consistent across the Presbytery. In saying that the critical factors that we will seek to balance are;

- Parish population size as this is likely to have a direct impact on ministry demands for funerals etc.
- Parish geography, a large area presents specific demands about travel for ministers and also issues around poor weather travelling.
- The impact on service expectations, for example, the linking of a number of congregations may present specific problems with regard to maintaining worship across them all, and so a union may be the optimal option even though such a Plan may face increased levels of local resistance.
- Communities make up our parishes and it seems fitting to, as far as possible, keep communities and smaller connected communities together in one charge where they share common services, such as schools, critical transport infrastructure, or commercial hubs as all of this will generate a common sense of identity.

There will be other factors not listed above, but the foregoing does highlight the complexity of the issues we face in balancing demand with resource availability.

## **Developmental Issues**

### *Ordained Local Ministries (OLM) & Local Worship Leaders (LWL)*

The success of the Plan does not rely solely on the work of parish ministers but recognises the work of OLMs, Readers and LWLs in delivering ministry and worship at local levels. This requires the Presbytery, through its congregations, to promote and advance these roles within the Church, seeking to identify those who have the skills and gifts to contribute to the work locally. We recognise that the journey to OLM is beyond our control as it is a national scheme, however, we can promote this as a possibility. An initial step on this journey will be equipping LWLs who will gain vital experience and encouragement that this is a form of ministry they could, with training and support, undertake. It is essential then that the Presbytery's LWL course is established and made accessible to people across Presbytery. This may require the use of on-line technologies to allow people to engage in the process with reduced travelling commitments.

### *New forms of ministry*

As we move into this new era for the Church, we have to move beyond the initial reaction phase that contraction will inevitably bring and look for ways to encourage the congregations in all locations to engage missionally with their communities. The Presbytery Mission Plan system was brought forward with a slogan of 'pruning for growth', if the contraction phase is the pruning, we need to resource the growth element. The Presbytery has a role in networking congregations doing new work with the wider Presbytery. Consideration has to be given to bringing in external partners, even on a short-term basis, to work with congregations on what fresh expressions of Church they could explore, how to undertake community audits to identify needs and opportunities for the Church to engage positively. Moreover, to develop links with organisations like Scripture Union, who specialise in ministry to young people, to boost or restart local engagement with young people. It is part of the responsibility of Presbytery to encourage and nurture congregations and not simply leave them to their own devices. We understand that not all of the potential demand for this can be met at the same time and a degree of prioritising will have to be done, but Presbytery is urged to bring forward a Plan on how it intends to undertake this 'growth' work.

### *Local Church Review*

The Local Church Review (LCR) scheme was developed to supersede the elements of the Quinquennial visitation system, shift the focus from assessment to encouragement. We recommend that the Presbytery examine ways of building the LCR into a focused and purpose driven tool for local congregations to develop their local ministry.

We hope, from the foregoing, that it is clear that the PMP is not a stand-alone part of Presbytery's work, rather it shows the need for an integrated response at both local and Presbytery level. We cannot simply complete the Plan as a process and then leave it on the shelf until the annual review. The Plan should trigger a wider Presbytery response of support and training for the local congregations to enable them to fulfil the Great Commission of Christ to the church where they are. If we, as a Presbytery, fail to do this we will, most likely,



contribute to the compounding of the cycle of decline and we will fail to realise the potential new life and growth that we all hope and pray for.

## Reality Check

We must acknowledge that this move to the Presbytery Mission Plan system has been embraced positively by a few, or generally accepted and seen as inevitable by many, but it is also a source of great hurt and discouragement for some. As we develop plans on paper to adjust ministries and congregations, the impact and reality of this will be felt at the local level. Some will feel threatened and a deep sense of loss. A loss, not only of a building, but the loss of story. Many will have long rooted history in a church, places where memories are rooted, marriages, baptism, funerals, the echoes of family voices joining in the singing, memories spanning not only their lives, but perhaps for generations before them. Those who have worked hard to keep places of worship, ministries and a church presence in a community going, may feel that all of that work has been for nothing, or worse is being treated as having had no value or worth. We acknowledge that this process of change may not be easy for some. It has been said that implementing change is a process of disappointing people at a rate they can cope with. In truth, for some, they will not be in a place to cope with any change and for them they may feel to depart is their only option.

We have to develop a pastoral heart within the administrative process, understanding the mixed emotions that will be presented and who they will impact on and the reactions of those impacted. As we move forward with the implementation of the Plan, we would do well to acknowledge loss and celebrate the past as we move people through the liminal space towards a future that is uncertain and unclear.

With the many words that have been used so far, we turn to the practical elements of the Plan. As indicated earlier we have adopted a three-zone approach, Dundee, Perth and Stirling zones. These are not independent units but are three subsets of the whole to make it easier for people to drill down to the local impacts the Plan may have. The allocation principles are being applied equally across all the zones. Each zone is compiled of sectors or areas where the ministry is being considered together to ensure balance and consistency.

There are two elements to the Plan. There is an extended narrative, principally taken from the approved legacy Plans, and an extracted abstract in tabular form to present the information in a condensed form. Both documents should be read together to gain as complete a picture of the Plan as possible.

## AMBA

As part of the Presbytery Mission Planning Act, Presbyteries are required to assess the use and location of buildings currently used for worship and church activities in communities. To provide a consistent assessment methodology the General Trustees develop the Asset Management Building Audit process. A questionnaire was completed for each building covering a wide range of issues about fabric, location, accessibility and facilities. The information was gathered by Presbyteries and assessed and scored by the General Trustees.

This information is purposed to aid Presbyteries making a determination on the future of buildings. However, it is not as simple as the lower the score the more likely a building will be disposed of. Presbytery must look at the need for a building in a specific location, but it may help in making a determination between buildings where there is a choice of which building should be retained.

To borrow a phrase from the General Trustees, we are looking to establish 'well equipped spaces, in the right places'. Buildings built sometime ago and only with the use of worship in mind, seldom offer the opportunity to be used for other activities. We are also looking balance the issue of being in the right place. The AMBA system seeks to create a matrix of scores for each building and hall based on location, accessibility and flexibility giving a final score. It may well be that a well equipped church is in the wrong place and presbytery has to make the hard choice about its future. Likewise, a poorly equipped and inflexible church building may be in the right place and the Presbytery has to consider whether the congregation has the resources to remodel he building maintaining its use as a place of worship, but to allow it to also provide other flexible use for the work and mission of the church, thereby bring the congregations biggest asset into more regular use. A vision that sees the only function of a church building as a place of worship is limited. That place of worship is also to be a place for the propagation of the gospel. It is the view of the committee that those who founded and built our churches would understand that. They had the energy and enthusiasm to build where there was nothing and we hope they would commend us in having a vision for the future that puts the use of our primary assets to maximum benefit for the work of the Kingdom of God.

It is clear that the issue of buildings can be the most emotive issue within the planning process. The talk of closure and disposal can be hard for congregations to hear and engage with, even if the issues around planning and deployment are, if reluctantly, accepted. However, this is an issue that has dogged the church since the Act of Union in 1929 where the buildings erected during the disruption were allowed to remain and parishes formed to suit the building rather than taking the long-term view of sustainability. We are now in a time when even harder decisions are having to be taken in an effort to sustain the medium-term future of the national church.

## **Future Allocation Changes**

Clearly, this Plan is based on the current allocation of ministries. However, there is no guarantee that this number will be constant. We may find ourselves in a position, at some point in the future, of having to face changes to that allocation. This could be one of two scenarios, firstly one of further reduction, or secondly, the situation where additional resources are granted. In either case we have to have a prepared approach to the implementation of changed allocation levels.

Should further reductions in ministry numbers be imposed we must consider where such adjustment could be accommodated. As we consider the current Plan as a whole, it is clear that a significant level of reduction has been across the board, but the greatest impact can be seen in the more rural areas where ministry has been spread as thinly as possible while maintaining a regular church presence in the communities they seek to minister. Further reductions in these areas will result in the removal of Christian ministry in a number of communities and failure of the church to meet its own stated purpose in the Third Article Declaratory. Consequently, the more urban areas of Presbytery present greater capacity for downward adjustment. As unsatisfactory as this is, further consolidation through adjustment is more possible in the urban centres of the Presbytery, namely Dundee, Perth and Stirling city areas.

Alternatively, should there be an increase in the allocation of ministry, there is an opportunity to develop presbytery or zone wide ministries to support and aid local congregational development and extending ministry support to facilitate annual leave for ministers. Such posts may include but not be limited to such things as Fresh Expressions, Family Ministry, specialist youth/school ministries. Should Presbytery prefer to bolster parish ministry then priority should be given to increase provision in areas that have been subject to significant adjustments and allowing areas placed under guardianship to be granted some degree of permanent ministry allocation, recognised Priority Areas, and areas where ministry provision extends over significant a geographical to reduce the stresses on ministry provision.

## Plan Development

This Plan is a compilation of the five separate legacy Plans, all of which were approved under the terms of the Act. In an effort to simplify the presentation of the Plan, the supporting text of the legacy Plans have been significantly reduced and the essential summary included herein. The original legacy Plans can still be accessed on the Presbytery website. As the Plan evolves clarifying text may be added at subsequent revisions.

At the formation of the next Plan in 2028, it will be necessary for the Presbytery to consider the approach to the nature of tenures offered at vacancy and to establish a coherent and consistent approach across Presbytery, this may result in the alteration of some Charges within legacy areas being altered from Reviewable to Unrestricted when all planned adjustments have been completed.

For the avoidance of doubt, this consolidated Plan does not constitute a new Plan.

## **Dundee Zone**

Dundee Zone has been subdivided into 12 sectors.

### *Urban area Dundee Central – allocation 4 FTE*

#### **Congregations in this sector:**

**Dundee Law**  
**Dundee Kingsgait**  
**Stobswell Trinity**  
**St Mary's**

The former Coldside parish is a designated Priority Area by the national Church, and this also reflects the City Council view.

#### **Meadowside St. Paul's linked with St. Andrews**

These congregations united on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023, to form Kingsgait Church. The congregations have proposed that the Meadowside St. Paul's building be let as it is in a prime City Centre location. They anticipate that this will provide a source of income to support further mission initiatives. This fulfils the Plan.

#### **Stobswell and Trinity**

These congregations united on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023, to form Stobswell Trinity Church. Worship is conducted in the former Trinity Church building and the Stobswell Church building shall be sold, let, or otherwise disposed of in consultation with the General Trustees. This fulfils the Plan.

#### **Coldside and The Steeple**

These congregations united on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, to form Dundee Law Parish Church. Both buildings to be retained. This fulfils the Plan.

#### **St Mary's**

On the retirement of the present incumbent, St Mary's shall either unite with Dundee Law Church or it shall be dissolved, and its building shall be sold, let or otherwise disposed of by the end of 2027.

The grouping is asked to explore the feasibility of becoming one parish operating with a Team Ministry within the life of the Plan.

#### **Summary.**

1. Dundee Law - 2 MWS
2. Stobswell Trinity – 1 MWS
3. Kingsgait – 1 MWS

4. St Mary's 1 MWS until retirement of present incumbent.

Overstaffed by 1 FTE until retirement of minister of St Mary's.

**A reduction from 6 FTE to 4 FTE**

**Buildings Categorisation.**

Coldside Church - A

Dundee Trinity - A

Dundee St Andrews - A

Stobswell - B

Steeple - A

St Mary's - B

Meadowside St Pauls – B.

**Adjustment steps to be completed.**

1. The disposal of Stobswell has been approved.
2. Meadowside St Paul's is Category B, however the congregation are granted permission to retain the property and maintain the commercial lets provided they meet the maintenance costs and do not present a drain on congregational resources. This provision is to be reviewed at each annual Plan review.
3. St Mary's and the Steeple share one city centre site. It is difficult to rationalise an argument for this to continue and the proposal is to keep The Steeple as it has been modernised and has significant missional outreach operating from its premises. The Steeple has been categorised as 'A' and St Mary's as 'B' with a decision to dispose by end 2027.
4. Congregations in this sector are encouraged to work towards a Parish Grouping.

## Urban area Dundee Western – allocation 4 FTE

### **Congregation in this sector:**

**Menziesshill Church & Hall**

**Logie St John's**

**Dundee West**

**Lochee Church and Hall**

**Camperdown Church**

### **Balgay**

This congregation has been dissolved. This fulfils the Plan.

### **Westgait Church: Union of Camperdown, Dundee West, Lochee, Menziesshill, Logie and St John's (Cross)**

The congregations have formed Westgait Church with a 4FTE allocation of 3 Ministers of Word and Sacrament in a Team Ministry and one MDS. This fulfils the Plan. The congregations of Camperdown and Lochee are recognised priority areas.

### **Reduction from 6.6 FTE to 4 FTE.**

### **Buildings Categorisation.**

Menziesshill Church & Hall - A

Logie St John's – B, disposal by Easter 2025

Dundee West – A

Lochee Church and Hall - A

Balgay Church - B

Camperdown Church – B

\* Review of the of buildings categorisation for Logie and Dundee West has been undertaken and it is confirmed that Dundee West has been selected as the preferred centre for the work of this congregation.

Menziesshill church and hall have been allocated category 'A'. This reflects its location, the investment in the fabric of the building and its extensive missional activity. Similarly, Lochee church and hall have been allocated category 'A'. Camperdown has been allocated category 'B' and has been approved for disposal.

The Balgay building has already been put on the market.

### **Adjustment steps to be completed**

None



## Rural Northwest area Carse – allocation 2 FTE

### **Congregation in this sector:**

**Sidlaw**

**Invergowrie**

**Inchture & Kinnaird**

**Abernyte**

**Longforgan Church**

**St Marnock's Fowlis Easter**

**Invergowrie Hall**

**Longforgan Hall**

The congregation of Auchterhouse, Fowlis and Liff Parish Church of Scotland and Lundie and Muirhead united on 1 January 2024 to form Sidlaw Church with a 1FTE. This fulfils the Plan.

The linked charges of Abernyte, Inchture & Kinnaird linked with Longforgan and Invergowrie to move to a union.

### **Summary**

1. Linked charges of Abernyte, Inchture & Kinnaird with Longforgan and Invergowrie unite - **1 FTE**
2. Sidlaw - **1 FTE**

### **Reduction from 3FTE to 2 FTE.**

### **Buildings Categorisation.**

Muirhead - A

Invergowrie Church & Hall - A

Inchture & Kinnaird - A

Abernyte - B

Auchterhouse - A

Longforgan Church - A

Longforgan Hall - B

St Marnock's Fowlis Easter - B

Muirhead Church, Invergowrie Church and hall, and Inchture & Kinnaird Church have all been categorised as 'A'. Location, condition of fabric and levels of activity justify this category.

Auchterhouse has been categorised as 'A' due to location and condition of fabric.

Longforgan Church has been categorised 'A' as plans for redevelopment of a multi-use community and church space in partnership with the local community trust are well advanced and consultations in the local community have been very positive. This had been agreed previously by both Presbytery and the General Trustees. Longforgan Church Hall has been categorised 'B' as it is planned to dispose of it as part of the funding package for

redevelopment an exact date for release of the building is unknown at this point as it will be required to be used during the redevelopment of the church, as such it shall be reviewed annually.

The churches at Abernyte, Inchtute, Invergowrie and Longforgan at present used and occupied by the congregations shall be the places of worship of the united charge. A Review of the ongoing use of the four buildings shall take place by the end of 2026.

St Marnock's Fowlis Easter Church has been categorised as 'B', disposal should have been by end 2024, conversations are ongoing. This is due to levels of use and proximity to other places of worship.

**Adjustment steps to be completed.**

1. The linked charges of Abernyte, Inchtute & Kinnaird linked with Longforgan and Invergowrie to unite.
2. Disposal of St Marnock's Folwis Easter.
3. Disposal of Longforgan Church Hall by end 2025.
4. A determination on the place or places of worship for the united charge in 1 above to be made by end of 2026.

## Urban Area Dundee North – allocation 4.5FTE

### **Congregation in this sector:**

**Dundee Craigowl**  
**Dundee Northeast**  
**Downfield Mains**

All charges and congregations in this area shall be part of a formal 'Parish Grouping', as provided for in the Presbytery Mission Plan Act 2021. In doing so, each will be expected to identify their own response to the five marks of mission.

### **Dundee Craigowl**

Strathmartine and Chalmers Ardler have united to form Craigowl Church with a 1FTE. This fulfils the Plan.

### **Dundee Northeast**

The congregations of Fintry, Whitfield, Douglas, Mid Craigie, and Craigiebank united to form Dundee Northeast with 1 MWS, 0.5 MWS Pioneer Ministry (for up to two years initially), 1 MDS and 2 OLMs. This fulfils the Plan.

### **Summary**

1. Union of Chalmers Ardler and Strathmartine – 1 MWS.
2. Downfield Mains – 1 MWS.
3. Fintry, Whitfield, Douglas & Midcraigie, Craigiebank – 1 MWS 0.5 MWS Pioneer Ministry (for two years from the date of appointment), 1 MDS and 2 OLMs.

### **Reduction from 6 FTE to 4.5 FTE.**

### **Buildings Categorisation.**

Chalmers Ardler - A  
Douglas & Mid Craigie - B  
Strathmartine - B  
Downfield Mains - A  
Whitfield – B, approved for disposal.  
Fintry - B

Chalmers Ardler and Downfield Mains churches have been categorised 'A' as a result of location, and levels of activity.

Strathmartine Church has been categorised as 'B' and has been approved for disposal.

Whitfield Church, category 'B' has been approved for disposal.

Douglas & Mid Craigie Church and Fintry Parish Church have all been categorised as 'B'. The congregation are currently exploring the possible redevelopment of the existing sites to

provide better equipped spaces for their mission purposes. This is being done in conjunction with the General Trustees and the Presbytery Buildings Officer and it is hoped that the Congregation will be in a position to submit a costed proposal and plan in 2025 for the consideration of the Planning Committee and subsequent approval of Presbytery.

**Adjustment steps to be completed.**

1. All charges to move towards a formal Parish Grouping.
2. A review and assessment of the remaining building estate of Douglas & Mid Craigie Church and Fintry Parish Church being undertaken by the congregation to development of well-equipped spaces in the right places for the united charge. A costed proposal and plan to be submitted in 2025 for the consideration of the Planning Committee and subsequent approval of Presbytery.

## Urban area Broughty Ferry & Dundee East – allocation 2 FTE

### **Congregations in this sector:**

#### **Broughty Ferry Parish Church St Stephen's & West Church**

#### **Broughty Ferry Parish Church**

The congregations of Barnhill St Margaret's, St James, St. Luke's and Queen Street and New Kirk were united on February 1<sup>st</sup> 2024. The Ministry allocation is 2 MWS AND 1 MDS, the latter to be centrally funded until the end of 2027. This fulfils the Plan.

St Stephen's & West to be integrated into the combined charge at the demission of the incumbent.

### **Reduction from 4 FTE to 2 FTE.**

#### **Buildings Categorisation.**

Barnhill St Margaret's Church and Hall – A

St Stephen's & West Church and Hall – B to be disposed of by end 2027.

St Luke's & Queen Street Church – A

St Lukes & Queen Street Hall – B

Queen Street East Church and Hall (formerly New Kirk) - A

St Aidan's Halls - A

St James' Church and Hall - B

The grouping is asked to determine which buildings should be reclassified as 'A' to best meet their missional goals, subject to Presbytery approval. The necessary steps to complete the determination of the buildings was not completed by the end of 2024 and urgent discussions are ongoing.

#### **Adjustment steps to be completed.**

1. Determination of the future building requirements.
2. St Stephen's & West to be integrated into the single charge and Team Ministry at the demission of the incumbent.

## Semi-Rural area Monifieth – allocation 1.5 FTE

### **Congregation in this sector:**

#### **Monifieth South Angus Church**

The congregations of Monifieth and Monikie & Newbigging and Murroes & Tealing formed a union to form Monifieth South Angus. This fulfils the Plan.

The ministries allocation is **1 FTE** MWS and **0.5 FTE** MDS operating as a Team Ministry.

#### **Reduction from 2 FTE to 1.5 FTE.**

#### **Buildings Categorisation.**

Monifieth Church - A

Murroes Church – B, approved for disposal.

Monikie Church – B, approved for disposal.

Murroes Hall - A

Monifieth Gerard Hall – B, sold.

Monifieth Church has been categorised as ‘A’ due to location, significant investment in the new build and levels of activity.

Monifieth Gerard Hall has been categorised as ‘B’ - sold.

Murroes Church and Monikie Church have been categorised as ‘B’ due to location and levels of use and approval to sell has been confirmed.

Murroes Hall has been categorised as ‘A’ with a view to redevelopment as both a community space and place of worship in the rural part of this grouping.

#### **Adjustment steps to be completed.**

1. The charge in this sector to move to a Parish Grouping with Carnoustie Trinity.

## Semi-Rural area Arbroath – allocation 3.5 FTE

### **Congregation in this sector:**

#### **Arbroath and District**

The congregations of Arbroath Old & Abbey, St Andrew's, West Kirk, St Vigean's, Carmyllie, Colliston, Friockheim & Kinnell, Inverkeilor & Lunan and Arbirlot formed a union in two stages to create Arbroath and District Church. This fulfils the Plan.

Part of the Plan includes a local partnership by using 0.5 FTE of the ministry allocation being topped up locally to form a full post to focus on work among children, young people and families.

#### **Summary.**

1. All congregations have been brought into one united congregation with one Kirk Session.
2. The new congregation is served by 3.5 FTE posts - 3 MWS and 1 MDS Children & Family Worker (0.5 from the allocation and 0.5 paid locally).

#### **Reduction from 5.25 FTE to 3.5 FTE.**

#### **Buildings Categorisation.**

Arbroath: Old & Abbey - B  
Arbroath: St. Andrew's - A  
Arbroath: St. Vigean's - A  
Arbroath: West Kirk - A  
Arbirlot Church and hall– B, approved for disposal.  
Carmyllie - A  
Colliston – B, approved for disposal.  
Friockheim – B, approved for disposal.  
Inverkeillor Church - A  
Inverkeillor Hall – B, approved for disposal.

West Kirk and St. Andrew's scored most highly in AMBA and are to be retained. But the halls suite at Old & Abbey scored highly and is recognised as being an excellent facility which could operate as a Mission Centre and as the Administrative Centre for the area. It is proposed that further work be done as a matter of urgency to determine the feasibility or otherwise of separating the sanctuary from the halls and thus determining whether or not the sanctuary could be repurposed or disposed of appropriately, with a resolution of this by 31/12/2025.

St. Vigean's has issues around accessibility and facilities, with the sanctuary sitting atop a small steep hill and with no toilets etc. The work to improve the sanctuary (toilet facilities) is complete. However, plans and work to address the path and accessibility are still ongoing it is agreed due to the building being 'A' listed and the involvement of external agencies, dependent on these works being carried out by end 2026, that St. Vigean's be retained.

Colliston, Arbirlot and Carmyllie are situated to the west and northwest of Arbroath. Each serving a rural community with a small population. To allow time for thoughtful and sensitive repurposing or disposal of the buildings at Colliston and Arbirlot e.g. to consider some kind of community ownership, a date of 31/12/2025 should be set for disposal.

Friockheim and Inverkeillor. Friockheim is the largest of the villages and both it and Inverkeillor have seen new housing developments recently. Inverkeillor has two buildings - the Church and the hall, which are at a distance from one another. The hall might be said to be 'in the village' where other facilities such as the primary school and village hall are also situated. The Church sits at the edge of the village. In this case, there is felt to be merit in disposing of the hall and retaining the church building. Friockheim Church and adjoining hall were found to require considerable work and, with an excellent community facility (The Hub) in the heart of the village. The Hub is now being used as the Church and their current buildings have been approved for disposal.

**Adjustment steps to be completed.**

1. Determination of the future of Old & Abbey building by end December 2025.
2. St. Vigean's to undertake alteration and access work by end of 2026.



## Rural Area Esk – allocation 2 FTE

### **Congregations in this sector:**

#### **Brechin and Farnell Church Edzell Lethnot Glenesk I/w Fern, Careston, Menmuir**

The ministry allocation of 2 FTE MWS - one serving Brechin united with Farnell and one serving Edzell.

The linked congregations of Edzell, Lethnot Glenesk and Fern Careston and Menmuir are now united with the Edzell building being used as the place of worship.

The linked congregations of Brechin and Farnell are now united. This fulfils the Plan.

#### **Summary.**

1. Brechin united with Farnell now form one parish with **1 FTE**.
2. Edzell will act as the centre for the unions of the surrounding churches Glenesk, Fern, Careston, Menmuir with **1 FTE**.

#### **A reduction from 3 to 2 FTE.**

#### **Buildings Categorisation.**

Brechin Parish Church (Gardner Memorial) - A

Farnell - A

Edzell - A

Fern – B, sold.

Careston – B, sold.

Maule – B, sold.

Brechin Parish Church (Gardner Memorial). It is well located and, as the AMBA results make clear, in reasonably good shape and given a category A. Farnell church building has been retained as an A, giving the Union two worship centres.

Edzell Church is well located and has been both maintained and developed in recent times meaning that it is a 'well equipped space in the right place' and is given a category A.

Fern, Careston, and Maule Memorial are classed as 'B' and are to be disposed of by end of 2025. Fern and Careston have been sold. These buildings are set in very scattered communities with no clear population centres but are within reasonable driving distance of both Edzell and Tannadice churches.

#### **Adjustment steps to be completed.**

None.

## Semi-Rural area Carnoustie – allocation 2 FTE

### **Congregation in this sector:**

#### **Carnoustie Trinity**

Current ministry has Barry I/w Carnoustie (**1 FTE MWS**) and support by an OLM (presently locum at Arbirlot I/w Carmyllie); Carnoustie: Panbride with **1 FTE MWS**.

Proposed ministry envisages that there would be a union resulting in one Congregation served by **2 FTE MWS** and support by an OLM.

The union was effected on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024. This fulfils the Plan.

#### **Summary.**

1. All congregations have united to form Carnoustie Trinity served by 2 FTE.

**Represents the continued allocation of 2 FTE.**

#### **Buildings Categorisation.**

Newton Parish (Carnoustie) - A

Carnoustie Church - A

Panbride Church - B

Barry Church - B

Newton Church buildings scored more highly under AMBA but there is certainly potential for developing the Carnoustie Church building to bring it up to a higher standard. The case for the retention of the Barry site is less clear. In terms of the geography, Barry (which has a parish population of 5,600) is distinct from Carnoustie and yet only by a short distance with travel regarded as feasible. Barry scores most poorly in the AMBA table. Final decisions regarding the Carnoustie Cluster, and Barry in particular, will flow from the South Angus discussions and should be resolved by end of 2025. Similarly, the Church at Panbride to be disposed of and is presently on the market.

#### **Adjustment steps to be completed.**

1. Determination of Barry building to be finalised by end of 2025.
2. This charge to continue to investigate moving towards a Parish Grouping with Monifieth South Angus Church.

## Semi-Rural area Forfar – allocation 3 FTE

### **Congregation in this sector:**

#### **Forfar All Souls**

#### **Forfar East and Old and Inverarity**

To be able to serve the whole population, town and country, a team of 3 MWS along with an OLM, with the addition of locally trained worship leaders and elders and members, is envisaged in the future.

A considerable amount of adjustment has already taken place: -

To the west and south, Forfar: East & Old have come together with the rural area of Inverarity to form Forfar: East, Old & Inverarity

To the north, east and southeast, the rural congregations of Aberlemno, Guthrie & Rescobie, the village congregation of Dunnichen, Letham & Kirkden and the town congregations of Forfar: Lowson Memorial and Forfar: St. Margaret's have formed a union to become Forfar: All Souls retaining 3 places of worship.

### **Summary.**

1. 2 Kirk Sessions in the first instance with a road map towards one Kirk Session.
2. 3 FTE MWS supported by 1 OLM working in a team.

### **Reduction from 5FTE to 3 FTE plus 1 OLM.**

### **Buildings Categorisation.**

Forfar: East & Old - A

Forfar: Lowson Memorial - A

Forfar: St. Margaret's - B

Letham -A

Aberlemno - A

Guthrie - B

Rescobie – B

Inverarity - A

East & Old building in the centre of the town will be retained, along with the Lowson Memorial building set at the eastern end, in the heart of community housing.

Forfar: East & Old – A, as noted above their condition and location meet the needs of the Plan. The halls have been sold.

Forfar: Lowson Memorial – A, as noted above their condition and location meet the needs of the Plan.

Forfar: St. Margaret's – B, is now closed and about to be sold.

Letham – A. The buildings in the village of Letham will also be retained.

Aberlemno – A. To be retained and is categorised A.

Inverarity buildings have been recategorized as A due to an increase of missional activity serving the surrounding farming community.

The buildings of Guthrie and Rescobie are also closed, about to be sold.

**Adjustment steps to be completed.**

1. All congregations to unite into a single charge with a team ministry of 3 FTE and 1 OLM at a future time.
2. St. Margaret's, Guthrie and Rescobie church buildings to be disposed of as soon as possible.

## Semi-Rural area Kirriemuir – allocation 1 FTE

### **Congregation in this sector:**

#### **The Glens and Kirriemuir United I/w Oathlaw Tannadice Strathmore (This congregation was originally in this sector but has been realigned to Semi-rural and Rural East Perthshire)**

Currently, the town of Kirriemuir has one main worship centre at the heart of the town using the Kirriemuir United building. The Church also provides office facilities and meeting rooms for the team of ministers and elders. Whilst there will only be 2 MWS posts, it is expected that local elders, readers and retired ministers will also join the team.

The current linkage with the more rural Oathlaw Tannadice congregation to the north, will become a union to reduce the number of business meetings and release the eldership to carry out more missional roles, with a focus on community growth and engagement.

The congregations of Glamis, Eassie, Nevay & Newtyle and Ardler, Kettins & Meigle united to form Strathmore Parish Church in 2024 and this fulfils the Plan. The buildings at Kettins and Meigle to be reviewed by end of 2025.

#### **Summary.**

1. Glens & Kirriemuir United to be united with Oathlaw Tannadice - **1 FTE MWS.**

#### **Reduction from 3.25 FTE to 2 FTE.**

#### **Buildings Categorisation.**

Glens (Cortachy Church) – B, sold.  
(St Andrew's building sold previously)  
Kirriemuir United - A  
Tannadice - A  
Newtyle - A  
Glamis - A

#### **Adjustment steps to be completed.**

1. Glens & Kirriemuir United to be united with Oathlaw Tannadice.

## Semi-Rural area – Montrose – allocation 3 FTE

### **Congregation in this sector:**

#### **Montrose Trinity**

The three parishes in this cluster have united to form a single charge with a team ministry allocation of 2 FTE MWS an MDS post focussing on young people and families and an OLM.

Current ministry is deployed in the following way, Dun & Hillside – vacant, Montrose: Old & St. Andrew's - **1 FTE** MWS and 1 OLM (presently Locum at Hillside & Dun), Montrose South & Ferryden - **1 FTE** MWS, Cluster Youth Worker - **1 FTE** MDS. This fulfils the Plan.

#### **Reduction from 3.5 FTE to 3.**

#### **Buildings Categorisation.**

Hillside – B. The Plan proposes that a worshipping community be maintained at Hillside, but that full exploration is given to identifying a suitable community building within which it would meet - the church building itself to be disposed of by end of 2026.

Montrose: Old & St. Andrew's - A

Philo's Hub - A

Ferryden Church - B

Ferryden Hall - A

(Dun Church has been sold.)

#### **Adjustment steps to be completed.**

1. Disposal of Hillside Church by end 2026.
2. Disposal of Ferryden Church by end 2025

## Perth Zone

Perth zone has been divided into 12 geographic sectors in such a way as to reflect the natural connection, associations, and general transport links in this area.

### Rural area Kinrosshire – allocation 2 FTE

#### **Congregations in this sector:**

**Cleish**

**Fossoway St Serfs & Devonside**

**Kinross**

**Orwell & Portmoak**

**Arngask**

Cleish is presently linked with Fossoway St Serfs & Devonside. The Plan stated that this linkage will be progressed into a union and that Orwell & Portmoak shall unite with Kinross and thereafter the united congregation shall be linked with the united congregation formed by Cleish, Fossoway St Serfs & Devonside.

However, it was decided by the congregations to go beyond what the Plan envisaged. The congregations of Cleish, Fossoway: St Serfs and Devonside, Orwell and Portmoak and Kinross united on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2025 and became one congregation. This newly united charge has been allocated 2 FTE Ministry of Word and Sacrament. This fulfils the Plan.

The parish of Arngask (Glenfarg) that used to be part of Abernethy and Dron and Arngask Church will be transported and will fall within the new Kinrossshire Parish Churches boundaries. Arngask Church in Glenfarg has been closed.

**This is a reduction from 3 FTE to 2 FTE.**

#### **Buildings Categorisation.**

Cleish – B, disposed of by end 2027, authority to sell, in progress.

Fossoway St Serfs & Devonside - A.

Kinross – A.

Orwell – A.

Portmoak – B, approved for disposal.

Arngask – B, approved for disposal.

#### **Summary.**

1. Cleish, Fossoway: St Serfs and Devonside, Orwell and Portmoak and Kinross have united and have become one congregation.
2. The PMP allocated 2 FTE to this united charge.

#### **Adjustment steps to be completed.**

1. Disposal of redundant estate, Cleish – B disposed of by end 2027.

## Rural area Lower Earn – allocation 1.25 FTE

### **Congregations in this sector:**

**Abernethy & Dron & Arngask**  
**Dunbarney & Forgandenny**  
**Aberuthven & Dunning**  
**Aberdalgie & Forteviot**

All charges and congregations in this area shall be part of a formal 'Parish Grouping', as provided for in the Presbytery Mission Plan Act 2021. In doing so, each will be expected to identify their own response to the five marks of mission. However, the formal agreement that they will be required to enter into will set out where they will work together to pursue the issues and opportunities relating to mission which are common in this area.

The current united charge known as Aberuthven & Dunning to be severed and Aberuthven to become a Local Mission Church under the supervision of Auchterarder Parish Church and Dunning Church to become a Local Mission Church under the supervision of Dunbarney and Forgandenny Church.

The parish boundary of Aberdalgie and Forteviot will be reviewed in order that the South Perth Network will also be able to work in the new housing areas within the Perth bypass while allowing Aberdalgie and Forteviot to develop its Garden/Community Hub space.

This sector will be served by **1.25 FTE** comprising 1 MWS to the linked charge plus 0.25 FTE (this will be reviewed by Presbytery when the Plan is reviewed) to be allocated to the new parish grouping comprising of Abernethy Dron & Arngask linked with Dunbarney and Forgandenny linked with Aberdalgie & Forteviot (& Dunning Local Mission Church under the supervision of Dunbarney and Forgandenny).

**This is a reduction from 2.7 FTE to 1.25 FTE.**

### **Buildings Categorisation.**

Dunbarney - A.

Forgandenny - B to be disposed of by 21/12/2027.

Abernethy – A.

Arngask – sold.

Dunning – A - to become a Local Mission Church under the supervision of Dunbarney and Forgandenny.

Aberuthven – B\* to be reviewed with Presbytery following a feasibility study by end January 2025.

Aberdalgie Church – B\* and Forteviot Church – B\*. subject to review with Presbytery by end January 2025. The Church must choose which building is best suited for its mission

### **Summary.**



1. Aberdalgie and Forteviot Church, Abernethy and Dron and Arngask Church and Dunbarney and Forgandenny Church have linked and entered a Parish Grouping
2. The current united charge known as Aberuthven and Dunning to be severed and Aberuthven to become a Local Mission Church under the supervision of Auchterarder Parish Church and Dunning Church to become a Local Mission Church under the supervision of Dunbarney and Forgandenny Church.
3. This sector will be served by 1.25 FTE comprising 1 MWS to the linked charge plus 0.25 FTE (this will be reviewed by Presbytery when the Plan is reviewed) to be allocated to the new parish grouping comprising of Aberdalgie & Forteviot with Abernethy Dron & Arngask with Dunbarney & Forgandenny (& Dunning Local Mission Church under the supervision of Dunbarney & Forgandenny).
4. 1 OLM has been appointed to this network area for 2 years (reviewable).

**Adjustment steps to be completed.**

1. Abernethy & Dron & Arngask Church and A&F, Dunbarney & Forgandenny Church to enter a formal Parish Grouping.
2. The current united charge known as Aberuthven & Dunning to be severed and Aberuthven to become a Local Mission Church under the supervision of Auchterarder Parish Church and Dunning Church to become a Local Mission Church under the supervision of Dunbarney & Forgandenny Church.
3. The parish boundary of Aberdalgie will be reviewed in order that the South Perth Network will be able to work in the new housing areas within the Perth bypass while allowing Aberdalgie & Forteviot to develop its Garden/Community Hub space.
4. Disposal of redundant estate;
  - a. Forgandenny - B to be disposed of by 21/12/2027
  - b. Aberuthven – B\* to be reviewed with Presbytery following a feasibility study by January 2025.
  - c. Aberdalgie – B\* and Forteviot Church - B. subject to review with Presbytery by January 2025.

## Urban area South Perth – allocation 2.25 FTE

### **Congregations in this sector:**

**St Johns Kirk of Perth**

**St Matthew's**

**St Leonard's in the Fields**

**Craigie & Moncrieffe**

For this sector the Plan proposed the following.

1. Break linkage of St Johns Kirk of Perth and St Leonard's in the Fields, this has now taken place. Following the severing of the linkage with St John's Kirk, St Leonard's in the Fields to unite with Craigie & Moncrieffe.
2. Place St John's Kirk of Perth under Guardianship of Presbytery.
3. St Matthew's Church to take on Pastoral responsibility for Parish of St John's Kirk of Perth.
4. The Plan recognises the historical importance of St John Kirk in this Presbytery. Despite considerable internal refurbishment in the last fifteen years, but the building requires further significant works. To secure funding, St Johns requires to have clarity with regard to its future in the Presbytery Plan. The Plan supports the need for a congregation in St Johns for the duration of this Presbytery Plan (December 2027) and into the next. Further planning is needed in partnership with the Kirk Session, Presbytery, General Trustees, The Friends of St Johns, the Trust for St John's and Perth and Kinross Council, which will provide assurances over the ongoing care and maintenance of this historic building, and it currently has a category A allocation.

### **Reduction from 3 to 2.25 FTE.**

#### **Buildings Categorisation.**

St Johns Kirk of Perth - A. The Plan supports the need for a congregation in St Johns for the duration of this Presbytery Plan (December 2027) and into the next.

St Matthew's Church and Hall - A.

St Leonard's in the Fields Church and halls – A.

Craigie Church category B disposed of by end 2025.

Moncrieffe church and hall – A.

Moncrieffe church and hall is currently used as a centre for outreach work in partnership with the YMCA. The church and halls are being retained (as is St Leonards in the Fields) for the duration of this plan but the Kirk Session along with the newly called minister will be asked to consider what buildings are required in the future when the missional needs of the parish are identified. The buildings being retained will be reviewed at the next Presbytery Mission Plan.

#### **Summary.**

1. The link between of St Johns Kirk of Perth and St Leonard's in the Fields has been broken
2. St Leonard's in the Fields to unite with Craigie and Moncrieffe. **1 FTE**

3. St John's Kirk of Perth under Guardianship of Presbytery (0.25 FTE). The Plan supports the need for a congregation in St Johns for the duration of this Presbytery Plan (December 2027) and into the next.
4. St Matthew's Church to take on Pastoral responsibility for Parish of St John's Kirk of Perth and to work closely with Perth North Church and St John's Kirk of Perth to minister to the needs of the city centre. **1 FTE**
5. Parish boundaries are to be adjusted accordingly.
6. Craigie Church is be closed and disposed of by 31/12/25.

**Adjustment steps to be completed.**

1. St Matthew's Church to take on Pastoral responsibility for Parish of St John's Kirk of Perth and to work closely with Perth North Church and St John's Kirk of Perth to minister to the needs of the city centre.
2. St Leonard's in the Fields to unite with Craigie and Moncreiffe and allocated 1 FTE
3. Craigie Church is be closed and disposed of by 31/12/25.

## Semi-rural and Urban area North Perth – allocation 5.05 FTE

### **Congregations in this sector:**

**Perth: North**

**Letham St Mark's**

**Perth Riverside**

**Bertha Park PMI (Under supervision of Perth Riverside)**

**Auchtergaven & Moneydie**

**Redgorton & Stanley**

The Plan proposes an integrated mix of local support and adjustment for this sector.

- I. Perth North, Letham St Marks and Perth Riverside to enter a covenant agreement (or contract of shared understanding) to work closely with Auchtergaven & Moneydie (Bankfoot) with Redgorton and Stanley (Luncarty Church Centre). This agreement is to support and encourage the Kirk Sessions and congregations of Auchtergaven & Moneydie (Bankfoot) and Redgorton and Stanley (Luncarty Church Centre) to develop their mission initiatives maximising the opportunities both at Bankfoot and Luncarty.
- II. A group of representatives from all congregations to be formed with the purpose of developing a covenant agreement that will develop the ministry at Auchtergaven and Moneydie and Redgorton and Stanley.

Ministry allocation in this sector shall comprise of;

- I. Perth: North 1 FTE MWS
- II. Letham St Mark's 1 FTE MWS + 0.7 MDS (reduction from 1 to 0.7 FTE MDS)
- III. Perth Riverside 1 FTE MWS + 0.5 MDS (reduction from 0.7 to 0.5 FTE MDS)
- IV. Presbytery Mission Initiative - Bertha Park PMI 0.6 FTE MDS due to be reviewed in 2025.
- V. Presbytery Mission Initiative - OLM input to *Intotogether PMI* subject to review in 2025.
- VI. The linked charge of Auchtergaven, Moneydie, Redgorton and Stanley to be placed under the guardianship of Presbytery with the requisite allocation of 0.25 FTE.

Presbytery acknowledges the significance of this adjustment and looks for the northern boundary charges of Perth City to partner with this cluster to aid the development of alternate patterns of ministry and mission to their communities during a time of further assessment by Presbytery is undertaken as to the long-term future shape of ministry in the area. Consequently, all the buildings in this sector have been given a category of A until long-term plans are determined.

### **Reduction from 6.3 to 5.05 FTE.**

### **Buildings Categorisation.**

All buildings in this sector are allocated category A.

### **Summary.**

1. Ministry allocation in this sector shall comprise of;

- a. Perth: North **1 FTE** along with OLM input to Intogether PMI subject to review in 2025) (Perth North oversees Intogether PMI).
- b. Letham St Mark's **1 FTE** MWS and a reduction of the present MDS post from 1 to **0.7 FTE**.
- c. Perth Riverside **1 FTE** MWS and a reduced MDS post from 0.7 to **0.5 FTE**
- d. Bertha Park PMI **0.6 FTE** MDS to fulfil a standing commitment due to be reviewed in 2025.
- e. The linked charge of Auchtergaven, Moneydie, Redgorton & Stanley to be placed into Guardianship having an allocation of **0.25 FTE**.

**Adjustment steps to be completed.**

- I. Formal implementation of the structural and integrated ministry plans for the sector.

## Rural area Carse of Gowrie – allocation 1.5 FTE

### **Congregations in this sector:**

#### **St Madoes**

#### **Errol with Kilspindie & Rait**

#### **Kinnoull**

The charges of Errol and St. Madoes to be linked (the charge of Kilspindie & Rait has been dissolved). The charge of Kinnoull to remain a single charge but with a reduced ministry allocation of **0.5 FTE**.

St Madoes – The Madoch Centre is a recently built community church that serves the community well. A flexible seating modern Church building with café and community hall spaces. A great asset for the church and community, and a great resource for mission. The Plan recognises the very good working relationships between St Madoes and Errol and wants to link these congregations in this Presbytery Plan with the view to unite these charges in a future Presbytery Plan.

Errol has a traditional building that is very visible within the village. The building at Errol is be retained but this will be reviewed at next phase of Presbytery Planning. The Kirk Session at Errol to continue using the space as best it can to reach out to its community.

Kinnoull Kirk Session have conducted a comprehensive review of every aspect of Congregational life. The proposals of the congregation have been considered by the Planning Committee and have been warmly received as being innovative and positive in the enhancement of the ministry of the congregation and is therefore minded to alter the category to A. This review fulfils the Plan.

### **Reduction from 2.7 to 1.5 FTE.**

### **Buildings Categorisation.**

St Madoes – The Madoch - A

Errol – A to be reviewed by Presbytery following linkage.

Kinnoull buildings - A.

### **Summary.**

1. The charges of Errol and St. Madoes to be linked (the charge of Kilspindie and Rait has been dissolved) with a ministry allocation of **1 FTE**.
2. The charge of Kinnoull to remain a single charge but with a reduced ministry allocation of **0.5 FTE** (and would take effect when the current incumbent demits).

### **Adjustment steps to be completed.**

1. The charges of Errol and St. Madoes to be linked.
2. Errol building presently A category, to be reviewed by Presbytery after the linkage.

## Rural area Greater Scone – allocation 1 FTE

### **Congregations in this sector:**

#### **Scone & St Martins**

#### **Cargill Burrelton**

#### **Collace**

This sector will become a single united and linked charge as follows. Scone and St Martins to become supervising congregation to Cargill Burrelton Local Mission Church. Collace to Unite with Scone and St Martins.

Looking ahead to long term sustainability, the Plan calls on Scone and St Martin's Church to conduct a thorough review of the buildings with the purpose of choosing one church building (along with one set of halls) to be retained. Presbytery is to give focus to this over the next two years and confirm which buildings are to be retained at the second annual review. Deadline for decision over use of buildings: June 2025.

The Planning and Development Committee is encouraged by the vision that the Kirk Session of Cargill Burrelton has for its community. It seeks to repurpose its current sanctuary and make a flexible community space that can also be used by the worshipping congregation. It will become a Local Mission Church to Scone. The Presbytery of Perth in partnership with the Kirk Session will conduct a review of this church, particularly focussing its viability in terms of human and financial resource and report at the first annual review of the Plan and how all of this relates to the Five Marks of Mission. In the meantime, the building has been given the classification B\* until a decision has been made.

Collace Church is a lovely historic building in a very small village. It has a wonderful stained-glass window. Presbytery Planners do not envisage this congregation growing any further and that it should unite with Scone and close the building. Deadline for closure and disposal of building: end December 2025.

### **Reduction from 2.4 FTE to 1 FTE.**

#### **Building Categorisation.**

**All of the buildings in this sector are being categorised as B or B\*.**

Cargill Burrelton – B\*

Collace – B (Deadline: end December 2025)

Scone Old & Halls – B\* (deadline for decision – end Jan 2026)

Scone New & Halls – B\* (deadline for decision – end Jan 2026)

Scone and St Martin's Church to conduct a thorough review of the buildings with the purpose of choosing one church building to be retained. Presbytery is to give focus to this over the next two years and confirm which buildings are to be retained at the second annual review. Deadline for decision over use of buildings: end January 2026.

Collace Church deadline for closure and disposal of building is end December 2025.

**Summary.**

1. This sector will become a single united charge with a Local Mission Church, Scone and St Martins to become supervising congregation to Cargill Burrelton Local Mission Church. Collace to Unite with Scone and St Martins, with an allocation of **1 FTE**.

**Adjustment steps to be completed.**

1. The implementation of the union and subsequent linked charge, Scone and St Martins to become supervising congregation to Cargill Burrelton Local Mission Church. Collace to Unite with Scone and St Martins.
2. All of the buildings in this sector are being categorised as B or B\* until such times a review has taken place.
3. Scone and St Martin's Church to conduct a thorough review of the buildings with the purpose of choosing one church building to be retained. Presbytery to support this process and finalise decision by end January 2026.
4. Collace Church deadline for closure and disposal of building is end 2025.



## Rural area Greater Almondbank (lower A9 corridor) – allocation 0.25 FTE

### **Congregations in this sector:**

**Almondbank & Tibbermore  
Methven & Logielamond**

**It is proposed that all the congregations in this sector be united and placed under Guardianship with the required allocation of 0.25 FTE. All buildings in this sector are classified as B.**

The parish of Almondbank and Tibbermore neighbours the new housing development of Bertha Park. The Plan recognises that in future Presbytery Planning there might be further readjustment with Bertha Park, but the time is not right now. The Plan recognises that the comfortable space at Almondbank Church with individual seating and the use of IT. A good resource for local community. St Serf's Almondbank Tibbermore however will be categorised as 'B\*' and a comprehensive review will take place at the end of the first year of the Plan where every aspect of congregational life and all options are considered. St Serf's Almondbank Tibbermore Church must explore all options (including the possibility of closing further buildings) and engage with others (inc. Methven and Logiealmond) in order to produce a comprehensive review and feasibility study with regard to long term use and viability of its buildings and how all of this connects with the Five Marks of Mission. Date of Annual review – June 2024, this was not accomplished and has been timetabled for end March 2025.

Methven and Logiealmond Church has a very low AMBA score and is therefore proposed to close. Deadline for closure of Methven and Logiealmond Church - 31/12/24, this was not accomplished and has been timetabled for end of March 2025. However, in the meantime, Methven Church Hall will also be categorised at 'B' and a comprehensive review will take place at the end of the first year of the Plan where every aspect of congregational life and all options are considered. Methven and Logiealmond Church must explore all options (including the possibility of closing further buildings) and engage with others (inc. St Serf's Almondbank Tibbermore) in order to produce a comprehensive review and feasibility study with regard to long term use and viability of its buildings and how all of this connects with the Five Marks of Mission. Date of Annual review – June 2024, this was not accomplished and has been timetabled for end of March 2025.

**A reduction from 1 FTE to 0.25 FTE.**

### **Buildings Categorisation.**

**All buildings in this sector are classified as B or B\*.**

St Serf's Almondbank Tibbermore - B\* and a comprehensive review will take place at the end of the first year of the Plan where every aspect of congregational life and all options are considered. Date of Annual review – June 2024, this was not accomplished and has been timetabled for end of March 2025

Methven and Logiealmond Church – B (has a very low AMBA score and is therefore proposed to close by 31/12/24, this was not accomplished and has been timetabled for end of March 2025).

**Summary.**

1. All the congregations in this sector be united and placed under Guardianship with the required allocation of **0.25 FTE**.

**Adjustment steps to be completed.**

1. All the congregations in this sector be united and placed under Guardianship with the required allocation of **0.25 FTE**.
2. Annual review of allocation due to housing developments and a possible readjustment with Bertha Park at some future date.
3. Disposal of redundant buildings;
  - a. Almondbank & Tibbermore ongoing annual review end of 2025.
  - b. Methven & Logiealmond Church and Hall by end of 2025.

## Semi-rural area Crieff – allocation 1.7 FTE

### **Congregations in this sector:**

**Comrie**

**Dundurn**

**Crieff**

**Mid Strathearn**

The Plan proposes the following adjustments in this sector. Comrie to unite with Dundurn and become a part of the Parish Grouping covering this whole sector. Crieff to become a part of the Parish Grouping for this sector and to link with Mid-Strathearn This will see a change in ministry allocation from 3.7 to 1.7 with **1 FTE** allocated to the Crieff and Mid Strathearn change and **0.7 FTE** to Comrie and Dundurn.

Comrie Church and hall has been categorised as A as had Dundurn Church. Comrie Church and halls have recently been refurbished and provide a flexible seating Church building. A great asset for the church and community and a great resource for mission. The Church at Dundurn is in good condition and is of a manageable scale. The AMBA audit found that the church was inflexible however and was lacking in facilities and that the levels of income are insufficient to sustainably run and maintain the building. It is noted that a significant sum of money was spent on Dundurn Church 10 years ago but that the General Trustees support for the retention of this building is dependent on viable proposals to modernise the building by making the building more flexible seating and integrating the toilets into the building. The Presbytery will therefore conduct a review at the end of the first year of the Plan. Date of Annual review – June 2024, this was not accomplished and timetable for end March 2025.

Mid Strathearn - Currently this congregation has four church buildings. The plan states that two buildings should be retained. It is also proposing that Findo Gask Hall - with very good car parking - should be retained for the duration of this Presbytery Plan and its use reviewed with a decision to retain or otherwise made in the next phase of Presbytery planning. Deadline for closure and disposal of Monzie Church was 31/12/23 and for Findo Gask Church - 31/12/25. Fowlis Wester, Madderty and Findo Gask Hall will however be categorised at 'B\*' and a comprehensive review will take place at the end of the first year of the plan where every aspect of congregational life and all options are considered. Mid Strathearn Church must explore all options (including the possibility of closing further buildings) and engage with others in order to produce a comprehensive review and feasibility study with regard to long term use and viability of its buildings and how all of this this connects with the Five Marks of Mission. Date of Annual review – March 2025.

### **Reduction from 3.7 FTE to 1.7 FTE.**

#### **Buildings Categorisation.**

Comrie - A

Dundurn – B\* (review by June 2024, this date has not been achieved and has been amended to end March 2025)

Crieff St. Michael's Church – B, approved for disposal.

Crieff St Andrew's Church - A

Mid Strathearn:

Findo Gask Hall – B\*

Monzie – B, approved for disposal

Findo Gask Church – B, approved for disposal

Fowlis Wester – B\*

Madderty – B\*

### **Summary.**

1. Comrie to unite with Dundurn and become a part of the Parish Grouping covering this whole sector. 0.7 FTE
2. Crieff to become a part of the Parish Grouping for this sector and to link with Mid-Strathearn. 1 FTE.

### **Adjustment steps to be completed.**

1. Comrie to unite with Dundurn and become a part of the Parish Grouping covering this whole sector.
2. Crieff to link with Mid-Strathearn and both charges to become a part of the Parish Grouping for this sector
3. Disposal or otherwise determination on buildings;
  - a. Dundurn – B\* Under review by Mar 2025
  - b. St Michael's Church, Crieff – B

Mid Strathearn:

c. Findo Gask Hall – B\* (to be reviewed – Mar 25)

d. Monzie – B (31/12/23)

e. Findo Gask Church – B (21/12/25)

f. Fowlis Wester – B\*(to be reviewed – Mar 2025)

g. Madderty – B\* (to be reviewed – Mar 2025)

## Semi-rural & rural area Auchterarder & Blackford – allocation 1.5 FTE

### **Congregations in this sector:**

**Auchterarder**

**Aberuthven LMC**

**Ardoch**

**Blackford**

**Muthill**

**Trinity Gask & Kinkell**

All charges and congregations in this area shall be part of a formal 'Parish Grouping', as provided for in the Presbytery Mission Plan Act 2021. In doing so, each will be expected to identify their own response to the five marks of mission. However, the formal agreement that they will be required to enter into will set out where they will work together to pursue the issues and opportunities relating to mission which are common in this area. Additionally, Auchterarder will become the supervising congregation of Aberuthven LMC, with their union with Dunning to be severed. A ministry allocation of **1 FTE** to this charge.

Ardoch and Blackford to unite and then link with Muthill. This charge will have a ministry allocation of **0.5 FTE**.

Aberuthven Church, in the first year of the Plan will be categorised as 'B\*'. The Kirk Session (Aberuthven & Dunning) must explore all options (including the possibility of closing Aberuthven Church) and engage with others in order to produce a comprehensive review of all aspects of congregational life and a feasibility study with regard to long term use and viability of this building and how all of this connects with the Five Marks of Mission. Date of review – June 2024, this was not accomplished and has been timetabled for end January 2025.

Ardoch Church (currently A) and Blackford Church (currently A), Presbytery Planners wish to reduce the number of buildings in this charge to one. It has been decided to retain both buildings for the duration of this Plan but that a review of buildings to be undertaken with the closure of one church building to be agreed during the lifetime of this Plan. Deadline for decision – end December 2027.

Trinity Gask and Kinkell (category B), the Kirk Session has decided that the congregation should be dissolved, and the buildings disposed of. Awaiting extract minute from local parties approving disposal.

**A reduction from 2.4 FTE to 1.5 FTE.**

### **Buildings Categorisation.**

Auchterarder – A.

Aberuthven LMC – B\* review by June 2024, not accomplished and timetabled for end January 2025.

Ardoch – A to be reviewed by end 2027.

Blackford – A to be reviewed by end 2027.

Muthill – A.

Trinity Gask & Kinkell – B, approval to dispose approved.

### **Summary.**

1. All congregations in this sector will form a Parish Grouping.
2. Auchterarder will become the supervising congregation of Aberuthven LMC, after its union with Dunning being severed. A ministry allocation of **1 FTE** to this charge.
3. Ardoch and Blackford to unite and then link with Muthill. This charge will have a ministry allocation of **0.5 FTE**.

### **Adjustment steps to be completed.**

1. The united charge of Aberuthven and Dunning to be severed.
2. Auchterarder will become the supervising congregation of Aberuthven LMC.
3. Ardoch and Blackford to unite and then link with Muthill.
4. All congregations in this sector will enter a Formal Parish Grouping.
5. The new charge presently known as Ardoch and Blackford linked with Muthill to have boundaries adjusted to include the former parish of Trinity Gask and Kinkell.
6. Disposal of possible redundant estate;
  - a. Aberuthven LMC – B\* (review by Jan 2025)
7. Further reduction of estate envisaged and so;
  - a. Ardoch – A to be reviewed by end 2027
  - b. Blackford – A to be reviewed by end 2027

## Rural area West Highland Perthshire – allocation 2 FTE

**Congregations in this sector:**

**Aberfeldy  
Dull & Weem  
Grantully, Logierait & Strathtay (GLS)  
Tenandry  
Fortingall, Glenlyon, Kenmore & Lawers  
Foss & Rannoch  
Braes of Rannoch**

This sector has been divided into two Charges as follows each with **1 FTE**.

**Aberfeldy; Dull & Weem; Grantully, Logierait & Strathtay (GLS), Tenandry – 1 FTE.**

Tenandry to be brought into the existing linkage.

It is the intention of Presbytery to retain a regular worshipping presence in both Logierait and Strathtay – this ensuring mission in the Ballinluig/Logierait and Grandtully/Strathtay ends of the parish. There will be ongoing discussions and review with congregations, Kirk Sessions, Presbytery and the General Trustees as part of the Presbytery Mission Planning annual review process, in particular to consider the building categorisation of Logierait.

**Fortingall, Glenlyon, Kenmore & Lawers, Foss & Rannoch & Braes of Rannoch with 1 FTE.**

In accordance with the previously agreed plan, Foss and Rannoch have been united with Braes of Rannoch and linked with Fortingall, Glenlyon, Kenmore & Lawers. This followed on from the severance of linkage between Blair Atholl and Struan. This fulfils the Plan.

It is the intention of Presbytery that a regular worshipping presence in Kenmore, Glenlyon, Braes of Rannoch, regardless of ownership of buildings, be maintained and possibly through at least one Fresh Expression of Church. The building categorisations, in particular of Glenlyon and Braes of Rannoch will be considered following the forthcoming adjustment, and Presbytery is in regular conversation with the congregation of Fortingall, Glenlyon, Kenmore and Lawers regarding the best plan for the Kenmore building.

**A reduction from 3.3 FTE to 2 FTE.**

### **Buildings Categorisation.**

Aberfeldy – A.  
Weem – A.  
Strathtay Sanctuary – A.  
Strathtay Hall (John Kyd Hall) – A.  
Logierait -B.  
Tenandry – A.  
Fortingall Church – A.

Kenmore Church – B.  
Glenlyon Church – B.  
Braes of Rannoch Church – B.  
The Old Church of Rannoch – A.

**Summary.**

1. This sector has been divided into two charges as follows each with 1 FTE.
2. Aberfeldy, Dull & Weem, Grantully, Logierait & Strathtay (GLS), Tenandry – 1 FTE.
3. Fortingall, Glenlyon, Kenmore & Lawers, Foss & Rannoch & Braes of Rannoch with 1 FTE.

**Adjustment steps to be completed.**

1. The review of the categorisation of the following estate by end July 2025;
  - a. Logierait -B.
  - b. Kenmore Church – B.
  - c. Glenlyon Church – B.
  - d. Braes of Rannoch Church – B.



*Semi-rural & rural area Central Highland Perthshire (A9 corridor) – allocation 2 FTE*

**Congregations in this sector:**

**Pitlochry  
Blair Atholl & Struan  
Dunkeld  
Amulree  
Caputh & Clunie**

This sector has been divided into two Charges as follows.

**Pitlochry, Blair Atholl & Struan with 1 FTE.**

Pitlochry, and Blair Atholl and Struan were linked, and a new minister was inducted on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2024, this fulfils the Plan.

**Dunkeld, Amulree, Caputh & Clunie with 1 FTE.**

The plan is to create a new union with one or two centres of worship.

**A reduction from 3 FTE to 2 FTE.**

**Building Categorisation.**

Blair Atholl Church – A.  
Blair Atholl Church Hall – B.  
Pitlochry Church – A.  
Pitlochry Church Halls – A.  
Dunkeld Cathedral – A.  
Little Dunkeld Church – A.  
Duchess Anne Hall – B.  
Amulree Church – A.  
Caputh Church – B.  
Clunie Church – B.  
Chanory – A.

**Summary.**

1. This sector has been divided into two charges as follows.
  - a. Pitlochry, Blair Atholl & Struan with 1 FTE.
  - b. Dunkeld, Amulree, Caputh & Clunie with 1 FTE.

**Adjustment steps to be completed.**

1. The current linkage of Caputh and Clunie with Kinclaven to be severed and Dunkeld, Amulree, Caputh and Clunie to be united into a single charge.
2. Disposal of redundant estate:

- a. Blair Atholl Church Hall.
  - b. Caputh
  - c. Clunie Church Church
  - d. Duchess Anne Hall.
3. Little Dunkeld Church to be recategorized as an A and the building to be modernised and maintained as a place of worship and mission.

## Semi-rural & rural area East Perthshire – allocation 3.5FTE

### **Congregations in this sector:**

**Alyth  
Ratray  
Kirkmichael  
Straloch & Glenshee  
Kilry (Isla Parishes)  
Blairgowrie  
Bendochy  
Coupar Angus  
Kinclaven  
Ardler  
Glamis  
Kettins  
Meigle & Newtyle**

This sector has been divided into four charges.

### **Alyth, Ratray, Kirkmichael, Straloch & Glenshee and Kilry (Isla Parishes) with 1 FTE.**

The plan is to create a new union between Kirkmichael, Straloch & Glenshee and Ratray, and a new linkage between the new united congregation and Alyth with one FTE minister based at Alyth to cover the united and linked charges. Discussions regarding the possibility of a Local Mission Church at Kilry also need to take place as this would also require a union.

The proposal to link/unite with Alyth has met with general approval from the congregation who accept that times have changed and so change must come about. For Kilry to become a Local Mission Church, union would also be required. It would be a well-balanced, congenial linkage/union, with a good rural and town mixture. Presbytery will enter into conversations with the congregations concerned with regard to this proposed adjustment.

### **Blairgowrie 1 FTE.**

The Plan originally looked at a linkage of this charge with Bendochy, on reflection this has been reconsidered and an alternative proposal is being explored to include Bendochy in an adjustment with Couper Angus, Kinclaven and the congregations of the Sidlaw Charge. Blairgowrie is a fast-growing town and a pressing mission field for the church.

### **Coupar Angus and Kinclaven with 0.5 FTE.**

The Plan was to create a new union/linkage between Coupar Angus and Kinclaven. This linkage would have been covered by a **0.5 FTE** minister. However, it is now proposed to bring these congregations, with Bendochy, into a Team ministry with the Sidlaw charge.

### **Strathmore with 1 FTE.**

To enable a flourishing ministry within the recent union, the following will require to be in place:

- a. Strong administrative support for the minister (ideally, paid assistance).
- b. Developing worship teams, which is already ongoing.
- c. Skilled and energised property and finance teams, able to operate with a degree of independence, but appropriate involvement of minister and governance by Kirk Session.

It is the intention of Presbytery to retain a regular worshipping presence in Kettins, Meigle, Newtyle and Glamis. There is good local financial resource and leadership to enable the upgrade of existing buildings. Presbytery will work with the congregation and General Trustees to ensure the best provision for local mission.

### **A reduction from 5 FTE to 3.5 FTE.**

#### **Building Categorisation.**

Alyth Church & Halls – A.

Glenshee Church – B.

Kirkmichael Church – B.

Kirkmichael Session House – A.

Kilry Church (Isla Parishes) – A.

Ratray Church – A.

Blairgowrie Church- A.

Blairgowrie Church Halls – A.

Bendochy – B.

Coupar Angus Abbey - A.

Kinclaven Church and Hall - A (review by end December 2025).

Meigle Church - A (review by end December 2025).

Kettins Church and Hall - A (review by end December 2025).

#### **Summary.**

1. This sector has been divided into four charges.
2. Alyth, Ratray, Kirkmichael, Straloch & Glenshee and Kilry (Isla Parishes) with **1 FTE**.
3. Blairgowrie with **1 FTE**.
4. Bendochy, Coupar Angus and Kinclaven to be brought into adjustment with the Sidlaw charge with an FTE allocation to be confirmed.
5. A Strathmore with **1 FTE** and OLM.

### **An allocation of 3 FTE and an OLM, plus an allocation to be confirmed to the Team Ministry in the Sidlaw charge.**

#### **Adjustment steps to be completed.**

1. The union of Kirkmichael, Straloch & Glenshee and Ratray, and a new adjustment between the new united congregation and Alyth and Kilry.

2. Development of a new adjustment involving Coupar Angus, Kinclaven, Bendochy with the Sidlaw charge.
3. Disposal of redundant estate;
  - a. Glenshee Church – B, awaiting decision of local parties to approve disposal.
  - b. Kirkmichael Church – B, awaiting decision of local parties to approve disposal.
4. Undertake the review of the following buildings within one years (end Dec 2025);
  - a. Kinclaven Church and Hall – A.
  - b. Meigle Church – A.
  - c. Kettins Church and Hall – A.
  - d. Bendochy – B.

## **Stirling Zone.**

Stirling Zone has been subdivided in 6 sectors.

### *Rural area Carse/Callander – allocation 3FTE*

#### **Congregations in this sector:**

##### **Aberfoyle**

**Balquhiddy linked with Callander, linked with Killin & Ardeonaig**

**Buchlyvie and Gartmore**

**Gargunnoch Linked with Kippen and Norrieston, linked with Port of Menteith**

#### **Important update and clarification.**

**At the time when the legacy Presbytery of Stirling Mission Plan was being developed and approved, use was made of the concept of Team Ministry as a form of adjustment (see p21 above). At that time this was not seen as imposing a further level of adjustment. Subsequent guidance issued from the national church has indicated that Team Ministry is only suitable where the congregations involved move to union. This was not what was envisaged within the legacy Plan and consequently reference to such has been removed from this consolidation and initial review of the combined Perth Presbytery Mission Plan. Presbytery will enter into conversations with congregations in sectors through 2025 to refine proposals in light of current guidance and to present these at the next review of the Plan.**

All charges and congregations in this area shall be part of a formal 'Parish Grouping', as provided for in the Presbytery Mission Plan Act 2021. In doing so, each will be expected to identify their own response to the five marks of mission. However, the formal agreement that they will be required to enter will set out where they will work together to pursue the issues and opportunities relating to mission which are common in this area.

#### **Buchlyvie and Gartmore**

The congregation was united on June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024. The congregation is now vacant, with a **0.5FTE** allocation. This fulfils part of the Plan for this congregation.

#### **Gargunnoch I/w Kippen and Norrieston, I/w Port of Menteith.**

The union of Kippen and Norrieston, and that union's linkage with Gargunnoch and Port of Menteith, came into effect on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2024. On the same date, Port of Menteith's linkage with Aberfoyle, and Gargunnoch's linkage with both Kilmadock and Kincardine-in-Menteith, were both severed. This fulfils the Plan.

There should be an interim appointment of an **0.5 MDS** post, line managed by the minister of the linkage to support ministry in the grouping. The longer-term plan is to ultimately move to a team of **2 MWS** staff covering this charge and Buchlyvie and Gartmore, however how this is to be achieved will be subject to further conversations.

#### **Aberfoyle**

Aberfoyle (previous linkage with Port of Menteith now severed) is now in temporary Guardianship and both of its buildings are in Category B. In Aberfoyle the emerging partnership with St Mary's Episcopal Church is encouraged.

Aberfoyle's Guardianship should be reviewed in two years.

### **Balquhidder linked with Callander linked with Killin & Ardeonaig.**

After consultation, the adjustment that has been approved is a triple linkage between Balquhidder and Callander and Killin & Ardeonaig to consolidate common Missional objectives.

### **Reduction from 5.33 FTE to 3 FTE.**

### **Buildings Categorisation in this sector.**

Aberfoyle Church – B.

Aberfoyle Hall – B, approved for disposal.

Balquhidder – A.

Killin – A.

Callander Church – A.

Callander Church Halls – A.

Trossachs Church – B (now closed disposal has been approved).

Buchlyvie Church – A.

Gartmore Church – A.

Gargunnoch Parish Church – A.

Gargunnoch Ross Anderson Rooms - A

Kippen – A.

Norrieston Church – A.

Norrieston Hall - A

Port of Menteith – A.

### **Summary**

1. The congregations in this group to be a formal Parish Grouping.
2. Balquhidder and Callander and Killin & Ardeonaig have been linked, **1 FTE**.
3. The linkage between Aberfoyle and Port of Menteith has been severed.
4. Buchlyvie and Gartmore congregations have united with an allocation of **0.5 FTE**.
5. Kippen and Norrieston united on May 2<sup>nd</sup> and was linked with Gargunnoch and Port of Menteith, served by **1 FTE**.
6. The Ministry of 4 and 5 above to be supported by a shared **0.5 FTE** MDS post, line managed by the minister of the Gargunnoch/Kippen/Norrieston/Port of Menteith.
7. The charges 4 and 5 to move to a shared form of **2 FTE** within 3 years, with local conversations being undertaken to determine the shape and form of such ministry.
8. Aberfoyle to explore closer working relationship with the local Episcopal congregation.
9. The area grouping is invited to review their parish boundaries in collaboration and present any agreed adjustments to Presbytery.

**Adjustment steps to be completed.**

1. Appointment of 0.5 FTE MDS posts to support the Kippen and Norrieston, Gargunnock and Post of Menteith churches for 3 years.
2. The development of the 0.5 FTE Minister of Word and Sacrament and the 0.5 FTE MDS post into a 1 FTEe Minister of Word and Sacrament post with Buchlyvie and Gartmore and the Kippen and Norrieston, Gargunnock and Post of Menteith congregations. The exact nature of the deployment will be subject to local conversations and agreement.
3. Review of Aberfoyle Guardianship to take place in November 2025, according to the Basis of Guardianship, at which time Presbytery will review adjustment options and the buildings categorisation.



## Rural area Strathendrick – allocation 2 FTE + 1 OLM

### **Important update and clarification.**

**At the time when the legacy Presbytery of Stirling Mission Plan was being developed and approved, use was made of the concept of Team Ministry as a form of adjustment (see p21 above). At that time this was not seen as imposing a further level of adjustment. Subsequent guidance issued from the national church has indicated that Team Ministry is only suitable where the congregations involved move to union. This was not what was envisaged within the legacy Plan and consequently reference to such has been removed from this consolidation and initial review of the combined Perth Presbytery Mission Plan. Presbytery will enter into conversations with congregations in sectors through 2025 to refine proposals in light of current guidance and to present these at the next review of the Plan.**

### **Congregations in this sector:**

#### **Balfron and Fintry I/w Drymen and East Loch Lomond Killearn I/w Strathblane**

Both charges and all congregations in this area shall be part of a formal ‘Parish Grouping’, as provided for in the Presbytery Mission Plan Act 2021. In doing so, each will be expected to identify their own response to the five marks of mission. However, the formal agreement that they will be required to enter into will set out where they will work together to pursue the issues and opportunities relating to mission which are common in this area.

The linked congregations of Buchanan & Drymen were united on 29 August 2024 forming Drymen and East Lomond Church. This meets the first stage of the plan for this congregation.

The linked congregations of Balfron and Fintry were united on 29 August 2024 forming Balfron and Fintry Church. This meets the first stage of the plan for this congregation.

The united congregations of Balfron and Fintry, and of Drymen and East Lomond were linked into a single charge on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2024. This fulfils the Plan.

The congregations of Killearn and Strathblane were linked on 21 March 2024 forming Killearn and Strathblane Church. This fulfils the Plan.

### **Summary**

1. The congregations in this group to be a formal Parish Grouping.
2. Balfron and Fintry have united.
3. Buchanan and Drymen have united.
4. Balfron and Fintry and Drymen and East Loch Lomond have formed a linked charge with 1 FTE
5. Killearn and Strathblane have formed a linked charge. 1 FTE.
6. All of the newly linked congregations to consider union as soon as adjustment allows.
7. The area grouping is invited to review their parish boundaries in collaboration and present any agreed adjustments to Presbytery.
8. Additionally, 1 OLM to work across the group to support multiple centres of worship across the group.

## **Reduction of 4 FTE posts to 2FTE plus OLM.**

### **Buildings Categorisation in this sector.**

Balfron Church– A.

Balfron Church hall – A.

Buchannan Church – B, disposal approved.

Drymen Church and Halls – A.

Fintry Church – B, disposal approved.

Killearn Kirk and Halls – A.

Strathblane Church – A.

Strathblane Halls – A.

Following disposal of Fintry and Buchannan church buildings, services for their areas should be located into community facilities or schools as best suits the community and the missional objectives of the church.

### **Adjustment steps to be completed.**

1. Formation of a formal Parish Grouping of all charges in the sector.
2. Deployment of an OLM to the sector.

## Semi-Rural area Hillfoots – allocation 2 FTE

### **Important update and clarification.**

**At the time when the legacy Presbytery of Stirling Mission Plan was being developed and approved, use was made of the concept of Team Ministry as a form of adjustment (see p21 above). At that time this was not seen as imposing a further level of adjustment. Subsequent guidance issued from the national church has indicated that Team Ministry is only suitable where the congregations involved move to union. This was not what was envisaged within the legacy Plan and consequently reference to such has been removed from this consolidation and initial review of the combined Perth Presbytery Mission Plan. Presbytery will enter into conversations with congregations in sectors through 2025 to refine proposals in light of current guidance and to present these at the next review of the Plan.**

### **Congregations in this sector:**

**Alva in deferred linkage with Menstrie**

**Tillicoultry**

**Dollar linked with Muckhart**

Both charges and all congregations this area shall be part of a formal 'Parish Grouping', as provided for in the Presbytery Mission Plan Act 2021. In doing so, each will be expected to identify their own response to the five marks of mission.

Menstrie and Alva are already in deferred linkage and on the demission of the present Alva minister will become one linked charge.

Tillicoultry and Dollar linked with Muckhart should be linked, and as soon as possible move to a Union. Discussions with office bearers have indicated a willingness to move immediately to union, rather than linkage first. The minister at Tillicoultry will confirm whether she is willing to take on the united charge. If not, a deferred union will be proposed.

Glendevon Church was dissolved on 1 September 2024. This fulfils the Plan.

### **Reduction from 3 FTE posts to 2 FTE posts.**

### **Buildings Categorisation in this sector.**

Alva – A.

Menstrie – A.

Tillicoultry Parish Church– A.

Tillicoultry Parish Church Hall - A

Dollar Church – A (reconfirmed as category A by Planning Committee Dec. 2024).

Dollar Halls - A

Glendevon – B, disposal approved.

Muckhart – A.

### **Summary**

1. The congregations in this group to be a formal Parish Grouping.

2. Alva linked with Menstrie: **1 FTE.**
3. Tillicoultry, Dollar and Muckhart to be linked or united: **1 FTE.**
4. The congregation of Glendevon has been dissolved.
5. Both of the newly linked charges to consider union as soon as adjustment allows.
6. The area grouping is invited to review their parish boundaries in collaboration and present any agreed adjustments to Presbytery.

**Adjustment steps to be completed.**

1. The linkage of Alva and Menstrie, presently in deferred linkage.
2. The union or deferred union of Tillicoultry, Dollar and Muckhart.
3. A formal Parish Grouping to be formed once deferred adjustment.

## Urban area Greater Stirling – allocation 8.5 FTE

### **Important update and clarification.**

At the time when the legacy Presbytery of Stirling Mission Plan was being developed and approved, use was made of the concept of Team Ministry as a form of adjustment (see p21 above). At that time this was not seen as imposing a further level of adjustment. Subsequent guidance issued from the national church has indicated that Team Ministry is only suitable where the congregations involved move to union. This was not what was envisaged within the legacy Plan and consequently reference to such has been removed from this consolidation and initial review of the combined Perth Presbytery Mission Plan. Presbytery will enter into conversations with congregations in sectors through 2025 to refine proposals in light of current guidance and to present these at the next review of the Plan.

### **Congregations in this sector:**

**Bannockburn Allan in deferred linkage Bannockburn Ladywell**

**Cowie and Plean linked with Fallin**

**Bridge of Allan**

**Stirling Park**

**Stirling North**

**Stirling St Mark's**

**Stirling Holy Rude Viewfield**

**Stirling St Ninians Old**

**Cambusbarron: The Bruce Memorial**

**Logie Kirk**

All charges and congregations in this area shall initially be part of one of four formal 'Parish Groupings', as provided for in the Presbytery Mission Plan Act 2021. These would comprise firstly Bannockburn Allan, Bannockburn Ladywell, Cowie and Plean, and Fallin; secondly Bridge of Allan and Logie; thirdly Cambusbarron and Stirling North; and fourthly St Mark's, Holy Rude, Viewfield Erskine, Park, St. Ninians Old.

Each charge and congregation will be expected to identify their own response to the Five Marks of Mission. However, in the formal agreement that they will be required to enter into, they will set out where they will work together to pursue the issues and opportunities relating to mission which are common in each of these wider areas.

The congregations of Viewfield Erskine and the Holy Rude were united as Holy Rude Viewfield on 30 November 2023, this fulfils the Plan.

The Linkage between Bannockburn Allan and Cowie and Plean was severed on 6 June 2024 and Fallin and Cowie and Plean were linked on 6 June 2024, this fulfils the Plan. Bannockburn Allan and Bannockburn Ladywell entered deferred linkage on 6 June 2024. This fulfils the Plan

### **Reduction from 13 FTE to 8.5 FTE.**

### **Buildings Categorisation in this sector.**

Bannockburn Allan – A.  
 Bridge of Allan - A.  
 Bannockburn Ladywell – A.  
 Plean – A.  
 Stirling Park Church – A.  
 Stirling Park Church Halls – A.  
 Stirling North Church – A.  
 Stirling North Church Hall - A  
 Stirling St Mark's Church – A.  
 Stirling St Mark's Church Hall – A.  
 Stirling Church of the Holy Rude – A.  
 Stirling Viewfield Erskine Church – B, disposal approved.  
 Stirling Viewfield Erskine Hall – B, disposal approved.  
 Stirling St Ninians Old Parish Church – A.  
 St Ninians Old Church Hall – A.  
 Cambusbarron Parish Church: The Bruce Memorial – A.  
 Cambusbarron Church Hall – A.  
 Fallin Parish Church – B, feasibility study not yet submitted.  
 Fallin Parish Church Hall - A  
 Logie Kirk – B, feasibility study not yet submitted.  
 Logie Kirk Hall - A

## **Summary.**

1. Four Parish groupings be formed:
  - a. Bannockburn Allan, Bannockburn Ladywell, Cowie and Plean, and Fallin.
  - b. Bridge of Allan and Logie Kirk.
  - c. Cambusbarron and Stirling North.
  - d. St Mark's, Holy Rude, Viewfield Erskine, Park, St. Ninians Old.
2. All congregations encouraged to collaborate across Greater Stirling and beyond.
3. The linkage between Bannockburn Allan and Cowie and Plean has been severed.
4. Bannockburn Allan and Bannockburn Ladywell have formed a deferred linkage: 1 FTE.
5. Fallin and Cowie and Plean formed a new linkage on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2024 1 FTE
6. Bridge of Allan and Logie Kirk to form a new linkage and to support ministry to the University. 1 FTE + OLM.
7. Cambusbarron and Stirling North to form a new linkage: 1.5 FTE.
8. St Mark's (Priority Area) – 1 MWS and 1 MDS post based at St Mark's but also supporting other areas of significant need across Greater Stirling): 2 FTE.
9. Viewfield Erskine and Holy Rude United on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023.
10. Viewfield Erskine, Holy Rude, Park Church, St Ninians Old to develop an alternate use of ministry that allows for the congregations to be served by 2 FTE.
11. Presbytery reaffirms its vision of a single City centre charge as a long-term objective.
12. As adjustment is facilitated it is anticipated that the groupings will be altered accordingly, and Presbytery will review these as necessary.
13. The area grouping is invited to review their parish boundaries in collaboration and present any agreed adjustments to Presbytery.

### **Adjustment steps to be completed.**

1. Four Parish groupings be formed:
  - a. Bannockburn Allan, Bannockburn Ladywell, Cowie and Plean, and Fallin.
  - b. Bridge of Allan and Logie Kirk.
  - c. Cambusbarron and Stirling North.
  - d. St Mark's, Holy Rude, Viewfield Erskine, Park, St. Ninians Old.
2. Bridge of Allan and Logie Kirk to be linked, (with option of a deferred linkage) and with an OLM to support ministry to the University. A decision is to be made on retention of Logie Kirk by the end of 2025.
3. Cambusbarron and Stirling North to be linked. This is still to be progressed as both incumbents hold unrestricted tenure and represents a reduction of 0.5FTE.
4. Holy Rude Viewfield, Park Church, St Ninians Old to develop an alternate use of ministry that allows for the congregations to be served by 2 FTE. This is still to be progressed as all incumbents hold unrestricted tenure and the adjustment sees a reduction of 1FTE.
5. As ministry adjustments are embedded, it is anticipated that there will be a further, necessary review of the church estate.
6. Disposal of Fallin Church by end of 2025. The congregation were granted an opportunity to present a feasibility study to justify retention of the building. If this is not forthcoming Presbytery will confirm categorisation.
7. Decision to be made on retention of Logie Kirk by end of 2025.

## Semi-Rural area Dunblane – allocation 2FTE + OLM

### **Important update and clarification.**

**At the time when the legacy Presbytery of Stirling Mission Plan was being developed and approved, use was made of the concept of Team Ministry as a form of adjustment (see p21 above). At that time this was not seen as imposing a further level of adjustment. Subsequent guidance issued from the national church has indicated that Team Ministry is only suitable where the congregations involved move to union. This was not what was envisaged within the legacy Plan and consequently reference to such has been removed from this consolidation and initial review of the combined Perth Presbytery Mission Plan. Presbytery will enter into conversations with congregations in sectors through 2025 to refine proposals in light of current guidance and to present these at the next review of the Plan.**

### **Congregations in this sector:**

**Dunblane Cathedral, Kilmadock and Blair Drummond  
Dunblane St Blane's I/w Lecropt**

Both charges and all congregations in this area shall be part of a formal 'Parish Grouping', as provided for in the Presbytery Mission Plan Act 2021. In doing so, each will be expected to identify their own response to the five marks of mission. However, the formal agreement that they will be required to enter into will set out where they will work together to pursue the issues and opportunities relating to mission which are common in this area.

The formation of a formal Parish grouping will allow closer missional links to form particularly in the area of Mission to families and young people. After further consultation, alternative approaches to ministry may be encouraged so that within 5 years there could be a single charge of **2 FTE**.

Dunblane Cathedral, Kilmadock and Kincardine-in-Menteith were united to form Dunblane Cathedral, Kilmadock and Blair Brummond Church on 2 May 2024, this fulfils the Plan.

### **Summary**

1. The congregations in this group to be a formal Parish Grouping.
2. Dunblane Cathedral united with Kilmadock and Kincardine-in-Menteith on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2024. **1 FTE + 1 OLM.**
3. Dunblane St Blane's I/w Lecropt: **1 FTE.**
4. The area grouping is invited to review their parish boundaries in collaboration and present any agreed adjustments to Presbytery.

**Reduction from 3.67 FTE to 2FTE plus 1 OLM.**

### **Buildings Categorisation in this sector.**

Dunblane Cathedral Halls – A.  
Dunblane St Blane's Church – A.  
Dunblane St Blane's Church Hall - A  
Lecropt – B.



Lecropt Hall – A.  
Kilmadock – A.  
Kincardine-in-Menteith – B, approved for disposal.

**Adjustment steps to be completed.**

1. Disposal of Lecropt Church by end of 2025, due to legal issues this will be reconsidered by end of 2027.
2. Parish grouping to be established.

## Urban area Greater Alloa – allocation 4 FTE

### **Important update and clarification.**

At the time when the legacy Presbytery of Stirling Mission Plan was being developed and approved, use was made of the concept of Team Ministry as a form of adjustment (see p21 above). At that time this was not seen as imposing a further level of adjustment. Subsequent guidance issued from the national church has indicated that Team Ministry is only suitable where the congregations involved move to union. This was not what was envisaged within the legacy Plan and consequently reference to such has been removed from this consolidation and initial review of the combined Perth Presbytery Mission Plan. Presbytery will enter into conversations with congregations in sectors through 2025 to refine proposals in light of current guidance and to present these at the next review of the Plan.

### **Congregations in this sector:**

**Alloa: Ludgate**

**Alloa: St Mungo's**

**Clackmannan I/w Sauchie and Coalsnaughton**

**Tullibody: St Serf's**

All the congregations in this group to form a parish grouping. In doing so, each will be expected to identify their own response to the five marks of mission. However, the formal agreement that they will be required to enter into will set out where they will work together to pursue the issues and opportunities relating to mission which are common in this area.

The congregations of Alloa Ludgate and St Mungo's to unite, and as adjustment allows, to be served by one minister of Word and Sacrament. While Alloa St Mungo's is an unrestricted charge, Alloa Ludgate is currently a seven-year reviewable charge. Following positive joint discussions with office bearers on future mission in Alloa, a formal review will now be initiated by Presbytery for the charge of Alloa Ludgate, as the next step.

The congregations of Sauchie and Coalsnaughton and Clackmannan were linked on the 11 May 2023, this fulfils the Plan.

Tullibody: St Serf's will have one minister of Word and Sacrament.

As adjustment allows in Alloa, an MDS post will be created, based in Alloa, to serve the whole Greater Alloa area across all of these parishes, with a priority to the poor.

All congregations within the Grouping, and in particular Tullibody: St Serf's and the united church in Alloa, to be encouraged to work collaboratively to deliver ministry to the area and in the undertaking of mission.

### **Reduction from 6 FTE to 4 FTE.**

### **Buildings Categorisation in this sector.**

Alloa: Ludgate – B, final determination of category to be confirmed by Presbytery.

Alloa: St Mungo's – B, final determination of category to be confirmed by Presbytery.  
Clackmannan church – B, plan for rationalisation of buildings not yet submitted.  
Clackmannan Church hall – B, plan for rationalisation of buildings not yet submitted.  
Bruce memorial hall – B, now sold.  
Sauchie and Coalsnaughton Parish Church – A.  
Sauchie and Coalsnaughton Parish Church Hall – A.  
Tullibody: St Serf's church – A.  
Tullibody: St Serf's Church Hall – A.

### **Summary**

1. The congregations in this group to be a formal Parish Grouping.
2. The congregations of Alloa Ludgate and Alloa St Mungo's to be united. **1 FTE.**
3. The congregations of Sauchie and Coalsnaughton and Clackmannan to form a new linkage. **1 FTE.**
4. The congregation of Tullibody: St Serf's. **1 FTE.**
5. As adjustment permits in Alloa, to create an MDS post based in Alloa, to serve the whole Greater Alloa area across all of these parishes, with a priority the poor. **1 FTE.**
6. All congregations within the Grouping, and in particular Tullibody: St Serf's and the united church in Alloa, to work collaboratively to deliver ministry to the area and in the undertaking of mission.
7. The area grouping is invited to review their parish boundaries in collaboration and present any agreed adjustments to Presbytery.

### **Adjustment steps to be completed.**

1. Union of Alloa Ludgate and Alloa St Mungo's.
2. Final determination on the building to be retained for the proposed union of Alloa Ludgate and St Mungo's, the current proposal of the joint Kirk Session Group recommends the closure of St Mungo's, this work is ongoing, a final determination is yet to be confirmed.
3. The Presbytery Mission Plan invites Clackmannan's congregation to bring forward a funded plan within two years that includes the disposal of surplus estate and expresses a clear sense of the mission of the church in the community. That plan has not yet been submitted, but the Bruce Memorial Hall has been sold. Final determination of buildings for Clackmannan and disposal of remaining buildings by end 2027.
4. Appointment of an MDS post to work across the whole Greater Alloa Area promoting missional engagement.