

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

PRESBYTERY OF Lothian & Borders

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT and RECEIPTS and PAYMENTS ACCOUNT for the year ended 31 December 2023

Scottish Charity Number SC040976

The Church of Scotland is undertaking a reorganisation of Presbyteries throughout Scotland.

As a result of this, the Presbytery of Lothian & Borders came into being on 1st January 2023 being made up of the legacy presbyteries of Duns, Jedburgh, Lothian, and Melrose & Peebles. All trustees of the legacy Presbyteries at 31 December 2022, became Trustees of the Presbytery of Lothian & Borders from 1 January 2023. The new Presbytery first met on 23 January 2023 when various appointments were made.

Of the uniting Presbyteries, the Presbytery of Jedburgh was the only one which was a recognised Scottish Charity. As such arrangements were made by the Church of Scotland and OSCR (Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator) to retain the Jedburgh Charity Number (SC040976) for the Presbytery of Lothian & Borders. This has been done and the OSCR website has been updated accordingly. Similar arrangements were made for the former Presbytery of Jedburgh Bank Account to be changed for use by the new Presbytery.

The Presbytery of Lothian & Borders has a total of 218 Trustees.

The Principal Office-Bearers of the Presbytery of Lothian & Borders are -

Moderator The Very Revd Susan Brown;

Clerk Revd Norman A Smith; Treasurer Mrs Elizabeth Morton.

Members of the Presbyterial Council (who are the various Committee Conveners) are

Murray Campbell, Fiona Burnett, Ian Heathfield, Lisa-Jane Rankin (until 16/08/23) Keith Mack (01/09/23), Leslie Milton, Abigail Morrison, Rodger Dodd and Andrew Don.

It is understood that these Trustees names will be sufficient for the purposes of this Report.

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND PRESBYTERY OF LOTHIAN & BORDERS
Scottish Charity Number SC040976

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT - Year ended 31 December 2023

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

The Presbytery is administered in accordance with the Acts and Regulations of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Recruitment and Appointment of Trustees

All Ministers inducted to charges within the bounds of Presbytery become members of Presbytery on their induction. Other ordained Ministers living within the Presbytery, or having been living or serving within the Presbytery, may become a member. Each congregation nominates a Representative Elder to the Presbytery.

In terms of Act III 2000, Presbytery shall elect one elder in respect of each of the "other ordained Ministers", and may elect additional elders up to one-third of the number of congregations. These Elders are chosen because of the experience and skills which they have.

Organisational Structure

The Presbytery is chaired by the Moderator and normally meets 4 times a year for ordinary business and on other occasions as required. These meetings are open to the public. Presbytery appoints various Standing Committees, and ad-hoc Committees as required.

Objectives and Activities

The Church of Scotland is Trinitarian in doctrine, Reformed in tradition, and Presbyterian in polity. It exists to glorify God and to work for the advancement of Christ's Kingdom throughout the world. As a National Church, it acknowledges a distinctive call and duty to bring the ordinances of religion to the people in every parish in Scotland through a territorial ministry. It co-operates with other Churches in various ecumenical bodies in Scotland and beyond.

The essential role of the Presbytery is to oversee the work of the Church of Scotland within its bounds. This is effected by the supervision of congregations, the implementation of the Presbytery Mission Plan (previously the Forward Plan) and the pastoral care of ministerial members of Presbytery.

Presbytery also acts as co-ordinator and facilitator of the activities of member congregations.

Achievements and Performance

The Presbytery came into being on 1st January 2023, with its first meeting taking place in Dalkeith St John's and King's Park Church on Saturday January 21st. At this first meeting standing orders and regulations for governing our shared life were adopted, a committee structure approved with trustees appointed to said committees, bank accounts confirmed including signatories, and elected officials including Moderator and Clerk confirmed.

From the start of June Rev Peter Wood joined us as Presbytery Mission Officer and Mrs Caroline Kirk as part-time Presbytery Administrator.

At its June meeting the Presbytery Plans for Duns and Melrose & Peebles were approved giving Lothian & Borders 4 approved plans. However, full and final approval was not received until

September when the last request for review outcomes were communicated to us from their review panels.

Presbytery continues to have members involved in the wider work of the Church, appoints Commissioners to the General Assembly and Commission of Assembly and attends to remits from the Assembly.

Presbytery has appointed 9 Standing Committees whose remits were agreed at the inaugural meeting. The Committees bring reports and recommendations to Presbytery. These Committees are -

Presbytery Council [Functions as a Business Committee] – Convenor Prof Murray Campbell
The Committee meets before each statutory meeting of Presbytery to arrange the business, to deal with all matters that are not within the province of the other Standing Committees and report thereon to Presbytery.
The main focus this year has been on Presbytery Reform and our Presbytery Mission Plan.

Complaints – Convenor Rev Lorna Souter
The Committee is tasked with handling any complaints that arise and to make sure the correct complaints procedure is followed.

Congregational Support – Convenor Mrs Fan Heafield
The Committee has responsibility for Local Church Review which aims to get beside congregations and help them identify both a way forward and the steps necessary to get there. The remit of the Congregational Support Committee is to provide support and encouragement, as well as oversight and direction of the churches' work in respect of mission, social theology in action and change within the rubric of the Church of Scotland.

As such, it seeks to undertake the following functions:

- a. Carryout and oversee the Local Review of Churches every five years within the Presbytery of Lothian and Borders. To follow up the Review regarding implementation and development and to support congregations, Kirk Sessions, Lay Pastors and Ministers in developing mission, outreach and care in their parishes.
- b. To facilitate the annual Inspection of Records
- c. Other matters such as data protection, resolving of congregational disagreements and matters identified by the General Assembly.

Fabric – Convenor Mr Roger Dodd
The Committee supports congregations in ensuring that all properties (churches, halls and manses) and glebes are effectively maintained; and offers advice to congregations seeking to develop their properties.
5 yearly interim property surveys are carried out on a rotational basis. The Committee...

Finance – Convenor Andrew Don
The Committee examined the Annual Reports and Accounts for each of the congregations in Presbytery and all were found generally to comply with charity law and Church regulation.

The finance group is responsible for setting Presbytery Budget, maintaining sound financial records, producing Presbytery year end accounts. They support treasurers in all aspects of congregational finance. Attesting final year accounts for OSCR reporting. Helping Congregations understand their Giving2Grow assessments.

Mission – Convenor Dr Fiona Burnett

The Committee has responsibility for both local and world mission, helping congregations identify opportunities and putting in place training to realise them. The committee's main focus this year has been to encourage congregations to work together and share their skills and expertise in a wide range of missional opportunities. Most of our in-person meetings have included a session where we have invited office bearers from the local churches to come together to meet the committee and share ideas. In addition, we have run online seminars on a variety of topics with a mission theme and two-day conferences with a mission theme. Our Mission Officer has set up a number of Missional communities, e.g. forest church, new housing, pilgrimages, bringing people together to focus on a particular aspect of mission with the aim of creating areas of expertise that can assist other congregations wishing to start something similar in their area.

Nominations – Convenor Rev Keith Mack

The Committee has responsibility for proposing people to fill the committees of Presbytery, bring forward names of those attending the General Assembly and being forward names for Moderator. The Committee works with two aims

1. To bring forward to Presbytery names for appointment to committees and Presbytery positions, including but not limited to, the Moderator of Presbytery and the Conveners and Members of committees.
2. To deal with membership of Presbytery and the annual registration of ministry including nominating balancing and additional elders, corresponding members, and administering annual review of ministries registration categories in accordance with General Assembly legislation.

Planning – Convenor Mrs Abigail Morrison

The Committee has responsibility for all things planning. Including matters related to the Presbytery Mission Plan, Basis of Adjustment and interfacing between national planning bodes in 121 George Street and the Presbytery. The Committee has responded to challenges to two of the four constituent plans and got the remaining two approved without any challenges. They have worked with several local congregations to help them implement the adjustments required of them in the Mission plan: 9 adjustments have taken place and a further 17 or so are in progress. Some building disposals required by the plan have also progressed. The Committee has offered support to all the congregations affected by the changes and most have taken up that offer. Considerable input and support has been given to several areas within Presbytery where several congregations need to come together to work out how best to implement the plan for their area. Several Presbyters, including the Mission Officer, not on the Committee have assisted here and Presbytery is very grateful to them. The Committee has also liaised with the central church bodies, specifically the Law Department, the General Trustees and the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team on the plan implementation.

Resourcing Ministry – Convenor Rev Leslie Milton

The Committee function like the Ministry Committees of Old with oversight and support of all the recognised ministries of the national church as well as local expressions of ministry such as Lay Pastor and Worship Leader. The Committee...

Financial Review

Reserves Policy

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees must prepare financial statements which give sufficient detail to enable an appreciation of the transactions of the Presbytery during the financial year. The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which, on request, must reflect the financial position of the Presbytery at that time. This must be done to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities and Trustee Investments (Scotland) Act 2005, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 and Regulations for Presbytery Finance approved by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 2007 and amended by Regulations III in 2008. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Presbytery and must take reasonable steps for the prevention and/or detection of fraud and other irregularities.

This Report was approved by the Trustees on and signed on their behalf by

(Signed) Norman A Smith Clerk, Presbytery of Lothian & Borders