

Further to the Presbytery Planning Review Group report brought to the September Presbytery meeting, please find details of the questionnaire which is to be completed by every Kirk Session.

This questionnaire is divided into two parts.

Exercise 1, which relates to Presbytery groups, is to be completed by **30th September 2020** and submitted to scampbell@churchofscotland.org.uk.

Exercise 2, which relates to property, is to be completed by **31st October 2020** and submitted to scampbell@churchofscotland.org.uk.

If you require assistance in completing the questionnaire, or if there is a difficulty with the timetable, please contact Rev Stella Campbell as soon as possible.

In the case of vacant charges, it is the responsibility of the interim moderator to ensure that these exercises are undertaken according to the timeline set out above.

The Presbytery Planning Review Group will make contact with ministers and interim moderators over the course of the next two months to ascertain progress and to offer assistance where appropriate.

Exercise 1 – Presbytery Relationships and Groups Review (to be worked on in September)

The goal: In order to help establish/maintain worshipping communities in every parish and territory, we need to come together and share resources. Creating Presbytery Area Groups¹ is one way that Gordon Presbytery hopes to achieve these goals. These groups will be written into our Presbytery Plan, and we need your input on who you are working with or would like to work with in the years to come.

It is important to note that each Area Group may work in a different way, particularly as one size will not fit all. Some of our congregations are already well down the track of developing their Area Group and may appear as a Parish Grouping in the Presbytery Plan. Others are at the beginning. However, it is essential that we set the direction of travel in this collation of responses to this exercise, as this will form the basis of our new Presbytery Plan.

We understand that some congregations work ecumenically and this can be reflected in the Presbytery Plan. However, every congregation in the Presbytery needs to be developing a working relationship with other congregations in the Church of Scotland.

The deadline: Please work your way through the questions below and submit your responses for each section to Rev. Stella Campbell by **30 September 2020**, scampbell@churchofscotland.org.uk.

Questionnaire on Relationships and Groups in Presbytery:

1. Relationships/Groups:
 - a. Who are developing working relationships with in Gordon Presbytery/Church of Scotland?

¹ In 2019 the Presbytery Planning Team began to create groups and some of them have been adapted due to your feedback. Below are the current groups. These can change this autumn. Please give us your feedback as to the group/new group that best fits your needs or if your group needs to be smaller or larger.

Group 1: Upper Donside and Noth

Group 2: Howe Trinity and Cushnie Tough (Group 1 and 2 may work together at times)

Group 3: Monymusk, Cluny, Echt & Midmar, Kemnay and Kintore (Kintore has expressed desire for two groups – still needs to be determined which one they are in)

Group 4: Skene, Fintray & Kinellar & Keithhall, and Kintore

Group 5: Belhelvie, Foveran, and Ellon (This was a discussion group and feedback is needed as to what each of these congregations want to do).

Group 6: Methlick, Tarves, Barthol Chapel, and Udny & Pitmedden

Group 7: Huntly Cairnie Glass, Strathbogie Drumblade, and Insch, Leslie, Premnay, & Oyne (adapted through feedback)

Group 8: Chapel of Garioch & Blairdaff, Cusalmund & Rayne, and Daviot (adapted through feedback)

Group 9: Inverurie St. Andrew's and Inverurie West (to help support another group at times?)

Group 10: Newmachar and Meldrum Bourtie (to join other Presbytery groups or join another group in our Presbytery?)

- i. If this group is a good match, have you been able to begin working together? If so, in what way?
 - b. Does who you are working with match your Presbytery group in the footnote?
 - c. If not, can you please provide details of your updated Presbytery group and confirm that it has been agreed with the other congregations?
2. Resources:
 - a. Does your church have a resource/s that may be of help to another parish/Presbytery group nearby? (E.g. technology, buildings, personnel)
 - b. Are you in need of a resource that another nearby parish can provide, or can your need be met through combining the resources of your churches to address the issue?

Exercise 2: Church Buildings Review (to be worked on in September and October)

The goal: Meet with your Kirk Session and/or key leaders to discern if your building/s are helping or hindering ministry in your local area. This conversation may be built upon previous meetings you have had on this topic.

The deadline: Please work your way through the questions below and submit your responses to Rev. Stella Campbell by **31 October 2020**, scampbell@churchofscotland.org.uk.

Section 1: Well-Equipped Spaces Questionnaire

Is our church building/s a “well-equipped space” in the right place?

The General Trustees Report of 2019 provides us a list of criteria to help us establish if our building is a “well-equipped space”.

Please work through the list and have a discussion on how your buildings are fit for purpose. We ask that you record your response to each criterion listed for each place of worship that you have responsibility for.

Are our church building/s a “well-equipped space”?

- (a) Is there access for all through the main entrance door?
- (b) Are there flexible spaces that can be used throughout the week?
- (c) Is it a welcoming space (for both regulars and someone who might visit)?
- (d) Is it able to be used for worship (weekly or fortnightly)?
- (e) Are all health and safety requirements met?
- (f) Are there modern toilet facilities that take account of the numbers of people using the building (e.g. if building to be used for conferences, more facilities might be required)?
- (g) Are there facilities for hospitality – a kitchen that meets catering standards?
- (h) Are there realistic and affordable maintenance costs and management for your parish?
- (i) Is the building being used beyond the minimum amount of time during the week that the building is used (e.g. more than one hour per week)?
- (j) Does it meet a minimum energy efficiency standard?

(General Trustees Report 2019)

Section 2: A Reflection on our current times and how God is speaking to us?

Please answer the following questions, taking into account each of the places of worship you have responsibility for.

- How has the recent closing of church buildings due to the pandemic impacted your church and congregation?
- Has it made you rethink the purpose of your building/s and how they are being used?
- Do you have the resources available to you in your parish to re-open? If not, what resources are limited?

Section 3: Analysis

Please answer the following questions, taking into account each of the places of worship you have responsibility for.

- Is your church building/s key to your ministry?
- Is it fit for purpose? Or what could make your building/s fit for purpose?
- Is it in the right space? If not, where would it be?
- Could technology be a part of the solution for your church? If so, what is needed?
- Does your building offer a resource that could be of assistance to another parish nearby?

Section 4 Rating:

In summary, we would rate our building/s as (please tick one or give a rating for each of your buildings)

A – Our building is fit for purpose and is capable to remain in use for years to come as it is.

B - Our building needs work to be fit for purpose but it is in the right place for ministry. (Please list the projects that need work and resources.)

C – Our building is not essential to ministry and/or there are other resources in our parish that can be used or purchased which would be a better fit.

D – We are unable to decide right now and need some assistance.

Please complete each section as outlined and submit your answers to the Presbytery Planning Team by **31 October 2020**. Your responses will be used to inform the Presbytery Plan.

This exercise is not just about ticking boxes! Below are some suggested discussion questions (please pick the ones that suit your context) which might be helpful in determining what is meant by a “well-equipped space in the right place” in your parish. You do not need to submit responses to these questions, they are simply a guide to help in your discussions.

Discussion Questions

- The crucial question is ‘well equipped for what?’
- What does the building say to others about what it means to be a Christian congregation?
- How open and welcoming is it to the parish and community it serves? How do the Church’s sanctuaries and halls, most of which are open to the public to a greater or lesser extent, compare to other public buildings?
- Does the state of decoration tell of people who are proud to share their congregational ‘home’ with other people?
- Is it too expensive for its missional needs?
- Is it good Christian stewardship to have a small congregation rattling around in a huge building?
- Is it sufficient that the church (or sanctuary with a church complex) is only used for a short time each week as a worship space?
- What is the purpose of the building? Is it needed?
- Is the location of the building where it is best needed? How does it relate to the wider community?
- What kind of Christian witness could we give if we didn’t have this building?
- How close to other Church of Scotland or other Christian denominations buildings is it?
- Can the locality sensibly support as many churches over the next 10-15 years?

(General Trustees Report, 2019)