

**Lothian & Borders Complete Presbytery Plan
Inclusive of General Trustees and FAPLT Comments
Document prepared 2023**

This document contains copies of the four constituent plans from the four old presbyteries that merged to form Lothian & Borders Presbytery: Duns, Jedburgh, Lothian, Melrose & Peebles.

The plans included here are the ones finally approved as at the dates below:

1. Duns – concurrence received at the 16 August 2023 L&B Presbytery meeting and no challenges received
2. Jedburgh – concurrence received in December 2022 by Jedburgh Presbytery and the one challenge received, not upheld on 9 June 2023
3. Lothian - concurrence received at the 28 November 2022 Lothian Presbytery meeting and the one challenge received, not upheld in May 2023
4. Melrose & Peebles - concurrence received at the 16 August 2023 L&B Presbytery meeting and no challenges received

The plans include insertions – clearly noted – of any comments or caveats to the plan noted in the concurrence of the General Trustees or Faith Action Programme Leadership Team.

THE PRESBYTERY OF DUNS MISSION PLAN

INTRODUCTION

The Presbytery of Duns covers most of Berwickshire and the town of Berwick upon Tweed, which is in Northumberland – but is very much part of “The Borders”. The area is mainly rural apart from the towns of Berwick upon Tweed, Duns, Eyemouth and Coldstream; there are many picturesque villages and hamlets. The area is steeped in history with many historic buildings and sites of historic interest. The area is dependent on the agricultural industry and associated businesses and other small businesses. Transport links across the region are reasonably good: the East Coast Main Line passes through Berwick and there is a new station at Reston, the A1, A68 and A697 roads pass through the area. It is deemed to be a low-cost area and has a tendency to attract people who are retiring; younger people tend to move away to further their education and to pursue vocations elsewhere. Tourism is something that is increasing, people drawn by the beauty of the scenery, beaches, fishing opportunities, walking available for every ability, cycling, golfing, other sports, and the warm welcome from local hostellers.

The region has much to offer, but we are aware of the challenges facing many, which is reflected in our Churches. Over many years the Presbyterian Church has adapted and reformed many times, therefore like the previous Reformers we must change, if the Church is to be relevant, fit for purpose and ready to revive and have a future.

On the 1st January 2023 the old Duns Presbytery became part of The Presbytery of Lothian & Borders, incorporating the presbyteries of Duns, Lothian, Jedburgh and Melrose & Peebles; this Mission plan therefore forms part of the Lothian and Borders Presbytery Mission Plan.

The General Assembly has tasked us to produce a Presbytery Mission Plan, and have it approved by 31st December 2022. The General Assembly review of 2021 provides the Duns geographical area with four full time ministries from 2025, and an additional 0.6 of a ministry, and there will be no single parish ministers. This will be a rolling five-year plan being reviewed annually. A plan for the old Duns Presbytery was approved by that Presbytery before the end of 2022 but the plan was not approved by either the General Trustees or Faith Nurture Forum. This is a revised version taking into account the feedback of the General Trustees and the Forum.

The Faith Action Plan leadership team (FAPLT) approved the plan on 23 June 2023 subject to two conditions:

1. that the Presbytery at the first annual evaluation of the Mission Plan offers more detail and consistency in, and a general strengthening of, Mission Narratives.
2. in accordance with the Act, the General Trustees have considered the draft Mission Plan for Duns, submitted June 2023 and are content with the categorisation of the ecclesiastical buildings therein, subject to:

A. The Presbytery committing to and evidencing at the subsequent Annual Evaluation and Development review:

1. Greenlaw, Gordon St Michael's and Legerwood

Progress on the work between the worshiping communities at Greenlaw, Gordon St. Michael's and Legerwood to identify which two of the four buildings, including the Fairburn Hall, to retain. It is asked that the GTs be brought into discussions in advance of decisions being made. It is asked that the second Annual Evaluation be set as the deadline for this process.

B. the Presbytery committing to provide details at the subsequent Annual Evaluation and Development review:

2. Reston Church

The success of missional outreach to proposed new housing areas should be evidenced through the Annual Evaluations.

THE PLAN

In the past, as ministry numbers have reduced the Church has gone down the route of uniting, linking and closing churches, reacting to the situation at the time. It is now time for a radical action plan, to have a vision for the future, to think further ahead than we have recently, if we do not wish to continue managing the Church's decline. The decline in vocations means we have too few ministers to continue with our familiar pattern of ministry, therefore lay people will have to take more responsibility for worship and the life of our congregations. Enabling lay members to carry out these tasks should become the role of our paid employees and mainly our stipendiary ministers. This involves a radical rethink of the nature of the 'minister's' role, therefore the best way for this new role to be carried out is through the small group of ministers in the Duns area working as a team, with diverse responsibilities for four key areas. This team will only give a small part of their time to working with a particular church as their parish minister. The work of the ministerial team will be focused on enabling congregations to live by the "five marks of mission":

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 structure, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation
5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

THE PROCESS

After visiting each congregation, the first phase of the plan was brought to the old Duns Presbytery in February 2022. At that meeting, where all congregations were cited, it was approved.

Since phase one of the plan was agreed the old Duns Presbytery Planning Team met with each minister and each congregation. The Team has responded to all requests for meetings, and these meetings have been most helpful in shaping the second stage of the plan. This is a visionary plan, it is for others to deal with the implementation of the plan. Where it is recommended that a church should close, all

procedures and meetings will take place before this happens. During our meetings with congregations each congregation was given the opportunity to take a 15 minute act of worship.

Each congregation was asked the following questions :-

- Do you have sufficient people in your congregation and community to provide leadership (with support of the ministry team) to continue as a congregation?
- Numbers attending worship?
- Are finances available for the congregation to continue and support the central church and presbytery?
- Is the building in a fit state, are alterations planned. How will it fair under AMBA?
- Are other buildings available to use?
- Are there other worshipping communities that you could share or join?
- Are there areas for growth?

After the plan approved by Duns Presbytery in December 2022 was not approved by the General Trustees or Faith Nurture Form the plan was revised once more. The Presbytery Clerk of Lothian and Borders Presbytery and the Convenor of the that Presbytery's Planning Committee met (or offered to meet) at least the minister or Interim Moderator and Session Clerk of all congregations who might be seen as adversely affected by the plan revisions. Most of the churches took up the offer of a visit.

The AMBA scores for the buildings in Presbytery were used to inform decisions about buildings but were not the sole factor in decisions on the category of buildings. The AMBA scores can be found at the end of the plan (Appendix 1).

The Planning Act requires us to identify historic buildings. The advice of the General Trustees is that the criteria which a Presbytery should use to determine if a property is considered historic within the context of a Presbytery Mission Plan are as follows:

- The building is A Listed, and
- It is cathedral style in its proportions, and
- It is in a prominent setting within a townscape.

The buildings which satisfy these criteria are Ayton Church, Berwick: St Andrew's Wallace Green, Coldingham Priory. The following church buildings are A listed and lie in prominent positions in towns and rural settings throughout the Duns area:

Chirside Church, Cranshaws Church, Edrom Church, Fogo Church, Greenlaw Parish Church and Legerwood Church.

The advice of the General Trustees in this regard is noted:

"The historic significance of a building need not be a major factor within the categorisation decisions. In comparison to the building's condition, safety, accessibility, flexibility, facilities, location etc, the historic significance would not normally contribute towards the building's capacity to provide for mission and outreach."

The Plan is based on four ministers, working as a team across the whole Duns area, equipping congregations to be the Church within their own parishes. It is envisaged that all our ministers will work as a team as it will take time for the plan to be implemented.

Each congregation will be led locally by a Moderator, appropriately trained and in many cases drawn from the eldership, and in every case being someone who has demonstrated that they can provide inspirational leadership grounded on good practical theology and guided by the Holy Spirit.

The four full time ministers of word and sacrament will work together with every congregation. Each team member will be responsible for one aspect of the life of all of our congregations – responsible not for the delivery, but for ensuring, through training, assessment, encouragement and an on-going guidance, that each congregation is able to deliver these aspects of congregational life for themselves and that, as a result, instead of having four ministers in the presbytery we shall have a whole team of inspirational leaders growing in faith and working out that faith in action throughout the area. The four aspects, one of which will be adopted by each of the four ministers in the team, are worship, pastoral care, mission and Christian education.

Each minister will work one day a week in one of the larger congregations, namely Berwick, Eyemouth, Duns and Coldstream, and four days a week for the Duns area, as members of the team, each with their own particular area of expertise. The online platform ABVCOS (Across Berwick & Berwickshire, for all, Church of Scotland – where it all adds up) should become the focal point for the Team to access and coordinate information, resources, diaries and contacts. It is planned to have a resource centre for the team to be based.

The minister with the worshipping brief will seek to reshape how and where we worship, with approaches that impact and engage on young and old alike. This minister will be responsible for ensuring that each congregation is able to provide good local worship within their congregation on a week-to-week basis. Sometimes this may be by using scripts provided, sometimes as a result of group training, sometimes it may include a visit from the worship team of a neighbouring congregation, a visiting minister or one of the ministerial team. As we have an online facility through ABVCOS, the housebound, ill or those unable to attend are able to share in worship. This programme will revitalise our worship, the experience and opportunity to be actively involved will deepen involvement of existing members and be attractive to new members.

The minister with the pastoral care brief will train congregations to be able to care for each other and those around them. It will encourage congregations to seek out those who need a listening ear or practical support. The third of the five marks of mission is to be part of a serving community and the role of this team member will be to enable every congregation to respond to human need through loving service. Initially there will be a team of retired ministers to assist in such matters as funerals, but part of the remit of this team member will be to train appropriate congregational members to take on these tasks in future.

The minister with the mission brief will seek to support every congregation to be a witnessing community with mission at its heart. The remit will seek to equip congregational members to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom with enthusiasm in their daily lives which is where mission is at its most effective, and through special activities designed to enable congregations both to listen to and to share with their communities. The Mission brief will include assisting congregations to seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind, and pursue peace and reconciliation.

The minister with the Christian education brief will seek to support congregations to learn more about their faith as well as to work with new believers, providing appropriate learning and nurturing support. The remit will include empowering congregational members to work in schools and with youth

organisations throughout the area, as well as providing appropriate learning opportunities for all congregational members, and those who have an interest in discovering more about the faith. The remit will include supporting congregations as they strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of earth.

HOW IT WILL WORK

The team of four, working in wonderfully exciting and rewarding positions, will be a great resource for each congregation and Kirk Session who will not have one overworked minister, but the services of a team with specialist skills, enthusing and providing inspirational leadership, enabling congregations to become enthusiastic worshipping, witnessing, nurturing and serving communities.

The team will alternate leadership on a regular basis and be supported by the 0.6 of a minister. This equates to thirty weeks and two days. The proposal is that each year the team will seek to engage a minister or equivalent for a period, to assist them with a special project. This will most likely be a mission project and may encompass all the team. It might, for example involve the preparation and delivery of an outreach project to Eyemouth or Chirnside, drawing in the whole ministry team as well as congregation members from all over our area, with planning, training and resourcing a major activity over a number of weeks, and which might include conferences, events, quality speakers and wonderful music: in short, something on which all our congregations will be able to draw.

This is undoubtedly a new way of working for the Church. As such we have to accept that some aspects of the model will be refined in the light of experience over time. There is already agreement about how ministerial expenses will be shared by all the charges in the Duns area and we will prepare a more detailed paper on how this and the Giving to Grow system will work together to share the costs of the paid ministry. The principle will be that all charges contribute to the ministerial costs of the area, according to the access they have to that resource.

We have considered how it might be possible to move to the new approach of the ministerial team over time. There is already one minister in the Duns area who has been called on the basis of 20% of their time in a charge and 80% in the Presbytery. One of the four other ministers in the area (all are on full tenure) has indicated that they could move to this model within the first year of the plan and their congregation is supportive of this. The other three ministers could move towards giving 20% of their time to Presbytery (or maybe more in some cases) over the next few years or less. Thus half the allocation of full time ministry resource could be on the new model within a year and maybe up to 2.5FTE could be on this basis. As and when vacancies arise in the area new ministers would be brought in on the basis of the new model. Discussions with the existing ministers on their roles will also continue.

On the basis of those meetings the following plan emerged.

MISSION FOCUS

Key areas of mission for the Duns area of the Presbytery are below, along with some current examples:

- Outreach to new housing – Ayton District via Renton congregation, Chirnside
- New ways of doing Church – forest church in Cranshaws
- Mission to families – working with schools in Greenlaw, Eyemoth, Ayton, Reston, Berwick, Chirnside, Coldstream, Greenlaw, children's church in Duns

- Community support and outreach – foodbank support in Eyemouth, community café support in Ayton, Larder in Coldstream, café in Duns, community engagement activities in Greenlaw
- Ecumenical work – Eyemouth, Ayton, Berwick
- Developing skills in lay people: worship leading, pastoral care, moderatorship etc

AYTON & DISTRICT CHURCHES

This charge will continue as a congregation served by the four-member specialist ministerial team. It has actively embraced the concept of the Presbytery Plan since the recent retirement of its minister, is blessed with leaders, and is financially secure. There is good engagement with the community, there are regular social and fund-raising events, there is involvement in the community café. There are good relations with the local primary school, events are held specifically for children and families. The congregation is involved with East Berwickshire Churches together ecumenical groups and services. There are three buildings in the charge. Ayton Parish Church is a splendid building in excellent condition surrounded by excellent parking facilities. It has an amber AMBA score. The congregation is anxious to continue using both Foulden & Reston churches. The congregation is convinced that without a minister other than the support of the team they can make the plan work, and the Planning Committee believe that they should be given that chance but have concerns about the number of places of worship.

Foulden church will be retained and will continue to share services with Ayton Church. There is good engagement with the community, but there is scope and opportunity to grow the Christian witness in all of these parishes.

In the normal course of events the Presbytery Mission Plan would propose the closure of Reston Church. However, a new railway station has opened at Reston and because of this, there is to be many new houses built. This provides a huge missional opportunity and the congregation is keen to reach out to these new homeowners; their building is satisfactory and their finances secure. Thus this congregation served by the team, and supported particularly by the minister, will aim to develop a mission strategy for this new situation. It may be that the O.6 may be able to assist in this. The planning team feel that this congregation be given time to develop this unique circumstance. Reston Church is categorised B but with a disposal date of 2028 to allow time for missional opportunities to be explored and to decide if Reston Church building will be required for this mission. There is an active Guild and a good relationship with the local primary school too.

ST. ANDREW'S WALLACE GREEN

This congregation will continue with one of the four ministers allocated to them, serving with this congregation on a one-day-a-week basis. The congregation will take on the responsibility for their own worship, Christian education, pastoral care and mission with support, guidance and oversight of the ministerial team. It is a very strong congregation with capable leaders, prepared to lead this congregation forward as the Scottish Church in this England based town. There is much involvement with the other churches, the community, civic occasions, schools, and other organisations in the town. The church is very active, there are prayer and discussion groups, walking, choir and knitting groups. The building is in a satisfactory state (with planned improvements in the pipeline) and the finances of this congregation are secure.

CHIRNSIDE LINKED WITH HUTTON, FISHWICK & PAXTON

These two separate parishes will be united with the buildings in Hutton and Paxton being closed. The Paxton building is vested in local trustees and there is interest from a local Christian charity in taking over ownership of the building. The congregations of Hutton, Fishwick and Paxton are small, as is the congregation of Chirnside, but the community of Chirnside is an important one, although largely

unchurched, but the congregation has plans for outreach to the parish. There is involvement with the primary school. There is a large amount of new housing.

COLDINGHAM & ST. ABBS LINKED WITH EYEMOUTH

Coldingham St Abbs Parish Church: This congregation will continue, served by the four-member specialist ministerial team. It has given evidence of its ability to lead its own worship, currently provides its own pastoral care, leads activities with young and old in the parish, and works with the local school. It is blessed with leaders, has an excellent building with modern facilities and is financially secure. Coldingham priory will be retained.

Eyemouth Parish Church: Eyemouth is the largest community in Berwickshire. Eyemouth by its very size requires a Christian presence and therefore this congregation will continue with one of the four allocated ministers on a one-day-a-week basis in Eyemouth as there is much scope for mission and outreach in the town.

Within the congregation four members regularly lead worship, there are activities for children and families, there is engagement with the primary and secondary schools, and a pastoral care team is in place. The minister organises and arranges an end of summer mission club for children of the area (this could perhaps be resourced in future through the 0.6 of ministry), technology is in use to stream services, and the foodbank/community larder based in the church are widely used.

The Eyemouth Renew refurbishment project aims to transform the church building into a flexible space for the community to engage in education, cultural and social activities and as such the building will be retained.

Within Eyemouth there are five other Christian Communities – Roman Catholic, Free Baptist, Independent Evangelical, Scottish Episcopal and Eyemouth United Congregationalist churches. The Committee is glad to see these congregations coming together for various events, such as Lent and Advent meditation. Although there are some significant theological differences which present obstacles to deepening cooperation, the scale of the mission challenge dictates that it would be best for these churches to continue the journey towards working more closely together, with a view to deepening co-operation

COLDSTREAM & DISTRICT PARISHES LINKED WITH ECCLES & LEITHOLM

This linked charge has two parishes but four churches: Coldstream Parish Church, Swinton Church, Leitholm Church and Eccles Church.

The Coldstream and District Parish congregation will continue with one of the four ministers allocated to presbytery serving with the congregation on a one-day-a-week basis. The congregation will take on the responsibility for their own worship, Christian education, pastoral care and mission with the support, guidance and oversight of the ministerial team. There is healthy attendance on a Sunday and the congregation has leaders who are capable and prepared to lead this congregation forward in this important Scottish town. The building has good facilities and the congregation is financially secure and will be retained. There is good engagement with the local community, involvement with civic functions, the school and other churches in the town. The Larder is based in the church hall, coffee mornings, summer teas, prayer breakfasts and movie and popcorn events increase engagement with the community.

The Swinton congregation has declined to single-figure attendance. Worship ceased at Easter 2023. However, a great deal of work has been done on the building as the village has no community facility. It is therefore proposed that the building be transferred to a local Swinton Community Trust so that the building may remain in use by the community which has supported it for many hundreds of years. This option is currently being explored locally.

Eccles & Leitholm has two church buildings.

Leitholm Parish Church: This congregation will continue as a congregation served by the four member ministerial team. The congregation numbers around twenty-five on a normal Sunday, but it is hoped that this number will increase with the closure of Eccles Parish Church. The building is appropriate and the congregation financially secure so the church is categorised A.

Eccles Parish Church: From Easter 2023 the church is no longer being used for regular worship but is being used for occasional worship. The committee recognises the fine heritage of the building, and the support received from the community over the years. Worshipers will use the Leitholm building.

DUNS & DISTRICT PARISHES

The congregation of Duns Parish church will continue with one of the four ministers allocated to them serving with the congregation on a one-day-a-week basis. The congregation will take responsibility for their own worship, Christian education, pastoral care and mission with the support, guidance and oversight of the ministerial team. There is a healthy number attending Sunday worship. Duns and District Churches have several people who regularly participate in the worship life of the church. A Worship Group is in place and there are several people who assist the minister by independently producing and leading worship across the worship sites. They have the capability to lead the congregations forward. The building has good facilities, and the congregation is financially secure. Its halls are available to community groups and its presence is felt throughout the town as a whole. There is involvement with the foodbank, civic occasions, there is a regular café, kirk kids, prayer and family gatherings. As a result both church and halls are categorised A. It may be that this congregation feels that it has a right to more ministerial provision than the plan is able to give to it, but it is equally true that this congregation is better placed than many to make the vision behind this plan a reality and that, as the plan develops, leaders from this congregation will be able to assist several of the other congregations within presbytery, enriching them with what they already have.

The charge has four further churches.

Langton Parish Church (in Gavinton) is united with Duns Parish Church and it is hoped the building will remain as a satellite used by the people of Duns Parish Church. However, the building has no facilities and is an inflexible space though the adjacent hall has full facilities. The long-term future of the building is unclear and so the building is categorised as B with a disposal date of the end of the plan – 2028.

The worshipping congregation of Edrom Parish Church is small and is part of Duns & District Parishes; it is with regret and with an awareness of the history of this listed building and the support it has received from the community over many years, that it is recommended that this building is closed.

Bonkyl is united with Duns Parish Church and the Bonkyl church has no facilities and is an inflexible space. The hall is very close by and has facilities. The long-term future of the building is unclear and so the building is categorised as B with a disposal date of the end of the plan – 2028.

On the basis of numbers there is no justification for keeping the congregation at Cranshaws going. However, this congregation is experimenting as a forest church, with the enthusiasm of a small group at its centre. We suggest that they be allowed to continue as a pioneering experiment for the term of this plan, keeping the situation under review, and with the support, guidance and oversight of the ministerial team.

GREENLAW PARISH CHURCH

The congregation moved into the Fairbairn Hall for services over the winter months of 2022-23, as this would save on heating costs and allow a structural examination of the state of the church building. It is possible that the Fairbairn Hall, which belongs to Greenlaw Church, could be developed as a presbytery resource centre for the ministerial team and include an appropriate worshipping area. However, Greenlaw Church, Fairbairn Hall, Gordon St Michael's Church and Legerwood Church are all relatively close to each other and to Earlston in the Melrose & Peebles part of the Presbytery and the first four buildings have some challenges, as seen by their AMBA scores. There is also some concern about small congregations having to support all the statutory roles that independent congregations require and the burden this places on Moderatorial resource. The plan therefore is for these three congregations (and possibly Earlston) to work together over the next two or three years so see if there is an alternative governance structure that might suit the congregations better and to explore which buildings will best suit their missional purposes. So the plan categorises these four buildings as B whilst these discussions go ahead. It is envisaged we might keep up to two of the buildings in the Duns area. Earlston is considering whether they wish to join with the Duns area and its approach to ministry allocation.

The one-day-a-week minster would be transferred to Coldstream, with the congregation of Greenlaw taking responsibility for their parish supported by the ministerial team.

Worship is varied, including a daily thought posted online. There is good engagement with the school, and a wide range of events throughout the year to engage with the community, for example 'Walk & Talk'.

GORDON PARISH CHURCH

This congregation will continue as a congregation served by the four-member specialist ministerial team. However, Greenlaw Church, Fairbairn Hall, Gordon St Michael's Church and Legerwood Church are all relatively close to each other and to Earlston in the Melrose & Peebles part of the Presbytery and the first four buildings have some challenges, as seen by their AMBA scores. There is also some concern about small congregations having to support all the statutory roles that independent congregations require and the burden this places on Moderatorial resource. The plan therefore is for these three congregations (and possibly Earlston) to work together over the next two or three years so see if there is an alternative governance structure that might suit the congregations better and to explore which buildings will best suit their missional purposes. So the plan categorises these four buildings as B whilst these discussions go ahead. It is envisaged we might keep up to two of the buildings in the Duns area. Earlston is considering whether they wish to join with the Duns area and its approach to ministry allocation. It is felt that there is a mission opportunity in Westruther that needs to be explored.

LEGERWOOD PARISH CHURCH

This congregation will continue as a congregation served by the four-member specialist ministerial team. The building is in good condition and the congregation is financially secure. This congregation meets

once a month, but regularly draws in more than thirty people and on occasions very considerably more. It has few expenses and is genuinely supported by its small rural community. However, Greenlaw Church, Fairbairn Hall, Gordon St Michael's Church and Legerwood Church are all relatively close to each other and to Earlston in the Melrose & Peebles part of the Presbytery and the first four buildings have some challenges, as seen by their AMBA scores. There is also some concern about small congregations having to support all the statutory roles that independent congregations require and the burden this places on Moderatorial resource. The plan therefore is for these three congregations (and possibly Earlston) to work together over the next two or three years so see if there is an alternative governance structure that might suit the congregations better and to explore which buildings will best suit their missional purposes. So the plan categorises these four buildings as B whilst these discussions go ahead. It is envisaged we might keep up to two of the buildings in the Duns area. Earlston is considering whether they wish to join with the Duns area and its approach to ministry allocation.

FOGO PARISH CHURCH

This congregation has grown very significantly, each year over the last six years, increasing its membership ten-fold, sharing in adult baptism and producing a new candidate for ministry. It exists without the services of a stipendiary minister but has the assistance of a retired minister. The church building, which is in good condition, is the only community building within the parish. The congregation would like to see the building transferred into the ownership of the local community which has supported the building for at least 850 years, and for them to be permitted to continue as a congregation until the transfer of the building; otherwise, like all old buildings it would quickly deteriorate due to being empty with no heating. The transfer of the building to a local trust has been the policy of presbytery since 2016. The congregation is financially secure. The local community trust has already been in existence for a number of years and contains all the expertise and resources required for the purpose.

A summary of the plan as it affects each charge is in Appendix 2

CONCLUSION

This plan has been formulated through various conversations with Ministers, Kirk Sessions and members of Congregations, whose time and input is much valued. It is a radical plan and presents a vision for the future of this branch of Christ's Church in this area. Things are unsettling uncertain for all but through all the thinking and discussing, through the heartfelt prayers, this is the plan for the Presbytery of Duns which has emerged. There is of course, much work still to be done and many opportunities and challenges lie ahead, but we firmly believe our Lord Jesus Christ still has plans for his Church in this place. And we want to be part of those plans.

Appendix 1 Building AMBA scores

Building; Church only or Church With Adjoining Hall

	As a Percentage of Total Available Score
Fogo Parish Church	79%
Berwick St Andrew's Wallace Green Church	77%
Eyemouth Parish Church	76%
Coldingham Priory	71%
Ayton Parish Church	68%
Chirnside Parish Church	67%
Duns Parish Church	62%
Leitholm Parish Church	62%
Legerwood Church	57%
Foulden Parish Church	56%
Cranshaws Church	56%
Swinton Parish Church	56%
Gordon St Michael's Church	55%
Reston Parish Church	54%
Hutton Parish Church	54%
Paxton Church	54%
Bonkyl Church	52%
Greenlaw Church	50%
Edrom Church	47%
Langton Church	43%
Eccles Parish Church	32%

Building; Separate Hall on Same Site as Church

	As a Percentage of Total Available Score
Duns Parish Hall	72%
Gavinton Church Hall	48%

Building; Separate Hall on Separate Site

	As a Percentage of Total Available Score
Fairbairn Hall, Greenlaw	64%
Bonkyl Hall	56%

Appendix 2 – Summary of Plan

Charge	1 = Minister Allocated one day a week. 2= support of all 4.6 ministers	Buildings and their Plan Category A – to be retained for the life of the plan B – to be disposed of or a further decision on the building required and date of disposal or decision on building	Comments
Ayton & District Churches	2	Ayton Parish Church A Foulden Parish Church A Reston Parish Church B 2028	Reston Church will explore missional outreach to new housing in the area and see whether the Church should be kept to further that mission
Berwick: St Andrew's Wallace Green	1 & 2	St Andrew's Wallace Green A	
Chirnside Parish Church linked with Hutton, Fishwick and Paxton	2	Chirnside Parish Church A Hutton Parish Church B 2028 Fishwick Parish Church B 2028	Chirnside to unite with Hutton Fishwick & Paxton
Coldingham & St Abbs: linked with Eyemouth Parish Church	1 & 2	Coldingham Priory A Eyemouth Parish Church A	
Coldstream & District Parishes linked with Eccles and Leitholm	1 & 2	Coldstream Parish Church A Swinton Parish Church B 2026 Leitholm Parish Church A Eccles Parish Church B 2027	
Duns & District Parishes	1 & 2	Duns Parish Church A Langton Parish Church (Gavinton) B 2028 Edrom Parish Church B 2026 Bonkyl Parish Church B 2028	

		Cranshaws Parish Church A	
Greenlaw Parish Church	2	Greenlaws Parish Church B 2028 Fairbairn Hall B 2028	Greenlaw, Gordon St Michael's and Legerwood to discuss how to work together and which buildings best suit their mission. It is anticipated two buildings of the four may be retained
Gordon: St Michael's Parish Church	2	St Michael's Parish Church B 2028	Greenlaw, Gordon St Michael's and Legerwood to discuss how to work together and which buildings best suit their mission. It is anticipated two buildings of the four may be retained
Legerwood Parish Church	2	Legerwood Parish Church B 2028	Greenlaw, Gordon St Michael's and Legerwood to discuss how to work together and which buildings best suit their mission. It is anticipated two buildings of the four may be retained
Fogo Parish Church	2	Fogo Parish Church B 2027	

Presbytery of Jedburgh

Presbytery Mission Plan

As approved December 2022

*“After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb.”
Revelation 7v9*

This wonderful vision John was given of the vast and diverse congregation of the Lord’s redeemed people worshipping God in heaven shows us the goal of all our mission. All we do now, each day, in the service of our Lord is a step towards that glorious destiny.

1 The Plan

The Presbytery of Jedburgh (“the Presbytery”) is required by the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII 2021) to have an Approved Mission Plan (“the Plan”) in place in terms of that Act by 31 December 2022. The Plan is required to describe how the Church of Scotland’s engagement with Christ’s mission is to be shaped and resourced in the next five years.

To that end, the Plan needs to show how the life of the Church of Scotland here will be shaped around mission, while retaining the commitment to a territorial ministry as per the 3rd Article Declaratory and adhering to the reduced number of ministry posts for our presbytery of 5.5 as determined by the General Assembly. The presbytery also needs to ensure that new ways of being Church are reflected in the Plan. This is a challenging task to say the least with mission being put in the forefront, alongside the continuing responsibility as a national church to provide territorial ministry and mission, with the reality being that ministry numbers are set to reduce markedly. In our presbytery the reduction in FTE ministry posts is from 10 - per our present plan - to 5.5 (the 2011 FTE posts were 11.9).

Mission for the purposes of the Plan means those aspects of church life set out in the Five Marks of Mission, which 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, baptize 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*

As far as our presbytery plan is concerned, the view being taken is that these marks should be embedded in the ministry, outreach, life and service of each Christian congregation and in its members' life, witness and service, whatever form the congregation may take, or how it is structured or led.

The Presbytery is also required to categorise each ecclesiastical building between those that will be retained for five years from the approval of the plan (category A) and those that will be disposed of within five years (category B), taking into account the resources and advice of the General Trustees including the AMBA (Asset Management Building Audit) outcomes. The table on pages 9-11 gives indicative dates by which these disposals will take place.

2 Approach to the task

The Presbytery's Business and Superintendence Committee also serves as the Presbytery's Planning Committee ("the committee") and is responsible for taking the lead in the production of our Presbytery's Mission Plan.

The first step was to divide the Presbytery into three geographical areas each based around the three main towns – Hawick, Jedburgh and Kelso.

Then, based broadly on population levels per the 2011 census (but adjusted to reflect geography), the 5.5 permitted ministry posts were allocated across those areas as follows:

Hawick area (population 17,540) – 2.5 posts

Jedburgh area (population 6,643) – 1 post

Kelso area (population 10,740) – 2 posts

(Total population 34,923)

On a strict population basis, and rounding to the nearest 0.25, Hawick would have been allocated 2.75, Jedburgh 1, and Kelso 1.75. Given however the geographical spread of the Kelso area compared with Hawick and district, the adjusted allocation is considered reasonable.

The next stage was to hold at the end of 2021 meetings of all members of all the Kirk Sessions in each of these three areas. At those meetings the task we are engaged in was explained and discussion in small groups took place which included how the ministry, worship and work of the church might be undertaken in the future given the reduction in ministry numbers, and also which buildings would be necessary for the ongoing mission of the church.

A meeting of ministers in charges was also held early in 2022 at which helpful discussion took place regarding the future.

Taking into account the feedback from those meetings, the committee then began preparing the draft plan.

A key aspect of our plan is that all 5.5 FTE ministry posts will be Ministers of Word and Sacrament. Based on the type of work required in each of the new enlarged charges, plus our own knowledge of the workload, it is not possible under the plan to cut the number of Ministers of Word and Sacrament below 5.5. Alongside the key contribution that ministers make, we are clear that training of elders and church members is crucial in the ongoing mission of the church – training in leadership, worship leading, pastoral care, conducting funerals, children’s work, evangelism and other aspects of church life and ministry. Such training will require to take place at congregational level and within the new enlarged presbytery set up. We currently have a good number of people across the congregations who have undergone training and are engaged in leading worship but the number of such people needs to increase. At the same time, there needs to be realism regarding the capacity of church members to carry out on a regular, sustained basis tasks previously done by ministers. In that connection, given the shortage of ministers in our presbytery, around five elders have been trained to serve as Interim Moderators, but only one continues to act as such – it is a demanding role for an elder. So we are clear that all 5.5 FTE ministry posts need to be Ministers of Word and Sacrament to sustain and extend the mission of Christ here.

We would also envisage other employed roles developing – for example for work among the elderly, or with children and families, or among those trapped in addiction and poverty, or in the development of new expressions of church. These posts would be recruited locally and funded by the enlarged congregations or groups of congregations, by presbytery or possibly via the Pioneer Mission Fund or the Seeds for Growth Fund. We believe with Hudson Taylor, the missionary pioneer, that “God’s work, done in God’s way, will never lack God’s supply.”

The draft plan in summary form can be found at section 5 below. There follows a detailed review of the plan for each area and the congregations within it. It should be noted that the names used here for new configurations of congregations are working titles only. Charges will receive agreed names when bases of readjustment are drawn up.

3 The plan for each area

3.1 Hawick area

3.1.1 Overview

Under the previous plan for Hawick, a north and south grouping are in place. The north grouping consists of the linked charge of Teviothead with Wilton and the charge of Burnfoot and the south grouping consists of the linked charge of St Mary's & Old Parish with Teviot & Robertson and the linked charge of Cavers & Kirkton with Trinity.

These groupings allow for congregations and ministers to work together in various respects and on a vacancy occurring the charges within each area grouping, in consultation with Presbytery, jointly decided how best the needs of the area would be met with an appointment being made accordingly. Given the natural groupings already in existence, the proposals in the draft plan follow that division for the town itself and the area to the west and south west of the town.

It should be noted that there has been discussion for some time regarding the benefits of a new build church when unions and closures occur so that the united congregation is not meeting in any previous congregation's building therefore giving a fresh start. The view of the committee is that it is more appropriate to consider major refurbishment and modernisation of the church building(s) that are retained, utilising the proceeds of sale of redundant church buildings and manse.

The main high level missional aims for the Hawick area are as follows:

- **Grow a vibrant worshipping church, where God's word is faithfully preached:** with elders and members trained in leading worship, pastoral care, conducting funerals, evangelism, etc; full use being made of church buildings; and new ways of being church developed.
- **Build faith among the large number of elderly people in the town and district:** through services in care homes and sheltered housing, one-to-one visiting and making worship services available online or digitally. Consider local employment of someone to work among the elderly.
- **Develop and deepen links with children, youth and families:** through Christian holiday clubs and day events, Boys Brigade and Girls Brigade, Christian youth clubs, messy church, and other initiatives. Continue chaplaincy work and Scripture Union and other Christian groups in schools. Consider local employment of a children and families worker.
- **Support and develop mission to priority areas as well as the wider town which has a high SIMD:** including consideration of local employment of a Christian worker among those trapped in addiction and poverty.

- **Engage fully with rural ministry:** including continuing a Christian presence in places where church buildings have closed, through services held in community buildings and meetings in homes.

3.1.2 Hawick north

The ultimate aim of the draft plan is for Teviothead, Wilton and Burnfoot to become one charge, with Teviothead and Wilton being united and Burnfoot being added to that union. The mission of the Church will be furthered and strengthened through the coming together of the church in the north of the parish, while retaining the focus on each constituent part. The aim is for the church to be vibrant and growing, carrying on Christ's mission in these areas of Hawick.

Burnfoot is a Priority Area so it is important that the community identity of the congregation remains for the sake of the mission in the area, whose population at 2011 was 3,105. It will be important fully to engage with the mission opportunities arising from classification as a priority area. This would include consideration of additional staffing for mission work in the community by way of a temporary MDS post up to 31 December 2025 and additional staffing funded by the Seeds of Growth Fund thereafter. There is a primary school in Burnfoot and the church has an active BB company and good relationships with the community hub and other denominations working within the community. The church building is a flexible 1950's hall church at the top of Burnfoot. There were 6 funerals in 2021 (note there were 42 in 2018). Under the previous plan, Burnfoot was allocated a 0.5 FTE, 5 year reviewable, minister. It is now in a sisted vacancy. The plan would be for Wilton & Teviothead to be united early in the implementation stage and for Burnfoot subsequently to join that union. If the minister of Teviothead and Wilton does not take on Burnfoot, there would be a deferred union, with Burnfoot becoming vacant with no right to call a minister until such time as Teviothead and Wilton becomes vacant. A decision regarding the church building once the union is effected is still under discussion. If the minister of Teviothead and Wilton does not take on Burnfoot, the building would be retained until the deferred union is effected. The church building has been categorised as B but reviewable within 5 years. The manse would be disposed of in any event. If the church building is disposed of, an alternative venue will be needed for services and missional activities.

Teviothead is a rural parish including the hamlet of Teviothead 10 miles south of Hawick on the A7. Its parish extends to the border with Dumfries and Galloway Council. The minister of Teviothead linked with Wilton is on unrestricted tenure. There were 2 funerals in 2021. Given the distance from the town, and despite the small parish population (146 in 2011) it is important that the mission presence of the church continues. The plan is for the church building to close but for services to continue in the village hall at times to be agreed (see note at section 4). A union of the two congregations would be effected under the existing minister early in the implementation stage.

Wilton parish consists of most of the north of the town, except Wilton Dean and Burnfoot, and extends into the rural area to the north. It has two primary schools within it – Wilton and Stirches – where the minister is chaplain. There is a care home in the parish where church services were held pre-covid. The parish minister had 28 funerals in 2021. The church building is the largest in Hawick and has a separate suite of halls behind it with excellent accommodation which hosts a Girls Brigade company among other groups. The population of the parish is 3,867, the largest in the town, and contains some areas of social deprivation. The plan would be for Wilton and Teviothead to unite under the current minister with the resulting united congregation being united to Burnfoot on the demission of the minister of Teviothead and Wilton or with their agreement. Wilton church and halls would be retained and hopefully redeveloped into a flexible, modern church centre.

3.1.3 Hawick south

The ultimate aim of the draft plan for the south of Hawick is for the congregations of St Mary's & Old Parish, Teviot & Roberton, and Trinity to become one united charge; with Cavers & Kirkton being united with Hobkirk & Southdean with Ruberslaw (see 3.1.4 - Ruberslaw and Rule). The mission of the Church will be furthered through the coming into being of one church covering the enlarged unified parish, which by God's grace, can be vibrant and growing, carrying on Christ's mission in this part of Hawick.

The parish of **St Mary's & Old Parish Church** covers much of the west end of Hawick, with a parish population of 1,913 in 2011. Drumlanrig & St Cuthbert's Primary School is in the parish and the minister is chaplain there. There were 15 funerals in 2021. The minister of St Mary's & Old Parish linked with Teviot & Roberton is on unrestricted tenure. An AV system has recently been installed in the church, the interior has been redecorated and a foldaway kitchen installed in the sanctuary. The plan would be for St Mary's & Old Parish and Teviot & Roberton to unite under that minister early in the implementation stage. Then, on the demission of that minister, or with their agreement, Trinity Church, having been de-linked from Cavers & Kirkton, would be united to the (newly united) St Mary's & Old Parish and Teviot & Roberton. The St Mary's church building is clearly iconic in the town, occupying a landmark site where there has been a place of worship since around 1200AD. The plan is for the church building to be disposed of, but the committee consider that full support should be given to the building being acquired by a trust which would use it for cultural/traditional events and for occasional Christian services (see note at section 4). The church halls on Buccleuch Street would be retained for use by the united congregation. The small shop unit on 3 Loan would be disposed of. The manse is jointly owned by St Mary's & Old Parish and Teviot & Roberton and would be retained.

Teviot & Roberton Church is a union of Teviot Church in St George's Lane (across from the Common Haugh car park), and Roberton Kirk, situated in a hamlet 5 miles west of the town in the Borthwick valley. The parish comprises much of the west end of the town, on both sides of the River Teviot, and extends west 12 miles to Craik and beyond. Services take place weekly at Teviot and around 9 times a year at Roberton. Hawick High School is directly across the road from Teviot Church and is within the parish. Pre-covid an ecumenical chaplaincy team operated in the school. There are two sheltered housing complexes and two care homes in the parish where monthly services are normally held. The minister had 10 funerals in 2021. The population of the parish in 2011 was 2,558. The plan would be for Teviot & Roberton to unite with St Mary's & Old Parish under the current minister with that congregation being united to Trinity on the demission of the minister or with their agreement. The Teviot church building is large and has an integrated suite of halls. There is an AV system in the church with live-streaming of services. Teviot church building would be retained given its location, parking and facilities and hopefully redeveloped into a modern, flexible church centre. As regards Roberton, given the distance from the town, and despite the small parish population, it is important that the mission presence of the church continues. The plan is for the church building to be disposed of but for services to continue in the Forman Hall across the road at times to be agreed. (See note at section 4.)

Trinity Church parish comprises the centre and east of the town south of the Teviot. The charge is currently in a sisted vacancy – the previous plan provided for a minister on full time unrestricted tenure for Cavers & Kirkton linked with Trinity. The church building is on the east end of the High Street, with its own small car park and integrated suite of halls, which pre-Covid were used extensively, including for weekly community coffee mornings. The large parish had a population of 3,625 in 2011. It includes most of the High Street with the mission opportunity that brings. The church has good relationships with Trinity Primary School. There were 11

funerals in 2021. Two sheltered housing complexes are in the parish where monthly church services are held. The plan would be for the linkage between Trinity and Cavers & Kirkton to be broken and for Trinity to unite with St Mary's & Old Parish and Teviot & Roberton on the demission of the minister of that charge or with their agreement. At that time the Trinity Church building and manse would be disposed of. If the minister of St Mary's & Old Parish and Teviot & Roberton does not take on Trinity, there would be a deferred union, with Trinity becoming vacant with no right to call a minister until the deferred union is effected. Trinity Church would be retained until that union took place and the manse would be disposed of. The church building has been categorised as B but reviewable within 1 year.

3.1.4 Ruberslaw & Rule

The ultimate aim of the draft plan for this area is to break the linkage between Cavers & Kirkton and Trinity and unite the three congregations under a 0.5FTE Minister of Word & Sacrament on unrestricted tenure. That would create a large, geographically widespread parish in the rural area east and south of Hawick which would allow a part time minister with a vision for rural ministry to engage fully with a country parish to fulfil the mission of Christ to the people of that area.

Cavers & Kirkton Church is situated 3 miles east of the centre of Hawick. Its parish is geographically large stretching round the south of Hawick, but the parish population is only 325 as it is entirely rural. The charge is currently in a sisted vacancy – the previous plan provided for a minister on full time unrestricted tenure for Cavers & Kirkton linked with Trinity. There were 3 funerals in 2021. As well as the weekly Sunday services there are a number of funerals and weddings in the church. The linkage with Trinity has been in existence for many years but it makes sense to the committee to break that linkage now in order to separate the new town and country parishes. The plan is to do that early in the implementation stage of the plan. Then, on the demission of the minister of Hobkirk & Southdean with Ruberslaw, or with their agreement, Cavers & Kirkton, Hobkirk & Southdean and Ruberslaw would be united on a 0.5FTE basis with unrestricted tenure. At that stage, the Cavers & Kirkton building would be disposed of (see note at section 4). If the minister of Hobkirk & Southdean with Ruberslaw does agree, Cavers & Kirkton, Hobkirk & Southdean and Ruberslaw would unite on the present ministerial terms, but reducing to 0.5FTE on the demission of that minister. If the minister of Hobkirk & Southdean with Ruberslaw does not agree, there would be a deferred union, with Cavers & Kirkton becoming vacant with no right to call a minister until a vacancy occurs in Hobkirk & Southdean with Ruberslaw, and the Cavers & Kirkton church building would remain open during that period.

Hobkirk & Southdean parish covers the area around Bonchester Bridge and Chesters and stretches to the English border. The main church building is at Hobkirk near Bonchester where Sunday services take place weekly. Occasional services also take place at Southdean Church at Chesters. There are a number of weddings in both churches. It is a large spread out parish which is predominantly rural with a population of 736 in 2011. There is a care home at Bonchester Bridge. There were a total of 4 funerals in 2021. The minister of Hobkirk & Southdean with Ruberslaw is full time with unrestricted tenure. The plan is to unite Hobkirk & Southdean, Ruberslaw, and Cavers & Kirkton on the demission of the minister or with their agreement, on a 0.5FTE basis with unrestricted tenure. If the minister does agree, Hobkirk & Southdean would unite with Ruberslaw and with Cavers & Kirkton on the present ministerial terms, but reducing to 0.5FTE on the demission of that minister. If the minister does not agree, Hobkirk & Southdean with Ruberslaw would continue in its current arrangement until a vacancy occurs. As regards buildings, the plan is in any event to retain Hobkirk Church and to dispose of Southdean Church (see note at section 4).

Ruberslaw parish takes in the villages of Denholm, Minto and Bedrule and the extensive surrounding rural areas. It had a population of 1,265 in 2011. There is a primary school in Denholm to which the minister is chaplain. Sunday services rotate each week around the three church buildings at Denholm, Minto and Bedrule. There are a number of weddings in the various churches. There were a total of 8 funerals in 2021. The manse for the linked charge of Hobkirk & Southdean with Ruberslaw is in the centre of Denholm as is the Denholm church building. Denholm is five miles from the centre of Hawick. The minister is on unrestricted tenure. The plan would be to unite Hobkirk & Southdean, Ruberslaw, and Cavers & Kirkton on the demission of the minister or with their agreement, on a 0.5FTE basis with unrestricted tenure. If the minister does agree, Hobkirk & Southdean would unite with Ruberslaw and with

Cavers & Kirkton on the present ministerial terms, but reducing to 0.5FTE on the demission of that minister. If the minister does not agree, Hobkirk & Southdean with Ruberslaw would continue in its current arrangement until a vacancy occurs. As regards buildings, the plan is in any event to retain Denholm church building and dispose of Minto and Bedrule church buildings (see note at section 4). The manse in Denholm would be retained.

3.2 Jedburgh Area

The overall plan for this area is to unite Jedburgh Old & Trinity with Oxnam and link that united charge to Ale & Teviot United under a full time minister of Word and Sacrament. Linkage has been chosen over union primarily to allow the two congregations - Jedburgh/Oxnam and Ale & Teviot - to make their own decisions along with the minister as to how they develop their missional responsibilities in their own communities. This will strengthen and facilitate the development of the mission of Christ in Jedburgh, Oxnam, Ancrum, Lilliesleaf, the other villages and the rural areas, while maintaining the distinctive identity of the Christian community in each area.

The main high level missional aims for the Jedburgh area are as follows:

- **Grow a vibrant worshipping church, where God's word is faithfully preached:** with elders and members being trained in appropriate ways in leading worship, pastoral care, conducting funerals, evangelism, etc; and new ways of being church developed.
- **Consider how to make best use of church and other buildings:** for worship and discipleship and to project a vibrant, caring community.
- **Develop and deepen links with children, youth and families:** through Christian holiday clubs and youth clubs, and other initiatives. Continue chaplaincy work in schools. Consider local employment of a children and families worker.
- **Engage fully with rural ministry:** including continuing a Christian presence in places where church buildings have closed, through services held in community buildings, meetings in homes, and other ways.
- **Encourage the sharing of ideas and resources among congregations:** to enable growth both in membership and faith.

Jedburgh Old & Trinity parish comprises the whole of Jedburgh and its rural hinterland. It had a population of 4,649 in 2011. The previous plan provided for a full time minister of word and sacrament on unrestricted tenure but the church is currently in a sisted vacancy. An Interim Minister was appointed in October 2020, serving the Jedburgh Old congregation through a period of transition. Despite the constraints of Covid this is bringing about positive change in the congregation including increased attendances at worship. The need for the radical planning that we now require to carry out has changed the context for the congregation and more wide ranging change now has to be faced. There is a combined primary and high school campus in Jedburgh with which the church has good relationships. There are two care homes and two sheltered housing complexes in the Jedburgh area. There were 13 funerals in 2021 (14 in 2020). As well as the substantial A listed church building, Kenmore Halls is adjacent to the church, and has recently had a lift installed. The plan would be to unite Jedburgh Old & Trinity with Oxnam which is currently in guardianship, and then link that united congregation to Ale & Teviot United. As regards buildings, Jedburgh Old & Trinity church building will be retained as will the Kenmore Halls. An audit of the sanctuary and Kenmore Halls should be carried out in order to identify the most appropriate use and development of the buildings for future worship and mission. The Jedburgh Old & Trinity manse will also be retained.

Oxnam Parish Church has been in guardianship since October 2018. Oxnam village is four miles south-east of the centre of Jedburgh. There is a well-equipped community hall in the village. Sunday services are held in the church once a fortnight. Oxnam Church is an active fellowship with a strong community involvement. The large rural parish had a population of 258 in 2011. There were 2 funerals in 2021. The plan is to unite Oxnam with Jedburgh Old & Trinity. The Oxnam Church building will be categorised as B but subject to review within the 5 year period.

Ale & Teviot United parish includes Ancrum and Lilliesleaf, which are substantial villages, as well as Crailing and the surrounding extensive rural area. The charge is currently in a sisted vacancy

– the previous plan provided for a full time minister on unrestricted tenure. There is a primary school in Ancrum and in Lilliesleaf. The parish population was 1,736 in 2011. There were 8 funerals in 2021. The plan is to link Ale & Teviot with the union of Jedburgh Old & Trinity and Oxnam under a full time minister of word and sacrament. The linkage is important to continue the identity of this congregation and to allow them to make their own decisions along with the minister as to how they develop their missional responsibilities in their own communities. The church building at Crailing would be disposed of – it is not well positioned and there is a community hall in the village itself (see note at section 4). The church buildings in Ancrum and Lilliesleaf would be retained with regular worship to be conducted by the minister or by other suitably trained members of the congregations. The manse in Ancrum would be sold, let or otherwise disposed of.

3.3 Kelso area

3.3.1 Overview

The ultimate plan for the Kelso area is for there to be two charges. The North Side, resulting from the union of Kelso Country Churches with Kelso North & Ednam, and the South Side, resulting from the linkage of Cheviot Churches with Kelso Old & Sprouston. Each of these new charges would be under a full time minister of Word and Sacrament. An alternative arrangement of a country charge and a town charge was considered by the committee but was not pursued. Bringing together Cheviot Churches and Kelso Country Churches would have involved two large geographical areas, effectively separated by Kelso, which was considered inappropriate. Challenges were also foreseen in creating a single charge in the town, including the fact that both the church buildings are A-listed. For completeness at this stage, it should be noted that a basis of parish grouping was agreed in November 2013 among Kelso Country Churches, Kelso North & Ednam and Kelso Old & Sprouston.

The main high level missional aims for the Kelso area are as follows:

- **Grow a vibrant worshipping church, where God's word is faithfully preached:** with elders and members trained in leading worship, pastoral care, conducting funerals, evangelism, etc; full use being made of church buildings; and new ways of being church developed.
- **Develop and deepen links with children, youth and families:** through Christian holiday clubs and youth clubs, Growing Young and other initiatives. Continue chaplaincy work in schools. Consider local employment of a children and families worker.
- **Engage fully with rural ministry:** including continuing a Christian presence in places where church buildings have closed, through services held in community buildings and meetings in homes.
- **Develop a ministry to walkers and pilgrims:** on the St Cuthbert's Way and Borders Abbey Way both of which go through the area.
- **Encourage the sharing of ideas among congregations:** to enable growth both in membership and faith.

3.3.2 Kelso North Side

Kelso Country Churches is a rural parish encircling Kelso on the North, West and South West. It includes the settlements of Heiton, Roxburgh, Makerstoun, Smailholm, Nenthorn, Stichill and Hume. The charge falls vacant on 11 December 2022 but previously had a minister on unrestricted tenure on a 0.75FTE basis. There are church buildings in Stichill and Makerstoun with one service each Sunday alternating between the two places of worship. A podcast of the sermon is put online. The manse is in Stichill. The parish population in 2011 was 1,251 and there were no funerals in 2020 or 2021. The plan is to unite Kelso Country Churches with Kelso North & Ednam on a vacancy occurring in either of these charges and with the approval of the minister of the other charge, or on the demission of both ministers. When that union takes

place, Makerstoun church building (see note at section 4) and the Kelso Country Churches manse would be disposed of. If the minister of Kelso North & Ednam does not take on Kelso Country Churches, there would be a deferred union, with Kelso Country Churches remaining vacant with no right to call a minister until a vacancy occurs in Kelso North & Ednam. During that deferred union, Stichill and Makerstoun would be retained but the manse would be disposed of.

Kelso North & Ednam is the largest parish in the presbytery, with a population of 6,156 in 2011, and includes the north part of Kelso and Ednam (2 miles to the north east of the town). It is a union with two church buildings – Kelso North church in the town which has an integrated hall complex and is A-listed - and Ednam church. Kelso North has an AV system with the services being live-streamed. The minister is on unrestricted tenure. Worship services take place each Sunday in both church buildings. A primary school and Kelso High School are both in the Kelso part of the parish and there is also a primary school in Ednam. The minister acts as chaplain in all three of these schools. In the parish there is a care home, a sheltered housing complex and Kelso Hospital. The parish has a large number of funerals – 56 in 2021. The plan is to unite Kelso North & Ednam with Kelso Country Churches on the demission of the minister of Kelso North & Ednam or with their agreement. The Kelso North building would be retained as would the manse, with the Ednam building being disposed of (see note at section 4).

3.3.3 Kelso South Side

Cheviot Churches is an extensive rural parish south and west of Kelso, covering the villages of Morebattle, Yetholm, Hownam and Linton and the surrounding rural areas and extending to the English border and the foothills of the Cheviots. The minister is on full time unrestricted tenure. There are church buildings in Morebattle and in Yetholm (where Sunday services are generally held weekly), in Linton (where services are held monthly), in Hownam and in Hoselaw (where services are held occasionally). The church at Yetholm has recently been refurbished, with audio visual equipment, and moveable chairs and is used for community purposes as well as worship and church activities. Podcasts of the weekly services are put online. The manse is in Morebattle. The parish population in 2011 was 1,441. Both Morebattle and Yetholm are on the St Cuthbert's Way which gives mission opportunities. There are primary schools in Morebattle and Yetholm. There were 9 funerals in 2021. The plan is to link Cheviot Churches with Kelso Old & Sprouston on the demission of the minister of Cheviot Churches or with their agreement. Linkage has been chosen over union primarily to allow the two congregations – Cheviot Churches and Kelso Old & Sprouston - to make their own decisions along with the minister as to how they develop their missional responsibilities in their own communities. Yetholm and Morebattle are quite distinct communities from Kelso. It may be that linkage is a first step to union further down the line. When the linkage takes place, Morebattle and Yetholm church buildings would be retained but Hownam and Linton churches would be disposed of (see note at section 4). The Cheviot Churches manse would be retained, with a view to the minister of the new Kelso South Side charge being based in the rural part of the charge, which fits with the minister of the new Kelso North Side church residing in Kelso. If the minister of Cheviot Churches does not take on Kelso Old & Sprouston there would be a deferred union, with Kelso

Old & Sprouston becoming vacant with no right to call a minister until a vacancy occurs in Cheviot Churches.

Kelso Old & Sprouston parish covers the southern part of Kelso, the village of Sprouston (3 miles from the centre of Kelso on the south side of the Tweed downstream) and the surrounding rural area. It is a union with two church buildings – Kelso Old Parish church– which is a large, historic, A-listed building, centrally located and adjacent to a public car park - and Sprouston church. There is a hall across the road from the Old Parish church, which belongs to the Roxburghe Estate. The charge is currently in a sisted vacancy – the previous plan provided for a minister on unrestricted tenure on a 0.75FTE basis. Worship services take place each Sunday in both church buildings. The Kelso Old building is widely used as a venue for concerts. The manse is in Kelso. There is a primary school in both the Kelso part of the parish and in Sprouston and the High School is in the north of the town. The church has a chaplaincy involvement in the two primary schools. There is a care home in the parish. There were 20 funerals in 2021. The plan is to link Kelso Old & Sprouston with Cheviot Churches on the demission of the minister of Cheviot Churches or with their agreement. Linkage has been chosen over union primarily to allow the two congregations – Kelso Old & Sprouston and Cheviot Churches - to make their own decisions along with the minister as to how they develop their missional responsibilities in their own communities. It may be that linkage is a first step to union further down the line. If the minister of Cheviot Churches does not take on Kelso Old & Sprouston, there would be a deferred linkage, with Kelso Old & Sprouston becoming vacant with no right to call a minister until a vacancy occurs in Cheviot Churches. The Kelso Old Parish building would be retained and the hall would continue to be used. On the linkage taking place, or if Kelso Old & Sprouston moves into deferred linkage, Sprouston Church would be disposed of (see note at section 4). The Kelso Old & Sprouston manse would be sold, let or otherwise disposed of by 31st August 2027.

4 Note regarding sale of buildings

The committee believes disposal of some of our rural churches may be difficult. Several are contiguous with graveyards and utilities are in some cases absent or of poor quality. In several cases, hall accommodation is adjacent which is more central to the settlement, of a higher standard than the church building and more than adequate for church use. For these reasons, noting the strong local attachment to what is an important historic part of the settlement, we consider that in the first instance buildings should be offered to a local trust (subject to negotiation) at a nominal cost.

As has been said at 3.1.3, as regards the historic St Mary's church in Hawick, given its special place in the town, the committee consider that full support should be given to the building being acquired by a trust which would use it for cultural/traditional events and for occasional services.

5 The plan and route map in summary form

HAWICK AREA

Congregation	2021 Roll	Parish Population (2011)	Status as at Dec 2022	Status envisaged at end of plan	Implementation	Category A Buildings	Category B Buildings	Buildings Under Discussion
<u>Hawick North</u>								
Burnfoot	61	3105	Vacancy Sisted (previously 0.5FTE, 5 year reviewable)	Union of the three congregations under 1 FTE parish minister	1. Unite Wilton & Teviothead 2. On the demission of the minister of Wilton & Teviothead or with their agreement, unite the 3 congregations	Wilton Church, Halls and Manse	Teviothead (by 31.8.27), Burnfoot Manse (by 31.8.23), Burnfoot Church (by 31.8.27) but reviewable within 5 years	
Teviothead	51	146	Incumbent FTE minister - unrestricted tenure - in linked charge					
Wilton	234	3867						
		(subtotal 7118)						
<u>Hawick South</u>								
St Mary's & Old Teviot & Roberton	306 176	1913 2558	Incumbent FTE minister - unrestricted tenure - since 2017 in linked charge	Union of the three congregations under 1 FTE parish minister	1. Unite SMOP and T&R 2. Break linkage of Cavers & Kirkton with Trinity 3. Unite the three congregations, subject to the demission of the minister or with their agreement	Teviot Church, manse, St Mary's Hall	St Mary's Church (by 31.8.27), 3 the Loan (by 31.8.23), Roberton (by 31.8.27), Trinity Manse (by 31.8.23), Trinity Church (by 31.8.27) but reviewable within 1 year	
Trinity	436	3625	Vacancy sisted (previously 1FTE minister for linkage with Cavers & Kirkton)					
		(subtotal 8096)						

Congregation	2021 Roll	Parish Population (2011)	Status as at Dec 2022	Status envisaged at end of plan	Implementation	Category A Buildings	Category B Buildings	Buildings Under Discussion
<u>Ruberslaw & Rule</u>								
Cavers & Kirkton	92	325	Vacancy sisted (previously 1FTE minister for linkage with Trinity)	Union of the three congregations under a 0.5 FTE parish minister	1. On the demission of the minister of Hobkirk and Southdean linked with Ruberslaw, or with their agreement, unite the three congregations on a 0.5FTE basis	Denholm, Hobkirk, Ruberslaw manse	Bedrule (by 31.8.27), Cavers (by 31.8.27), Minto (by 31.8.27), Southdean (by 31.8.27)	
Hobkirk & Southdean	121	736	Incumbent 1FTE minister - unrestricted tenure - since 2018 in linked charge					
Ruberslaw	205	1265						
		(subtotal 2326)						
	1682	17540						

Congregation	2021 Roll	Parish Population (2011)	Status as at Dec 2022	Status envisaged at end of plan	Implementation	Category A Buildings	Category B Buildings	Buildings Under Discussion
Ale & Teviot	361	1736	Vacancy Sisted (previously 1FTE)	Union of Jedburgh Old & Trinity with Oxnam. Linkage to Ale & Teviot	1. Unite JOT with Oxnam 2. Link to Ale & Teviot	Ancrum, JOT church, halls, and manse, Lilliesleaf	Ale & Teviot Manse (by 31.8.23), Crailing (by 31.8.27), Oxnam (by 31.8.27) but reviewable	
Jedburgh Old & Trinity	515	4649	Vacancy Sisted, Interim Minister in place (previously 1FTE)					
Oxnam	119	258	In Guardianship					

	992	6643					within 5 years	
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JEDBURGH AREA

KELSO AREA

Congregation	2021 Roll	Parish Population (2011)	Status as at Dec 2022	Status envisaged at end of plan	Implementation	Category A Buildings	Category B Buildings	Buildings Under Discussion
<u>Kelso North Side</u>								
Kelso Country Churches	172	1251	Vacancy sisted (previously 0.75 FTE)	Union of the two charges under 1 FTE parish minister	1. On the demission of the minister of KNE or with their agreement unite the two charges	Kelso North church and manse, Stichill	Ednam (by 31.8.27) Makerstoun (by 31.8.27), KCC Manse (by 31.8.23)	
Kelso North & Ednam	858	6156 (subtotal 7,407)	1 FTE incumbent minister - unrestricted tenure - since 2016					
<u>Kelso South Side</u>								
Cheviot Churches	271	1441	Incumbent FTE minister - unrestricted tenure - since 2019	Linkage of the two charges under 1 FTE parish minister	1. On the demission of the minister of CC or with their agreement, link the two charges	Cheviot manse, Kelso Old, Morebattle, Yetholm	Hownam (by 31.8.27) Linton (by 31.8.27) Sprouston (by 31.8.27) KOS manse (by 31.8.27)	
Kelso Old & Sprouston	401	1892 (subtotal 3,333)	Vacancy Sisted (previously 0.75FTE)					
	1702	10740						

Glossary of terms used in draft Presbytery Plan

AMBA	Asset Management Buildings Audit. This process was introduced to provide a standard template which records details of a church building's physical, geographical and social value. The profile, which is already largely understood by the Presbytery by virtue of local knowledge, will be used by the General Trustees when they assess the future use of church buildings.
Article Declaratory	The Church of Scotland derives its constitution from the Church of Scotland Act 1921 (c 29 11&12 Geo 5), an Act of Parliament. This Act gives the Church an unusual degree of autonomy and specifically limits the extent to which the state may be involved in church decisions. Included in the Act are 9 Articles Declaratory . The First may only be changed by act of parliament. The other may be changed by the General Assembly. In the 3rd Article Declaratory the Church commits itself to "to bring the ordinances of religion to the people in every parish of Scotland through a territorial ministry"
Basis (pl bases) of readjustment	When a charge undergoes changes in congregational arrangements there will always be a Basis of Readjustment which defines how the charge came into being, what changes in other charges occurred, what responsibility the minister (and possibly other members of staff) have, how the properties involved are used, and what subsequent changes may occur as a result of the arrangements.
charge	A charge is the area of responsibility of a minister. When ministers accept a call to a charge (or are otherwise appointed to the charge) the geographical area of responsibility and the duties of the charge are defined.
congregation	Congregation is an ambiguous term. It may mean the people who worship in a particular place, or the members of a particular church. When used the context should clarify what it means.
demission	Demission is the process of ministers leaving their charge. They may leave (demit) to accept a call or appointment elsewhere, to retire from ministry, or for other undisclosed reasons.
draft plan	Successive acts of the General Assembly have in recent years required presbyteries to produce a plan for the future of the church in the presbytery's area. When a plan has been drawn up (which may or may not have required particular forms of consultation with interested parties) the draft plan is presented at a meeting of presbytery. If the plan is approved by a majority at that presbytery meeting the word "draft" is dropped and the resulting document becomes the Presbytery Plan. Different Acts of the General Assembly have required different parties outwith the presbytery to approve or concur with the plan.
ecclesiastical building	A building associated with a church. It means the "church" proper, any church halls, and the manse. Ecclesiastical buildings are usually legally owned by the General Trustees . Despite urban (and rural) legend, ecclesiastical buildings are very seldom owned by local parties. If you think you own your building, show the title deeds.
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent. The standard way of measuring human resources. The benefit of using this rather impersonal term is that it allows people to be employed part-time and accurately represented. For example someone working half-time (0.5 FTE) could be teamed with someone working three-quarters time (0.75 FTE) to make a team of 1.25 FTE.

General Trustees	A body of charity trustees who are the legal body responsible for the “ownership” of the Church of Scotland’s property.
guardianship	A process in which a presbytery decides that for reasons shown a charge will not have a minister but will remain under the direct care of presbytery. It used to be known as a <i>continuing vacancy</i> .

Interim Minister	A minister who is specially trained to assist a congregation (usually during a vacancy) to prepare for and undertake changes in its church life. There are only a few such ministers available in the Church of Scotland.
Interim Moderators	A minister of word and sacrament, or an appropriately trained elder, who chairs the Kirk Session, and otherwise undertakes the duties of the minister of the charge during a vacancy.
listed church building	In Scotland there are three categories of listing (A,B,C). There is very little flexibility in altering List A buildings. List B buildings are more amenable to being changed (with appropriate permissions). List C tends to be a record of individual features. The listing of a building is not always helpful if major refurbishment is anticipated.
manse	The house provided for the minister of a parish. A minister of word and sacrament is entitled to a manse . Other forms of ministry do not necessarily include housing though in some cases may do so.
Ministers of Word and Sacrament	These are “ministers” in the commonly understood meaning of the word. They are called to a charge, ordained for service and as well as being licensed to preach they are able to conduct sacramental services (baptism and communion). There are other ministries in the Church of Scotland which do not include these responsibilities (eg youth workers, community workers). If not financed directly by local parties, ministers who are not ministers of word and sacrament still count towards a presbytery’s FTE allocation.
parish	The geographical area associated with a church (or in some unusual circumstances several churches).
Priority Area	An area of socio-economic need as identified by the national Church’s Priority Areas Committee using the Scottish Government’s Index of Multiple Deprivation.
reviewable	When a minister is inducted to a charge on reviewable tenure there will be a time period (say 5 years) after which the appointment will be reviewed. At that time the decision may be to continue or terminate the appointment. A presbytery plan or a Basis of Readjustment may indicate events which may trigger the review.
sist	Sist means to stop all legal process. In the context of this draft plan, a decision was taken by the General Assembly that all vacancies should be sisted (ie no further action towards filling the vacancy can be taken).
Union / linkage	Unions and linkages are often confused. When two or more churches form a union , their Kirk Sessions are united so that the new united church has one Kirk Session. (It may retain some or all of the buildings of the uniting congregations. In a linkage the individual Kirk Sessions continue oversight and management of the congregations and the linking churches share the same minister.
unrestricted tenure	As Church law applies at present, ministers on unrestricted tenure may continue in office until they demit office, or agree to a change in tenure, or are removed as a result of a disciplinary case.

Concerning **democracy**. The decision-making process in the Church of Scotland is not democratic. Decisions are made by “courts” (kirk sessions, presbyteries, and the General Assembly). At the level of a congregation it is the responsibility of the kirk session collectively, and elders individually, to consult with church members. Congregational meetings where anyone associated with the church can speak, propose courses of action, or otherwise influence the decision-making process are only occasionally held and under legally defined circumstances. A court may invite someone to address its meeting but unless they are a member of the court they may not enter the subsequent debate, nor may they vote when a decision is made. This may be perceived as “undemocratic” but it is the nature of presbyterianism.

Disclaimer: This glossary is not a precise set of legal definitions and should not be treated as such. Anyone wishing to present a legal argument is advised to consult a professional advisor. This glossary is intended to clarify for ordinary church members the meaning of the terms used in the draft Presbytery plan.

THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

PRESBYTERY OF LoTHIAN

NARRATIVE RELATING TO THE PREPARATION OF THE MISSION PLAN

The Vision cast by Presbytery is to have "A network of vibrant *missional* churches covering every community across the Presbytery."

This remains front and centre for all our planning and should remain so in every aspect of what we do. Here is perhaps a way to picture what the future we are dreaming, planning, praying for might look like:

If this comes to be we will see

- Churches teeming with people of all generations who are deeply committed to Christ and growing in faith
- With members living out their lives for Christ, wherever they are
- Actively reaching out to others to draw them into a living relationship with Christ Jesus
- Churches impacting their communities and more widely, with a concern for social justice and deeply involved in caring for creation
- All driven by people as passionate about reaching out to others as caring for their members
- With new patterns of being church developed that engage younger generations
- And churches across the Presbytery working together, supporting one another.

And here might be a story told that would be told in that new future we are called to build:

"I was at a Presbytery meeting the other day and was in a discussion group with some elders from a few other churches. Most of them were, like me, under 35. It was exciting to hear about what is happening in their churches and share a bit about what is happening in ours. Young people coming to faith and joining the church, joined by people from all generations – and older people who, far from feeling pushed out, are finding that the new life the younger people bring is encouraging them all to live out their faith day to day! Churches that are responding to the needs in their community by starting a foodbank or offering a listening ear project. Support being given to Christian Aid and a group going out to Rwanda to build a school. Some churches experimenting with Forest Church and reaching people who would never come on a Sunday. I came away so encouraged and as we prayed together I sensed how important it was that we had one another to draw on."

Too far-fetched – or something to stretch for? This plan lays the foundations for this to be something we might prayerfully work towards together, identifying the opportunities and overcoming the obstacles.

A Starting Point - building a realistic plan

What is clear is that the above cannot be achieved by perpetuating the patterns of the past. Nor, unfortunately, do we have the resources - either in terms of finances or people - to maintain or develop in meaningful ways the number of churches we currently have. To do so would be to spread our resources too thinly. The plan therefore outlines the need to close

some church buildings, unite some congregations and close others. This will be a painful road to walk and supporting one another on the journey has never been more important than now. It also outlines a commitment to develop new patterns of Lay Ministry alongside a commitment to maintain what has always been at the heart of the Church of Scotland - a belief that God has called us to take the Gospel in word and action into every corner of our communities.



1 **Setting the Foundations**

Two key principles underpin the plan

Geographical spread

If we are to proclaim the good news of the Kingdom in every community, we must be present across our Presbytery to do so - both in rural and urban areas. To do this, we plan to maintain and develop at least one worshipping, witnessing Christian church in every town of over 5,000 in the Presbytery. Alongside this, we want to maintain or build a meaningful Christian presence in rural communities and in areas of new housing.

Focussing on Vibrant, Missional churches

In making decisions about where to allocate resources, we believe we need to prioritise those churches where there are the clearest signs of life, growth and mission. As a consequence, stipendiary ministers have been allocated to the churches in each area who most clearly exhibit the characteristics of vibrant, missional churches.

2 **Evidencing the 5 marks of mission**

The 5 marks of mission are:

- 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
- 5 To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth

Our intention is that all churches within the Presbytery will increasingly evidence **all five marks** of mission. The Mission Plan therefore centres around how to achieve this. Firstly, as outlined above, by focussing resources on the congregation in each area who most clearly evidence

these five marks. Secondly by setting out how Presbytery can support congregations in developing those marks further, believing that Presbytery has an important role in this.

Note: Initially we assessed which congregations to allocate resources to using criteria agreed by Presbytery on vibrant, missional, churches. These completely align with the five marks (see appendix) with a note of how these map on to the five marks of mission. Within the Mission Plan, stipendiary ministers have therefore been allocated to churches which most clearly exhibit the five marks of mission and going forward the five marks will be explicitly used in work with congregations.

3 Presbytery Planning – numbers

Numbers were allocated to each Presbytery by the GA of 2021 and we have been asked to plan for 25 paid posts by 2025. This is to include an allowance of 0.25 for all congregations under the Guardianship of Presbytery. Our previous allocation was 33.7. Whilst we are reducing by 8.7 posts on paper, the impact of the guardianship change means that we are losing slightly more than this. Though this is painful it will mean we put most energy where it is most likely to bear fruitful, loving service.

4 Completing the plan and timescale for changes

Even after the plan is approved, changes to any parish can only be implemented on the retirement or translation of a minister - or with the written agreement of a minister in a parish being readjusted. As a consequence it is not possible to place a firm timescale on all the changes. In connection with this, it should be noted that some of the changes set out in the 2015 plan have not been fully implemented. The positive side of this is that it makes it much more likely that congregations will move to the new shape of Presbytery in a positive light and in peace and harmony.

5 Links, unions and closures

Our policy has been that unions and links would only be considered when all parties are in agreement and that dissolving a congregation may be preferable to creating a difficult union. In general this has been followed in the planning process and in completion of the Mission Plan, even though it means resources may be lost to the local church. If we are to pursue peace and reconciliation in the world we must demonstrate it in the Church.

6 New housing areas & population growth

Our allocation of ministry is higher than most as our population growth is higher than the national average in both East Lothian and Midlothian. Our reduction is 26% set against an average of 35%. Without the population growth, our ministry numbers *would have dropped by a further 3.5*. Whilst this growth is spread across the Presbytery, with almost every town seeing new housing added, there are four new housing areas where we believe it is important to develop a significant church presence - Shawfair, Blindwells, Hopefield and around Wallyford. Rather than seek to replicate church life in full in those new areas, it is envisaged that local churches will seek to build connections with those in the new housing, ensuring that opportunities are given for people to join existing church activities and that groups and activities are developed in the new housing areas themselves. This is built into the plan, with new staffing committed to this or the remit of existing ministry posts extended to cover this.

Much of our new housing, however, is on the edge of existing communities, without an identity of its own. In those contexts we want to ensure that local congregations engage positively with those who move into their communities. It is recognised that input from Presbytery will be required if this is to be effective, and one new Pioneer Minister post has this included within their remit.

This explicit focus on new ways of being church in new housing developments is key to supporting the five marks of mission. Only by having a presence in these areas, and engaging with people in new and meaningful ways, can we hope to proclaim the Kingdom and support new believers. Bringing more people to active faith will create opportunities for them to transform the societies they live in and to pursue peace as it affects them. Building connections in new ways may mean a church with either no buildings or borrowed buildings - which can be a much more sustainable way of working.

7 Congregational Development Team

A central part of the strategy developed through the last Presbytery plan was the creation of a team to support local congregations in developing a missional focus. In a period of change the work carried out by the team is vital, not only supporting congregations but those involved in new work. The team's role in providing training opportunities is also likely to be crucial (see sections below) and specific responsibility for this needs to lie with paid staff, while drawing on the gifts and skills of others. The model of providing funding for local congregations to pay local staff and release their minister for a day a week has worked well, giving a team with different gifts and allowing team members to focus on areas they are passionate about and gifted in. This should be maintained and built in to the new Presbytery. Playing to people's God-given talents frees energy, passion and resource to support the five marks. When we allow ourselves that space to focus our talents, we are much more successful in mission.

The funding for this team was drawn from the Ministries and Mission 5% given to Presbyteries along with voluntary contributions from congregations. The 5% will be withdrawn after 2022 with a 'block grant' given to presbyteries from the "Giving to Grow" scheme. With this and the changes envisaged through the formation of the Presbytery of Lothian and Borders, it is appropriate that funding for this team be drawn from the block grant along with Presbytery dues and additional contributions from congregations.

However, two posts contained in the plan have a dual element of Presbytery and local responsibilities. Firstly, a Ministry post in a parish where it is envisaged that the minister will spend 30% of their time in Congregational Development work. Secondly a new Pioneer Ministry post at Musselburgh, where the post holder would spend 30 - 50% of their time providing support across the Presbytery to those involved in work in new housing areas. In the case of the first post, it is envisaged that the congregation would receive from Presbytery money to cover the difference between their "Giving to Grow" contribution for a minister full-time and what it would be for 0.7 FTE.

Note: General Assembly has approved replacing the current system for calculating Ministries and Mission contributions from congregations with a new system called Giving to Grow. This changes the allocation available to Presbyteries. This is scheduled for introduction in 2023.

8 Recruitment and training for Lay Pastors, Worship Leaders and Lay Pioneers

It is imperative that we should not stumble into a future with fewer Ministers of Word and Sacrament without ensuring that recruitment and training for other roles is given a distinct focus. To do so would be to place an unreasonable expectation on a reducing number of ministers. Work has already been done on this with a good training programme now in place for local worship leaders and Lay Pastors. This is seen as a positive start and Presbytery maintaining this development is seen as a key part of what must be done.

However, further work is required in recruiting and training elders who will act as Interim Moderators – in some cases providing leadership to a congregation in Guardianship over a sustained period of time rather than guidance through a period of vacancy.

Training for leading funerals and working in bereavement support has been provided previously and needs given a fresh focus.

Like the Congregational Development Team, putting our energies into developing our members allows them to proclaim the Good News more effectively and gives opportunities for loving service from them too.

9 Part-time ministry posts

The plan contains a number of half-time ministry posts. The hope is that these posts would be taken up by ministers whose circumstances or stage of life genuinely make part-time ministry attractive. Some may choose this as a semi-retirement route rather than full retirement. In this way the 'pool' of ministers in full-time posts would not be diminished.

Work will require to be done with Kirk Sessions and congregations before an appointment is made to manage expectations. This should include agreeing what days, weeks or months will be worked. It is envisaged that there would be an explicit expectation that ministers should lead worship and preach on no more than 23 Sundays in a year. This might be balanced at two Sundays a month throughout the year or with three Sundays October to March and one Sunday a month April to September. Or even two or three months off in the summer, with a heavier load in the winter months! As a consequence, the role of the ministers in these parishes would include encouraging, training and resourcing others to step into tasks that would usually be carried by a parish minister.

A tie-in with Duns Presbytery may be possible, as they are looking to roll out a fuller model of this in all of their parishes. Below is a section from their draft plan.

The Presbytery of Duns proposes to use the four full-time ministries allocated to it each to serve one-day-a-week in a congregation within our current presbytery area, with four days devoted to the work of Presbytery with each minister providing specialist support, training and on-going supervision in each of four areas, namely worship, pastoral care, mission and Christian education.

Once again, supporting innovative ways of working frees up people to use their talents to support the five marks of mission as best they can.

10 Supporting Parish Ministers in changing roles

The creation new patterns will also change the nature of the work that full time stipendiary ministers are involved in, with greater emphasis placed on enabling and supporting others in their different ministries. On reporting on this to General Assembly, it was proposed that any

ongoing strategy should ensure that *Ministers are trained to support and help members and elders 'identify, release, and develop their gifts'.*

The Congregational Development Team will take on the additional responsibility for supporting ministers in this change, augmenting what can be provided by the central church.

Once more this support and development should direct ministerial skills to where they will be most effective. And providing such support is in itself an act of loving service.

11 Buildings

Former Chairman of the General Trustees Raymond Young introduced their 'Well Equipped Spaces in the Right Places' strategy by saying to the General Assembly.

"There are some very good spaces in the Church, but we have too many, and many are not fit for purpose. For years the Assembly has nodded in sympathy when my predecessors have said that we must reduce the size of this estate, yet at the start of this year Presbyteries have said 86 per cent of these church buildings are expected to remain in use beyond the life of the Presbytery Plan. Really?"

This plan seeks to respond realistically to the challenges we face and outlines a proposal to sell or dispose of over twenty church buildings or halls, freeing up resources to invest in the remaining buildings to bring them up to a suitable standard for the 21st century. This is one of the most difficult parts of the plan, as all of those church buildings contain memories and history of the work of the people of God. It is therefore important that we handle this with sensitivity and in particular ensure that when buildings close that this is marked in an appropriate way.

As previously agreed, in areas where a union is proposed, we plan to build round the strengths of the most vibrant, missional congregation; this will mean, in most cases, keeping their buildings as the centre for the new congregation. In some areas discussions about buildings have not concluded, but an indication about the number of buildings to be retained is given in the Mission Plan.

Closing buildings is always hard, but it will allow us to reduce our carbon footprint (fewer buildings to heat and hopefully more sustainable building too). It also allows resource previously spent caring for buildings to be freed up for other missional work.

12 Historic Buildings

The advice of the General Trustees is that the criteria which a Presbytery should use to determine if a property is considered historic within the context of a Presbytery Mission Plan are as follows:

- The building is A Listed,
- It is cathedral style in its proportions, and
- It is in a prominent setting within a townscape.

The only building which satisfies these criteria is Haddington: St Mary's. However, two other buildings come close - Dunbar Church and Musselburgh: Inveresk Church, both of which are A listed.

The following church buildings are also A listed, with many of them lying in prominent positions in towns and rural settings throughout the Presbytery:

Aberlady Church; Cockenzie and Port Seton: Chalmers Memorial Church; Cockpen and Carrington Church; Dalkeith: St Nicholas Buccleuch Church; Dirleton Church; East Saltoun Church; Glencorse Church; Morham Church; Oldhamstocks Church; Pencaitland Church; Penicuik: South Church; Prestongrange Church; Prestonkirk Church; Whitekirk; Yester Church.

The advice of the General Trustees in this regard is noted:

"The historic significance of a building need not be a major factor within the categorisation decisions. In comparison to the building's condition, safety, accessibility, flexibility, facilities, location etc, the historic significance would not normally contribute towards the building's capacity to provide for mission and outreach."

13 Partnership and Development Networks

Congregations in the Church of Scotland generally see themselves as independent entities with limited interaction with other congregations and little joint work. Part of the vision set out above is to see *"churches across the Presbytery working together, supporting one another."*

The creation of Parish Groupings forms part of the plan in order to see this vision become reality.

In addition, our intention is that every congregation should be part of a network which supports local church development. This could be sharing in a Presbytery Path of Renewal or Growing Young cohort or something more widely available from others, for example Priority Areas, Cinnamon Network or Cairn. All are designed to support churches in developing their church life and witness with a group from each congregation, including the minister, taking part in conferences or seminars, with a coach appointed to work alongside the church. In connection with this, plans are being put in place for a Growing Young cohort for churches with few or no young people, in partnership with Fuller Youth Institute.

Churches working together in clusters can share best practice, experience and skills. This should lead to better options for service, to challenge unjust structures in society and pursue peace and reconciliation.

14 Working with other denominations

While this report does not contain any specific proposal for working with other denominations, Presbytery must remain open to considering partnerships with other churches as appropriate, either in formal or informal partnership. No congregation mentioned this in consultations, but in an ongoing way we remain open to consider how Presbytery can positively support partnerships between churches of different denominations.

With regard to work in new housing, Pioneer Ministers appointed would be asked to actively pursue working with other denominations or church groupings as a means of developing work in those areas and planting new churches.

15 Rooting the five marks of mission in Presbytery's ongoing work.

You can make the case that almost everything in this plan supports all of the five marks of mission. The plan is about having disciples in every part of Lothian and releasing the God-given talents they possess. Once you do that - removing obstacles of bureaucracy and the weight of maintaining old buildings and old ways of working - you free church members up to proclaim

the Good News, nurture new believers, give loving service, transform societies, and safeguard creation.

The basis is to have disciples across all of Lothian to start with. And we do. It is vital that all communities - both rural and urban - are supported. We need witness in the hamlets and villages as well as the towns. The plan explicitly states that we will maintain witnessing congregations across the Presbytery. But that doesn't mean a large church building and a Kirk Session, with all the effort both entail, in every settlement. The plan focuses that witness and removes some of the distractions to effective mission that we may currently have. Focusing mission on one set of buildings and one Kirk Session is, though painful, key to releasing energy, time and talent. Ensuring that the centres of worship that we keep are the most missional is vital and that is how we have decided which buildings and which congregations remain at the core. All of this is the cornerstone of proclaiming the Good News of the Kingdom in Lothian.

With these leaner, fitter, revitalised churches you create more space (at least as much in people's heads as anywhere else) for mission. Then church members can put more energy into Growing Young and Path of Renewal programmes and the like. We can allocate missional resource to the many, significant, new housing areas in Lothian. All this means we should be better places to teach, baptise and nurture new believers.

Part of the foundation of the Lothian Presbytery Mission Plan is to develop church members in their faith and to help them discern where they can most effectively further God's Kingdom. The Congregational Development Team, recruitment and training of Lay Pastors, Worship Leaders and Lay Pioneers and supporting Parish Ministers in their changing roles are critical in this respect. These activities help church members discern God's calling for them and to learn and grow into that calling. All the forms of call are loving service whether leading worship or congregations, establishing new ministries in new areas or supporting existing ones. The whole focus of the Plan should give new opportunities for service to members and should make the most of the talents they so obviously have.

Where you have Christians free to develop their skills and deploy them in new ways, you allow them to explore how to transform unjust structures of society, challenge violence and work towards peace and reconciliation. The Plan ensures that churches work together more than in the past; several Parish Groupings are in the plan. This will mean sharing of best practice and skills and experience. It should lead to something being done once, well, in an area rather than resources being spread too thinly. And the very act of working together provides a model of reconciliation.

The decisions not to force unions on congregations, to allow clusters of churches to work together to agree which building to keep and which to let go and to make some changes only when a vacancy arises should also promote peace and reconciliation in our midst. Without that it is quite hard to persuade others that we are capable of it.

Reducing the number of buildings we have and keeping mostly those that are most fit for purpose is a principal way for the Church to safeguard creation. Fewer, better cared-for buildings is one path to reducing carbon emissions. In addition, the Plan expects different, more collaborative, ways of working in new communities. We are not planning to build new churches in new communities. Rather we seek new, more adaptive ways of witnessing in these new towns. A leaner and greener church.

All the elements of the Plan act together to help us achieve the five marks of mission; we need each part to build our revitalised missional church in Lothian Presbytery.

The Faith Nurture Forum and General Trustees approved the plan on 25 November with the following caveats.

Church of Scotland – Faith Nurture Forum

Extract from the Minutes of the Faith Nurture Forum meeting held on 25 November 2022

4. Mission Plan for the Presbytery of Lothian

The Plan for the Presbytery of Lothian was presented for consideration and approval.

The Faith Nurture Forum approved the Presbytery Mission Plan from the Presbytery of Lothian, subject to two conditions, firstly that the Mission Narrative be revised at the first annual review of the Plan, with appropriate detail around the then existing clusters, and secondly including the following conditions issued by the General Trustees:

In accordance with the Act, the General Trustees have considered the draft Mission Plan for Lothian, submitted June 2022, and are content with the categorisation of the ecclesiastical buildings therein, subject to:

A. the Presbytery committing to and evidencing at the subsequent Annual Evaluation and Development review:

1.1.1. Cockburnspath

- I. attainment of an updated Professional Report (Quinquennial) on Cockburnspath Church and Hall.**
- II. an assessment detailing how any repairs identified in the above are to be programmed (with assistance from the General Trustees as required).**
- III. completion of the Property Register for the above with compliant dates evidenced for EICR, PAT tests, emergency lighting and an asbestos survey.**

B. the Presbytery committing to provide details at the subsequent Annual Evaluation and Development review:

1.1.2. Haddington Grouping

I. of the ongoing review of the Haddington grouping, including the parameters for review and likely timescales.

1.1.3. Musselburgh Grouping

I. of the ongoing review of the Musselburgh grouping, including the parameters for review and likely timescales (with assistance from the General Trustees as required).

C. the Presbytery committing to continue:

1.1.4. Bilston

I. to consider the viability of the Bilston Church over the life of the plan from a human and financial perspective.

1.1.5. Aberlady

I. to consider whether the required improvements to the Aberlady Church are viable

1.1.6. Penicuik

I. an ongoing review of the buildings at Penicuik, with particular reference to the Trinity Church building.

Lothian Presbytery Mission Plan

DUNBAR AND NORTH BERWICK AREA

Background Within this area are two towns with over 5,000 - Dunbar (9,030) and North Berwick (6,930). There are three villages of over 1,000 - Gullane (2,650), Aberlady (1,190) and East Linton (1,810), with a number of other smaller villages in this rural part of the Presbytery. Spott is less than three miles from Dunbar, while Cockburnspath (the most easterly village in the Presbytery) is nine miles from Dunbar.

Current situation There are currently seven charges in this area - six on unrestricted tenure in the last Presbytery Plan. Note: There are currently two congregations in Dunbar – Dunbar Parish and Belhaven.

Spott is a rural parish less than three miles from Dunbar and is linked to Belhaven.

Dunglass is a rural parish running south east from Dunbar. Although covering a large area the population is only a little over 1,600. The main communities are Innerwick, Oldhamstocks and Cockburnspath, which lies furthest (some nine miles) from Dunbar.

- North Berwick: St Andrew Blackadder
- Dirleton *with* North Berwick: Abbey
- Dunbar
- Belhaven *with* Spott
- Traprain - a newly-united rural charge centred on East Linton
- Aberlady *with* Gullane (currently vacant)
- Dunglass - a rural charge south of Dunbar (population 1,604). Part-time ministry in previous Presbytery Plan; currently has a full-time minister on unrestricted tenure.

Plan for the area Four major changes are envisaged

- 1 Dirleton *with* North Berwick: Abbey move into Guardianship of Presbytery (0.25 FTE)
- 2 Aberlady and Gullane to unite and move to part-time ministry (0.5 FTE) with buildings in both villages retained. They would be part of a North Berwick parish grouping.
- 3 Spott to unite with Belhaven and Dunglass (1.0 FTE); Spott Church to be sold or disposed of; buildings in Innerwick and Oldhamstocks to be sold or disposed of.
- 4 Dunbar to move to part-time ministry (0.75 FTE).

Ministry The Plan allows a ministry allocation of 1.75 FTE for Dunbar coastal area, including rural parishes and 1.75 FTE for North Berwick coastal area, including Aberlady and Gullane. A full-time minister to be allocated to Traprain, the largest of the rural parishes in the Presbytery. These to be allocated as follows:

- North Berwick: St Andrew Blackadder - unrestricted tenure 1.0 FTE
- Dirleton *with* North Berwick: Abbey - Guardianship 0.25 FTE
- Dunbar - unrestricted tenure 0.75 FTE
- Belhaven united with Spott and Dunglass - unrestricted tenure 1.0 FTE
- Traprain - unrestricted tenure 1.0 FTE
- Aberlady and Gullane - part-time ministry 0.5 FTE

Buildings Innerwick Church and Oldhamstocks Church along with the manse of Dunglass and the manse of Dirleton *with* North Berwick: Abbey to be sold; Spott Church to be sold; all other buildings retained.

Notes Our aim has been to ensure that we have at least one vibrant, missional church in each town of over 5,000. In some towns there is only one church and the intention is that we invest in that church. In some other towns the best way of achieving a vibrant,

missional church is by combining the resources of some of the individual congregations. In yet others, the Plan will include investing in the church which most clearly exhibits the characteristics of a vibrant, missional church and dissolving others.

In both North Berwick and Dunbar a different scenario applies as we have two churches actively involved in mission, financially viable, with a good number attending worship and an active eldership. In these towns the plan is to keep both churches open, but, given the populations in the towns, there would not be a full-time minister of Word and Sacrament in each church.

The Plan therefore includes provision for one of the churches in each of those towns to be allocated a full-time minister, with the second church allocated a part-time minister or brought into Guardianship of Presbytery and given an allowance for a Locum.

In the case of North Berwick, the church with the most active children's and youth ministry, the largest number attending worship on Sundays, the best balance of ages, and the largest financial input from members is North Berwick: St Andrew Blackadder. The allocation of a full-time minister of word and sacrament has therefore been made to this congregation.

Dirleton *with* North Berwick: Abbey have been allocated 0.25 FTE, with the intention that at the next vacancy, they move into Guardianship, with a Locum in place two days a week. With the new Ministries and Mission allocations being based on the ministry in place in a congregation, they will have additional funds locally that would allow them to appoint two people to work alongside the Locum, one to cover Youth, Children's and Family ministry, the other to cover Pastoral Care and work with elderly. Along with someone appointed as an Interim Moderator, this has the potential to create a strong team to build the work and witness of the two congregations.

Discussions are ongoing about a Parish Grouping in the area. The Kirk Sessions of Aberlady, Gullane and North Berwick: St Andrew Blackadder have already agreed to this, with discussions still to be held with North Berwick: Abbey and Dirleton.

In many of our towns in the Presbytery we are moving towards a single charge - however in Dunbar, we have two churches that are financially self-supporting and have active ministries. Whilst there are areas that the congregations already work together on, much of the work is complementary and reflects a slightly different ethos within the two congregations. Drawing the churches into a union would have the effect of reducing the community activity and engagement which exists and potentially diminish the missional impact within the Dunbar area. Instead it is proposed that the two churches should be kept, though with one having a reduced ministry allocation. The AMBA score for all buildings is above 70 and it is intended that all buildings should be retained.

Both churches have taken seriously the priority of mission and are engaged in their communities in different ways, seeking to meet both spiritual and practical needs. This includes work with Foodbanks, Men's Shed, School's work (with a staff member appointed) and Mother & Toddlers groups connecting with families. In addition, opportunities for people to explore and deepen their faith are given – and it is of note that four members from Dunbar parish have recently gone into full-time Christian ministry or are training for this. Developing these different ministries in meaningful

ways will continue to be important. In this, both churches should work on identifying areas which need further work, **with clear reference in this to the five marks of mission**. Presbytery's Congregational Development Team will provide ongoing input to assist with this.

Both churches also need to consider their work with young people. In particular, whilst there are good contacts made with young people through schools work and Dunbar Area Christian Youth project, the churches themselves have struggled to build meaningful programmes that are discipling young people in faith in effective ways. Participating in the Growing Young programme being offered by Presbytery may be a way of looking to how this is taken forward but the Kirk Sessions may prefer to use a different approach in looking at this area.

Partnership working between the churches also needs to be a key priority moving forward – not just between the Church of Scotland congregations but also with other denominations. This will allow the congregations to draw on and learn from one another's strengths as well as developing work together. To take this further, a formal parish grouping is to be formed when a vacancy occurs at Dunbar Parish Church, or earlier if appropriate.

As noted above, there is deep engagement from both churches in the community they serve and as part of this, good partnerships have been developed with other community groups and schools. These should be maintained and developed further.

Timing of changes The ministers at North Berwick: St Andrew Blackadder, Dirleton *with* North Berwick: Abbey and Dunglass are all on unrestricted tenure so changes will only happen with their agreement or at the next vacancy. However it is hoped that discussions about this might be started and moves made towards the changes noted above made while they remain in post.

Once the Plan is adopted the union of Aberlady and Gullane would be taken forward along with an agreement on Parish Grouping. Following this, permission would be given to call a minister on the basis of part-time ministry (0.5 FTE).

The minister at Dunbar parish has unrestricted tenure, so changes there would take place when a vacancy occurs. The minister at Dunglass Church also has unrestricted tenure. Following discussions, it has been concluded that it is not possible to unite the congregations of Belhaven, Spott and Dunglass under the minister of Dunglass. In accordance with section 7.3 of the Presbytery Mission Planning Act, the congregations of Belhaven and Spott will therefore be united and placed in a deferred union with Dunglass with permission given to call a minister to Belhaven and Spott in deferred union with Dunglass.

TRANENT CLUSTER

Background Within the cluster are three towns of over 5,000 - Tranent (12,410), Prestonpans (10,410) and Cockenzie and Port Seton (5,470.) Each is a distinct community with its own identity. In addition there are a number of smaller villages of over 1,000 - Longniddry (2,420), Macmerry (1,410), Ormiston (1,970) and Pencaitland (1,480). Blindwells is a new housing area with an initial 1,600 homes to be built. However there is an ongoing commitment to the Blindwells allocation as a site for a new

settlement with a Safeguarded Blindwells Expansion Area. The expansion area is three times bigger than the initial development site and includes a new town centre [East Lothian Community Development Plan 2018].

Current Situation There are churches in each of the communities above, with the exception of Macmerry. It is in the parish of Gladsmuir, which lies 1.8 miles to the east of Macmerry. Longniddry is linked with Gladsmuir, and Ormiston with Pencaitland. There is a single charge in each of Prestonpans and Tranent and two charges in Cockenzie and Port Seton - Chalmers, which is unrestricted tenure, and Old, which is in Guardianship.

Plan for the area Three major changes are envisaged.

Firstly, a union of the churches in Cockenzie and Port Seton, with exploratory discussions about this agreed. If those discussions are not fruitful for a union within the next twelve months, it is envisaged that Cockenzie and Port Seton: Old will be dissolved or a union effected at a later date (see below on timing).

Secondly the union of Longniddry and Gladsmuir, with the closure of the building at Gladsmuir.

Both of these changes are designed to release time, resources and energy for new mission work in Blindwells and more widely in the parishes (see below).

Thirdly, Ormiston *with* Pencaitland to move into Guardianship.

Presbytery's policy for new housing, outlined in page 2 section 5 of the narrative which Presbytery approved on 24 February is that "local churches will seek to build connections with those in the new housing, ensuring that opportunities are given for people to join existing church activities **and** that groups and activities are developed in the new housing areas themselves".

Both Tranent and Prestonpans have significant new housing areas within their own parishes and have the largest populations of the churches in the area. It is therefore envisaged that the work of developing new work in Blindwells will be undertaken by Gladsmuir *with* Longniddry and by Cockenzie and Port Seton and that they will enter into a parish grouping. Blindwells lies in the parish of Gladsmuir.

It is envisaged that Tranent, Ormiston and Pencaitland will also work in a parish grouping.

Ministry It is proposed that there would be a parish minister in each of Cockenzie/Port Seton, Tranent, Prestonpans and the wider Longniddry parish. Tranent is a large parish and a need exists to further develop work among youth, children and families. An allocation for a part time youth and children's worker 0.3 FTE is made in Tranent. In the last Presbytery Plan an allocation of 0.5 FTE was made. An allocation of 0.4 FTE to be made to Ormiston and Pencaitland, who would enter into the Guardianship of Presbytery, with the 0.4 FTE potentially allowing for additional hours for the Youth and Family worker at Tranent to covering Ormiston and Pencaitland too (see below).

Buildings Gladsmuir Church (and its post-union identities in the charge of 'Gladsmuir Longniddry' and the parish grouping of 'Gladsmuir Longniddry Cockenzie Port Seton') to be categorised as a building to be retained for five years or more.

There are currently two sets of church buildings in Cockenzie and Port Seton. It is proposed that the Cockenzie and Port Seton: Chalmers Memorial buildings be retained with an assessment made of the buildings at Cockenzie and Port Seton: Old to ascertain and scope out the value of retaining these to facilitate mission in the area.

Manse at Pencaitland to be sold. All other buildings to be retained and investment to be made in a building in Blindwells.

Notes A new arrangement is envisaged for Ormiston and Pencaitland that will allow them to continue under the Guardianship of Presbytery and in a Parish Grouping with Tranent. The 0.4 FTE allocation made will allow for a number of possibilities to be explored. This includes the possibility of appointing Lay Pastors to serve in the congregations and part or all of the ministry allocation being used to increase the hours of the Youth and Families worker at Tranent, with the worker committing time to work across the parishes.

Timing of changes The ministers at Cockenzie and Port Seton: Chalmers Memorial, Tranent, Prestonpans: Prestongrange, Gladsmuir *with* Longniddry, and Ormiston *with* Pencaitland are all on unrestricted tenure so changes will only happen with their agreement or at the next vacancy. However it is hoped that discussions about this might be started and moves made towards the changes noted above made while they remain in post.

With regard to the union in Cockenzie and Port Seton, a union now would depend upon local discussions and the full agreement of all parties including the current minister at Cockenzie and Port Seton: Chalmers Memorial. If agreement is not reached within twelve months, a union would be effected when Cockenzie and Port Seton: Chalmers Memorial falls vacant or Cockenzie and Port Seton: Old would be dissolved.

HADDINGTON AREA

Background Haddington has a population of 9,130. The population of the rural area to the south of Haddington is 2,500.

Current Situation There are currently three charges in this area.

- Haddington: St Mary's, minister on unrestricted tenure
- Garvald and Morham *with* Haddington: West, minister on unrestricted tenure
- Humble *with* Yester, Bolton and Saltoun, minister on unrestricted tenure

Plan for the area Two major changes are envisaged.

- 1 Haddington: St Mary's to unite with Haddington: West.
- 2 Humble *with* Yester, Bolton and Saltoun, and Garvald and Morham to unite and move to part-time ministry.

Consideration to be given to forming one parish with a team ministry.

Ministry The Plan allows a ministry allocation of 1.5 FTE for this area, with a minister in Haddington and a part-time minister in the rural parishes to the south.

This would result in

- Church in Haddington, minister on unrestricted tenure
- Rural parish, part-time ministry

With the possibility of this becoming a single charge with a minister and a part-time minister working as a team - or a Parish grouping being formed.

Buildings It has been agreed with local parties that a maximum of two church buildings should be kept in the rural area with Yester Church being one of them. Either Humble or Saltoun Church may also be retained. Discussions are ongoing about the Session Rooms at East Saltoun, Humble Stables, and Garvald Stables.

Haddington: St Mary's to be retained. However it does not have hall accommodation and, until discussions about the missional focus for work in Haddington take place, determination about the buildings of Haddington: West cannot be made.

Timing of changes The three parishes are served by ministers with unrestricted tenure, which means that changes can only happen when there is a vacancy. Specifically the change to a 50% ministry will only occur when a vacancy occurs at Yester, Bolton and Saltoun. Closing some buildings need not wait; Kirk Sessions can initiate this process at any time.

MUSSELBURGH

Background Musselburgh has a population of 20,840. Wallyford, an adjoining community to the East, 3,620. This is, though, an expanding town with plans for the largest addition of new homes anywhere in East Lothian, with 5,000 new homes included in East Lothian Development Plan. House building is predominantly taking place to the west around the Craighall area, where 1,600 houses are planned, and to the East around Wallyford where over 3,000 homes are planned.

Current Situation There are currently four charges in this area.

- Musselburgh St Andrews High with a minister on unrestricted tenure
- Musselburgh: St Michael's Inveresk with a minister on unrestricted tenure
- Musselburgh: Northesk with a minister on five year reviewable tenure
- Musselburgh: St Clement's and St Ninian's in Wallyford in Guardianship of Presbytery

Plan for the area Recognising that none of the four existing churches can in and of itself take the work of the Kingdom forward in Musselburgh, the vision is:

- To build one strong, vibrant, growing congregation which builds on the strengths of the existing congregations.
- Focussed on Growing Young when our experience is of seeing the churches Growing Old.
- With one set of buildings suitable for the 21st century, situated in Musselburgh, with the buildings in Wallyford retained as a mission church.

Ministry Given the size of the parish and the way that the population will increase in the coming years, 3 FTE are allocated to Musselburgh. However, rather than maintain three separate churches in Musselburgh, and one in Wallyford, the intention, as outlined above, is to create one church and to have a team ministry - Parish Minister, Pioneer Minister and Youth and Families worker. This will result in

- Musselburgh Parish Church with a mission church in Wallyford. Team ministry with Minister, Pioneer Minister, and Youth and Families worker.

Buildings One set of buildings in Musselburgh would be invested in with other buildings sold. Further work is required on this. The buildings of St Clement's and St Ninian's would be retained to serve Wallyford and the new housing area surrounding it.

Notes The following has been identified as work over the next few years:

- Churches will engage from July 2022 on the Growing Young programme developed by Fuller - working on this as individual churches but also on shared projects.
- Surveys will be completed on buildings and a decision made about the most suitable to be retained and refurbished.

Timing of changes The ministers in Musselburgh: St Michael's Inveresk and Musselburgh: St Andrew's High are on unrestricted tenure; the minister at Musselburgh: Northesk is on reviewable tenure. All have indicated a willingness to work together to lead their churches into a union, this being effected when vacancies occur in St Michael's Inveresk and St Andrew's High. Therefore, unless vacancies occur before the period of review at Northesk is reached, Presbytery's intention is that the Reviewable Tenure at Northesk will continue until such time as one or both of the other Musselburgh congregations become vacant.

DALKEITH AREA

Background Dalkeith (14,300), Mayfield/Easthouses (13,500), Newtongrange (5,341), Gorebridge (7,160), Danderhall (2,810), Shawfair (4,150). The planned total of new homes being built in Shawfair/Danderhall is 4,950 which will increase this population to over 12,000, with a new town centre in Shawfair. The rural area covered by Tyne Valley Parish has a population of around 4,000.

Current Situation There are currently six charges in this area.

- Dalkeith: St Nicholas Buccleuch, minister on unrestricted tenure
- Tyne Valley, a rural parish south of Dalkeith, minister on unrestricted tenure
- Newbattle covering Newbattle, Mayfield/Easthouses and Newtongrange, Transition Minister in post
- Newton parish, covering Danderhall, Shawfair and some neighbouring villages, is in Guardian-ship of Presbytery and in a Parish grouping with Dalkeith St John's and King's Park. Two part-time MDS staff (Total 0.8 FTE) are in post along with an Ordained Local Minister.

Plan for the area Two major changes are envisaged

- 1 Dalkeith: St Nicholas Buccleuch to unite with Newbattle or with Dalkeith: St John's and King's Park or to be dissolved.
- 2 Newton to be united with Dalkeith: St John's and King's Park.

Ministry Full-time ministers of Word and Sacrament for Dalkeith: St John's and King's Park, Newbattle, Gorebridge and Tyne Valley (see also below).

MDS post at Newbattle (0.75 FTE) which has a population of 18,841 and 1.3 FTE MDS posts across the Dalkeith/Danderhall/Shawfair parish (which will have a population of over 25,000) along with an Ordained Local Minister. This will result in

- Dalkeith: St John's and King's Park, minister on unrestricted tenure with 1.3 MDS * see notes
- Tyne Valley, minister on unrestricted tenure (part Presbytery - see below)
- Gorebridge, minister on unrestricted tenure
- Newbattle, minister on unrestricted tenure with 0.75 MDS * see notes

Buildings The following buildings to be disposed of in the next five years:

- Hall at Mayfield/Easthouses
- The church building at Newton

The following buildings to be disposed of when readjustment actioned:

- Buildings owned by St Nicholas Buccleuch
- The church at Fala

Notes A small adjustment to parish boundaries is also proposed - that Birkenside be added to Gorebridge parish. It currently sits in Tyne Valley Parish. This reflects the

reality of the fact that Birkenhead is part of the village of Gorebridge rather than of the rural parish of Tyne Valley.

Tyne Valley: The minister of Tyne Valley to have a commitment to work within Presbytery for 30% of their time - providing input as part of a Congregational Development team or/and within the neighbouring parish of Ormiston and Pencaitland if Lay pastors are appointed to those parishes. Presbytery would recompense the congregation financially with the difference between what the congregation's payment to the Giving to Grow Fund would be for 0.7 FTE and their allocation based on a full-time appointment.

Within Danderhall and Shawfair there are already positive signs of new life developing within a church that had few members, with the work of the MDS staff currently in post key in this. An additional member of the team or additional hours for existing team members would allow this work to develop further as Shawfair grows, and to consider the birthing of a new church in the centre of Shawfair. There is also a need for work within the Woodburn area and centre of Dalkeith, which falls within the 10% most deprived areas in Scotland. An additional 0.5 FTE MDS post is included to facilitate developing work across the parish.

Without altering the total number of ministry posts in the Dalkeith, Newton and Newbattle area, the Strategic Planning and Mission Committee will calculate an alternative distribution of ministry posts to indicate how ministry would be allocated to a union of Dalkeith: St Nicholas Buccleuch and Newbattle, for inclusion alongside the indication of how ministry would be allocated to a union of Dalkeith: St Nicholas Buccleuch with Dalkeith: St John's and King's Park and Newton, and will bring this as an amendment to the Plan at a later date.

Timing of changes The union between Newton and Dalkeith: St John's and King's Park should take place in 2022.

Depending on what is agreed, either the dissolution of Dalkeith: St Nicholas Buccleuch would take place at the next vacancy there, or a union between Newbattle and Dalkeith: St Nicholas Buccleuch, or a union between Dalkeith: St Nicholas Buccleuch and Dalkeith: St John's and King's Park at the first available opportunity - which might be when the relevant churches fall vacant, with appropriate interim measures in place when one of the churches falls vacant.

The input of the minister from Tyne Valley in wider presbytery work would be subject to discussion and agreement with the current minister but stipulated for any future minister appointed.

BONNYRIGG

Background Bonnyrigg is a town with a population 17,530, with additional new house building taking place in the south of the parish in the Hopefield area. The village of Rosewell lies two miles to the south of Bonnyrigg and has a population of 1,560.

Current Situation There are two charges, with ministers on unrestricted tenure

- Bonnyrigg Parish Church
- Cockpen and Carrington *with* Lasswade and Rosewell.

Plan for the area The longer-term plan would be to make this one parish, with Rosewell set up as a Local Mission Church. Reducing the number of buildings, office-bearers and activities would release resources for the work of mission to the whole parish, including new housing. Consideration might be given to purchasing or leasing suitable premises in Hopefield.

Ministry The Plan allows a ministry allocation of 2 FTE for this area and it is envisaged that there would be two parish ministers serving the congregation in this parish, or a parish minister with a Pioneer Minister. This will result in

- Church in Bonnyrigg with a mission church in Rosewell

However the current arrangement will continue until at least one of the ministers moves on or agreement is reached earlier.

Buildings Lasswade Church to be sold, Cockpen Hall to be sold, with all other buildings retained.

Notes The buildings of Bonnyrigg Parish Church offer good facilities in the centre of Bonnyrigg.

Cockpen Church is on the edge of the town and is the closest building to the new housing in south Bonnyrigg. However, if retained long-term, it would need to be adapted for missional ministry and community use. This has been agreed by the Kirk Session and discussions to ascertain the viability, affordability and desirability of completing this work will be held, with the intention that a final proposal be presented to Presbytery by January 2023.

Timing of changes The ministers at Bonnyrigg and at Cockpen and Carrington *with* Lasswade and Rosewell are both on unrestricted tenure so changes cannot be made without their agreement or until they leave. It is hoped to set up a Parish Grouping in the short term, enabling the churches to work together in new ways.

The sale of Lasswade Church to take place as soon as possible.

The sale of Cockpen and Carrington Halls would take place within four years, with the monies from this sale potentially used to fund the adaptations at Cockpen and Carrington Church.

MIDLOTHIAN WEST – A701 CORRIDOR

Background Within this area are two towns with over 5,000 - Loanhead and Penicuik. In addition the villages of Roslin and Bilston.

Current Situation There are currently four charges in this area:

- Penicuik Trinity Community Church, minister on unrestricted tenure
- Penicuik: North, minister on unrestricted tenure
- Loanhead, minister on unrestricted tenure
- Bilston *with* Roslin which is currently vacant

Plan for the area Two major changes have already been actioned

- 1 Glencorse Church was dissolved on 31 December 2021
- 2 Penicuik: South and Howgate united with Penicuik: St Mungo's to form Penicuik Trinity Community Church

Three further changes are envisaged

- 1 Bilston Church to be united with Loanhead and become a Mission Church
- 2 Roslin to enter into Guardianship of Presbytery
- 3 Roslin and Loanhead to enter into a parish grouping, with a union at the next vacancy.

Ministry A full-time minister to be allocated to Loanhead and to both churches in Penicuik, and 0.25 FTE to Roslin. This would result in

- Penicuik Trinity Community Church, minister on unrestricted tenure
- Penicuik: North, minister on unrestricted tenure
- Loanhead, minister on unrestricted tenure
- Roslin, Guardianship of Presbytery and parish grouping with Loanhead 0.25 FTE

Buildings

The sale of Penicuik: South and Howgate has already been agreed.

The manse at Roslin to be sold.

Notes The long-term vision is for one congregation in Penicuik with one set of buildings. Discussions locally need to be held to resolve which of the buildings will be a priority to keep long-term (St Mungo's or North Kirk), or alternatively agreement reached about selling all buildings and building a new, purpose-built church. There are significant funds available from the sale of Penicuik: South halls and the church and halls at Howgate to support this.

The churches in Penicuik are already working closely together.

Timing of changes The minister at Loanhead has indicated his willingness to allow the changes outlined for Loanhead, Bilston and Roslin to take place in 2022 and it is intended to move ahead with this.

The longer-term union in Penicuik is seen to be beyond the five year scope of this Plan. Further discussions to be held as indicated above.

ADDENDUM

AMBA Scores

The AMBA scores for each church building are as below.

Congregation Name	Building category (see below)	Building	AMBA Score %
Dunglass	B	Innerwick Church	23
	B	Oldhamstocks Church	20
	A	Cockburnspath Church	46
	A	Cockburnspath Hall	44
Belhaven	A	Church	75
	A	Hall	80
	A	Stables	71
Spott	B	Church	56
Dunbar	A	Church	78
	A	Hall	72
Aberlady	A	Church	54
	A	Stables	66

Gullane	A		54
North Berwick: Abbey	A		77
Dirleton	A	Church	66
	A	Hall	73
North Berwick: St Andrew Blackadder	A	Church and hall	85
Traprain	A	Stenton Church	49
	A	Prestonkirk Church	59
	A	Prestonkirk Stables	68
	A	Athelstaneford Church	56
	B	Whittinghame Church	In process of being sold
	B	Whitekirk Church	In process of being sold
Haddington: St Mary's	A	Church	83
Haddington: West	A*	Church & Hall	68
Garvald & Morham	A*	Garvald Church	51
	A	Garvald Stables	59
	A*	Morham Church	33
Yester, Bolton & Saltoun	A	Yester Church	67
	A *	Saltoun Church	59
	A *	Saltoun Session Rooms	69
	A *	Bolton Church	52
Humbie	A *	Church	51
	A *	Stables	51
Tyne Valley	A	Cranstoun Church	58

	A *	Fala Church	49
	A	Fala Session House	69
Gladsmuir	A	Church	67
Longniddry	A	Church and halls	83
Cockenzie & Port Seton: Chalmers Memorial	A	Church & Hall	79
Cockenzie & Port Seton: Old	A *	Church	56
	A *	Hall	55
Prestonpans	A	Prestongrange Church	66
	A	Prestongrange Halls	74
Ormiston	A	Church and hall	71
Pencaitland	A	Church	60
	A	Carriage House	73
Tranent	A	Church	74
	A	Halls	74
Musselburgh: Northesk	A	Church & hall	85
Musselburgh: St Andrew's High	A	Church and hall	74
Musselburgh: St Michael's Inveresk	A	Church	72
	B	St John's Whitecraig	Agreed to sell
	A	Halls	69
Musselburgh: St Clement's & St Ninian's	A	Church	47
	A	Halls	55
Gorebridge	A	Church & hall	83
	A	Hall	80
Newbattle	A	M/field E'houses Church	80

	B	M/field E'houses Hall	75
	A	Newtongrange Church	Refurb in progress
	A	Kirkbank Centre	63
	B	Newbattle Church	Been sold
Dalkeith: St John's & King's Park	A	Church	85
	A	Hall	85
Newton	B	Church	46
	A	Hall	73
Dalkeith: St Nicholas Buccleuch	A *	Church	66
	A *	Hall	74
	A *	Coffee Shop	68
	A *	Cottage	67
Bonnyrigg	A	Church	65
	A	Pitcairn centre	78
Cockpen & Carrington	A	Cockpen Church	62
	B	Carrington Hall	55
Lasswade & Rosewell	A	Rosewell Church	72
	A	Rosewell hall	74
	B	Lasswade Church	57
Loanhead	A	Church	79
Bilston	A	Church	52
Roslin	A	Church	65
Penicuik: North	A	Church & hall	75
	A	Church hall (separate)	75
Penicuik: Trinity Community Church	A	Church	53
	A	Hall	81

Almost all of the buildings in rural parishes score under 65 – with no building in a rural parish having a score above 70. At one level this highlights an inherent weakness in the scoring system, with buildings which are physically connected scoring better than those which are not, even if there are halls in close proximity. However it also underscores the need to focus resources on fewer buildings in our rural communities. Within the

Mission Plan this is being addressed in each of the rural parishes, with some buildings sold in each rural parish, with the money from those sales invested in the buildings to be retained.

- In Dunglass parish two out of four buildings will be sold.
- In Traprain parish, two out of six buildings are being sold.
- In Humbie l.w. Yester, Bolton and Saltoun three or four out of six buildings to be sold.
- Spott church will be sold.
- In Garvald and Morham it is envisaged that at least two of the three buildings will be sold.
- Tyne Valley - Borthwick Church was sold recently and one of the remaining three buildings will be sold.

This is a very significant change in our rural parishes but one that should allow the churches to focus their energies and finances on developing church life and mission in new ways, with buildings that will enhance this.

A number of church buildings in urban parishes are also earmarked to be sold – either with a date attached, or when a vacancy occurs as noted below.

There are several churches outside the rural parishes with scores of less than 65 which are categorised as A.

- Aberlady Church – The Mission plan includes maintaining a worshipping, witnessing presence in Aberlady and the stables in Aberlady are not large enough for the worshipping congregation.
- Gullane Church – The Mission plan includes maintaining a worshipping, witnessing presence in Gullane and refurbishment plans are being put in place to create a building that will have wider uses, with monies available for this work.
- Penicuik Trinity – This is a recent union of two churches. Significant funds are available to refurbish the church from the sale of other buildings – though long term plans for Penicuik need to be clarified before significant investment is made in this building.
- Pencaitland Church – The Mission Plan includes maintaining a worshipping, witnessing presence in Pencaitland and the Carriage House is not large enough for the worshipping congregation.
- Musselburgh: St Clement's and St Ninian's – Situated in Wallyford, this is an area where there is considerable new house building and these premises offer a place to develop new missional work in Wallyford itself along with the new housing areas.
- Bilston Church and hall – This congregation is uniting with Loanhead and becoming a Mission Church. With significant new housing in Bilston, keeping this building gives an opportunity for new missional work in the Bilston area with the church and hall as a base.

Progress on the use or adaptation of these buildings will be kept under review.

Designation of Buildings

The following buildings are classified as B (to be sold, let or otherwise disposed of).

- Whitekirk Church by 31 December 2022
- Whittinghame Church by 31 December 2022
- Newbattle Church by 31 December 2022
- St John's Church, Whitecraig by 31 December 2022
- Lasswade Church by 31 December 2023
- Innerwick church by 31 December 2023
- Oldhamstocks Church by 31 December 2023
- Newton Church by 31 December 2023
- Cockpen & Carrington church hall by 31 December 2026
- Mayfield & Easthouses Church hall by 30 June 2027
- Spott Church by 30 June 2027

The following buildings are classified as A (to be retained beyond June 2027) because they currently have ministers in post on full tenure or are to be united with a charge

where a minister is in post on full tenure. However, it is not envisaged that all will be retained, as set out below.

The following will be re-categorised as B when a vacancy occurs:

- Dalkeith: St Nicholas Buccleuch Church,
- Dalkeith: St Nicholas Buccleuch Hall,
- Dalkeith: St Nicholas Buccleuch Coffee Shop
- Dalkeith: St Nicholas Buccleuch Cottage
- Fala Church

In the parishes of Humbie l.w. Yester, Bolton and Saltoun when a vacancy occurs, or earlier by agreement

- Yester will remain as Category A
- Bolton Church will be re-categorised as B
- Saltoun Church, Humbie Church or both will be re-categorised as B
- A decision will be made whether Saltoun Session rooms and/or Humbie Stables will be re-categorised as B.

Some or all of the buildings of Cockenzie and Port Seton: Old will be redesignated as B when a union is effected with Cockenzie and Port Seton: Chalmers Memorial.

Some or all of the following churches in the parishes of Haddington: West l.w Garvald & Morham will be re-categorised as B either when a union between Haddington: St Mary's and Haddington: West is effected and Garvald & Morham unite with the other rural parishes to the south of Haddington, or earlier by agreement.

- Garvald Church
- Morham Church
- Garvald stables
- Haddington West: Church and Halls

It is envisaged that one set of buildings will be retained in Musselburgh but that this change will not take place until late 2027 at the earliest – which lies beyond the 5 year scope of this plan. Financial investment in the following buildings will be limited until a decision on buildings to be retained and developed is made, with the Mission Plan amended at that stage to reflect this:

- Musselburgh: Northesk Church and Hall
- Musselburgh: St Andrew's High Church and Hall
- Musselburgh: Inveresk Church and Hall

All other buildings are categorised as A (to be retained beyond the five years from the date at which the Mission Plan is approved or annually reviewed).

APPENDIX

Lothian Presbytery has been developing its Presbytery plan over several years. The basis of the plan is mission. In June 2017 the Presbytery approved this vision:

- to create a network of vibrant churches in communities across our Presbytery.

In 2021 this was updated to:

- to create a network of vibrant, missional churches in communities across our Presbytery.

Three Strands of Vibrant, Missional Congregations Presbytery also took time to define what that vision meant – to define vibrant (or missional) churches. The result was a description of three strands of vibrant, missional congregations. These are:

Strand 1: Engaged in their local community and more widely; working in partnership with other people to meet social needs and bring about change so that justice prevails.

- Church organises projects or activities which allow it to engage positively with the wider community
- Church has members involved in local community projects or groups
- Church is engaged in an active partnership with work overseas
- Church has members who support work overseas
- The church or individuals in the church are actively engaged in issues of justice or peace
- The church provides financial support for other community groups, charities or overseas work
- Church is actively engaged in issues of climate justice and aware of their own impact on the life of the earth.

Strand 2: Sustaining and building authentic, engaging Christian community and worship which is relevant to daily life and living and which draws in people of all generations.

- Numbers attending worship are healthy with a good balance of ages
- There is an active children's and youth work programme with Christian teaching as part of the programme, with a good number of young people participating in this
- There are well attended activities outwith a Sunday morning which encourage fellowship and sharing
- There is a pastoral care programme which provides good support to members and others when they need it
- There are a good number of people who have become actively involved in the last three years who were not previously involved
- There are sufficient finances in place to sustain and grow the life and witness of the congregation

Strand 3: Forming people in faith - helping people at every stage of their faith journey, from coming to faith through to becoming mature Christians who live out their faith in daily life and service.

- A healthy number of people have come to faith or had faith rekindled and have become active for the first time in church life and worship
- There are a high percentage of members involved actively in areas of service within the local church
- Proportion of elders under 65 is positive and additions have been made to the Kirk Session in the previous five years
- There are stories of people coming to faith and growing in faith through the witness and work of the congregation
- Some members are actively involved in Christian work outwith the congregation
- There are people who are not yet involved in the church who are being supported by the church or individuals as they explore their faith

Five Marks of Mission During the development of Lothian Presbytery's plan the central Church has adopted the five marks of mission as a description of what mission means in today's church. The five marks are:

- 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

Although Lothian Presbytery and the central Church have described mission in slightly different ways the two descriptions, unsurprisingly, are consistent. For ease we have mapped the three strands against the five marks, and vice versa. This mapping, which clearly shows the synergy between the two descriptions, can be found below.

Map of Five Marks of Mission to the three strands of Vibrant, Missional Congregations

Strand	Strand Sub-point	Mark of Mission
1	Church organises projects or activities which allow it to engage positively with the wider community	1, 3
1	Church has members involved in local community projects or groups	1, 3, 4
1	Church is engaged in an active partnership with work overseas	4,5
1	Church has members who support work overseas	4, 5
1	The church or individuals in the church are actively engaged in issues of justice or peace	4, 5
1	The church provides financial support for other community groups, charities or overseas work	4, 5
2	Numbers attending worship are healthy with a good balance of ages	1, 2
2	There is an active children's and youth work programme with Christian teaching as part of the programme, with a good number of young people participating in this	2
2	There are well attended activities outwith a Sunday morning which encourage fellowship and sharing	1, 2
2	There is a pastoral care programme which provides good support to members and others when they need it	3
2	There are a good number of people who have become actively involved in the last three years who were not previously involved	1, 2
2	There are sufficient finances in place to sustain and grow the life and witness of the congregation	1
3	A healthy number of people have come to faith or had faith rekindled and have become active for the first time in church life and worship	1, 2
3	There are a high percentage of members involved actively in areas of service within the local church	1, 3, 4, 5

3	Proportion of elders under 65 is positive and additions have been made to the Kirk Session in the previous five years	1, 2
3	There are stories of people coming to faith and growing in faith through the witness and work of the congregation	1, 2
3	Some members are actively involved in Christian work outwith the congregation	1, 2, 3
3	There are people who are not yet involved in the church who are being supported by the church or individuals as they explore their faith	1, 2

Map of the three strands of Vibrant, Missional Congregations to the Five Marks of Mission

Mark of Mission	Vibrant Congregation Sign
To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Church organises projects or activities which allow it to engage positively with the wider community • Church has members involved in local community projects or groups • Numbers attending worship are healthy with a good balance of ages • There are well attended activities outwith a Sunday morning which encourage fellowship and sharing • There are a good number of people who have become actively involved in the last three years who were not previously involved • There are sufficient finances in place to sustain and grow the life and witness of the congregation • A healthy number of people have come to faith or had faith re-kindled and have become active for the first time in church life and worship • There are a high percentage of members involved actively in areas of service within the local church • Proportion of elders under 65 is positive and additions have been made to the Kirk Session in the previous five years • There are stories of people coming to faith and growing in faith through the witness and work of the congregation • Some members are actively involved in Christian work outwith the congregation • There are people who are not yet involved in the church who are being supported by the church or individuals as they explore their faith
To teach, baptise and nurture new believers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers attending worship are healthy with a good balance of ages

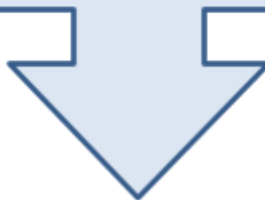
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an active children's and youth work programme with Christian teaching as part of the programme, with a good number of young people participating in this • There are well attended activities outwith a Sunday morning which encourage fellowship and sharing • There are a good number of people who have become actively involved in the last three years who were not previously involved • A healthy number of people have come to faith or had faith rekindled and have become active for the first time in church life and worship • Proportion of elders under 65 is positive and additions have been made to the Kirk Session in the previous five years • There are stories of people coming to faith and growing in faith through the witness and work of the congregation • Some members are actively involved in Christian work outwith the congregation • There are people who are not yet involved in the church who are being supported by the church or individuals as they explore their faith
To respond to human need by loving service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Church organises projects or activities which allow it to engage positively with the wider community • Church has members involved in local community projects or groups • There is a pastoral care programme which provides good support to members and others when they need it • There are a high percentage of members involved actively in areas of service within the local church • Some members are actively involved in Christian work outwith the congregation
To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Church has members involved in local community projects or groups • There are a high percentage of members involved actively in areas of service within the local church • Church is engaged in an active partnership with work overseas • Church has members who support work overseas • The church or individuals in the church are actively engaged in issues of justice or peace • The church provides financial support for other community groups, charities or overseas work
To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Church is engaged in an active partnership with work overseas • Church has members who support work overseas

and sustain and renew the life of the earth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The church or individuals in the church are actively engaged in issues of justice or peace • The church provides financial support for other community groups, charities or overseas work • There are a high percentage of members involved actively in areas of service within the local church
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THE PRESBYTERY of MELROSE and PEEBLES MISSION PLAN 2023 – 2027

Updated 29/03/2023

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Definitions

Where Presbytery of Melrose and Peebles is written, it is taken to mean that section of the Presbytery of Lothian and Borders previously constituted as the Presbytery of Melrose and Peebles.

Where Presbytery appears on its own, that is taken to mean the Presbytery of Lothian and Borders.

References to the appropriate section of the Mission Plan Act are shown in parentheses in or at the end of certain paragraphs.

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII 2021) requires each Presbytery to have a Mission Plan, approved by the Faith Nurture Forum the General Trustees, and Presbytery, in place no later than 31 December 2022. The Act states that the overarching purpose of the whole Mission Planning process is to shape and resource the Church's engagement with Christ's Mission. Enabling and sustaining worship and mission in the congregations within the bounds of the Presbytery of Melrose and Peebles has been the primary aim of this Mission Plan. Its preparation has of necessity involved a recognition of the financial challenges currently facing the Church of Scotland, an acceptance of the allocation of ministry posts agreed by the 2022 General Assembly, and a commitment to reassess the necessity of each of our church buildings in furthering the work of local mission.

1.2 Acknowledging the uncertainty, anxiety and stress felt across the Church at this time of rapid change and reform, Presbytery offers commendation and thanksgiving for those who have continued to participate in the mission of God. We must all continue to work prayerfully and imaginatively to proclaim the message and the faith, following the example of the early Christians.

1.3 Under the Presbytery Mission Plan Act the old Presbytery of Melrose and Peebles has been allocated nine FTE ministries. For the best use of this resource to support and grow the work of mission and service in our Presbytery, our Mission Plan envisages a transition from charge-based ministries to more collaborative working within Mission Districts each containing several charges.

1.4 Any form of strategic or operational planning requires, from the outset, a detailed consideration of 'the challenge'. This plan attempts to use the format of business planning whilst recognising that the 'business' is spreading the message of Jesus Christ across the communities in which we serve.

1.5 Our Church is bruised but not broken. We will survive, but only if we address the real problems which led to a need for radical change across the Church of Scotland, facing the reduction in resources by developing new ways of serving God through the Five Marks of Mission :

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.

OUR VISION

2.1 Our Vision focuses on Mission through the centrality of whole life discipleship, equipping the people of God to grow in prayer, developing our relationship with Jesus Christ and one another, receiving and using gifts of the Spirit and sharing our faith, and proclaiming and sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ.

2.2 Our Vision is one of a thriving, vibrant, visible church which delivers the message of Jesus Christ, as relevant as it has ever been, by engaging with worshippers, non-worshippers and those of no faith within and outside church buildings, serving all people at all stages of life. Our vision centres on Mission Districts and collaborative ministries leading worship, outreach, pastoral support, and evangelism, supported by the necessary resources.

2.3 Our Vision is underpinned by training for leadership and all aspects of service which reflect the talents of church laity, by establishing relationships, by supporting the poor and needy and by communicating our vision through the Grace of God.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT (2.1)

3.1 Our Plan is predicated on Mission: our goal is a missional church that is rooted in every community, living in that community, loving that community, serving that community, praying for that community, and joining other church communities in Mission Districts and beyond in sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ and working together for the furtherance of his Kingdom.

3.2 The Plan covers a period of five years, during which there will be opportunities through annual reviews to explore how God is calling us to work together in his service. The end of 2028 is our target date for achieving the objectives of the Mission Plan, but this will be possible only if congregations are encouraged and enabled to work together to identify and put into practice missional activities relevant to their own communities.

3.3 A recent Presbytery Questionnaire confirmed that many of our churches already display such service within their communities, planning for growth and not decline, whilst engaging beyond local communities and embracing national and international service through their regular work. Congregations are encouraged to support work with asylum seekers and refugees with their international partners.

3.4 As current members of the church become less active and numbers continue to diminish in the medium to short term, widespread mission is particularly challenging. Currently, many congregations practice interesting examples of both outreach and local mission work, much of which has stood the test of time. The moment seems opportune to test new and perhaps untried forms of worship, mission and discipleship leading to a

Gospel Plan. Reaching out does not come easily but outreach, particularly through membership of local groups helping those in need, increases the visibility of the people of God and witnesses to the gospel imperative of priority to the poor.

- 3.5 Following a successful Presbytery Conference in October 2022 exploring the theme “Growing the Church”, it is proposed that each Mission District meet to discuss ideas that will create a local Mission Toolkit. The following 5 discussion topics raised at the Conference are a good starting point:

1. Growing your church
2. Online worship
3. Improvements to church buildings
4. Attracting a younger generation
5. Meeting the spiritual needs of older generations.

A mechanism to share ideas and best practice within all the Mission Districts will be essential moving forward. This is something on which the new Presbytery Mission Officer will have ideas. The importance of seeing what is already happening, seeing where God is already moving, and supporting and enhancing examples of good practice cannot be over-emphasised. Some examples of existing mission activities which can be built upon are listed below:

Presbytery-wide initiatives

- Building on the work of the Good Ideas fund in supporting small one-off local mission initiatives
- Supporting links that Presbytery and several churches have built with Malawi, Palestine and Lebanon, and spreading that contact through the community
- Working and learning together as Eco Congregations

Galashiels and Selkirk Mission District

- Continuing to develop Street Pastors in Border towns
- Promoting outreach in Langlee, Galashiels, through the successful Girls’ Brigade
- Providing hot meals and working with Foodbank in Selkirk
- Developing a well-resourced hub for community worship and witness for the Valleys and Galawater Valley
- Welcoming new people brought to the area by the existence of the Borders Railway.

Earlston and Melrose Mission District

- Supporting and learning from each other through Messy Church
- Promoting Community Lunch Clubs and Cafés as warm places
- Developing the Chaplaincy to Earlston High School
- Continuing development of the work on St Cuthbert's Way churches
- Welcoming tourists, walkers and visitors who come to events in the area

Peeblesshire Mission District

- Coordinating chaplaincy work with the High School in Peebles
- Developing work with Castle Craig Clinic
- Setting up Breakfast Clubs in the primary schools
- Planting a worshipping group in Cardrona
- Coordinating provision of warm places for anyone who needs them right across the District.

- 3.6 Ministers and congregations need to develop ways of working together and supporting one another. The development of trained lay ministry teams is vital in maintaining worship and service in congregations across geographically extended Mission Districts. As the Presbytery of Lothian and Borders covers a very large geographical area, Mission Districts served by collaborative ministries could promote and support both local and far-reaching mission.
- 3.7 Although 'church' is not simply about those who worship regularly, we should not hide from the fact that the future of our church would benefit through more people seeking spiritual comfort and a desire to worship, however that might manifest itself. The church today is often seen to be doing its own thing inside the closed doors of very old mysterious buildings; the work of the church should be clearly visible and available where people are, not where we want them to be.
- 3.8 What is an ideal church service? We could learn so much from engaging with young people on music for worship, and with their teachers on how learning takes place. There is no 'one size fits all, however. Reaching out to younger folk but serving also the older generation may demand a mix of styles and timing for worship, including more traditional services for older members and others who seek to worship in this way.
- 3.9 We need fewer office-bearers and committees; more technology, fewer paper newsletters, but more Instagram, Facebook, TikTok and WhatsApp; greater trust placed in those pursuing delegated duties.
- 3.10 The visibility of the church in a given locality depends principally on its members. Whilst people are our most visible presence and our best ambassadors, the use of regularly updated noticeboards, website postings, social media and newsletters should continue to provide regular contact with parishioners. Elders might be

encouraged to ask members what level and nature of contact they wish, exploring targeted contact serviced through a Good Neighbourhood Team.

STRATEGY and OBJECTIVES/ASPIRATIONS

4.1 The medium to long term strategy of this initial 5-year, annually reviewed Mission Plan is to enable local mission based solidly on the Five Marks of Mission, as required by the Mission Plan Act. Whilst mission remains the over-riding focus of the plan, organisational structures, the allocation of Ministers of Word and Sacrament, the place and way of worship and the securing of necessary resources in support of mission are also addressed.

4.2 Implementation of this plan at every stage and in every way articulates and responds to God's call to mission in a manner that will inspire faith-filled action. The Five Marks of Mission should enhance the purpose of spreading the gospel, leading to sustainable outreach and pastoral support within and beyond church buildings.

4.3 Objectives/Aspirations

- To determine how the Five Marks of Mission should be addressed in furthering the Kingdom of God and the nurture of present and new believers.
- To re-discover the fundamental purpose of the profession of faith as it articulates with discipleship. The review of Confessions of Faith by the Theological Forum, including the vows and subscription of office-bearers, illuminates this element of a missional approach.
- To establish within the five-year timescale of this Plan a collaborative ministry in each of the three Mission Districts described in Section 6.3.
- To strive to ensure that progress towards ministerial collaboration within Mission Districts is achieved through consultation with and the cooperation of current parish ministers, in accordance with various provisions within the Mission Plan Act.
- To encourage collaborative ministries to develop mission projects within their Mission District with an emphasis on work with young people under 40.
- To revisit the most recent Local Church Reviews as reported to Presbytery, with a view to monitoring actions taken as advised in the reviews (2.1.1).
- To recommend to the Mission Committee of the new Presbytery of Lothian and Borders that Mission Districts are provided with a Toolkit on local mission and outreach by June 2024.
- To acknowledge the recommendations for the disposal of buildings designated as Category B in Section 8 in accordance with the guidelines from the General Trustees moderated by local input. Congregations are asked to take the time offered by the disposal timetable to fully consider whether a building in Category B is genuinely serving the mission of the local church, or whether it has in fact become a hindrance. A congregational vote is required before a disposal can occur. Assistance will be available to congregations when a decision is made to dispose of a building.

STRUCTURE and GOVERNANCE

5.1 Given the recent formation of the Presbytery of Lothian and Borders, the following comments on Structure and Governance should be considered as recommendations to the first annual review of the plan by the this Presbytery.

5.2 The Mission Plan Act recommends that (7) all current linkings should look towards establishing unions in the medium term. It is accepted, however, that the idea of "uniting" congregations which are rooted in geographically and culturally separated communities with a strong sense of connection can result in resentment and disillusionment. An unintended consequence may be the disappearance of the Christian witness of local congregations and an accelerated reduction in overall church membership. The problem of the burden on the minister of multiple Kirk Sessions and other meetings could be solved by changing the rules governing moderation of Session meetings (2.4). The draft Church Courts Act may provide opportunity to consider the size and management of Kirk Sessions within the lifetime of this plan.

RESOURCES

6.1 Planning for Mission lies firmly at the heart of this Mission Plan. However, all mission requires to be resourced. It is necessary therefore to address resource needs for active local mission whilst attending to the directives of the General Assembly.

Ministers of Word and Sacrament

6.2 This plan recognises that the ideal of a minister and a church in every parish is no longer sustainable. Adjustments carried out under the 2019 Presbytery Plan significantly reduced the number of charges in the Presbytery. The successful filling of most of the resulting vacancies has resulted in a considerable loss of flexibility, constraining our ability to effect the relatively small further changes required by the 2021 Mission Plan Act.

6.3 The forward planning for old Melrose & Peebles Presbytery includes a proposal to create Mission Districts comprising geographical groupings of congregations approximately 6-15 strong, offering mutual encouragement and support through enabling training, consultation, worship and fellowship. In this spirit, the current Plan proposes that the 20 congregations within the bounds of the old Presbytery of Melrose and Peebles are grouped into three Mission Districts. The groupings take into account geographical proximity and school catchment areas. The Galashiels and Selkirk Mission District includes the following six congregations: Ashkirk linked with Ettrick & Yarrow linked with Selkirk; Caddonfoot linked with Stow & Heriot; Galashiels Church of Scotland.

The Earlston & Melrose Mission District includes the following four congregations: Bowden & Melrose; Channelkirk & Lauder; Dryburgh District Churches; Earlston. The Peebles Mission District includes the following ten congregations: Carlops linked with Kirkurd & Newlands linked with West Linton; St Andrew's linked with Upper Tweeddale; Eddleston linked with Peebles; Old linked with Stobo & Drumelzier; Innerleithen, Traquair & Walkerburn; Lyne & Manor linked with Peebles; St Andrew's Leckie.

6.4 The Mission Plan Act provides for two or more Ministers of Word and Sacrament to collaborate in either a Team Ministry or a Parish Grouping. Moving to this type of collaborative ministry raises questions about the call to a particular charge and the bond

between minister and congregation, which will require sensitive and prayerful discussion during the period of transition. Individual Mission Districts may choose different patterns of ministerial collaboration and local mission.

- 6.5 Of the eleven current charges in the area, three are in vacancy (Ashkirk linked with Ettrick & Yarrow linked with Selkirk; Caddonfoot linked with Stow & Heriot; Earlston), three are unrestricted charges (Bowden & Melrose; Lyne & Manor linked with Peebles: St Andrew's Leckie; Dryburgh District Churches), four are on reviewable tenure (Innerleithen, Walkerburn & Traquair; Eddleston linked with Peebles Old linked with Stobo and Drumelzier; Galashiels Church of Scotland; West Tweeddale), and one is about to commence Interim Ministry (Channelkirk & Lauder).

6.6 To achieve an equitable distribution of available ministerial resources across the three Mission Districts, this Plan proposes that by the end of its five-year timescale each Mission District will be served by three full time Ministers of Word and Sacrament. This will require a reduction of one post in each of the Earlston & Melrose and Peebles Mission Districts.

6.7 It is proposed that over the next two years Earlston Parish is encouraged to explore the possibility of working with parishes to the East that are now part of the same Presbytery. At the same time the option of a linking, i.e., the sharing of a Minister with Channelkirk and Lauder, should be investigated.

6.8 Possible routes to the required reduction in ministerial posts in the Peebles Mission District will need to be explored and fully discussed with the ministers currently in post. The development of a collaborative ministry team is strongly encouraged.

6.9 Changes to the Parish Ministries Act and the Mission Plan Act define the basis on which the right to recall a minister on reviewable or unrestricted tenure is determined. To recall tenure should not be used without very careful thought and consultation. The proposal that within the lifetime of this plan there should be three Ministries of Word and Sacrament in each of the three Mission Districts is therefore presented as a long-term goal. With the new Presbytery of Lothian and Borders, fresh opportunities for collaborative ministries across former Presbytery boundaries may emerge, and funding possibilities for additional supporting posts can be explored.

Melrose & Peebles Presbytery: Ministries							
Mission District	Charge	Average Attendance Band	Gross Population	Current Status	Status by end 2025	Interim Implementation Steps	Future Staffing
Galashiels & Selkirk	Ashkirk	5-20	6933	Vacant	R	Permission to call. Instruct linked congregations to consider union. Develop collaborative ministry within Mission District.	3 FT MWS posts (Team Ministry or Parish Grouping) by end 2028
	I/w Ettrick & Yarrow	5-20					
	I/w Selkirk	30-50					
	Caddonfoot	5-20	3491	Vacant	R	Instruct linked congregations to consider union. Develop collaborative ministry within Mission District.	
	I/w Stow	5-20					
	& Heriot	5-20					
	Galashiels	over 50	12670	R	R	Develop collaborative ministry within Mission District.	
Earlston & Melrose	Bowden	20-30	7066	UT	R	Change of status on vacancy. Develop collaborative ministry within Mission District.	3 FT MWS (Team Ministry or Parish Grouping) by end 2028
	& Melrose	over 50					
	Channelkirk	20-30	2771	Interim Minister	0.5R	Possible linking/union with Earlston. Develop collaborative ministry within Mission District.	
	& Lauder	30-50					
	Maxton,	5-20	3713	UT	R	Change of status on vacancy. Develop collaborative ministry within Mission District.	
	Mertoun,	5-20					
	Newtown	20-30					
	& St. Boswells	20-30					
	Earlston	30-50	1920	Vacant	0.5R	Possible linking/union in new Presbytery, or with Channelkirk & Lauder. Develop collaborative ministry within Mission District.	
Peebles	Carlops	30-50	4661	R	R	Develop collaborative ministry within Mission District. Consider whether a union may be appropriate.	3 FT MWS by end 2028.
	I/w Kirkurd & Newlands	20-30					By end of 2025 we expect to understand how

	I/w West Linton: St Andrew's	30-50					the ministries in the Peebles Mission District can be reduced from 4 to 3, taking into account new options arising from revisions of Presbytery and Mission District boundaries.
	I/w Broughton	5-20					
	& Skirling	5-20					
	& Tweedsmuir	5-20					
	Eddleston	5-20	6027	R	R	Develop collaborative ministry within Mission District. Consider whether a union may be appropriate.	
	I/w Peebles: Old	Over 50					
	I/w Stobo & Drumelzier	5-20					
	Innerleithen,	over 50	5451	R	R	Develop collaborative ministry within Mission District.	
	Traquair	5-20					
	& Walkerburn	5-20					
	Lyne	5-20	4162	UT	UT	Develop collaborative ministry within Mission District. Consider whether a union may be appropriate.	
	& Manor	20-30					
	I/w Peebles: St Andrew's Leckie	over 50					
No. of Ministries				7 in post 3 vacant 1 IM	10		9

Ministry Development Staff

6.10 There is no current allocation of Ministry Development Staff to Melrose and Peebles Presbytery.

6.11 It is recommended that congregations are encouraged and supported in sourcing funds for the appointment of ministry specific staff who could work within Mission Districts on specific aspects of mission. Successful examples of such appointments are present in both Peebles and Selkirk.

6.12 As church governance moves towards collaborative ministry, it is recommended that funding should be sought to employ a Ministry Development Worker to assist ordained ministers in promoting mission in each of the Mission Districts.

6.13 The Presbytery of Melrose and Peebles welcomes the intention of the Presbytery of Lothian and Borders to appoint a Mission Officer to support Mission Districts in implementing mission plans.

6.14 It is recommended that localised mission planning should include a learning programme on all aspects of ministry and mission, including the Sacraments and pastoral care, for the benefit of church members demonstrating interest and talent.

6.15 Consideration should be given to the roles of Readers and Ordained Local Minister in furthering the implementation of the Plan within the new Presbytery.

Networking and Ecumenical Relationships

6.16 Congregations in the Church of Scotland often see themselves as independent entities with limited interaction with other congregations and little joint work. Part of the vision set out above is of churches across the Presbytery working together, supporting one another. The creation of Mission Districts should help this aspiration become reality.

6.17 In addition, it is desirable that every congregation should be part of a network which supports local church development. This could be sharing in a Path of Renewal or Growing Young project. Church of Scotland resources are available to support churches in developing their church life and witness with a group from each congregation, including the minister, taking part in conferences or seminars. Plans are being put in place for a Growing Young cohort for churches with few or no young people, in partnership with the Fuller Youth Institute.

6.18 God's calling to the wider church encompasses fellowship, communion and partnership as a foundation upon which to understand more fully what binds us together.

6.19 While this Mission Plan does not contain any specific proposal for working with other denominations, we must remain open to considering either formal or informal partnerships with other churches.

Finance (2.1.1)

6.20 It is recommended that clarifying the full implications of the 'Giving to Grow' financial scheme should be a priority of the Finance Committee of Lothian and Borders Presbytery, and that the potential use of the Seeds for Growth fund, the Pioneer Mission Fund, and the Small Grants Fund in supporting new mission work should be explored.

Buildings (2.1.1)

6.21 All are aware of the passion that people feel for the place where they worship: they experience life events and a sense of community belonging. The importance of little congregations should not be overlooked. More than a place of worship, the parish church offers a focus for local mission which could outweigh considerations of cost.

6.22 As required by the Mission Plan Act (2.1.2 – 2.1.5), responses to the informative Mission Plan Questionnaire on categorising church buildings were solicited, and these helpfully indicated where some buildings could be reviewed or disposed of following annual review. Information on the unit cost in maintaining ecclesiastical buildings was considered in drafting the Plan.

6.23 The Plan recognises the need for a determination to create vibrant ecclesiastical buildings which reflect and accommodate the expectations of those born in the 21st century. Areas for worship and sanctuary need to encourage reflection and prayer, offer a

warm welcome and personal comfort, be open to all when they seek access, and provide family friendly worship times and room for social community gatherings. However, a rationalisation of buildings is necessary with closures and refurbishments rooted in local mission plans.

6.24 There are currently 35 church buildings and 9 separate church halls within the bounds of the old Melrose and Peebles Presbytery. The Asset Management Building Audit (AMBA) provided a consistent and transparent approach to assessing the suitability of ecclesiastical buildings.

6.25 The Mission Plan Act requires Presbyteries to categorise buildings as either to be retained (A) or disposed of (B) within the timescale of the Mission Plan. Section 2.1.3 of the Act states that ‘in order to arrive at these categorisations the Presbytery shall use, and reference resources and advice from the General Trustees, including the Land and Buildings Toolkit’. The AMBA process is seen to offer a helpful instrument for assessing buildings; ultimately however, it is for Presbytery to use this information, as well as local knowledge, to determine which buildings are best suited for supporting its Mission Plan. A building may score poorly in its AMBA result but be in the right place strategically and capable with some investment of becoming a well-equipped space in the right place.

6.26 The Church described itself as a “substantial” landowner in a report to Scottish Government on land reform last year - and also a “unique” one given that its buildings and land directly benefit the communities it serves.

6.27 Small rural churches supported by viable congregations deserve to be treated with respect. These are simple houses of worship built so that the local community could gather there for worship on a Sunday morning. They may not be easily adapted as multi-use spaces but that is not what their congregations require of them. Small congregations often represent a significant proportion of the local population, which values the presence of the church and is willing to support it if money is required for maintenance. The very simplicity of these buildings keeps overheads low, although a major problem with the fabric would inevitably require a review of the sustainability of the building.

6.28 Good stewardship includes holding on to the spiritual history of a place for the community. It is nevertheless recognised that where a very small number worship on a Sunday, the building is unused throughout the rest of the week, and another church or hall is available nearby, the best solution may be for the building to be closed or bought by the community from the Church of Scotland. Within a union, money raised from the sale of redundant properties goes to help congregations keep their existing churches and halls going. Trustees get a 10 per cent levy on sale proceeds from church property, a portion of which is paid into the Central Fabric Fund which distributes grants and loans to churches in need of repair and improvement.

6.29 Properties can be selected for sale for several reasons. An energy inefficient manse can be replaced by one which is more energy efficient. An unsustainable church building can be sold with services moved to the community hall. The proceeds of sales should be retained for the benefit of the local congregation.

6.30 Information on interesting work to redesign ecclesiastical buildings is readily available, making many churches more suited to accommodating community activity,

promoting influence, and spreading the word of God, alongside technology which allows worship to be more participative.

INFORMATION FLOW

7.1 The Melrose & Peebles Presbytery Mission Planning Committee was formed in October 2021. Reports to that Presbytery began with a verbal report in November 2021 followed by a progress report received by Presbytery in December 2021. At that time all Kirk Sessions were urged to respond to the Committee's request for their views on the Mission Plan Act by March 2022. In addition, the Convener wrote personally to each Parish Minister inviting personal comment and observation. Later in December 2021 a questionnaire was sent to Session Clerks for completion and return to the Planning Committee by the end of March 2022. All churches responded to the questionnaire, which included a section on building categories as required by the Mission Plan Act.

7.2 The Initial Draft Melrose & Peebles Presbytery Mission Plan was prepared by the Presbytery Mission Plan Committee and introduced to Presbytery in February 2022. It was then sent to all Kirk Sessions for their response by mid-May 2022. Most churches responded within the timescale. The Initial Plan was also sent to the Faith Nurture Forum as recommended, seeking their guidance on where the Initial Draft might not meet the requirements of the Mission Plan Act. Their response confirmed that there would be no additional allocation of ministers to the Presbytery of Melrose and Peebles; more information was requested on how the ministry allocation would be shared, and which churches might be designated for closure. The Forum also sought more detailed information on local mission plans.

7.3 All constructive comments on the Initial Draft were embedded to form a Second Draft of the Mission Plan. A summary information leaflet was provided to all who requested it. In addition to regular on-line consultation and an in-person meeting of the Mission Plan Committee, members of Presbytery were invited to comment at each stage of the draft planning process. Conveners of Presbytery Standing Committees and members of the Business Committee were also consulted.

7.4 The Second Draft Plan was considered at a joint meeting on 28th July 2022 of the Presbytery Mission Plan Committee and the Presbytery Business Committee. The first part of this meeting was also attended by representatives of the Faith Nurture Forum and the Presbytery Mission Plan Implementation Group, who advised on further changes which would be required before the plan would be likely to receive approval. It was agreed that once the AMBA building audit reports were available a final draft of the Plan would be prepared by the Presbytery Business Committee and presented to Melrose & Peebles Presbytery for approval.

7.5 The results of the AMBA process were discussed with representatives of the General Trustees and the Faith Nurture Forum at an online meeting on 29th September 2022. The final draft Plan, including an Appendix listing decisions on whether buildings should be retained or closed during the five-year timespan of the Plan, was subsequently completed. The information on proposed building closures was communicated to ministers in charges and Interim Moderators beginning on 5th October 2022, and meetings were arranged with affected congregations. The final draft Mission Plan having been

presented to Presbytery on the 16th of November, and approved, is was submitted to the General Trustees and the Faith Nurture Forum for their approval.

7.6 In December 2022 the General Trustees notified the old Presbytery that did not approve this plan and raised a number of concerns about several buildings. Principally they were concerned about the category B* (it is not allowed in the Planning Act) and wanted more clarity on dates for decisions on buildings. The Faith Nurture Forum did not have any issues with the rest of the plan. As a result the Planning Committee of the Lothian and Borders Presbytery revisited the plan making changes to building categories and narratives. The Presbytery Clerk and the Convenor of the Planning Committee offered to visit representatives of every church affected by these revisions. Most of the churches took up that offer. Visits were held during April and May 2023 to explain the changes and listen to concerns. Narratives for some churches changed as a result of those discussions.

REVIEW OF BUILDINGS

5.3.8 Buildings: There is a connection between ministry and church buildings, although that connection is neither uniform nor universal. At a national level there is a consensus that the Church of Scotland has too many buildings, numerous buildings that are underutilised, buildings that are too large for present-day needs and buildings that are in the wrong place. At a local level, however, almost every church building is deemed essential by those who worship there week by week. There is no simple solution to this problem. The starting point, however, should be mission. Presbyteries will want to consider which buildings are essential and useful for the mission they envisage and offer to local parties means by which they might look more objectively at the bricks and mortar which they possess. The General Trustees will support Presbyteries in developing their mission plans.

Faith Nurture Forum, September 2021

Part 1: Consists of the results of the Asset Management Buildings Audit (AMBA), for all the churches in Presbytery and for all the halls, presented in a single spreadsheet, and ranked by percentage scored. The input for this spreadsheet came from the congregations themselves with some help and a light touch oversight from Andrew Isherwood.

The scoring of the returns and the weighting of the various elements was done by the General Trustees. It is not always clear how the scoring is determined and in what way individual weightings may skew the eventual outcome. The AMBA percentages alone shall not determine the future of the buildings in the Presbytery.

Part 2: Presents a summary and then some individual detail of the A and B categorisation of each of the buildings within their Presbytery Mission Districts.

As well as looking at the AMBA score, emphasis has been on future sustainability:

- the maintainability of the building,

- the viability of finances,
- the resilience of the people.

So far as we can determine AMBA takes very little account of any of these three important pointers for the future of our churches.

Part 1: Presbytery Buildings ranked by AMBA returns

Church	AMBA %	Mission District	Min. Standards	Location
Galashiels Old Parish & St Paul's	83	Galashiels & Selkirk	88	77
Selkirk	82	Galashiels & Selkirk	80	85
Innerleithen	81	Peebles	80	83
Galashiels Trinity	80	Galashiels & Selkirk	80	81
Melrose	78	Earlston & Melrose	82	73
Peebles Leckie	72	Peebles	69	75
Earlston	71	Earlston & Melrose	72	69
Bowden	68	Earlston & Melrose	69	65
Carlops	68	Peebles	68	67
Newlands	68	Peebles	65	71
Galashiels St John's	65	Galashiels & Selkirk	62	69
Stow	63	Galashiels & Selkirk	62	65
Eddleston	62	Peebles	57	67
Newtown	62	Earlston & Melrose	69	54
St Boswells	62	Earlston & Melrose	68	56
Peebles Old	62	Peebles	60	63
Lauder	61	Earlston & Melrose	54	69
Mertoun	58	Earlston & Melrose	71	42
Channelkirk	57	Earlston & Melrose	63	50
Heriot	57	Galashiels & Selkirk	55	60
Caddonfoot	55	Galashiels & Selkirk	58	50
Skirling	54	Peebles	60	46
Stobo	54	Peebles	54	54
Maxton	53	Earlston & Melrose	60	44
St Andrew's West Linton	53	Peebles	51	56
Kirkhope	50	Galashiels & Selkirk	51	50
Traquair	50	Peebles	58	38
Tweedsmuir	50	Peebles	48	52

Manor	49	Peebles	57	38
Yarrow	49	Galashiels & Selkirk	52	44
Lyne	48	Peebles	54	40
Broughton	47	Peebles	51	42
Ashkirk	46	Galashiels & Selkirk	52	38
Ettrick	45	Galashiels & Selkirk	46	44
Drumelzier	43	Peebles	49	35
Halls				
Galashiels Old Parish & St Paul's	82	Galashiels & Selkirk	86	77
New Hall West Linton	82	Peebles	78	90
Earlston Hall	81	Earlston & Melrose	73	97
Bakehall Leckie	79	Peebles	83	75
Old Hall West Linton	76	Peebles	68	90
Lauder Church Centre	71	Earlston & Melrose	72	69
St Boswell's Hall	71	Earlston & Melrose	75	65
Peebles Old Hall	69	Peebles	74	63

Part 2: Categorisation of Buildings

*It is understood that congregations want to have a familiar, well-maintained, well-presented church building that is warm and comfortable and free from vandalism. A place where good friends can gather on a Sunday for a time of quiet and gentle pleasure. This may be seen as success, but we are not asked to be successful but to be faithful. How faithful can we be if that is **all** our vision?*

The categorisation of buildings is either **A** or **B**;

The categorisation of each building is hoped to act as an encouragement to all congregations towards prayerful review of the role of mission in their church life.

A means the building is envisaged to be kept for at least 5 years, the life of the Plan.

B means the building is expected to be disposed of within the 5-year life of the Plan *or* that the building is subject to review along with other local buildings as to which is the most suitable to be retained. A category **B** designation describes the usefulness of the building: it does not reflect on the life of the congregation or the continuing worship and activity of the church community.

Note that the Plan is to be reviewed annually and therefore a category **A** designation does not imply that no thought need be given to the future. Also note that, in future, reviews will be undertaken by the Planning Committee of the Lothian and Borders Presbytery.

The Planning Act requires us to identify historic buildings. The advice of the General Trustees is that the criteria which a Presbytery should use to determine if a property is considered historic within the context of a Presbytery Mission Plan are as follows:

- The building is A Listed, and
- It is cathedral style in its proportions, and
- It is in a prominent setting within a townscape.

There are no buildings in the area that fulfil all three of these criteria. The following church buildings are A listed and lie in prominent positions in towns and rural settings throughout the Melrose & Peebles area: Bowden Kirk, Channellkirk Church, Lauder Church and Stobo Kirk. There are other buildings which are in prominent positions and which are large but they are not A listed.

The advice of the General Trustees in this regard is noted:

"The historic significance of a building need not be a major factor within the categorisation decisions. In comparison to the building's condition, safety, accessibility, flexibility, facilities, location etc, the historic significance would not normally contribute towards the building's capacity to provide for mission and outreach."

Buildings must be “well equipped spaces in the right places”

Inevitably some church buildings will have a category **B** designation. This must not sound the death knell of a congregation. There are several examples of congregations worshipping in community spaces where fellowship and Christian community is maintained without a church building. There are also instances where a church under other ownership is still used by the congregation for occasional or even regular worship. We hope by stating this we give congregations the reassurance that the plan is not about dissolving them. The life and vitality of a congregation can be renewed by worshipping in the ‘right space in the right place’ and the energy released aids outreach and mission.

We ask that reaction to a **B** category comes with open minds. There is time to review options and the reassurance that the final decision on closure is up to the Kirk Session and the Congregation, as well as Presbytery. Alongside that power must be set the probability that with a **B** category very little expenditure on the building is likely to be permitted.

The term ‘celebration’ church is used in a few instances in the following report. This term is used to describe a church which is no longer used for weekly worship and is no longer in the ownership of the Church of Scotland. It may be owned by an individual or community but may be made available for use at times of ‘celebration’. For instance, at Easter, Christmas,

Remembrance or for weddings and funerals. The General Trustees are happy to enter a period of exclusivity with a locally based community group looking to purchase.

Each Congregation must be financially viable and missionally active:

When reviewing the categorisations, we ask congregations to be honest in their undertakings and to assess their financial viability, considering both their ongoing and exceptional fabric responsibilities and other recurring costs.

We also ask our congregations to consider carefully how they continue to develop mission. While financially secure, a congregation requires to consider how it consistently reviews and renews its life, discipleship, and witness. A Mission Officer has been appointed in the Presbytery and support may be available to enable a congregation to flourish and to serve its parish area with a missional bias.

From The Faith Nurture Forum Report to the 2022 General Assembly:

8.1.16 Supporting the Church's strategy of striving towards well-equipped spaces in the right places has never been more important and recognising the value of smaller churches as well as the larger is critical in the Forum's work in Presbytery Mission Planning; it was 50 years ago in his book "The Go-Between God" that John V Taylor talked about the importance of 'little congregations' in the life of the whole church. Today, we strive to affirm both the smaller church and the larger, and to explore how they are part of what Church is today.

Specific Issues

- **There is an obligation on the Presbytery to have all buildings categorised by the end of 2022 in order to receive approval for our Presbytery Mission Plan.**
- The AMBA percentages alone are not enough of a determinant. The percentages lack clarity when weightings can, for example, be skewed by individual big issues in the building, or the remoteness of the location. They do, however, represent the input of each local congregation. How this input is reflected in the percentages is not always clear.
- All churches and halls have been reviewed.
- The configuration of church and hall needs to be considered.
- Historical Significance does not grant special immunity.
- The local vesting of churches is not a consideration of this process. Their status within the Church of Scotland is still very much the General Trustees' responsibility.
- Money owed on grants has not been confirmed, but we do not believe it is a big issue in Melrose and Peebles.
- Population figures are from the Church of Scotland Statistics for Mission.

- Average attendance from AMBA forms
- The Presbytery will have a yearly responsibility to review the Presbytery Mission Plan and therefore the future of all its buildings.
- **No decision in this document is lightly taken.**

Church of Scotland – Faith Action Plan Leadership Team
Extract from the Minutes of the Faith Action Plan Leadership Team meeting
held on 23rd June 2023

Presbytery Mission Plan for the former Presbytery of Melrose and Peebles

The Plan for the former Presbytery of Melrose and Peebles, now part of the new Presbytery of Lothian and the Borders, was presented for consideration and approval.

The Faith Action Plan Leadership Team approved this Presbytery Mission Plan, subject to the following condition, and also the conditions listed below, from the General Trustees:

- that the Presbytery at the first annual evaluation of the Mission Plan offers more detail and consistency in, and a general strengthening of, Mission Narratives;
- and in accordance with the Act, the General Trustees have considered the draft Mission Plan for Melrose and Peebles, submitted June 2023 and are content with the categorisation of the ecclesiastical buildings therein, subject to:

-

A. The Presbytery committing to and evidencing at the subsequent Annual Evaluation and Development review:

1. Channelkirk & Lauder

i. The work to explore the missional opportunities associated with each of the buildings in the union. Following the initial phase, work with the GTs on which church building to retain. As agreed this should be in the second year of the Interim Ministry.

2. Stow / Caddenfoot / Heriot

i. It is the view of the GTs that only one building in this adjustment is sustainable in the long term. The logical place for this is Stow as the presbytery have detailed in the narrative. It is understood that the congregation at Stow have struggled with the building. The GTs would be willing to make support available to determine whether there is a solution to the building issues which would then allow for the church to be managed effectively at a local level. The GTs do not see that the churches at Caddenfoot and Heriot are sustainable in the long term. Both sit out with a centre of population but travel times to better churches are not significant. Both are lacking in facilities and are inflexible spaces. Both also show relatively low levels of income and have small congregations on a weekly basis. It is asked that the Presbytery engage with the GTs on this matter.

3. Manor Church

i. The audit found that the church at Manor had no facilities and is an inflexible space. It is not in a centre of population and has a small congregation. There is some concern about the viability of the church however, it is said that the congregation is active and that they have the means to manage the building. It is asked that the Presbytery provide proposals detailing how facilities can be installed into the church and how this work could be financed. It is also asked that the Presbytery provide evidence demonstrating the longer-term viability of the church in terms of financial and human resources at the annual review.

4. Kirkhope / Ettrick / Yarrow

i. The audit found that the church at Kirkhope had accessibility issues, few facilities and is used infrequently. Notwithstanding this, Kirkhope scored slightly better than the Ettrick and Yarrow buildings and is in a centre of population. It is asked that the Presbytery provide details of which church is to be retained at the first annual review.

ii. It is also asked that the Presbytery provide details of how the retained building can be improved at the first annual review and how improvements could be financed. In addition, the Presbytery is asked to provide evidence demonstrating the longer-term viability of the church in terms of financial and human resources at the annual review.

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Melrose and Peebles Presbytery Summary

General Trustees have offered to help with the buildings decision in Galashiels

Church	AMBA % Score	Comment	Average Attendance	Population as % of M& P Presbytery	Category	Category Explanation	“R”= Restricted Tenure “U”= Unrestricted	Possible Changes
Gala O.P. & St Paul’s	83	Galashiels churches have united. Plans being reviewed for one church in the town. Decision by end 2024 at latest.	50 plus	12670/21.5%	B	Options under review; decision by end 2024.	“R” Recent Union FT Minister	Grouped within Galashiels and Selkirk Mission District Decision on buildings should be taken by end 2024.
Gala O.P. & S.P. Halls	82				B			
Galashiels Trinity	80		30-50		B			
Galashiels St John’s	65		20-30		B			
Selkirk	82	Selkirk with one church as the hub for the valleys as noted in mission goals. Plans needed for historic small churches as celebration churches in local ownership. Substantial funds available to upgrade the chosen building.	30-50	6049/10.3%	A		Vacant Selkirk linked with Ashkirk linked with union of Ettrick and Yarrow in the Valleys.	Suggest union between Selkirk and Ashkirk. Very recent linking with the Vall churches, plus suggested closures, indicates complete union would be counterproductive short term. Grouped within Gala and Selkirk Mission District
Ashkirk	46		5-20	260/0.44%	B	Decision required by 1 st annual review as to which church of Kirkhope, Yarrow & Ettrick to be retained and upgraded as the hub for the Valleys - disposals by 2027.		
Kirkhope	50		5-20	624/1.06%	B			
Yarrow	49		5-20		B			
Ettrick	45		5-20		B			

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Stow	63	Stow Church building appears to be a drain on the congregation. The building problems need to be resolved, or some alternative arrangement be made for worship. It is anticipated only one building will remain after the review of Stow Church. The review should be complete by the 1 st annual review of the plan.	5-20	2327/3.5%	B	A decision on a reduction in buildings to one is required by 1 st annual review especially given financial constraints	Vacant FT Minister Union of Stow and Heriot linked with Caddonfoot.	Recent linking: union would reduce future flexibility within the Presbytery. Grouped within Galashiels and Selkirk Mission District
Heriot	57		5-20		B			
Caddonfoot	55		5-20	1164/2.0%	B			

Church	AMBA % Score	Comment	Average Attendance	Population as % of Presbytery	Category	Category Explanation	“R”= Restricted Tenure “U”= Unrestricted	Possible Changes
Melrose	78	Review upon vacancy, Melrose, Bowden and the recently united Dryburgh District churches are in separate communities but close which could offer opportunities.	50 plus	7066/12.0%	A		U	An unrestricted charge but with potential for review upon vacancy. Grouped within Earlston & Melrose Mission District.
Bowden	68		20 to 30		A	Status to be reviewed upon vacancy.	Union FT Minister	
Newtown	62	To be reviewed again with a view to reducing the number of CofS owned	20 to 30	3713/6.3%	B	Review upon vacancy.	U	An unrestricted charge but with potential for review ahead of vacancy. Grouped
St Boswells	62		20 to 30		B		Union	

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St Boswell's Hall	71	buildings to two. Decision to be made by the time of the first annual review of the plan.			B		FT Minister	within Earlston & Melros Mission District.
Mertoun	58		5 to 20		B	Dispose by end 2026.		
Maxton	53		5 to 20		B	Dispose by end 2025.		
Earlston	71	Earlston Church are considering whether to explore missional opportunities with Greenlaw, Gordon:St Michael's and Legerwood in the old Duns Presbytery. The total number of buildings across those four churches to reduce to 4 if Earlston join that area.	30 to 50	1920/3.3%	A	If the sanctuary is developed, might it be worthwhile reviewing the need for 2 buildings?	Vacant	Through no fault of its ow Earlston has been vacant too long. A linking/ union within the enlarged Presbytery may be appropriate. Grouped with Earlston & Melrose Miss District.
Earlston Hall	81				A			
Lauder	61	Starting an interim ministry with a building closure seems inept. By the conclusion of the first year of the Interim Ministry the missional opportunities of each building will be explored. During the second year of the Interim Ministry	30 to 50	2771/4.7%	B	2 A listed churches – their future requiring resolution within the term of the interim ministry, giving time for	Interim Minister	Following a very long vacancy, this Union has n recently started, an Interi Ministry needs to be give that 2 years. Grouped with Earlston & Melrose Missi District.
Lauder Church Centre	71				B			
Channelkirk	57		20 to 30		B			

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		the Interim Minister, congregation, Presbytery and General Trustees commit to working together to make a choice on buildings to be retained.				mission development.		
Church	AMBA % Score	Comment	Average Attendance	Population as % of Presbytery	Category	Category Explanation	"R"= Restricted Tenure "U"= Unrestricted	Possible Changes
Innerleithen	81	Its proximity to Innerleithen and its infrequent use indicate that Traquair could become a celebration church.	50 plus	5451/9.3%	A		"R" FT Minister	A union of 3 churches with outreach to Cardrona. Grouped within Peebles Mission District seen as part of the future goal to serve the District with 3 FTE.
Traquair	50		5 to 20		B	Dispose by end 2027.		
Peebles Leckie	72	The 2 churches in Peebles need to develop their vision for mission in the town together. They can then decide which buildings suit that mission best. It is anticipated that only one set of buildings will be required. The aim will be to make a decision on this by the end of 2025.	50 plus	3948/6.7%	B	GTs agree that time and support needs to be given to discern the future for the CofS in Peebles. This sensitive review needs	"U" FT Minister	Linking of town church with rural church union of Lyne & Manor. Pushing for union on top of disposal of Lyne would be difficult and could reduce future options. Grouped within Peebles Mission District seen as part of future goal to serve District with FTE.
Bakehall Leckie	79				B			

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		Lyne has a future as a celebration church.				to be completed before a decision on buildings can be reached.		Whilst Manor Church is being categorised B as an interim measure, the GTs have committed to working with the Presbytery to ensure the church remains sustainable in the longer term. This work will take place in the first year of the Presbytery Plan.
Manor	49		20 to 30	214/0.36%	B	Review at 1 st annual review		
Lyne	48		5 to 20		B	Dispose by end 2025.		
Carlops	68	6 quite separate communities who work hard to sustain worship and mission. In Broughton this is impeded by the building. West Linton need to develop their vision for mission in the town. They can then decide which buildings suit that mission best. It is anticipated that no more than two buildings will be required. The aim will be to make a decision on this by the end of 2025.	30 to 50	472/0.8%	A		“R” FT Minister	The 6 churches have linked in the past 2 years after a period of Interim Ministry in Carlops, Newlands and West Linton. Forcing a Union here would be counterproductive. Broughton Skirling and Tweedsmuir have united. In West Linton the congregation need to be helped to review their buildings with a view to reducing to one or two. Grouped within Peebles Mission District seen as
Newlands	68		20 to 30	919/1.6%	A			
St Andrew’s West Linton	53		30 to 50	2396/4.1%	B	3 buildings should be reviewed within the next 2 years.		
New Hall West Linton	82				B			
Old Hall West Linton	76				B			
Broughton	47		5 to 20	598/1.0%	B	Dispose by end 2025.		
Skirling	54		5 to 20	171/0.29%	A			
Tweedsmuir	50		5-20	105/0.18%	B	Dispose by end 2027.		

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		In Tweedsmuir there needs to be a plan for a future worship space and possibly a celebration church.						part of the future goal to serve the District with 3 FTE.
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Church	AMBA % Score	Comment	Average Attendance	Population as % of Presbytery	Category	Category Explanation	"R"= Restricted Tenure "U"= Unrestricted	Possible Changes
Eddleston	62	The 2 churches in Peebles need to develop their vision for mission in the town together. They can then decide which buildings suit that mission best. It is anticipated that only one set of buildings will be required. The aim will be to make a decision on this by the end of 2025. Drumelzier is already used as a celebration church.	5 to 20	762/1.3%	B	GTs agree that time and support needs to be given to discern the future for the CofS in Peebles. This sensitive review needs to be completed before a decision on buildings can be reached.	"R" FT Minister	Another town church linked with rural churches. Linking with Stobo and Drumelzier a recent addition. Forcing a union short term would be counterproductive and could reduce future flexibility. Eddleston must be allowed to make their case for retention to Presbytery Grouped within Peebles Mission District seen as part of the future goal to serve the District with 3 FTE.
Peebles Old	62		50 plus	5099/8.7%	B			
Peebles Old Hall	69				B			

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Stobo	54				A			
Drumelzier	43		5 to 20	166/0.28%	B	Dispose by end 2024.		

A means the building is envisaged to be kept for at least 5 years, the life of the Plan.

B means the building is expected to be disposed of within the next 5 years Plan *or* that the building is subject to review along with other local buildings as to which is the most suitable to be retained. A category **B** designation describes the usefulness of the building: it does not reflect on the life of the congregation or the continuing worship and activity of the church community.

Average attendance figures are taken from the figures provided by congregations for the AMBA Form. Population figures are from the Church of Scotland [Statistics for Mission](#).

Galashiels & Selkirk Mission District - 12 buildings

Union of the 3 churches in Galashiels:

82% Galashiels Old Parish and St Paul's Church B

82% Galashiels Old Parish and St Paul's Halls B

80% Galashiels Trinity B

65% Galashiels St John's B

The newly united Church of Scotland Galashiels, incorporating Galashiels Old Parish and St Paul's, Galashiels St John's, and Galashiels Trinity, is currently taking advice and working through which of its 3 buildings to retain: we anticipate this decision will be made by the 1st annual review. We may need the assistance of the General Trustees and will request that if we do.

63% Stow Church B linking of Caddonfoot, Stow & Heriot

Although a prominent building in the community the church is large for the numbers that currently worship there. It is a difficult building, requiring constant maintenance and vigilance, at the same time as the congregation have run out of funds. This does not appear sustainable, but the General Trustees have offered support. It is important to note that there has been a large increase in the population of Stow over the last 10 years, indicating that there must be the possibility of growing the worshipping community. The charge is now vacant therefore a decision needs to be reached before a new minister is called. It is anticipated only one building, between Stow, Caddonfoot and Heriot, will remain after the review of Stow Church. The review should be complete by the 1st annual review of the plan. Presbytery will need the assistance of the General Trustees to review the Stow building.

57% Heriot B linking of Caddonfoot, Stow & Heriot

A small well-maintained building considerably aided by windfarm money. The church is some distance from population centres but is often used by worshippers from Stow. It is anticipated only one building, between Stow, Caddonfoot and Heriot, will remain after the review of Stow Church. The review should be complete by the 1st annual review of the plan. The union has run out of funds but Heriot has been adept at obtaining outside funding.

55% Caddonfoot B linking of Caddonfoot, Stow & Heriot

This church currently meets the three requirements for sustainability. Good congregational support, a reasonable sized relatively easily maintained building and some money in the bank. It is anticipated only one building, between Stow, Caddonfoot and Heriot, will remain after the review of Stow Church. The review should be complete by the 1st annual review of the plan.

82% Selkirk Church A linking of Selkirk & Ashkirk linked with Ettrick & Yarrow

This church is prominent within the town and has been well maintained, including the welcome addition of some solar panels. The church needs to be active in developing a self-sustaining hub in the valley churches with which it is now linked. The charge is vacant awaiting the approval of the Presbytery Mission Plan to call.

46% Ashkirk B linking of Selkirk & Ashkirk linked with Ettrick & Yarrow disposal by end

2024 Presbytery has been asked to permit Ashkirk to cease holding worship as there are currently too few people to sustain weekly worship. The village hall is already used for worship on occasion: maybe a combination of the Hall plus 'celebration' use of the church is the way forward.

50% Kirkhope B linking of Selkirk & Ashkirk linked with Ettrick & Yarrow

49% Yarrow B decision on Church to retain by the 1st annual review of the plan; disposals by end 2027

45% Ettrick B

These three rural churches currently alternate worship using one of the churches each week, although in the winter months Ettrick closes. There are some problems with building maintenance in a couple of the buildings but there are considerable funds available from the sale of the Manse. It makes sense to retain one of these churches and concentrate on using and developing that building as a worshipping and community hub for this distinctive geographical area as is The Planning Group are of the view that retaining the church in Kirkhope would be preferable but are open to being persuaded otherwise. Those buildings it is decided not to retain could hold an attraction to a heritage buyer due to their historic connections. A decision on which of the three buildings to keep should be possible by the 1st annual review. In our Mission Statement in Section 3 we stated as an objective

- Developing a well-resourced hub for community worship and witness for the Valleys and Galawater Valley

Earlston & Melrose Mission District - 12 buildings

78% Melrose Church A Union of Bowden and Melrose

The church is prominent within a growing community and is well maintained and funded. In the run up to expected vacancy on the retirement of the current Minister the position of Melrose as a hub for the churches on its doorstep should be considered.

68% Bowden A Union of Bowden and Melrose

This church currently meets the three requirements for sustainability. Good congregational support, a reasonable sized relatively easily maintained building and some money in the bank. An 'A' listed building. Its proximity to the Dryburgh District Churches offers opportunities for future planning for mission together which should be addressed before a vacancy arises.

71% Earlston Church A Proposed linking Earlston with Channelkirk and Lauder

81% Earlston Hall A

This church currently meets the three requirements for sustainability. Good congregational support, a reasonable sized relatively easily maintained building and some money in the bank. Earlston Church is considering whether to discuss missional opportunities with Greenlaw, Gordon:St Michael's and Legerwood in the old Duns Presbytery. The total number of buildings across those four churches to reduce to 4 if Earlston decide to join that area. If the congregation achieve their desire to remove the pews to make the sanctuary more flexible the need to own a separate hall could also be reviewed.

62% Newtown B Dryburgh District Churches

United with St Boswells, Maxton and Mertoun. This church currently meets the three requirements for sustainability. Good congregational support, a reasonable sized relatively easily maintainable building, and some money in the bank, also set in its community. Sunday worship approximately every third week:

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this will increase with the closure of 2 of the churches in the union. To be reviewed again with a view to reducing the number of buildings between Newtown and St Boswells to two. Decision to be made by the time of the first annual review of the plan. Its future should be reviewed before a vacancy arises.

62% St Boswells B Dryburgh District Churches

71% St Boswells Hall B

United with Newtown, Maxton and Mertoun. This church currently meets the three requirements for sustainability. Good congregational support, a reasonable sized relatively easily maintained building and some money in the bank, also set in its community. Sunday worship approximately every third week: this will increase with the closure of 2 of the churches in the union. To be reviewed again with a view to reducing the number of buildings between Newtown and St Boswells to two. Decision to be made by the time of the first annual review of the plan. Its future should be reviewed before a vacancy arises.

58% Mertoun B Disposal by end 2026 Dryburgh District Churches

An old estate church in good condition and with the benefit of the Union's funds but very close to other churches in the Dryburgh Union. Sunday worship monthly.

53% Maxton B Disposal by end 2025 Dryburgh District Churches

The church benefits from the Union's funds. Close to other churches in the Dryburgh Union. Sunday worship monthly.

61% Lauder B

71% Lauder Church Centre B

57% Channelkirk B

Both churches meet most requirements for sustainability with strong congregational support, have a reasonable amount of funding in the union and serve growing communities. Lauder Church is set in its community. However, the church building is inflexible and unlikely to be able to replace the functionality of the Centre, which also houses the vestry. Channelkirk is a short distance from the population centre of Oxton if exceptional adverse weather conditions affect access, there is a Resilience and Contingency Plan in place for transfer of Sunday services to Oxton's War Memorial Hall". Both churches are 'A' listed which inevitably adds to costs and to the energy required from the congregations to maintain their buildings. It does give both churches the potential to be repurposed as heritage buildings. By the conclusion of the first year of the Interim Ministry the missional opportunities of each building will be explored. During the second year of the Interim Ministry the Interim Minister, congregation, Presbytery and General Trustees commit to working together to make a choice on buildings to be retained. This new ministry has been long awaited and is much needed and will require a supportive Presbytery.

Peebles Mission District - 19 buildings

81% Innerleithen A Innerleithen, Traquair and Walkerburn

A recently refurbished multi-use church in frequent use. Responsible for outreach to Walkerburn and Cardrona as well as to the church in Traquair.

50% Traquair B disposal by end 2027 Innerleithen, Traquair and Walkerburn

This small church is very close to the church in Innerleithen which has been well developed as a multipurpose building. The kirk at Traquair would be a candidate for a celebration church in either

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community or individual ownership. It currently holds services at 2 pm on the first Thursday of the month.

72% Peebles Leckie B St Andrew's Leckie linked with Lyne and Manor

79% Bakehall Leckie B

There are two large sets of church buildings each requiring considerable expenditure in Peebles. Both are centrally situated on the High Street; this seems unsustainable given the moves that have been made in Galashiels and other Border towns. A first step should be to obtain a clear understanding of the Leckie lease, which could prove restrictive. The 2 churches in Peebles need to develop their vision for mission in the town together. They can then decide which buildings suit that mission best. It is anticipated that only one set of buildings will be required. This sensitive review needs to be completed before a decision on buildings can be reached. The inability to spend money on the buildings should be a strong incentive. The aim will be to make a decision by the end of 2025.

49% Manor B St Andrew's Leckie linked with Lyne and Manor

This church currently meets the three requirements for sustainability. Strong congregational support, a reasonable sized, relatively easily maintained, and accessible building, with substantial funds in the bank. It benefits from the toilet and other facilities in the adjacent Village Hall. When the church at Lyne closes worship will take place in Manor every week, providing an important centre for the rural hinterland of Peebles. However, the General Trustees have asked that Presbytery provide proposals detailing how facilities can be installed in the Church and how this work could be financed and that we provide evidence of the longer-term viability of the Church in terms of financial and human resources. Whilst Manor Church is being categorised B as an interim measure, the GTs have committed to working with the Presbytery to see if the church could be made more viable and sustainable in the longer term. This work will take place in the first year of the Presbytery Plan.

48% Lyne B disposal by end 2025 St Andrew's Leckie linked with Lyne and Manor

Not in weekly use and not in a centre of population. An obvious option would be to move to a community or individually owned 'celebration' church. Attended by the Manor congregation on a monthly basis.

68% Carlops A 4 linked churches of West Tweeddale including new union of Upper Tweeddale

This church currently meets the three requirements for sustainability. Good congregational support, a reasonable sized relatively easily maintained building and some money in the bank

68% Newlands A 4 linked churches of West Tweeddale including new union of Upper Tweeddale

This church currently meets the three requirements for sustainability. Good congregational support, a reasonable sized relatively easily maintained building and some money in the bank, plus a unique connection with Castle Craig Hospital, an addiction rehabilitation clinic.

54% Skirling A 4 linked churches of West Tweeddale including new union of Upper Tweeddale

This church currently meets the three requirements for sustainability. Good congregational support, a reasonable sized relatively easily maintained building and some money in the bank.

53% St Andrews West Linton B

4 linked churches of West Tweeddale including new union of

82% New Hall West Linton B

Upper Tweeddale

76% Old Hall West Linton B

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The congregation is supportive, and some funds are available, but the church building is quite large and in need of maintenance. Two halls and a large church all on separate sites is a lot of property to manage and maintain. The congregation are willing to look to the future for the church in West Linton with the possibility of a multi-purpose space in either the church or one of the halls: Community ownership could be sought for the building/buildings anticipated to be freed up. West Linton need to develop their vision for mission in the town. They can then decide which buildings suit that mission best. It is anticipated that no more than two buildings will be required. The aim will be to make a decision by the end of 2025.

50% Tweedsmuir B disposal by end 2027 4 linked churches of West Tweeddale including new union of Upper Tweeddale

A supportive congregation and a building currently in good condition, but with difficult access. Although funds have basically run dry the union with Broughton and Skirling will give support in the short term. There needs to be a plan in place for when the church is no longer sustainable as it is important to retain a worshipping community in the Tweedsmuir community. The long-term possibility of developing a reflection area/chapel in the Crook Inn development could be explored. In addition, the church building could become a community or individually owned 'celebration' church.

47% Broughton B disposal by end 2025 4 linked churches of West Tweeddale including new union of Upper Tweeddale

The church is oversized for the numbers that currently worship there and is now in need of maintenance. It is also badly sited on the edge of the village with poor access. The church at present seems almost to be an impediment to mission. Broughton is a vibrant village which must offer scope for mission and plans to create a small modern welcoming church in the village centre, and this should be supported.

62% Eddleston B Peebles Old linked with Eddleston linked with Stobo & Drumelzier

Relatively well-maintained church with a congregation very active in the community. There is a lack of funding, however, to meet any unexpected building costs. Though the church has limited access to readily available funding their experience is that their community responds well to requests for funding for specific needs. It is quite a large church for a small congregation. Whilst occasional services are held in the village hall (with the church used every week) the hall is not suitable for regular worship as it is regularly let out on a Sunday. Peebles is only 5 miles away: however, this is a very separate community and should be given the opportunity to prove its sustainability. The congregation is very capable of making a case as to why this small church is essential for mission.

62% Peebles Old B Peebles Old linked with Eddleston linked with Stobo & Drumelzier 69% Peebles Old Hall B

There are two large sets of church buildings each requiring considerable expenditure in Peebles. Both are centrally situated on the High Street: this seems unsustainable given the moves that have been made in Galashiels and other Border towns. The first step should be to obtain a clear understanding of the Leckie lease, which could prove restrictive. The 2 churches need to work together to see if successful mission in the town of Peebles can be served from one location, or else to clarify why there is a need for two centres. The 2 churches in Peebles need to develop their vision for mission in the town together. They can then decide which buildings suit that mission best. It is anticipated that only one set of buildings will be required. This sensitive review needs to be completed before a decision on buildings can be reached. The inability to spend money on the buildings should be a strong incentive. The aim will be to make a decision by the end of 2025.

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54% Stobo A Peebles Old linked with Eddleston linked with Stobo & Drumelzier

This church currently meets the three requirements for sustainability. Good congregational support, a reasonable sized relatively easily maintained building and some money in the bank.

43% Drumelzier B disposal by end 2024 Peebles Old linked with Eddleston linked with Stobo & Drumelzier

This church is currently infrequently used and could well continue to be used as it is at the moment on high days and holidays as a celebration church, but in other ownership.

Updated 25th May 2023

Presbytery Mission Plan for the former Presbytery of Melrose and Peebles

The Plan for the former Presbytery of Melrose and Peebles, now part of the new Presbytery of Lothian and the Borders, was presented for consideration and approval.

The Faith Action Plan Leadership Team approved this Presbytery Mission Plan, subject to the following condition, and also the conditions listed below, from the General Trustees:

- that the Presbytery at the first annual evaluation of the Mission Plan offers more detail and consistency in, and a general strengthening of, Mission Narratives;
- and in accordance with the Act, the General Trustees have considered the draft Mission Plan for Melrose and Peebles, submitted June 2023 and are content with the categorisation of the ecclesiastical buildings therein, subject to:

A. The Presbytery committing to and evidencing at the subsequent Annual Evaluation and Development review:

1. Channelkirk & Lauder

i. The work to explore the missional opportunities associated with each of the buildings in the union. Following the initial phase, work with the GTs on which church building to retain. As agreed this should be in the second year of the Interim Ministry.

2. Stow / Caddenfoot / Heriot

i. It is the view of the GTs that only one building in this adjustment is sustainable in the long term. The logical place for this is Stow as the presbytery have detailed in the narrative. It is understood that the congregation at Stow have struggled with the building. The GTs would be willing to make support available to determine whether there is a solution to the building issues which would then allow for the church to be managed effectively at a local level. The GTs do not see that the churches at Caddenfoot and Heriot are sustainable in the long term. Both sit out with a centre of population but travel times to better churches are not significant. Both are lacking in facilities and are inflexible spaces. Both also show relatively low levels of income and have small congregations on a weekly basis. It is asked that the Presbytery engage with the GTs on this matter.

3. Manor Church

i. The audit found that the church at Manor had no facilities and is an inflexible space. It is

not in a centre of population and has a small congregation. There is some concern about the viability of the church however, it is said that the congregation is active and that they have the means to manage the building. It is asked that the Presbytery provide proposals detailing how facilities can be installed into the church and how this work could be financed. It is also asked that the Presbytery provide evidence demonstrating the longer-term viability of the church in terms of financial and human resources at the annual review.

4. Kirkhope / Ettrick / Yarrow

i. The audit found that the church at Kirkhope had accessibility issues, few facilities and is used infrequently. Notwithstanding this, Kirkhope scored slightly better than the Ettrick and Yarrow buildings and is in a centre of population. It is asked that the Presbytery provide details of which church is to be retained at the first annual review.

ii. It is also asked that the Presbytery provide details of how the retained building can be improved at the first annual review and how improvements could be financed. In addition, the Presbytery is asked to provide evidence demonstrating the longer-term viability of the church in terms of financial and human resources at the annual review.