

Presbytery Planning 2022

Information for the congregation of Craiglockhart Parish Church
January 2022

1. Introduction

Since the 1990's Presbyteries have been required to agree a Presbytery plan for a ten-year period. The purpose of Presbytery planning is to agree the distribution of ministers and the arrangement of congregations within the Presbytery area. The hope is that when vacancies arise having a plan in place would enable the Presbytery to agree permission to call a new minister on the basis of the agreed plan without having to begin conversations from scratch.

Discussions have started to replace the current Presbytery plan, for the period 2012–2022, with a new plan for the period 2022–2025, not a ten-year plan but one to be implemented by the end of 2025. The Kirk Session agree to share information about this process with the congregation at this time.

2. The context for this round of Presbytery Planning

The General Assembly of 2019 approved a radical action plan, which it was hoped would secure the future of the Church of Scotland. The following statistics are important in this context.

- The membership of the Church of Scotland is currently around 300,000 having declined every year since 1955.
- Recent surveys suggest that at most only 5–7% of the population of Scotland have any active connection with any Christian church.
- Falling income in the Church of Scotland means that the National Stipend Fund can only support 600 ministries: 450 ministers of word and sacrament and 150 mission support workers.
- These numbers of ministries require a reduction in ministry number of 40% across the whole of the Church of Scotland. In Edinburgh the reduction of ministry posts agreed by the General Assembly is from 78 ministry posts to 48 ministry posts.
- An anticipated high number of ministerial retirements and low number of new candidates for ministry mean the provision of ministers for all the present charges in the Church of Scotland cannot be achieved.
- the retention for use of a higher than needed number of church buildings, with continuing costs for maintenance and insurance, cannot be sustained.

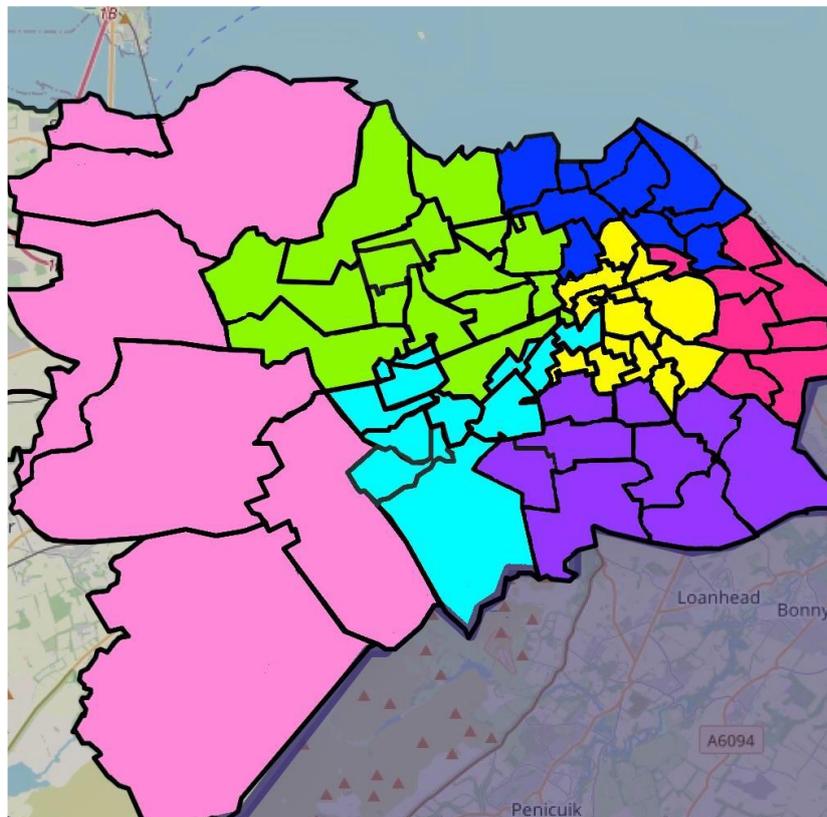
3. The Presbytery Planning Process in Edinburgh Presbytery

The Presbytery appointed a Presbytery Planning Strategy Group (PPSG) in 2018 to prepare a draft Presbytery Plan which could be considered by local congregations and agreed by the Presbytery.

In 2020 the congregations in the Presbytery were arranged into Cluster Groups, our group was with Colinton and St John's Colinton Mains. The Cluster groups met for about 9 months. However, following the General Assembly in 2021 the Presbytery decided to change all the Cluster Groups to enable the plan reduction in ministry posts.

The PPSG published a Consultation Document on the 13th of December 2021. The aim is for this document to form the starting point for local congregations to agree the terms of a Presbytery Plan which can be approved by the Presbytery in 2022 and implemented by the end of 2025.

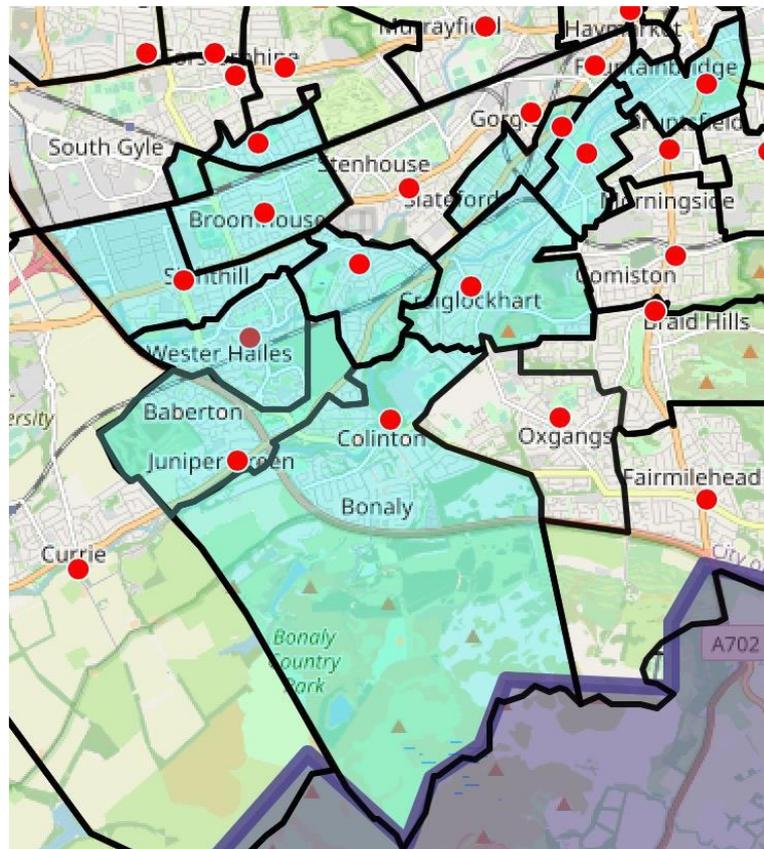
The Consultation Document proposes the establishment of seven Mission Districts which are displayed on the following map:



Map showing the seven proposed Mission Districts for Edinburgh Presbytery

The pages from the Consultation Document which cover the South West Mission District, light blue in the map, which include Craiglockhart are copied here. Page numbers given below are to the pages in the Consultation Document.

Cluster A – SOUTH WEST



Map showing parishes in South West Mission District

PARISHES

- 1 Colinton, Juniper Green, Slateford Longstone
- 2 Holy Trinity Wester Hailes, St Nicholas' Sighthill
- 3 Carrick Knowe, St David's Broomhouse,
- 4 Barclay Viewforth, Craiglockhart, Polwarth, St Michael's

Population of parishes	80,116
Average population of Parish	20,029
Number of Posts Ministers	7
MDS	0

Mission Narrative for Mission District A – South West

Many of the congregations here have already cultivated connections with each other. There is a variety of congregational strengths, gifts, and approaches to mission. Some of these congregations exist within areas of significant need and others, while located in less challenging socio-economic circumstances, have manifested an awareness and engagement in supporting people locally, nationally, and internationally. There is an enthusiasm and energy in several of the congregations that can motivate all the congregations in the district. There is a variety of styles of leadership, there are different financial circumstances and a combination of potentially creative use of buildings alongside worrying fabric issues. Working across the boundaries of current congregations and future unions will allow mission in this geographical area to flourish.

Thus, the following is proposed:

1. Mission District A will contain four congregations by the end of the plan with a total of seven Full Time Ministers of Word and Sacrament (FTMSW) and one 0.5 Ministry Development Staff (MDS). It will be complemented by two Ordained Local Ministers (OLM) and locally appointed staff as necessary.
2. Colinton, Juniper Green and Slateford Longstone will be served by two FTMWS. The history, stability and outward orientation of Colinton will complement recent developments at Juniper Green (and especially possible outreach to the Baberton area) and the opportunities afforded by initiatives and needs in the Slateford Longstone parish.
3. Holy Trinity (a Priority Area with double weighting for posts) and St. Nicholas Church Sighthill will be served by two FTMWS, complemented by two OLMs and local staff. Both churches have shown an energy, enthusiasm, and effectiveness in reaching out to a local area of need. Both churches have also expressed a concern about building capacity for their mission. To harness the possibilities, discussions regarding future building provision should begin with some urgency.
4. Carrick Knowe and St. David's Broomhouse will be served by one FTMWS and 0.5 MDS. Carrick Knowe offers facilities in good condition, a recognised presence in the community and a good location. St. David's Broomhouse hosts numerous groups in an area with challenges and does so from a building that requires attention.
5. Barclay Viewforth Craiglockhart, Polwarth and St. Michael's will be served by two FTMWS. The mission drive found in all these congregations can be focused for

effectiveness. Craiglockhart and St. Michael's are not well placed for mission and the building of Barclay Viewforth requires significant resources.

pages 35–36

4 Union of Barclay Viewforth - Craiglockhart- Polwarth – St Michael's

FUTURE NATIONAL POSTS Two Ministers

LOCAL PROVISION Craiglockhart – Youth Worker.

MANSES Barclay Viewforth manse to be retained.
Craiglockhart to be sold.
Polwarth to be sold.
St Michael's to be retained.

CHALLENGE Work with Ratho, and other relevant parishes, in Edinburgh and West Lothian, on the Canal Boat Project.

Barclay Viewforth Congregation to be planted in Morningside United building. There will need to be in-depth conversations with the United Reformed Church and the Ecumenical Relations Committee of the Church of Scotland about the future of the Local Ecumenical Partnership in this area.

ADJUSTMENT The demission of a Minister or by the ending of the Reviewable Charge of Polwarth or St Michael's no later than December 2025.

TENURE tbd

MISSION This reconfiguration will combine parishes on both sides of the canal. We are asking the congregation to grasp a missional opportunity to build a 'bridge' and come together for a new future. The current congregations have different experiences and challenges within their respective parishes. The new parish must work to agree priorities for the future; to decide what will end and what must start afresh; and to identify clear priorities. The Polwarth part of the parish is challenged to deliver a floating Ministry on the canal.

FINANCES Barclay Viewforth's are relatively stable although 2020 was a challenging year for them.
Craiglockhart's are showing signs of a downward trend.

Polwarth's income and expenditure has fluctuated.
St Michael's provide cause for concern with several recent years running in deficit.

CHURCH BUILDINGS Barclay Viewforth has no 'compliant second means of escape from first floor gallery in church and from main hall'; requires significant outlay for maintenance, repairs, and energy, as well as 'significant repairs being required'; and there is 'no disabled parking space close by'.

Craiglockhart has required significant outlay in maintenance and repairs, there is no 'on-site parking' and crossing the busy road 'is somewhat daunting for the elderly and less fit.'

Polwarth had significant work done in the recent past. There is very limited parking.

St Michael's has spent significant sums for maintenance and repair given its deficits; requires safety work to be carried out and has limitations in accessibility; the pews could be considered 'restrictive'; and the lack of a school and care home in the Parish 'curtail[s] its reach into the community'.

The above pages have been copied as they were published in the Consultation Document. The Kirk Session have recorded their concern and unhappiness with the description of Craiglockhart's ministry and mission and are seeking an opportunity to correct the comments made here, e.g., to correct the post title of Youth Worker to Mission Development Worker.

4. Presbytery Meeting on 15 January

The Presbytery met online on Sat 15 January to respond to questions which had been asked about the Presbytery Consultation Document and the planning process. Andy Bathgate, Norma Henderson and Gordon Kennedy attended from Craiglockhart.

More than 470 questions had been submitted prior to the meeting. The response to almost all of these questions was that they would be addressed during the consultation period.

The proposed timeline for the consultation period is:

1. February 2022 all congregations will be contacted by the Deployment group with responses to the Presbytery by 15 March.
2. April to June 2022 there will be visits to local congregations and facilitated conversations between local parties to proposed unions.
3. July to August 2022 further engagement with local congregations with a view to achieving local agreement of proposals.
4. October 2022 there will be a Presbytery meeting, provisionally 22 October, to seek approval of the Presbytery plan.

5. Conclusion

The timetable given above shows that consultation on the proposals in the document will be happening very soon. The Kirk Session recognise that this will involve a number of meetings with Presbytery and other congregations and undertake to keep our congregation informed as we journey through this process of Presbytery planning.

This information has been prepared in advance of our congregational meeting on Sunday 23 January. The maps and pages included have been copied from the full Consultation Document, a copy of which is on our website, www.craiglockhartchurch.org

On the final page we have copied a letter sent from the Presbytery on 13 January 2022.

Gordon Kennedy
Minister

The Presbytery have issued the following statement about Presbytery Planning on Thursday 13 January 2022.

The Church is committed to operating more effectively and efficiently to ensure that it is properly equipped to deliver the Good News of Jesus Christ in a dynamic and sustainable way. At recent General Assemblies the whole church has been instructed to begin to draw up plans which will look at the future shape and number of ministries. As you may know, the church in Edinburgh and West Lothian, like churches across the country, is at the very start of a four-year process to ensure that the best structures are in place to meet 21st century mission and ministry needs.

One of the objectives of the current Presbytery consultation is to ensure that congregations work more closely together in efficient and imaginative ways to serve local communities, and to find ways to make this happen. A planning strategy team has produced a consultation document for discussion, but no final decisions have been made and the details contained within the plan are subject to change.

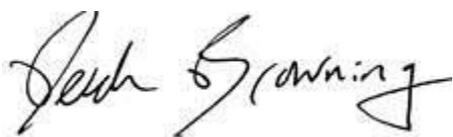
An agreed plan on the best way forward will evolve in due course and will be shaped by the feedback from congregations within the Presbytery, as well as national church bodies that have responsibility for overall planning, and for buildings.

No final decisions about ministries or church buildings have been made, but this will play a part in future discussion this year.

In the meantime, the good work that Edinburgh churches are involved in to support the vulnerable and the marginalised and those with real pastoral need continues.

Across the country the whole Church of Scotland is facing similar challenges in planning, and the process is not an easy or straightforward one, but the ultimate goal, whatever Plan is finally agreed, is to ensure that the good work of the Church continues.

In this sensitive and unsettling time, please pray for your own congregation, your neighbouring congregations in the Presbytery, and the whole Church of Scotland. It will be together that we will, with God, find a way forward.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Derek Browning". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Very Revd Dr Derek Browning