

Draft Presbytery Mission Plan
for the Presbytery of Moray
Growing a Shared Future:
Planning our future together with God

7 April 2022

Table of Contents

1	Introduction	4
2	Overall mission narrative for Moray	7
3	Process.....	10
3.1	Overview of process.....	10
3.2	Listening and gathering	13
3.2.1	Footprints.....	13
3.2.2	Focus Groups.....	14
3.2.3	Synthesis and analysis	14
3.3	Buildings	16
3.3.1	Historic Properties	16
3.3.2	Manses	17
3.4	Criteria	17
3.5	Next stages	19
3.6	Implementation	20
4	Buckie Area.....	22
4.1	Buckie Area Headlines	22
4.2	Buckie Area Mission Narrative	24
4.3	Buckie Area Buildings.....	27
5	Keith Area.....	28
5.1	Keith Area Headlines	28
5.2	Keith Area Mission Narrative	29
5.3	Keith Area Buildings.....	31
6	Upper Speyside Area.....	32
6.1	Upper Speyside Area Headlines	32
6.2	Upper Speyside Area Mission Narrative	33
6.3	Upper Speyside Area Buildings.....	35
7	Lower Speyside Area.....	36
7.1	Lower Speyside Area Headlines	36
7.2	Lower Speyside Area Mission Narrative	37
7.3	Lower Speyside Area Buildings.....	38
8	Lossiemouth Area	39
8.1	Lossiemouth Area Headlines	39
8.2	Lossiemouth Area Mission Narrative	40
8.3	Lossiemouth Area Buildings	42

9	Elgin Area.....	43
9.1	Elgin Area Headlines	43
9.2	Elgin Area Mission Narrative.....	44
9.3	Elgin Area Buildings.....	47
	Appendix A – Criteria (agreed by Moray Presbytery February 2022)	48
	Appendix B – Glossary.....	57

DRAFT FOR AMENDMENT

1 Introduction

This draft Mission Plan is offered for discussion and amendment as the Presbytery of Moray discerns “*Growing a Shared Future: Planning our future together with God*”.

This is being shared with all Members and Corresponding Members of Moray Presbytery and with all Session Clerks within Moray, so they can distribute it more widely in congregations. It is intended for discussion by congregations and with our partners in communities and other churches, so that together God’s will for the future may be better discerned.

There is much more in subsequent sections about what has shaped this document. It may also be helpful to be clear what this document is not.

It is not perfect, but is offered after a lengthy time of listening, learning, gathering information and prayerful discernment. It is the best attempt within human limitations using the information at our disposal.

It is not final, but offers a platform for amendments from the wider discernment of the people of God in Moray (see section 3.5 for next stages in the process). It will also need to respond to feedback from other parties to its approval: the Faith Nurture Forum and the General Trustees.

It is not totally comprehensive. There are parish boundaries that may need renegotiated as adjustments are implemented. The most appropriate manse to retain are not yet recommended.

It is not proposing a new permanent shape to church life, but offers a first step with some longer term directions of travel. It is a five year plan and will be reviewed annually.

It is not indicating any lack of commitment or faith of the congregations in Moray. The gardener in John 15 prunes the branches that bear fruit and those that are overstretched or exhausted.

It is not comfortable to write or read, but it is offered trusting that God is still at work in the Church of Scotland in Moray, so there can be hope for new growth as well as lament of loss.

It is not primarily about buildings. It is about the mission of Christ, which is the mission of the Church, which can be resourced by appropriate buildings.

It is not primarily about Ministers. It is about the mission of Christ, which is the mission of the whole body of the Church, within and beyond the Church of Scotland, within and beyond Recognised Ministries. It is about the ministries and mission of the whole people of God.

It is not a reshaping of business as usual. The roles of those in paid posts in the Church will have to be reimagined, as it will not be possible to live up to past expectations and some tasks will need to be laid aside. God's call to the whole people of God will also need to be recognised.

This is offered trusting in God, whose Church this is. It is the result of a huge investment of time and energy by people across the Church of Scotland in Moray. Thanks to all those who have engaged with the process, and particular thanks to current and past members of the Presbytery Planning Team.

God,
vine-grower, true vine, Spirit of life,
across Moray help us grow together,
discerning and planning our future with you.
Help us to remain joined with you
and accept wise pruning,
so we might share the fruit of your love more widely.
Amen

Moray Presbytery Planning Team (PPT)

Rev Jenny Adams (Convener), Mr Scott Anderson, Mrs Ann Bowie, Rev Eddie Enslin, Rev Andrew Kimmitt, Mrs Jane Rossetter, Mrs Fiona Simpson and Rev Wiekus van Straaten

Supporting documentation includes:

Brendan Research report “Moray Presbytery Plan: Synthesis of congregational documents and associated statistics” February 2022

Presbytery Mission Plan Approval or Amendment Request Form

Presbytery Mission Plan Act 2021¹

Presbytery Mission Planning Act: Guidance and Code of Practice²

AMBA summary for Moray Presbytery (as soon as final version available from General Trustees)

Key Contacts:

Presbytery Clerk: Mrs Janet Whyte moray@churchofscotland.org.uk

Convener of Presbytery Planning Team: Rev Jenny Adams
jadams@churchofscotland.org.uk

¹ https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/81835/Presbytery-Mission-Plan-Act-2021-as-passed-31.5.21.pdf

² <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/presbytery-planning/presbytery-mission-plan-act-guidance-code-of-practice>

2 Overall mission narrative for Moray

The vision of the mission planning process for Moray Presbytery is summed up in the strapline “*Growing a Shared Future: Planning our future together with God*” which has been used since the process began.

The imagery of the vine in John 15, including God’s pruning of branches that are bearing fruit, shaped the listening and information sharing with office-bearers and focus groups from all congregations (see section 3). While pruning brings loss, pain and uncertainty, it can create space for new ways of being Church to grow if God leads the pruning and new growth.

God is at work in every local congregation and community, so listening to local congregations is listening to discern the mission of Christ for the church. That listening included hearing stories, hopes and fears, as well as gathering quantitative data. That listening will continue in the constructive responses to this draft plan which are encouraged and anticipated, and which will facilitate the decisions of the whole of Moray Presbytery in shaping the final mission plan.

A key theme heard across the local church in Moray was God’s call to engage with local communities. This led to reflection on the start of Luke 10, where Jesus’ followers are sent into communities to bring God’s peace and good news. That acknowledges our total dependence on God to provide the labourers to do so, and recognises many challenges. It also highlights that the mission of Christ is always done alongside others, receiving as well as offering hospitality, and varying in response to the specific context. That shapes the mission of the Church as the mission of the whole people of God, working together within and beyond the Church of Scotland.

Through Christ and the Holy Spirit, God calls, gathers and builds up the Church for the mission of the Church, which is the mission of Christ. That has been helpfully summarised in the Five Marks of Mission, which are key to this mission plan:

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.

In Moray, members of the Church of Scotland have been gathered in congregations who are called to Christ's mission. The report of the Theological Forum on the Five Marks of Mission recognised the integrity of all aspects of mission, reminding all congregations and members that "in being invited to share God's mission for the world, we are called to contribute across that whole mission so far as we are able." However, different parts of Christ's body are given different gifts and have different roles to play in specific contexts - not every congregation, member or denomination is required to fulfil all aspects of Christ's mission.³

This directs attention back to the mission of Christ always being done alongside others, with ecumenical and community partners, in and between congregations, with other disciples of Jesus and with those of goodwill who offer hospitality. The mission of the Church of Scotland in Moray will be shaped on that basis:

- discerning the gifts and calling of existing congregations;
- discerning the potential for new growth in contexts where people do not know God's good news;
- discerning relationships possible between and beyond congregations and ministries to work together as Christ's body.

In listening to congregations across Moray, God's call was discerned in many common concerns across the whole of the presbytery area:

- a) the Church in Moray wants to continue to engage with all our local communities. This call to serve encompasses the breadth of the Five Marks of Mission, including meeting needs, supporting local organisations and global charities, witnessing to those who do not know the gospel or who are alienated from it, and nurturing people in faith. This comes with widespread generosity, commitment and passion. Local Sunday worship is seen as a

³ https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/69749/Church-of-Scotland-Theological-Forum-Five-Marks-of-Mission.pdf

primary vehicle for proclaiming God's good news and nurturing believers. Implementation of the mission plan will require commitment to listening to the needs of communities, with partners and appropriate expertise.

- b) the Church in Moray has a particular concern for children and young people. This includes service and witness through close relationships with local schools, and a strong desire to teach, baptise and nurture new believers. This can build on strong relationships and good examples across Moray, while needing considerable development.
- c) building on the experience gained through the COVID-19 pandemic, the Church in Moray recognises a need to also engage with communities through an online presence, which requires support, training and capacity.
- d) the future of the Church in Moray will include working with other churches. The particular shape that might take will vary between communities.

It is noted that the fifth mark of mission was mentioned as a strong call in only a few congregations. This is an aspect of Christ's mission that will get increased focus by all congregations through the Church of Scotland's Net Zero Carbon target of 2030. The priority of engaging with children and young people will also require greater emphasis on care for creation in a time of ecological crises. In many cases this aspect of mission will be exercised through the commitment to Christian Aid that is found in all congregations, as Christian Aid focus on climate justice.

While these priorities for mission have been identified across the breadth of Moray Presbytery, these will find different expressions within each local area, depending on the gifts, callings and partnerships of congregations; the other expressions of church already working missionally in an area; and the needs of the communities being served. More specific mission narratives are shared for each Area in sections 4 to 9 below.

3 Process

3.1 Overview of process

This timeline summarises the mission planning process so far, with sections in italics completed so far:

<i>Aug – Nov 2020</i>	<i>Presbytery Planning Team (PPT) consider priority actions, estimate timescales, plan process</i>
<i>Oct 2020</i>	<i>PPT draft, agree and send out initial “heads-up” letter, based on best current information, including from General Assembly (GA) of October 2020.</i> <i>Aim – keep Presbytery informed; and start the robust and imaginative planning for our local context instructed by GA 2020.</i>
<i>Nov 2020</i>	<i>Prepare report to December Presbytery meeting, including outline process and method to be used in preparing a Plan.</i>
<i>Nov 2020 - Mar 2021</i>	<i>Based on Planning Principles, gather information about congregations, parishes, communities and areas from different sources (including from congregations and relevant committees of Presbytery).</i>
<i>Nov 2020 - May 2021</i>	<i>Keep up to date with latest budgets and projections from the Assembly Trustees and Faith Nurture Forum, to inform information and consultation packs and Presbytery.</i> <i>Respond, where possible, to questions and comments from Presbytery.</i>
<i>Feb - May 2021</i>	<i>Plan format and content of meetings of PPT with Ministers and representatives of congregations, including clear purpose and outcomes regarding mission and the ministry posts and buildings that might enable mission in the future.</i>
<i>Feb - May 2021</i>	<i>Consider the information being gathered (based on the Planning Principles, and in consultation with relevant committees of Presbytery) and how such information will be processed and used.</i>
<i>Feb - May 2021</i>	<i>Engage with Presbytery’s Stewardship, Finance & Property committee about using the General Trustees’ toolkit to plan a process of information-gathering, assessment and recommendation for all church buildings within Moray Presbytery.</i>
<i>May 2021</i>	<i>General Assembly brings greater clarity of ministry post numbers, and potential changes to financial, property and planning legislation.</i>
<i>June 2021</i>	<i>Review this planning process in the light of General Assembly decisions.</i>

Jun-Jul 2021	<p>Assemble a draft 'footprint' for each congregation, drawing information from existing sources. (Step 1)</p> <p>Allocate and train members of PPT (in visiting pairs) for meeting with Ministers and representatives of congregations.</p>
Jul-Oct 2021	<p>Visiting pairs of PPT meet online with Minister, Session Clerk and 2 or 3 key stakeholders in each congregation. (Step 2)</p> <p>Revise footprint and share with Kirk Sessions for their approval. (Step 3)</p> <p>Arrange dates for visiting pairs to meet with focus group from each congregation Oct-Dec 2021.</p>
Nov 2021	Meetings of PPT with congregational focus groups. (Step 4)
1 Dec 2021	Collated footprints and focus group notes shared with Brendan Research for analysis and synthesis to assist the PPT
Dec 2021 - Jan 2022	PPT, with advice of PMPIG and relevant research, shapes criteria for use of gathered data in creating a draft plan, to present to February Presbytery
Jan-Feb 2022	Asset Management Buildings Audit of "Well equipped spaces in the right places" led by General Trustees and SFP committee. Outcomes by 28 Feb 2022.
1 Feb 2022	Presbytery agrees this process and general criteria for formation of a draft plan
1 Feb – 7 April 2022	<p>PPT receives Brendan Research output reports</p> <p>PPT shapes a draft Mission Plan for Moray Presbytery, in consultation with SFP committee, PMPIG and General Trustees. Draft plan will specify any geographical clusters of current parishes, ministry posts and other ministries allocated within that; what adjustments are proposed for existing charges; and categorising ecclesiastical buildings to be retained or not. There will be supporting documentation indicating the rationale behind the proposals, in terms of the Mission Plan Act and the information gathered from the earlier stages of the process.</p>
by 7 April 2022	The proposed draft Mission Plan, supporting documentation, links to the relevant Act and Code of Practice, and a response proforma will be sent to all members and corresponding members of Presbytery, for circulation to all congregations. That documentation will also be sent to the General Trustees and PMPIG for their comment.
3 May 2022	At the May meeting of Moray Presbytery, PPT will present the draft plan, along with any feedback from the General Trustees and

	PMPIG. Presbytery will be asked to accept it as a draft for discussion.
7 April – 30 June 2022	<p>All Boards and Kirk Sessions will be encouraged to discuss the draft plan, including with relevant neighbouring congregations and ecumenical and community partners. All Boards and Kirk Sessions will be encouraged to use the response proforma to make any proposals for amendments to the draft.</p> <p>All Members and Corresponding Members of Presbytery will be encouraged to consider the draft plan and use the response proforma to make any proposals for amendments to the draft.</p> <p>Any alternatives proposed by any parties must be within the criteria agreed by February Presbytery and within the Mission Plan Act 2021 and its associated Code of Practice.</p>
1 July – 23 August 2022	PPT get feedback on proposed amendments to the draft plan from General Trustees and PMPIG. PPT with Business Committee collate proposed amendments in appropriate sections of deliverance for the consideration of Presbytery.
by 23 August 2022	Proposed amendments to draft Mission Plan (as collated sections of deliverance), with all relevant supporting documentation, sent to all members and corresponding members of Presbytery, for circulation to all congregations. All congregations cited to attend September Presbytery meeting.
6 Sept 2022	<p>At the September meeting of Moray Presbytery, Presbytery discusses and votes on proposed amendments to draft Mission Plan. Presbytery also agrees who represents Moray Presbytery in any discussions with PMPIG and GTs regarding possible amendments.</p> <p>If Presbytery votes to approve the Mission Plan the PPT's process will be sisted and an extract minute of the decision and a copy of the Mission Plan documentation shall be sent to the Faith Nurture Forum and the General Trustees for their approval.</p>
September 2022	Possible approval of the Mission Plan by the Forum and the General Trustees: Upon receipt of the Mission Plan, the Forum and the General Trustees shall consider whether the Mission Plan conforms to the Presbytery Mission Plan Act and thus whether the Forum and the General Trustees can grant final approval of the Mission Plan, or whether further discussion with the Presbytery is required. If in these discussions Presbytery representatives agree to possible amendments then the amended Mission Plan will be resubmitted to a full meeting of Presbytery for its final approval.
4 Oct 2022	At the October meeting of Moray Presbytery, possible resubmission of amended Mission Plan to full meeting of Moray Presbytery.

October 2022	Possible referral to Mission Plan Review Panel for assistance: Discussion on the Mission Plan among the Presbytery, the Forum and the General Trustees shall continue until final approval of the Mission Plan is given by the Forum and the General Trustees. If final approval is not in place within a period of three calendar months after the Forum's and the General Trustees' receipt of the Mission Plan, the matter shall be referred to the Mission Plan Review Panel by the Presbytery and the Panel shall assist the parties to resolve the matter, so that final approval of the Mission Plan can be given.
Oct/Nov 2022	Extract minute of final approvals to Presbytery: Once both the Forum and the General Trustees have given final approval of the Mission Plan, the Forum shall send an extract minute to Presbytery indicating that the Forum and the General Trustees have granted final approval of the Mission Plan.
Oct/Nov/Dec 2022	Moray's approved Mission Plan will be amalgamated with other approved Mission Plans of the existing presbyteries of the North East and the Northern Isles. Some stages of approval may be gone through, depending on the availability of all six constituent Mission Plans.

3.2 Listening and gathering

3.2.1 Footprints

From June-October 2021 the Presbytery Planning Team (PPT) assembled "footprints" of data for each congregation and the communities they serve. That included:

- responses to a questionnaire sent to each Minister/Interim Moderator and Session Clerk in December 2020, asking for information relevant to the subordinate principles described in the *Presbytery Mission Planning Act: Guidance and Code of Practice*: other denominations & fellowships; other significant networks of belonging; current Mission and Ministries contributions; congregational income; number of active worshippers; where people come from to gather in church buildings; and transport options.
- answers recorded in the most recent Local Church Review reports, where available and still relevant.
- information from any recent Parish Profile.

- Statistics for Mission.⁴
- Statistics regarding Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation.⁵
- Moray Council's Local Development Plan 2020-2030.⁶

Draft footprints were then added to and amended through visiting pairs from the PPT meeting with Ministers/Interim Moderators and officebearers from each congregation (with each congregation choosing who was most relevant to involve). Those meetings also discussed how each congregation might describe its identity, and developed descriptions of missional activity in terms of the Five Marks of Mission.

The final footprints, including descriptions of congregational identity and missional activity in terms of the Five Marks of Mission, were approved by Kirk Sessions.

3.2.2 Focus Groups

In October-December 2021 the PPT visiting pairs met with focus groups of up to ten people from each congregation for conversation around two open questions: "What does the future look like for you?" and "What roles can support you in that future?" The membership of their focus group was chosen by each congregation. The discussion outcomes were agreed and noted during the meeting on flipcharts.

3.2.3 Synthesis and analysis

Moray Presbytery commissioned Brendan Research to synthesise and analyse the footprints and focus group notes of all twenty one congregations. The resulting report offers six themes that stood out from the focus group responses, with relevant statistical data and selected examples taken from footprints and focus groups. The Brendan Research report also adds related statistics from other sources and summarises the data relating to the Five Marks of Mission across all the congregations.

⁴ Statistics for Mission, accessed at https://cos.churchofscotland.org.uk/church_finder/

⁵ Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, www.simd.scot; and Church of Scotland SIMD stats https://cos.churchofscotland.org.uk/church_finder/

⁶ Moray Council Local Plan http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_133431.html

The report from Brendan Research is not exhaustive – it does not (and could not) include every piece of information gathered. However, it is a helpful addition to the footprints, focus group notes, local knowledge and observations of the PPT.

The full synthesis report is available as a supporting document to this draft plan. Specific details will be referred to in sections 4 to 9 for areas. The wider themes identified for the whole of Moray Presbytery include:

- a) The first two Marks of Mission connect with the many requests for ministers and worship leaders to provide Sunday services, online or digital worship, and the request for youth and children's workers which emerged in focus groups.
- b) Marks 3 and 4 connect with the generosity found within the presbytery, as well as the theme of connecting with the community as expressed by the focus groups.
- c) Few congregations mentioned the fifth Mark of Mission in their material, but it was noted that there is a desire to develop this, and certain congregations are further ahead.
- d) Community engagement was the most prominent theme.
- e) For all parishes, the future included working with children and young people, with a majority of congregations also identifying the need for a role supporting such work.
- f) Working with other churches was a strong theme, with information gathered about existing ecumenical work and connections between congregations.
- g) The focus group questions asked about roles to support the future, so staffing and volunteers were highlighted.
- h) Concerns about premises were raised by most focus groups.
- i) Digital church and technology is an important theme, building on explorations during the COVID pandemic.
- j) Working with the elderly was also mentioned by a significant number of congregations.

3.3 Buildings

The General Trustees have created a Asset Management Buildings Audit process for all ecclesiastical buildings, which was undertaken in Moray in January and February 2022 by volunteers organised by Moray Presbytery's Stewardship, Finance and Property Committee and trained by the North East and Northern Isles Buildings Officer. Audit spreadsheets were passed to the General Trustees who have provided the PPT with a summary of audit results, with scores for "Minimum Standards," "Location Assessment" and total scores. These scores provide an indication of whether a building is a "well equipped space in the right place" or not.

However, buildings must serve the mission of the Church, which means that mission is the ultimate criteria. There are situations where there are multiple well equipped spaces in very close proximity, where it is not desirable to have the burden or perceived competition of multiple properties. There are well equipped spaces which are no longer in the right place, due to demographic changes. All the ecclesiastical buildings in Moray have been well maintained, with care, respect and sacrificial dedication over decades and centuries.

Therefore, as with other information gathered, the AMBA outputs are one factor shaping proposals about buildings, along with all that has been shared about mission potential through the footprints, focus group notes, local knowledge and observations of the PPT.

3.3.1 Historic Properties

The Mission Plan Act instructs that the Mission Plan must record those ecclesiastical buildings that are Historic Properties. The General Trustees advise that a property is to be considered historic if:

- a. The building is A Listed; *and*
- b. The building is Cathedral style in its proportions; *and*
- c. The building is in a prominent setting within a townscape

The historic significance is to be recorded, but the categorisation decisions are to be made based on a building's capacity to provide for mission and outreach within the whole mission plan.

Based on the above criteria, there are no “Historic Properties” within Moray’s ecclesiastical buildings.

3.3.2 Manses

Ecclesiastical buildings include manses. A manse must be provided to a Minister inducted to a charge in the mission plan, including in a Team Ministry. A manse cannot be provided rent-free to Ministry Development Staff.

The PPT proposes that proposals for retaining the most appropriate manses for the posts described in this Mission Plan, and disposing (through let, sales or otherwise) of surplus manses, will be brought:

- as amendments to the draft plan from the PPT, as sections of deliverance brought to Moray Presbytery in September 2022; and
- as part of the first annual review of the Mission Plan.

3.4 Criteria

Good practice guidance emphasised the value of agreeing criteria that will be used in proposing the future shape of the church. The Mission Plan Act 2021 makes clear the prioritisation of the mission of Christ, which has been articulated in the Five Marks of Mission:

The mission of the Church is the mission of Christ:

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

The associated Code of Practice offers eight subordinate principles:

- a) Communities
- b) Ecumenism

- c) The poor
- d) Whole people of God
- e) Congregations
- f) Mixed economy
- g) Financial responsibility
- h) Buildings

The PPT collated recent research on church growth and fresh expressions of church to seek wider wisdom and best practice to encourage new ways of being Church.

During the listening stages of the planning process, representatives of congregations have been sharing what is happening in their communities and the potential they see for mission in the future. The mission of Christ and such ideas are often found in narratives rather than statistics, so the formation of the Mission Plan will take such stories into account as well as quantitative data.

The General Assembly of 2021 agreed numbers for ministry post allocations, based around 600 full-time equivalent (FTE) ministries plus 60 vacant posts by the end of 2025. That number includes Ministry Development Staff (MDS) posts, and has been broken down into allocations for existing presbyteries. The current Moray Presbytery has an allocation of 11.5 ministry posts, a reduction from the current 17 FTE posts (16.8 centrally funded) serving 21 congregations. The Recognised Ministries of Readership and Ordained Local Ministry (OLM) are not included in those target numbers, and those ministries are greatly valued and should be encouraged and supported.

The allocation of posts is for nationally-funded ministry posts. It will be possible for congregations to fund additional posts from local funds, particularly when working in partnerships.

The roles of those in paid posts will have to be reimagined and expectations significantly adjusted. The PPT, along with the whole Church of Scotland, recognises God's call to and the ministries of the whole people of God, so planning for ministries and mission is not limited to or by the number of paid posts. Local leadership will need to be trained and supported as people respond to God's call. We also share

ministry to the people of Moray with other denominations and fellowships and should be actively considering ecumenical partnerships which fit our local contexts.

There are many common areas of mission in multiple areas of Moray. That offers the potential for learning communities and networks of all those involved in related ministries to support each other in development, training and experimentation, which research suggests is helpful in supporting growth and fresh expressions of church. Where those commonalities have been identified, relevant networks are highlighted for congregations in an area. In some cases there are recommendations of areas to lead in facilitating such networks.

All of these factors will be taken into account in the formation of a Mission Plan. For a fuller description of the criteria agreed by Moray Presbytery in February 2022, please see Appendix A.

3.5 Next stages

As indicated in the process timeline, this is a draft report offered to Moray Presbytery for discussion and potential amendment. God is at work in all the congregations and communities of Moray, and discerning God's will for this phase of Church of Scotland life will need the discernment of the wider body.

All Boards and Kirk Sessions are encouraged to discuss this draft plan. Wherever possible and relevant, those discussions should include neighbouring congregations and ecumenical and community partners. All Boards and Kirk Sessions are encouraged to use the response proforma to make any proposals for amendments to the draft, by 30 June 2022.

All Members and Corresponding Members of Presbytery are also encouraged to consider the draft plan and use the response proforma to make any proposals for amendments to the draft, by 30 June 2022.

The PPT may also propose amendments to the draft plan, responding to feedback from the Faith Nurture Forum, the General Trustees and any other relevant additional information.

Any alternatives proposed by any parties must be within the criteria agreed by February Presbytery (see Appendix A) and within the Mission Plan Act 2021 and its associated Code of Practice.

The PPT will gather feedback on this draft mission plan, and on any proposed amendments to it, from the Faith Nurture Forum's Presbytery Mission Plan Implementation Group and from the General Trustees.

From 1 July 2022 until 23 August 2022 the PPT will work with Moray Presbytery's Business Committee to collate all proposed amendments into appropriate sections of deliverance for the consideration of Presbytery.

Those proposed amendments (as collated sections of deliverance with relevant supporting documentation) will be sent to all members and corresponding members of Presbytery by 23 August 2022 for circulation to all congregations. All congregations will be cited to attend the Presbytery meeting on September 3 2022, where Moray Presbytery will discuss and vote on the proposed amendments to this draft Mission Plan.

The Mission Plan documentation will then be sent to the Faith Nurture Forum and General Trustees for their approval, as required by the Mission Plan Act 2021.

3.6 Implementation

After the final approval of the Mission Plan by Presbytery, Faith Nurture Forum and General Trustees, and when there are no outstanding requests for review, the Presbytery shall proceed to implement the Approved Mission Plan. The Mission Plan Act 2021 also governs that implementation.

The implementation of the Mission Plan will not immediately reach the outcomes described in the plan.

The disposal of ecclesiastical buildings categorised (b) is to be achieved by a date specified in the Plan details below – which will be within five years of September 2022. Disposal of buildings can be achieved through sale, letting or otherwise, which will hopefully include working with relevant community partners to achieve the best outcome for the communities being served.

The target date for reaching the number of nationally-paid post holders within Moray is 31 December 2025. With all the Ministers currently inducted on unrestricted tenure, reaching the new shapes of church life and that number of staff will depend on God's call.

From 1 January 2023 Moray Presbytery is uniting into The Presbytery of the North East and the Northern Isles. It has been agreed by the constituent presbyteries that the approved Mission Plans of the six existing presbyteries will be amalgamated to form the first Mission Plan for the united presbytery to approve. From 1 January 2023 implementation of the Mission Plan that includes the existing Moray boundaries will become the responsibility of the appropriate committee(s) of The Presbytery of the North East and the Northern Isles.

Congregations, Kirk Sessions and those in ministry posts will be given appropriate support in undertaking the tasks necessary to implement the mission plan. That will include help with negotiating and agreeing each Basis of Adjustment set out in the plan. It is expected that The Presbytery of the North East and the Northern Isles will also provide guidance and training for congregations and ministry teams, including (but not limited to) conducting worship and potential use of technology.

Every mission plan will be reviewed on an annual basis and Kirk Sessions will be required to provide updates on progress against the plan.

Many of the changes being proposed will be painful to work through. This may be particularly difficult with buildings which have meant so much to so many people down the centuries. In this time of transition and with 2022 designated Scotland's Year of Stories, congregations are encouraged to find creative ways of documenting and celebrating the history of their parish and their buildings.

4 Buckie Area

4.1 Buckie Area Headlines

Current parishes: Findochty; Portknockie; Buckie North; Rathven; Buckie South and West; Enzie; Cullen and Deskford

Option A (Cullen and Deskford in Moray Presbytery Mission Plan):

Population: 14,482 (rural)

Proposed adjustment:

Union of Findochty, Portknockie, Buckie North, Rathven, Buckie South and West, Enzie and Cullen and Deskford

with Local Mission Churches in Findochty, Portknockie and Cullen

Number of posts: 1 FTMWS

1 FTE MDS Parish Assistant

1 OLM

Local leadership, appropriately trained and supported

Buildings categorisations:

	(a) Retain	(b) Dispose (sell / let / other)
Findochty Church	a	
Portknockie Church		by August 2027
Portknockie Seafield Hall	a	
Buckie North Church and Hall	a	
Rathven Church		by August 2027
Rathven Church Hall	a	
Buckie South and West Church and Hall	a (adapting sanctuary)	
Seamen's Hall (Buckie)		by August 2027
Enzie Church		by August 2027
Cullen Auld Kirk	a	
Cullen Church Hall	a	

Networks:

Children's and youth work; Digital Church; Pilgrimage, tourism and heritage

Option B (Cullen and Deskford in Buchan Presbytery Mission Plan):

Population: 12,763 (rural)

Proposed adjustment:

Union of Findochty, Portknockie, Buckie North, Rathven, Buckie South and West and Enzie

with Local Mission Churches in Findochty and Portknockie

Cullen and Deskford in grouping with Portsoy, Ordiquihill and Cornhill – to be shaped through Buchan Presbytery Mission Plan, with 0.5 FTE post transferred to Buchan allocation

Number of posts: 1 FTMWS

0.5 FTE MDS Parish Assistant

1 OLM

Local leadership, appropriately trained and supported

	(a) Retain	(b) Dispose (sell / let / other)
Findochty Church	a	
Portknockie Church		b by August 2027
Portknockie Seafield Hall	a	
Buckie North Church and Hall	a	
Rathven Church		b by August 2027
Rathven Church Hall	a	
Buckie South and West Church and Hall	a	
Seamen's Hall (Buckie)		b by August 2027
Enzie Church		b by August 2027

Networks:

Children's and youth work; Digital Church

4.2 Buckie Area Mission Narrative

Many of the Moray-wide mission priorities (see section 2) were articulated in the Buckie area. It will be important as mission is developed and reviewed in the years ahead that the following areas of engagement encompass all five Marks of Mission, including developing care for creation with all groups of people.

This is an area where ecumenical working can clearly assist in fulfilling the commitment to territorial ministry, building on existing relationships (e.g. Ecclesia digital ministry, Holy Week, Keswick in Buckie) and complementing the mission of other fellowships. The shared missional workload across multiple denominations is reflected in the number of paid Church of Scotland posts for the population.

a) Local engagement:

Central to mission across the Buckie area was the call to engage with local communities across all the Marks of Mission. The PPT hears the distinctive identities of the communities and congregations in the area and the value of a physical worshipping presence. Church growth research recognises identifiable local leadership as helpful, and that small churches grow best, and the PPT wants to build on strong local relationships and identity.⁷

This area of the plan is currently covered by seven Church of Scotland congregations in four existing charges, with many other Christian denominations and fellowships also serving the communities. There are encouraging conversations already taking place between Church of Scotland congregations discussing further linkages, indicating a desire to work more closely together. However, the PPT is aware of the governance burden of finding officebearers for seven congregations and of the Code of Practice discouragement of multi-linkage charges.⁸

Therefore, the proposal is for a single union across the Buckie area (reducing the burden of governance and officebearers), within which the congregations of Findochty, Portknockie and Cullen (if option A) become Local Mission Churches. A

⁷ *From Anecdote to Evidence: Findings from the Church Growth Research Programme 2011-2013*, Church of England,

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/church-growth-research-programme/anecdote-evidence>

⁸ Presbytery Mission Planning Act: Guidance and Code of Practice 6.6

Local Mission Church is a Christian community whose purpose is to worship, witness and serve within their distinct geographical setting, with a local leadership team. These Local Mission Churches can organise and develop worship, witness and service, subject to the oversight and governance of the Kirk Session for the Buckie Area.⁹

b) Children's and youth work:

The PPT heard from the congregations that there is already significant mission work with children and young people across the Buckie area, with potential to build on that. Portknockie and Findochty have active groups, Buckie South and West have a large Boys Brigade company and links with a dancing school, Buckie North has an active primary school aged Sunday School and Messy Church, and Cullen's hall user groups include youth-centred activities.

This work in the Buckie area will develop using existing and new volunteers, building connections between these existing ministries to create a learning network to support ongoing work and to explore new missional opportunities.

The expertise and experience of those working with children and young people in the Buckie area can also be shared with others across Moray, with volunteers sharing in the intentional creation of supportive networks with people engaged in similar mission activity in all the areas of Moray.

c) Older people:

The PPT also heard that there is significant missional need amongst older people. Some of this is already being met through hospitality which can be built upon. There is further missional potential, evidenced by the higher proportions of older population in the community statistics, particularly notable in Cullen and Deskford (option A). There are possibilities being explored with Blackwood Homes and Care, a Scottish charity providing high quality housing, care and support for disabled people of all ages, who are working to co-create a neighbourhood for independent living and

⁹ Local Mission Church Regulations (Regs II 2021)
https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/81836/Local-Mission-Church-Regulations-final-as-at-4.6.21.pdf

healthy aging in Buckie.¹⁰ The conversation with Blackwood is to be encouraged to see if a fruitful partnership is possible, potentially unlocking access to wider funding and more community volunteers, and possibly directing adaptation of the church buildings within Buckie itself.

d) Digital church:

Local ministers in the Buckie area developed the ecumenical “Ecclesia” digital expression of church through COVID lockdown. That experience and expertise should be built upon, in a network with others across Moray who have those skills – that has been particularly recognised in the congregations of Lower Speyside and the Keith Area.

e) Heritage:

Option A - Cullen Auld Kirk is in the middle of restoration project with partnership funding from other bodies, to develop it as a welcoming and accessible place of historical interest. To fulfil funding criteria, the building is expected to be maintained as an active place of worship for some years. If this is to be the case, the heritage and tourism potential of Cullen Auld Kirk must be used for mission: proclaiming the Good News of God’s love and welcome to those who visit; teaching through its distinctive Christian symbolism; responding to the need for warm and accessible spaces; sharing the work of Christian Aid with those who visit; and doing all of this with concern for creation in practical work and witness. The proposal to retain this building for mission through heritage and tourism should be reviewed after the first year of implementation of the plan.

The congregation of Cullen and Deskford should network with other congregations in Moray and beyond to develop mission through pilgrimage, tourism and heritage, including the congregations of Upper Speyside, the Lossiemouth area and the Elgin area.

¹⁰ www.blackwoodgroup.org.uk/peoplehood

4.3 Buckie Area Buildings

	(a) Retain	(b) Dispose (sell / let / other)	Rationale
Findochty Church	a		Good centre for the community, well used.
Portknockie Church		b by August 2027	Seafield Hall a better resource in the community.
Portknockie Seafield Hall	a		Good centre for the community, well used.
Buckie North Church and Hall	a		Good location, well used hall, sanctuary an accessible space for worship.
Rathven Church		b by August 2027	Church Hall a better resource in the community.
Rathven Church Hall	a		Modern accessible hall.
Buckie South and West Church and Hall	a		Good location, very well used hall. Very close to Buckie North, so sanctuary could be adapted into a more flexible space for community and organisation use, as part of a suite of halls.
Seamen's Hall (Buckie)		b by August 2027	Already in long-term let to community group.
Enzie Church		b by August 2027	Very small worshipping community, beyond capacity for maintaining.
Cullen Auld Kirk (option A)	a (review after 1 year)		Heritage and tourism mission; funding requirements to continue as place of worship.
Cullen Church Hall (option A)	a		Good resource for community groups and flexible space for worship.

5 Keith Area

5.1 Keith Area Headlines

Current parishes: Keith North, Newmill, Boharm and Rothiemay; Keith St. Rufus, Botriphnie and Grange

Population: 7652 (remote rural)

Proposed adjustment:

Parish Grouping

working towards a Union with Team Ministry

Number of posts: 2 FTMWS

Locally-funded part-time youth worker

Local leadership, appropriately trained and supported

Buildings categorisations:

	(a) Retain	(b) Dispose (sell / let / other)
Keith North Church and Hall	a (adapting sanctuary)	
Rothiemay Church		b by August 2027
Keith St. Rufus Church	a	
Keith St. Rufus Church Hall		b by August 2027
Botriphnie Church		b by August 2027
Grange Church		b by August 2027

Networks:

Children's and youth work; Digital Church; Creation care

5.2 Keith Area Mission Narrative

The Keith area is a small town with a large remote rural area around it, and the needs of all those more remote and dispersed communities must continue to be recognised in considering mission in the Keith area. The remoteness and distances involved are reflected in the number of paid Church of Scotland posts for the population.

At present the parish boundaries of the two congregations create non-contiguous parishes (due to historical developments). The two congregations describe their identity and mission in very similar terms, serving overlapping communities with similar vision. Therefore it is proposed to bring the congregations together into a Parish Grouping responsible for a single area, working towards a Union of the congregations with a Team Ministry.

There are good relationships with ecumenical partners, and the development of team ministry and mission should include ecumenical partnership wherever possible.

a) Community needs:

Both congregations have a strong sense of call to serve the practical needs of the communities. This is primarily articulated in terms of the third Mark of Mission, responding to human need by loving service, meeting needs for food, connection and financial support. This should be built upon, with a renewed focus on addressing social isolation in the rural areas (where statistics show a high proportion of over 65s). This work will also assist in proclaiming the Good News of the Kingdom to those supported, and will nurture believers as people are connected to others and equipped to serve.

The resources of the congregations can combine well, along with new and existing community partners. In the rural areas, many of activities that will address isolation and other needs will be better undertaken in accessible, flexible community hall spaces during the week, rather than through Sunday worship in older buildings. In Keith itself, the location and kitchen facilities of Keith North could be built upon by adapting the Keith North sanctuary into another flexible space for community use.

The need for Sunday worship in a historic sanctuary can be met in St. Rufus' Kirk, with transport and digital options built up for those unable to attend.

b) Social justice:

Another area of shared concern is the fourth Mark of Mission, seeking to transform unjust structures of society and more. The Fairtrade ministry of the Kirk Shop, the social justice aspects of addressing community needs, and the ongoing support of Christian Aid and other charities, is to be encouraged. Engaging with Christian Aid should also lead to further activity around the fifth Mark of Mission, safeguarding the integrity of creation, as does work around food waste reduction. This can connect with others in Creation Care networks, including the Lossiemouth Area and Upper Speyside.

c) Children's and youth work:

There is potential for growing mission to children and young people in the Keith area. Existing work, which has included the local employment of a part-time youth worker, gives a strong grounding. This will shape worship and reflection offered in terms of proclamation of good news and teaching, baptising and nurturing new believers, and addressing the context of young people will require an engagement with the fourth and fifth Marks. A desire to build strong relationships with the many local primary and secondary schools will also meet needs through service.

Intentional engagement in a supportive network with people engaged in similar mission activity in all the areas of Moray will help new and existing volunteers to be equipped and develop mission to children and young people.

5.3 Keith Area Buildings

	(a) Retain	(b) Dispose (sell / let / other)	Rationale
Keith North Church and Hall	a (adapting sanctuary)		Good location and hall facilities, well used hall. Very close to Keith St Rufus, so sanctuary could be adapted into a more flexible space for community and organisation use, as part of a suite of halls.
Rothiemay Church		b by August 2027	Very rural, no public transport, not very flexible space.
Keith St. Rufus Church	a		Large sanctuary space to serve communities.
Keith St. Rufus Church Hall		b by August 2027	Hall small, less accessible, less central location.
Botriphnie Church		b by August 2027	Not very accessible or flexible space or location. Better community hall available.
Grange Church		b by August 2027	Rural, no public transport, not very flexible space.

6 Upper Speyside Area

6.1 Upper Speyside Area Headlines

Current parishes: Knockando, Elchies and Archiestown; Rothes; Aberlour; Mortlach and Cabrach

Population: 6432 (remote rural)

Proposed adjustment:

Two two-way linkages in a Parish Grouping:

Aberlour linked with Knockando, Elchies and Archiestown; and
Mortlach and Cabrach linked with Rothes;

working towards a four-way Union with Team Ministry and Local
Mission Churches where appropriate

Number of posts: 2 FTMWS

Local leadership, appropriately trained and supported

Buildings categorisations:

	(a) Retain	(b) Dispose (sell / let / other)
Knockando Church	a	
Rothes Church	a	
Rothes Church Hall	a	
Aberlour Church	a	
Craigellachie Church		b by August 2027
Mortlach Church	a	

Networks:

Children's and youth work; Pilgrimage, tourism and heritage; Creation care

6.2 Upper Speyside Area Mission Narrative

The Upper Speyside area covers a large remote rural area, and the needs of all the villages and settlements must continue to be recognised in considering mission. The remoteness and distances involved are reflected in the number of paid Church of Scotland posts for the population.

In the communities where other denominations are present, the good relationships and ongoing discussions should be developed as fully as possible.

a) Daily life in communities:

All the congregations in Upper Speyside described mission undertaken through the daily life of church members. This will be supported through equipping people to live out their faith wherever they are, including within community organisations meeting local needs. That will include training for workplace chaplaincy for the many businesses and to support the local care home (which contributes to Aberlour's high proportion of over 65s), for those identified as called and gifted appropriately.

The PPT hears the distinctive identities of the communities and congregations in the area and the value of a physical worshipping presence. Church growth research recognises identifiable local leadership as helpful, and that small churches grow best, and the PPT wants to build on strong local relationships and identity.

It is therefore proposed that a staged approach to closer working is taken, moving first to two two-way linkages, allowing time to reflect on the best model of Union, Team Ministry and Local Mission Churches for local presence into the future. Continued equipping of local leadership, including training for leading worship and funerals within communities, will be necessary in that period.

b) Hospitality:

A strong strand of mission across all these congregations and communities is hospitality, offered through welcome, food and drink, and Fairtrade. This includes hospitality offered to local people and to tourists/visitors. The congregations can continue to meet needs for connection by offering opportunities for people to gather. While primarily undertaken in terms of the third Mark of Mission, responding to

human need by loving service, this work will also assist in proclaiming the Good News of the Kingdom to those supported, and will nurture believers as people are connected to others and equipped to serve.

Hospitality is also offered through church buildings offered as a resource in communities. In Rothes and Knockando there are no other church buildings, and Rothes Church Hall and Knockando Church are used by community partners. In Dufftown, the Scottish Episcopal Church and Church of Scotland congregations intend to share use of their different spaces, as appropriate for needs of church and community. Aberlour Church is an accessible flexible space in the centre of the village. Craigellachie Church is also a well-maintained, welcoming space, but gatherings may be better resourced by meeting in the community hall in the village.

The potential for pilgrimage developments, both in terms of heritage connections and through walking, is very strong. Intentional engagement, and potentially leadership, of a supportive network with people engaged in similar mission activity is proposed, including with the Elgin Area (heritage) and Lossiemouth Area (walking routes).

c) Children's and youth work:

This area of work was identified as important across Upper Speyside. The statistics for the area indicate high proportions of secondary school age children and households with children. There is already a partnership with Scripture Union in schools in Rothes and Knockando, as well as school chaplaincy relationships to maintain and build upon. There are intentions to develop Messy Church. Active engagement concerns for social justice and creation care will also engage with young people.

As for other areas, intentional engagement in a supportive network with people engaged in similar mission activity in all the areas of Moray will help new and existing volunteers to be equipped and develop mission to children and young people.

d) Social justice and creation care:

There is already joint working across Upper Speyside through Christian Aid, which is one strand of concern for social justice, also seen in Fairtrade work and support of local and global charities. This work around the fourth Mark of Mission overlaps with the fifth Mark of creation care, which also has a natural connection with the connections with farming communities and walking. This fifth Mark of Mission is identified as an area to develop across Moray, and should be developed through a Creation Care networks, including the Lossiemouth Area and Keith Area.

6.3 Upper Speyside Area Buildings

	(a) Retain	(b) Dispose (sell / let / other)	Rationale
Knockando Church	a		Flexible, accessible resource shared with community.
Rothes Church	a		Only sanctuary space in the village, in central location.
Rothes Church Hall	a		Very well used hall.
Aberlour Church	a		Flexible, accessible resource in central location.
Craigellachie Church		b by August 2027	Not very flexible space. Better community hall available.
Mortlach Church	a		Heritage and tourism mission, large sanctuary space to serve community.

7 Lower Speyside Area

7.1 Lower Speyside Area Headlines

Current parishes: Bellie and Speymouth; St. Andrew's Lhanbryd and Urquhart (SALU)

Population: 8358 (rural)

Proposed adjustment:

Union of Bellie and Speymouth; St. Andrew's Lhanbryd and Urquhart

with Team Ministry

with Local Mission Church in Lhanbryde

Number of posts: 1 FTMWS

0.5 FTE Pioneer Ministry
(possibility of combining with other 0.5 FTE Pioneer post in Elgin to recruit 1FTE across both areas)

Local leadership, appropriately trained and supported

Buildings categorisations:

	(a) Retain	(b) Dispose (sell / let / other)
Bellie Church and Hall	a	
Speymouth Church		b by August 2027
St. Andrew's Lhanbryd Church and Hall		b by August 2027
St. Margaret's Church Hall, Urquhart		b by August 2027

Networks:

Children's and youth work; Digital Church

7.2 Lower Speyside Area Mission Narrative

The Lower Speyside area includes the villages of Lhanbryde and Fochabers and the settlements in the rural areas around them. While Lhanbryde is as close to Elgin as Fochabers, the communities are within the catchment area of Milne's High School and the congregations have a history of working together.

The two congregations describe their identity and mission in similar terms. Therefore it is proposed to bring the congregations together into a Union of the congregations with a small Team Ministry. The needs of all those more remote and dispersed communities must continue to be recognised in considering mission in the area.

The community of Lhanbryde will retain local leadership through creation of a Local Mission Church. A Local Mission Church is a Christian community whose purpose is to worship, witness and serve within their distinct geographical setting, with a local leadership team. The Local Mission Church can organise and develop worship, witness and service, subject to the oversight and governance of the Kirk Session for the Lower Speyside Area.¹¹

a) Children's, youth and families work:

There are already a number of areas of work with and for children, young people and families in both congregations, including (but not limited to) Bellie Babes, Messy Church, Take Note music group and online church materials for younger age-groups and the development of the Connect service. SALU demonstrated commitment to this through the local funding of a part-time children's and family worker in recent years. There are also good links to build on with local schools and their community partnerships.

This work can be developed in partnership with others, through intentional engagement in a supportive network with people engaged in similar mission activity in all the areas of Moray. That will support expertise and experience, and will help

¹¹ Local Mission Church Regulations (Regs II 2021)
https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/81836/Local-Mission-Church-Regulations-final-as-at-4.6.21.pdf

new and existing volunteers to be equipped and develop mission to children and young people.

b) Lhanbryde village

While the congregation of St. Andrew's Lhanbryd and Urquhart (SALU) has a strong sense of call to mission in Lhanbryde itself, its building is a considerable distance away – it is no longer in the right place. Therefore that building should not be retained, enabling the congregation to explore creative ways to be more missionally active in Lhanbryde village. There is one small fellowship that meets in community premises in the village, but otherwise there is no other worshipping community there. Therefore, mission to Lhanbryde should be developed across all five Marks of Mission, in partnership with the people and groups within the community and across the new Union.

c) Digital Church

The Lower Speyside congregations and ministry teams have developed significant online church experiences and reflections through the COVID lockdowns and beyond. That experience and expertise should be built upon, in a network with others across Moray who have those skills – that has been particularly recognised in the Buckie Area and Keith Area.

7.3 Lower Speyside Area Buildings

	(a) Retain	(b) Dispose (sell / let / other)	Rationale
Bellie Church and Hall	a		A well equipped and flexible sanctuary and hall suite in a central location in Fochabers.
Speymouth Church		b by August 2027	Not very flexible space, not quite in the community. Community hall available.
St. Andrew's Lhanbryd Church and Hall		b by August 2027	Wrong location for where most people live in Lhanbryde village.
St. Margaret's Church Hall, Urquhart		b by August 2027	Community hall available in the very small community.

8 Lossiemouth Area

8.1 Lossiemouth Area Headlines

Current parishes: Duffus, Spynie and Hopeman; Lossiemouth St. Gerardine's High; Lossiemouth St. James'

Population: 11316 (rural)

Proposed adjustment:

Union of Duffus, Spynie and Hopeman; Lossiemouth St. Gerardine's High; and Lossiemouth St. James'

with Local Mission Churches in Duffus and Hopeman

Number of posts: 1 FTMWS

0.5 FTE MDS Parish Assistant (pastoral/funerals)

1 OLM

Local leadership, appropriately trained and supported

Buildings categorisations:

	(a) Retain	(b) Dispose (sell / let / other)
Duffus Church and Hall		b by August 2027
Spynie Church and Hall		b by August 2027
Hopeman Church and Hall	a	
Lossiemouth St. Gerardine's High Church and Hall		b by August 2027
Lossiemouth St. James' Church and Hall	a	

Networks:

Children's and youth work; Pilgrimage, tourism and heritage; Creation care

8.2 Lossiemouth Area Mission Narrative

This is an area where ecumenical working can clearly assist in fulfilling the commitment to territorial ministry, building on existing relationships (e.g. school chaplaincy teams, community services, local leadership meetings) and complementing the mission of other fellowships. The Church of Scotland is only one part of the body of Christ, alongside Hopeman Baptist Church and a number of denominations and fellowships in Lossiemouth.

The local culture and sense of belonging to the Church of Scotland has brought a high number of funerals (seen in congregational statistics), so an OLM and 0.5 full time equivalent parish assistant are proposed to support the pastoral and funeral workload.

Parish boundaries should be discussed during the first year of implementation of the plan, with the Elgin area around new development at Findrassie, and possibly with Inverness Presbytery about the western boundaries with the current parish of Alves and Burghead.

Local presence in the villages of Duffus and Hopeman should be maintained with local leadership through creation of Local Mission Church(es). A Local Mission Church is a Christian community whose purpose is to worship, witness and serve within their distinct geographical setting, with a local leadership team. The Local Mission Church can organise and develop worship, witness and service, subject to the oversight and governance of the Kirk Session for the Lossiemouth Area.¹²

However, local presence and gathering people together does not necessarily need an ecclesiastical building, and use can be made of the excellent community halls in Duffus and Spynie to serve those communities.

Within Lossiemouth, there is no need for two Church of Scotland buildings, with very similar facilities, locations and limitations, and with many other gathering spaces available in the town. The congregation of St. James' articulate a call to develop their facilities to offer a more flexible space in and around the existing building, with ideas

¹² Local Mission Church Regulations (Regs II 2021)
https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/81836/Local-Mission-Church-Regulations-final-as-at-4.6.21.pdf

and capability to take that forward. That would enhance a building that has been capable of hosting children's holiday clubs and community hospitality, though needs investment to reach appropriate modern standards. There is also a recognition of the need to care for creation in the development of St. James' building, acknowledging the fifth Mark of Mission. The vision and potential to adapt the St. James' building for mission into the future leads to the recommendation to retain it and dispose of the St. Gerardine's High building.

a) Hospitality:

A significant mission in these congregations and communities is hospitality, offered through gathering people together through food and drink, and music. The congregations can continue to meet needs for connection by offering opportunities for people to gather. While primarily undertaken in terms of the third Mark of Mission, responding to human need by loving service, this work will also assist in proclaiming the Good News of the Kingdom to those supported, and will nurture believers as people are connected to others and equipped to serve.

The Lossiemouth congregations express a call to connect to people who are elderly or living with dementia, so accessibility is an important factor in considering development of facilities.

b) Pilgrimage:

The potential for pilgrimage developments, both in terms of history (including commemorating St. Gerardine, Patron Saint of Lossiemouth) and through walking (with the Moray Coast Trail), is very strong. Intentional engagement, and potentially leadership, of a supportive network with people engaged in similar mission activity is proposed, including with the Elgin Area and Upper Speyside Area.

c) Creation care and social justice:

Active commitment with Eco Congregation Scotland (including Fairtrade) in Duffus, Spynie and Hopeman, and shared commitment to Christian Aid across the area engages with the fourth and fifth Marks of Mission: working for social justice and care for creation. This fifth Mark of Mission is identified as an area to develop across

Moray, and this area could lead a Creation Care network, including the Upper Speyside Area and Keith Area.

d) Children's and youth work:

There are higher than the Moray average proportions of children in this area, though also active mission with young people in Hopeman and Lossie Baptist Churches, the Scottish Episcopal Church in Elgin/Lossiemouth and family mission in the RAF Chaplaincy. The Church of Scotland has a key role in school chaplaincy in the communities, and congregations have experience of Messy Church and holiday clubs to build on. Work in partnerships and teams can help meet the needs and nourish the faith of children and young people.

8.3 Lossiemouth Area Buildings

	(a) Retain	(b) Dispose (sell / let / other)	Rationale
Duffus Church and Hall		b by August 2027	Community hall available in the small community.
Spynie Church and Hall		b by August 2027	Community hall available in the small community.
Hopeman Church and Hall	a		Large sanctuary space to serve communities. Draft Inverness Plan proposes closure of C of S sanctuary in Burghead, other neighbouring community.
Lossiemouth St. Gerardine's High Church and Hall		b by August 2027	Very close to Lossiemouth St. James'. Listed building less adaptable, and less capacity for development work.
Lossiemouth St. James' Church and Hall	a		Vision and capacity to develop into well equipped flexible space.

9 Elgin Area

9.1 Elgin Area Headlines

Current parishes: Birnie and Pluscarden; Elgin High; Elgin St. Giles' and St. Columba's South

Population: 25760 (urban)

Proposed adjustment:

Union with Team Ministry

Number of posts: 1 FTMWS

1 FTE MDS Parish assistant

0.5 FTE Pioneer Ministry (in Team Ministry)
(possibility of combining with other 0.5 FTE Pioneer post in Lower Speyside to recruit 1FTE across both areas)

1 OLM

Local leadership, appropriately trained and supported

Buildings categorisations:

	(a) Retain	(b) Dispose (sell / let / other)
Birnie Church		b by August 2027
Birnie Church Hall		b by August 2027
Pluscarden Church		b by August 2027
Elgin High Church and Hall		b by August 2027
Elgin St. Giles' Church	a	
Elgin St. Columba's Church	a	
Williamson Hall (by St. Columba's)	a	

Networks:

Children's and youth work; Pilgrimage, tourism and heritage

9.2 Elgin Area Mission Narrative

These three parishes, currently in a relatively recent Parish Grouping, serve just over one third of the population of Moray Presbytery, in the expanding urban context of Elgin and the rural areas of Birnie and Pluscarden.

Within the town there are many other Christian denominations and fellowships also serving the communities, so this is an area where ecumenical working can clearly assist in fulfilling the commitment to territorial ministry, building on existing relationships (e.g. Holy Week, Advent trails) and complementing the mission of other fellowships.

Parish boundaries should be discussed during the first year of implementation of the plan, with the Lossiemouth Area around the new development at Findrassie to the north, and with the Lower Speyside around the developments at Linkwood and Barmuckity to the south and west.

a) Children's and youth work:

Reaching out to children and young people, and their families, was identified as important in all three congregations. Statistics show high proportions of under 16s in and around Elgin, and this area includes eight primary schools and two secondary schools, so there is huge mission potential. There is also much to build on, including (but not limited to) existing relationships with schools (chaplaincy and Easter Code), thriving Messy Church in Birnie and Pluscarden, Sweaty Church and KIX children's activities at St. Giles', and family engagement by Elgin High.

This area of work, across a range of communities and a large population, will benefit from partnerships with other denominations, para-church organisations such as School Pastors and community groups.

Intentional engagement in a supportive network with people engaged in similar mission activity in all the areas of Moray will help new and existing volunteers to be equipped and develop mission to children and young people.

b) New developments

There are very large housing developments ongoing to the north and south of Elgin. To the south that already includes the new Linkwood Primary School and Moray Sports Centre offering new community spaces in which people can gather. On the north side of Elgin, the development just beginning at Findrassie will also include community space outdoors and in a new Primary School.

Statistics for the Elgin area also have the highest proportion of people of “no religion.”

Awareness of the needs of these evolving communities led the congregations of the Elgin area to come together into a Parish Grouping at the end of 2020, which included a Pioneer Ministry post “developing mission and new worshipping communities across Elgin, particularly its new housing areas.” That intention is affirmed and encouraged across all five Marks of Mission, while recognising that such work is best done through small teams rather than individuals.¹³ More limited staffing resources and the potential to share learning across different local contexts lead to the proposal for 0.5 FTE Pioneer Ministry post in the Elgin Area, in parallel to a similar post in Lower Speyside.

c) Overcoming isolation:

All these congregations have a strong sense of call to connect with people in their communities (urban and rural), with a particular concern to overcome isolation. This is primarily articulated in terms of the third Mark of Mission, responding to human need by loving service: directly meeting needs for food and connection in community partnerships, and offering the use of church buildings to host community groups who also meet those needs. This work will also assist in proclaiming the Good News of

¹³ *Pioneering Pieces: An evaluation of the Church of Scotland's Pioneer Pilot Project*, Church Army's Research Unit, October 2020;
The Day of Small Things: An analysis of fresh expressions of Church in 21 dioceses of the Church of England, George Lings, Church Army's Research Unit, November 2016, <https://www.churcharmy.org.uk/Publisher/File.aspx?ID=204265>;
Playfully Serious: How Messy Churches create new space for faith, Church Army's Research Unit, January 2019, <https://www.churcharmy.org.uk/Publisher/File.aspx?ID=225713>

the Kingdom to those supported, and will nurture believers as people are connected to others and equipped to serve.

However, gathering people together does not necessarily need an ecclesiastical building. In the rural communities, use can be made of community halls. Within Elgin, there is a high concentration of church buildings (sanctuaries and halls, across denominations) within the town centre. It may be that the partners using Elgin High Church Hall could be best supported by transferring ownership of the property to a community organisation, which may allow access to funding for more flexible modern adaptation of the sanctuary and halls to meet practical needs in Elgin.

d) Pilgrimage and heritage:

The potential for pilgrimage developments, both in terms of heritage connections and through walking, is very strong. The rural area includes the history around Birnie Kirk and the spiritual centre of Pluscarden Abbey, while the ruins of Elgin Cathedral and the presence of a range of ecclesiastical buildings offer further mission potential around spiritual heritage. Urban and rural areas also connect to short and long walks in the area. Intentional engagement in a supportive network with people engaged in similar mission activity is proposed, including with the Upper Speyside Area (heritage) and Lossiemouth Area (walking routes).

9.3 Elgin Area Buildings

	(a) Retain	(b) Dispose (sell / let / other)	Rationale
Birnie Church		b by August 2027	No facilities. Not really at the centre of a community.
Birnie Church Hall		b by August 2027	Community hall available in the small communities.
Pluscarden Church		b by August 2027	Community hall available in the small communities. Sanctuary at the Abbey.
Elgin High Church and Hall		b by August 2027	Very close to multiple ecclesiastical buildings in Elgin. Community use maybe best served by transferring ownership.
Elgin St. Giles' Church	a		Prominent location in town centre. Flexible sanctuary for church, civic and community use.
Elgin St. Columba's Church	a		Used extensively for "ceremonial" purposes (weddings, funerals). Closer to New Elgin. Parking.
Williamson Hall (by St. Columba's)	a		A well equipped and flexible hall suite, with parking.

Appendix A – Criteria (agreed by Moray Presbytery February 2022)

Process summary (GCOP 6.5):

An essential part of the planning process is to put **mission first**, then consider **people and congregational structures** – ministries requirements and unions, linkages and various team formations – and **finally buildings**. Buildings must be seen to serve the mission of the Church, not the other way round.

Process outcome - ministries (PMPA 2.1.1):

A Mission Plan shall describe how the Church of Scotland's engagement with Christ's Mission is to be shaped and resourced in the following five years and to that end shall demonstrate how the Presbytery will:-

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

PPT comment:

The Mission Plan is to be shaped around the mission of Christ and it should reflect ideas for local mission. During the listening stages of the planning process, representatives of congregations have been sharing what is happening in their communities and the potential they see for mission in the future. The mission of Christ and such ideas are often found in narratives rather than statistics, so the formation of the Mission Plan will take such stories into account as well as quantitative data.

It is noted that the Mission Plan must consider how new ways of being church are encouraged. That may include posts beyond traditional parish ministry, and research suggests a variety of approaches may support growth in new ways of being Church.

Research into church growth, fresh expressions and Messy Church all acknowledge that many new ways of being church are led by non-ordained and unpaid people; that experimenting with small things is important, generally begun by small teams; that small churches grow best; that those experimenting and leading fresh expressions need ongoing support and refreshment; and that there is a positive association between employing youth workers and growth. (FATE, DOST, PS)

Research into the Church of Scotland's pilot Pioneer Ministry posts concluded that peer support from colleagues doing similar pioneering work is crucial, and building of teams would be better. The research also noted that while in theory, parish ministers should be able to pioneer alongside their existing responsibilities, the reflections of these post-holders suggest it is more difficult to juggle existing ministry and pioneering mission in practice. (PP)

There is research that suggests amalgamations of congregations can be a factor in decline, recognising that one leader for one local worshipping community is helpful and that small churches grow best. Research also recognises that such leaders do not all need to be ordained and paid. (FATE, HIRC)

All the above suggests a mixed ecology of inherited church and new ways of being church will require a mixed ecology of ministries, including paid and unpaid, ordained and non-ordained, valuing strong local relationships. New ways of being church and relational youth work can be encouraged by all in leadership, and will need intentional support for small teams rather than solo workers.

Process outcome – buildings (PMPA 2.1.2, 2.1.3):

In doing so the Presbytery will categorise each ecclesiastical building as either:-

- (a) to be retained beyond the five years from the date at which the Mission Plan is approved or annually reviewed, or
- (b) to be sold, let or otherwise disposed of by a specified date which is within five years from the date at which the ecclesiastical building is first categorised as (b).

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

PPT comment:

The General Trustees have created a Asset Management Buildings Audit process for all ecclesiastical buildings. This process will be undertaken in Moray by trained volunteers selected by the Stewardship, Finance and Property committee, with outcomes reported to presbytery by the General Trustees.

Key Criteria – Mission (GCOP 5.3.1, PMPA 1.1i)

Presbytery, the Forum and the Trustees must prioritise Mission.

[Mission shall be construed as meaning those aspects of church life set out in] the “Five Marks of Mission”:

The mission of the Church is the mission of Christ:

1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
2. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers
3. To respond to human need by loving service

4. To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation
5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth

No area of church life is exempt.

PPT comment:

Advice from Faith Nurture Forum Presbytery Mission Plan Implementation Group is that Presbytery should develop a mission narrative: a) define mission goals in local context; b) identify priorities; c) how to achieve those.

That advice and the experience of the listening stages of the planning process recognise that Christ's mission is often recognised in narrative. Therefore, formation of the Mission Plan will take stories into account as well as quantitative data.

Subordinate Criteria – Communities (GCOP 5.3.2)

Every community of every size in every location within Scotland is part of a Church of Scotland Parish. While population should no longer be the only principle in shaping Presbytery Plans, it still remains the starting point. Our calling as a church is not primarily to resource congregations: it is mission to everyone in the land.

PPT comment:

The urban or rural nature of communities and the distribution of population will be taken into account – more dispersed or remote rural populations will need more resource for a similar number of people.

Natural boundaries and connections between communities will be taken into account, as indicated by local congregations. Boundaries between existing presbyteries will not be a barrier to adjustment.

Subordinate Criteria – Ecumenism (GCOP 5.3.3)

“The Commission readily acknowledges that reaching the people of Scotland is an ecumenical task and one to which the Church of Scotland contributes along with other denominations as partners in the gospel.” If a particular community is well served by another denomination, there may be no need for the Presbytery to duplicate that. Where a community is equally well served by the Church of Scotland and another denomination the Presbytery should explore what local possibilities there might be for recognising each other's ministry so that resources can be used elsewhere. The General Assembly of 2021 instructed the Forum, when developing principles for Presbytery Mission Planning, to include a principle of ecumenical working, bearing in mind the Lund Principle, affirming that churches should act together in all matters except those in which deep differences of conviction compel them to act separately. That same deliverance also encouraged the forming of Local Mission Communities and regional Covenant Partnerships as outlined in the report of the Ecumenical Relations Committee.

Subordinate Criteria – The poor (GCOP 5.3.4)

The General Assembly has repeatedly affirmed that the gospel imperative is priority to the poor. At a time when resources are scarce, it is tempting to take away from the most marginal communities where churches are often very fragile and small. However pressing the reasons may be locally, this must be resisted because it makes a mockery of the gospel and the repeated commitments of the General Assembly. However, as in every part of the Church, this does not mean that existing patterns of ministry should not be evaluated and reviewed and different forms of church life introduced.

Subordinate Criteria – Whole people of God (GCOP 5.3.4 [sic])

One aim of the Act is to assist the church in making the most effective use of paid ministries. However, this takes place in the context of the ministry of the whole people of God. The Special Commission on the Third Article Declaratory, in 2010, noted that “the living out of the commitment of Article III may well involve an increasing number of communities where the ministry is exercised largely by the eldership and membership of the Church, albeit under the oversight of an ordained minister.” (8.5.6) Therefore a further principle to guide Presbyteries in their deployment of ministries is how they might be used to encourage and enhance the ministry of the whole people of God. This sharing of talents may be across a wider area than a parish – some Presbyteries are developing the idea of Mission Districts, on which more information will be available later.

PPT comment:

Church growth research indicates the importance of involvement of lay members, refreshing and rotating roles, and not leaving everything to an ordained minister. Fresh Expressions of Church are very often led by non-ordained and unpaid people, and begun by teams, all of whom need ongoing support. (FATE, DOST, PS)

Subordinate Criteria – Congregations (GCOP 5.3.5)

The church has “a commitment to maintain worshipping, witnessing and serving Christian congregations throughout Scotland.” One of the ways in which the gospel finds visible expression is in committed congregations under the power of the Holy Spirit. They both express the gospel and commend the gospel. In their Planning, Presbyteries will identify congregations that are outward looking, which engage with their communities and the wider church and consider how they might build on these strengths.

PPT comment:

Strong local relationships are important and enable smaller worshipping communities to grow more. (FATE, PP) Social engagement and meeting needs are important aspects of mission. (COVID) Rural communities have many needs and the church has a role in helping meet those needs. (HIRC)

The shape of church life can include different ways of supporting local worshipping communities, including the Recognised Ministries; trained and supported local

worship leaders; and the potential use of technology to share aspects of teaching and worship.

Subordinate Criteria – Mixed economy (GCOP 5.3.6)

Whilst affirming the importance of the Parish system and recognising the importance of a sense of 'place' the General Assembly stated that this needs to be expressed in a variety of ways. Martyn Percy, an Anglican scholar, says: "For the Church to find its place in the modern world, it will have to create new spaces for new communities and different opportunities for differentiated niche groups." While in many communities the sense of place is best expressed in something physical and tangible, that is not universally true. The Church will need, for example, to discover how to relate to those whose belonging is primarily through networks or the virtual world.

PPT comment:

Research into impact of Fresh Expressions suggests that networks, rather than geographical location, were a significant factor in a significant proportion of Fresh Expressions. A diversity of small things makes a difference, across a diversity of types, contexts, venues, frequencies and days. Many Fresh Expressions are led by non-ordained unpaid people, in teams. (DOST)

A familiar Fresh Expression is Messy Church, which reaches non-churched and de-churched families and can help people grow as disciples, but mostly for families with children below secondary school age. That needs the support of congregations and presbyteries to train and free leaders to prioritise Messy Church and fresh expressions of church. (PS)

Scottish rural church research found growth where the Church was doing something different. Pilgrimage has lots of potential for reaching people, including the "Invisible Church," and possibly for regeneration of communities and buildings. (HIRC)

Scottish Church COVID research recognised the importance of online networking and presence, and acknowledged that online worship needs resource, reflection and planning. (COVID)

All of the above suggests that giving responsibility, resource and support to people (ordained or paid or not) for ministry online and to particular networks may be important.

The research into the Church of Scotland pilot pioneer ministry posts recommends the need for people in such roles to have teams and networks for support, and space to experiment. That research cautions against trying to fit developing communities into governance structures too soon. (PP)

Subordinate Criteria – Financial responsibility (GCOP 5.3.7)

Presbytery Mission Planning does not mean ensuring that congregations which make a net contribution to central funds take priority. Nonetheless a degree of financial realism is required and it is appropriate that some consideration is given to congregational financial responsibility. Some congregations are more generous than comparable ones and all congregations are expected to make a financial contribution

appropriate to their means. At present one third of congregations are net contributors and two thirds are net receivers. However, per capita giving can be much higher amongst some of the poorest congregations than it is in some of the wealthiest. It is essential for Presbyteries to consider the complex financial picture and allocate ministerial resources to congregations that take their financial stewardship seriously. The Presbytery, Forum and Trustees should also take account of the effect of a Mission Plan on the aggregate amount of Ministry and Mission Contributions which the Presbytery's congregations remit to the national Church.

PPT comment:

It should be noted that the allocation of the number of posts to Moray is based on weighted population numbers here and across Scotland, not on how many ministry posts our current M&M contributions pay for.

It will be difficult to predict the financial consequences of some decisions. Historic data on the impact of unions and dissolutions on assessable income suggests an average decrease in assessable income of 0.4%. In 2023 there will also be a shift from the current system of Ministries and Mission contributions to the Giving to Grow system approved by the General Assembly 2021 (Appendix 1 of the Report of the Assembly Trustees). The PPT will use the best available information to estimate the future Giving to Grow contributions of congregations in different potential forms of adjustment, to assess the potential effect of proposals on the contributions of each congregation and the aggregate for Moray.

Subordinate Criteria – Buildings (GCOP 5.3.8)

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. Presbyteries are encouraged to make use of the General Trustees Land and Buildings Toolkit, and other assessment tools which will be available.

PPT comment:

The General Trustees have created a Asset Management Buildings Audit process for all ecclesiastical buildings, which will be undertaken in Moray by trained volunteers. Outcomes will be reported to presbytery by the General Trustees and will provide an overall indication of whether a building is a "well equipped space in the right place" or not. High overall scores will suggest both a well-equipped space and a good location. Lower scores will require further investigation. A breakdown of AMBA results and SFP's local expertise will help ascertain whether limitations and issues

can be overcome with appropriate investment in a building, to make it an asset for Christ's mission.

Buildings must be seen to serve the mission of the Church, not the other way round. (GCOP 6.5)

Other criteria – Fewer officebearers (GCOP 6.6):

Congregational groupings should move towards fewer decision-making bodies and fewer buildings, with effective numbers of office bearers. Multi-linkage charges should be strongly discouraged, as congregations in various forms of partnership need to be sharing vision for mission and life, and a requirement for too many office bearers drains the energies of Ministry leadership with the potential for miscommunication, divergence of vision and lengthening decision-making processes.

PPT comment:

This is an encouragement to think differently. It recognises existing struggles with finding officebearer with the appropriate gifts and calling. Church growth research suggests ever-larger amalgamations don't work for growth as communities need identifiable local leadership. (FATE)

Other criteria – Beyond boundaries (GCOP 6.10):

Presbyteries and congregations should be encouraged to think beyond their boundaries, especially in the light of future changes to Presbyteries through the reform process, but also to recognise that these boundaries do not necessarily present a barrier to mission.

Possible adjustments/arrangements (PMPA 7):

- 1) Union
- 2) Linking
- 3) Deferred union or deferred linking
- 4) Local mission church
- 5) Guardianship
- 7) Transportation
- 8) Parish groupings
- 9) Dissolution
- 10) Team ministry
- 11) New forms of church life
- 12) Presbytery mission initiative

PPT comment:

It is noted that the Code of Practice discourages multi-way linkages, as they produce a large governance workload.

The new Local Mission Church option offers recognition of a local worshipping community and identity, but without the governance requirements needing to be fulfilled by that local group of people.

Parish groupings may be a useful step towards teams in unions or linkages, where that bigger adjustment is not yet possible.

Team ministries are not just teams of paid or ordained posts, but can specify wider teams from the whole people of God. Roles and responsibilities may be to particular local communities and to wider roles across the team's area and/or across the Presbytery's area. Roles within ministry teams need well defined to enable continuity, building of local relationships and the ministry of the whole people of God. Church growth research suggests one leader of each community is good, though such leaders will not necessarily be ordained and paid in every community.

This is a five year rolling plan. This first plan may take first steps towards longer term arrangements. This plan will not assume it is defining a permanent shape to church life in Moray, but is shaping a stage in the ongoing evolving life of Christ's church. There may an overall trajectory proposed, with initial adjustments in that direction at this time.

Instruments of future planning available (PMPA 9):

- 1) Reviewable charge
- 2) Transference (to another presbytery)

References:

COVID: *"Adapt and be Flexible– the Mission Doesn't Stop": The Scottish Church and the COVID-19 Pandemic*, Brendan Research January 2021

<https://www.brendanresearch.com/projects/scf-acts-covid19>

DOST: *The Day of Small Things: An analysis of fresh expressions of Church in 21 dioceses of the Church of England*, George Lings, Church Army's Research Unit, November 2016 <https://www.churcharmy.org.uk/Publisher/File.aspx?ID=204265>

FATE: *From Anecdote to Evidence: Findings from the Church Growth Research Programme 2011-2013*, Church of England

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/church-growth-research-programme/anecdote-evidence>

GCOP: Presbytery Mission Planning Act: Guidance & Code of Practice v1.4 (see also <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/presbytery-planning/presbytery-mission-plan-act-guidance-code-of-practice>)

HIRC: *Hope in the Rural Church - Reflections on the Scottish Church Census*, ACTS Scottish Churches Rural Group, May 2018 <http://www.acts->

scotland.org/images/downloads/rural_group/SCRG_HopeRuralChurch_Report2018.pdf

PMPA: Presbytery Mission Plan Act 2021

PP: *Pioneering Pieces: An evaluation of the Church of Scotland's Pioneer Pilot Project*, Church Army's Research Unit, October 2020

PS: *Playfully Serious: How Messy Churches create new space for faith*, Church Army's Research Unit, January 2019

<https://www.churcharmy.org.uk/Publisher/File.aspx?ID=225713>

PPT: Moray Presbytery Planning Team

DRAFT FOR AMENDMENT

Appendix B – Glossary

AMBA	Asset Management Buildings Audit
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
FTMWS	Full Time Minister of Word and Sacrament
GA	General Assembly
GTs	General Trustees
OLM	Ordained Local Minister
LMC	Local Mission Church
MDS	Ministry Development Staff
PMPIG	Presbytery Mission Plan Implementation Group
PPT	Presbytery Planning Team (of Moray Presbytery)
SFP	Stewardship, Finance and Property committee (of Moray Presbytery)