



The Church of Scotland
Presbytery of Edinburgh

LOCAL CHURCH REVIEW



YOUR CHURCH TODAY

Currie Parish Church

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Introduction

The Local Church Review (LCR) report that follows is your report; a report on your congregation and parish written by you – office bearers, members and minister. Some things have already been completed; for instance, much of the statistical information has been completed from Presbytery records. But what we want to see most are your opinions, thoughts, concerns, hopes and aspirations.

Every parish church is unique; every story is different; you know your own story better than anyone else. That is why you are asked to write your story, tell us of church life in your parish, tell us of your worship, evangelism, service, discipleship, fellowship and so much more. Your story is vital in understanding the life of your congregation.

Before visiting your congregation the team from Presbytery will have read your report with great care and will use it as a basis for their meetings with you and for the questions they ask. The written word conveys only part of a picture and visits and dialogue add so much more. These visits are a sign that we are in this together – local church and Presbytery and we hope that all that follows reflects togetherness. Whilst some of what is asked is factual, such as numbers and compliance with legal requirements, the overall context is mission.

We hope that the questions asked are clear and that the processes to be followed are understood. A set of Guidance Notes is appended. However, the leader of the visiting team and/or the Convener of Superintendence is happy to be contacted for discussion or clarification.

The leader of the visiting team is Rev Dr Derek Browning; Tel - 0131 447 1617; email Derek.Browning@btinternet.com. My own contact details are; Tel 0131 449 2670; email - chasg@blueyonder.co.uk. The Presbytery Clerk, Rev George Whyte is also available to you; Tel 0131 225 9137; email - edinburgh@cofscotland.org.uk.

The pack has been produced using MS Word and you are asked to complete and respond electronically. Do not feel constrained by the size of the response boxes. As you type the boxes will expand to accommodate your text. Responses do not need to be wordy as the visiting team for the Superintendence Committee will discuss responses with you and will ask for more information if required.

LCR is now new – under ACT 1 of the General Assembly of 2012 LCR replaces the former Quinquennial Superintendence system. What we are doing in Edinburgh builds on the previous Superintendence scheme, the Unless the Lord..... visits and reports, and links in with the Plan for Presbytery.

We look forward to receiving this completed report by ????????. ????????

Charles R Godon
Convener of Superintendence

1. The story of your church

1.1 Suggested content:

Please tell us something of your church's history. Think back over the last ten years. Share the recent story of your congregation – the celebrations, the struggles, the dreams. Where have you seen God at work? How did you get where you are in church life? Where do you think you are?

The report that follows asks many questions and the answers given will tell much. Therefore, your story below need not be more than a very few paragraphs.

1.2 Your Church's Story:

Currie Kirk is very much a "local" church with most of the membership living within a mile or so of the church. The past 10 years has witnessed two ministries; Rev Keith Ross (2000 to 2007) and Rev Lesley Stewart from 2008.

The ministry of Rev Keith Ross followed that of the charismatic Rev Dr Willis Jones who was always going to be a "difficult act to follow". Looking back on Mr Ross' ministry, the story line of our church through that time would recount the following:

- **Worship**

In 2002 two contrasting services running simultaneously were established, one in the church, the other in the Gibson Craig Halls. The service in the church was termed "traditional" and the other "contemporary" taking the form of image based, interactive worship. While the "contemporary" format appeared attractive to the younger element in the congregation, the fact that both services were at the same time was an on-going source of concern and in late 2008 we moved to one service. One lasting benefit of the two service experience was the formation of a Worship Team which continues to provide worship support and cover during the minister's holidays.

- **Associate Membership**

In 2003 an invitation was extended to all members to reflect on their commitment and place in the spiritual life of the congregation, leading them to decide whether or not they wished to continue in full fellowship of Currie Kirk, or accept the reality that the Church was no longer pivotal to their day-to-day lives. Associate Membership was created to enable those who wished to remove themselves from the active Communion Roll to do so with dignity, and without the feeling or sense of exclusion. 472 people transferred to Associate Membership, i.e 35% of the then full membership.

- **Gibson Craig Halls**

In January 2004 we celebrated the opening of the enlarged and reconfigured Gibson Craig Halls. These Halls are where much of our outreach takes place, and the high usage by Church and community organisations has more than justified the £350,000 expenditure.

- **Children and Young People**

A regular feature was the focus on activities for children and young people during school holidays, e.g. puppet shows, Fischy Music, holiday clubs.

A new chapter in the life story of Currie Kirk began in 2008 with the ministry of Rev Lezley Stewart. The main milestones would be:

- **Worship**

Numbers attending "contemporary" worship had been small (around 20 adults plus Sunday School) and in late 2008 we reverted to one diet of worship incorporating into the traditional service some aspects of "contemporary" worship.

In 2010 we introduced a Blue Christmas Service which allowed space for reflection and contemplation for those feeling "blue" as Christmas approached.

In the Spring of 2012 we began a monthly 15 minute time of prayer after Sunday Worship. A focal point for this is the Prayer Tree on which requests for prayer are placed and included in the prayer service.

- **Unitary Constitution**

In January 2009 we adopted the Unitary Constitution which has helped us through our Committee structure to encourage more people to be involved in the life and work of the Church, enabling us to play to each others' strengths, maximising upon the use of individual's gifts, and quickening our response to the changing needs in today's fast moving world. At the same time, recognising that not all elders are pastorally gifted, we took the opportunity to move away from district visitation by elders and established a pastoral team approach.

- **Messy Church**

In September 2011 we started Messy Church on a monthly basis eight times a year. This has been well received within the community attracting families who would not normally attend a church service to the relaxed, informal environment.

- **Holiday Club**

As part of our focus on young families and building community we re-introduced a week long summer Holiday Club in 2012. This was a good outreach experience attracting 58 children and a similar number in 2013.

Looking to the future the missional challenge that lies ahead is how to grow the church against a background of an elderly congregation, a parish with over 50% of the population in the young/mature adult workers category but many of whom seem to have little interest in any current forms of institutional religion, and, because of our aging congregation, a financial position which is projected to reduce by 30/40% over the next ten years.

As a church we also need to keep abreast of progress in terms of approval, or otherwise, of the Murray Estates plan for the Gogar, Gogarbank and Riccarton areas which involves the development of 4,000 housing units with a completion rate 200-300 units/per annum beginning in 2015 and scheduled for completion in 2032. Much of the proposed area for development falls within the Currie parish and would represent a serious challenge on how to be church to this new community.

2. Life of the congregation

Tell us about congregational life and its worship, fellowship, service, discipleship and evangelism. Please type responses in relevant box and it will expand to fit your text.

2.1 **Worship** – *The shared experience of meeting God; we gather to express our need for God and to express our gratitude for all that God has done for us.*

- **Style(s) of worship – describe a typical service format;**
- **Number of weekly services; patterns of worship;**
- **Musical range; praise band; organ; soloists; etc;**
- **Use of audio visual equipment;**
- **Congregational member involvement in leading worship;**
- **Anything else you would like to tell us?**

Responses:

The main service of worship takes place on a Sunday at 10am. The format is one hour in length with a mix of hymns ancient and modern. Hymn books are used, along with the NIV Bible. The service includes an all age theme conversation which relates to the sermon or shorter reflections that follow. While the format is quite traditional, the content is less so with interaction, reflection, responses, and a relaxed atmosphere. There is a large rota of readers from the congregation, and a Worship Team of 7 who contribute weekly and take whole services on occasion. Children are also involved in worship, in leading and participating in services on an occasional basis e.g. all age or regular Sunday services. There are special services throughout the year for Guild/Boys' Brigade/Heriot Watt University/Local Community Council. Children are usually present for the first part of the service before going to Kidz@Currie (Sunday School) and Creche. Worship is lectionary based from Sep-June with thematic services in July & August.

Monthly Communion is celebrated with 4 months being within the main service and 8 months being short services following the main service.

A monthly Prayer Tree Service also takes place for prayer for healing and intercession. Members help to lead this service.

Music is mainly played on the organ, but also on the piano as appropriate. On occasion we have instrumentalists. There is a Festival Choir who sing at Christmas and Easter, and occasional solos are included in worship.

We do not have audio visual equipment yet, but it is part of our Kirk redevelopment plan which is soon to be implemented (See 3.2)

Worship also takes place in other formats – monthly at Messy Church,

and during occasional groups such as Lenten Study, and jointly and ecumenically during Holy Week.

An annual Blue Service is held during the Christmas season for the bereaved and those who find Christmas difficult.

2.2 **Evangelism** - *The calling of every Christian to be a witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is all the ways in which we share our Good News and bring others to the point of beginning their own journey of faith.*

- **How do you help people to start to become Christians?**
- **Communication;**
- **Anything else you would like to tell us?**

Responses:

It is our hope that personal evangelism is at the heart of the life of our church and congregation where each individual is challenged to integrate faith and life in every aspect of every day. Our Kirk motto is "Where faith and life cross paths", and we try to live that out in worship, service and action and in our engagement with the community.

We try to offer a welcoming, supportive and encouraging environment to explore faith and doubt, and provide opportunities for reflection.

We use various tools of communication – website, email, church magazine, parish cards, banners, posters to communicate what is going on, and we have good relationships with the local schools for advertising children's work.

We do not offer a discipleship programme as such [e.g. Alpha] but have offered different opportunities for exploring and deepening faith in recent years e.g. Threads, Lenten Studies (York Studies, Nick Fawcett "Discipleship", Churches Together in Britain and Ireland material) Lenten Retreat (Ignatian Spirituality), Essential 100 Bible Texts Study Course. There has also been a Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and a retreat to Iona is planned for spring 2014.

We also organise various social gatherings for building community and growing friendships throughout the church year.

We started running Messy Church two years ago to reach out to young people and families in the local area, as well as running a Holiday Club for one week in the summer. Messy Church meets 8 months of the year on the last Friday of the month and has been well received.

Evangelism is implicit rather than explicit in the life of Currie Kirk, and each member is called to be a living witness to the faith we share and proclaim.

2.3 **Service** - *The living out of our faith in practical ways. Jesus called us to be servants of all and this is shown to others as we care for our neighbours.*

- **What systems of Pastoral Care (elder districts, etc.) do you have?**
- **How do you respond to the needs of others in the parish and beyond?**
- **Are you involved with school or other chaplaincies?**
- **In what ways are you involved with social issues?**
- **In what ways do you share responsibilities with community groups or agencies and/or mission partnerships at home or abroad?**
- **Anything else you would like to tell us?**

Responses:

We have a Pastoral Team of 6 who visit homes and hospitals and are co-ordinated by the Minister. We moved away from Elder's Districts in recent years, and until the beginning of 2013 employed a part-time Pastoral Associate. On her retirement the Pastoral Team was formed and the Kirk Session is keeping this under review.

We also have a Pastoral Visitors' Group who visit individuals on a more regular basis, where they are paired up by our Pastoral Visitors' Co-ordinator. An annual Special Communion is arranged for this group with lunch following, usually at Harvest Time. We also operate a Kirk Mini bus for getting to church, provide the services on CD for those who are housebound and through our flower ministry distribute flowers to those who are sick, housebound or celebrating special occasions such as the birth of a child or a notable wedding anniversary.

The Minister conducts pastoral visits for Baptism, Weddings, Funerals, Home Communion and Crisis Care.

We run a hospital transport service for our members which provides transport to and from hospital/clinic appointments and during 2012 our 10 drivers undertook 53 such journeys.

Responding to needs and social issues, Currie Kirk is active in supporting Fresh Start, Bethany Christian Trust, Fairtrade and HIV projects. Christian Aid features prominently in our social conscience with annual door-to-door collections and a ready response through retiring offerings to that organisation's appeals, or those of the Disasters' Emergency Committee, or other charities/projects when they are launched.

Fundraising activities are also supportive of local organisations and causes and members of our church provide practical support to local groups such as a Day Care Centre, the Octagon Club (adults with learning difficulties) and Snack Lunches (an ecumenical venture run one day per week over the lunch period).

Relationships with the schools are positive, and have developed over the years. Chaplaincy involves assemblies, teaching, hosting services

and visits to the Kirk, as well as being a listening ear to staff and pupils as appropriate. Specifically, the Minister is Chaplain to Nether Currie Primary School (approximately 1 hour, twice a month), Currie Primary School (approximately 1 hour, monthly/six weekly), Woodlands Special School (seasonal), and shares Chaplaincy at Currie High School with the minister of Juniper Green parish church (occasional Assemblies).

We do not currently have Mission Partners since the Fucellas returned to Scotland from Thailand. We continue to support their former AIDS project, and our Mission & Outreach Committee are looking to where our next Mission Partnership will be.

As from September, the Mission and Outreach Committee has set up a Café Church facility for secondary age pupils, having identified this need in the community.

2.4 **Discipleship** - *The act of following Christ. It is about learning what it means to be a Christian as we experience life and question what we believe. The church should equip its members with "practical guidance for expressing their faith in the world during the week."*

- **How do you help people of all ages grow in their faith?**
- **In what ways do you promote personal devotions, private prayer and opportunities to reflect on life experiences?**
- **Which resources do you use?**
- **Anything else you would like to tell us?**

Responses:

People are encouraged to grow in faith through worship, action and service. Opportunities for service abound in the life of the church, and many worshipping members are involved in some way or other in serving the life of the church and parish, and this is seen as faith in action.

Personal devotions are encouraged by offering various study materials, and we have taken part in the [trypraying](#) initiative over the last couple of years. It is hoped that spirituality is at the heart of worship and is encouraged to be integral to daily life.

Different Bible study resources, such as Daily Bread, Every Day with Jesus, Day by Day with God, New Daylight etc are offered for daily devotions, and different courses/groups have been offered to try to address different needs and preferences. A monthly Prayer Group meets to explore prayer and to offer prayer.

While there is interest in these groups, there is often only a small uptake and often the same people. Worship therefore becomes the main vehicle to encourage the growth of faith and the devotional life.

2.5 **Fellowship** - *The opportunity of experiencing God's grace and love in and through God's people; this is about people really getting to know each other.*

- **How do you build relationships within the church?**
- **How do you encourage people to meet outwith worship?**
- **Anything else you would like to tell us?**

Responses:

Our Hospitality Committee arranges various opportunities throughout the year for building relationships in a social environment. This includes, lunches and concerts and quiz and family nights.

Refreshments are served weekly following worship and all are encouraged to come along.

Groups, such as the Kirk's Good Book Group, the Guild encourage friendships where there is a shared interest. Within the Community Snack Lunches (see 1.5) provide a gathering place, as does the local Senior Citizens' Club which provides an active programme throughout the year.

Our church halls provide a Community Hub for all sorts of groups which many of our members are involved in, ranging from Zumba to the Local History Society, and the Octagon Club for adults with additional needs.

3. Congregation and Wider Church

3.1 **Wider church** – *Your relationships and involvement with Presbytery, central church structures and other denominations.*

- **How would you describe your relationship with Presbytery?**
- **Tell us about any relationships with Councils (and/or their committees) of the General Assembly.**
- **Tell us about any ecumenical relationships.**
- **Anything else you would like to tell us?**

Responses:

- **Presbytery**

While for most of our members the relationship with Presbytery tends to be limited to visits from Presbytery representatives or meeting with the Presbytery Clerk at worship in Currie Kirk where he is a member, the minister, session clerk and presbytery elder take an active part in the work of Presbytery. The minister has recently been appointed Convener of the Ministries Committee and through this appointment membership of the Strategy Group. The session clerk is Convener of the Deployment of Resources Committee, a member of the Strategy Group, a member of one of the Local Church Review Teams and a member of the group charged with responsibility for carrying out the interim/annual appraisals of the Presbytery Clerk. The presbytery elder

has recently been appointed a Presbytery Safeguarding Trainer. Presbytery business is reported upon regularly to Kirk Session.

We are grateful to Presbytery for putting us in touch with two people who are able to provide expert advice in analysing the specifications/quotes in regard to the possible installation of an audio visual system in the church.

- **General Assembly Councils/Committees**

The session clerk is a member of the Stewardship staff support group of the Stewardship and Finance Committee.

- **Ecumenical Relationships**

We have good relationships with Balerno and Juniper Green Parish Churches. Once a year there is a Joint Valley Service involving the three Church of Scotland congregations, a once a year pulpit swap again with the three Church of Scotland congregations and Holy Week services in which the local Roman Catholic Church participates on one of the evenings. There is an independent Baptist Church in the parish but relationships have not been fostered although these may develop as a result of our Sunday School (Kidz@Currie) being accommodated in their Hall as from the Autumn of 2013.

For a long number of years we provided financial support (£3,000 per annum) to Mike and Jane Fucella who were our mission partners in Thailand. This arrangement came to an end in June 2012 when Mike and Jane returned to work in Scotland. We are currently reassessing our options in respect of whether or not to establish a relationship with new mission partners, and for 2013 the £3,000 allocated to "mission partners' purposes" will be assigned to an Aids Project established by the Fucellas in Thailand.

4. Resources – people, buildings, money

4.1 **Human Resources** – *People helping to make your mission statement a reality.*

- **Who are your ministry team members?**
- **What support is there for your minister/ministry team including admin support?**
- **How is training and development (in-service training, study leave, staff appraisals, etc.) supported?**
- **With your present staffing and volunteers are you resourced to achieve the developments highlighted in this report?**
- **Anything else you would like to tell us?**

Responses:

There is no ministry team as such but we have a number of paid positions, namely organist, part-time church cleaner (5 hours per week), part-time halls' caretaker and part-time secretary (7.5 hours per week). Following a review of the cleaning arrangements at our Halls we have recruited a part-time cleaner (4.5 hours per week).

The minister is supported in worship by a 7 person worship team who undertake weekly prayers and full service in the minister's absence. In addition, there is a pool of 49 Scripture readers. Pastoral support is provided by a team of 6 people, and during the minister's absences the retired pastoral associate provides cover and also support in the event of "too many" funerals in a week.

Our minister takes annual study leave. Kirk Session is supportive of training and development needs and some Session members have participated in Presbytery training, e.g. Welcome Ministry.

We have a good number of volunteers working within our committee structure (See Facts and Figures 1.3), plus teams of people welcoming folk into the church on Sunday mornings and people providing refreshments after worship. The BB captain and his team, Kidz@Currie (Sunday School), and Guild committee are all volunteers.

While we manage for the present with the existing level of volunteers, there is concern that because of the age profile of our congregation we will not be able to sustain these levels. In general, the younger element of our membership find that work/family commitments are such that there is little time for voluntary work. In a nutshell, within the 25 – 44 age group figures only 6 (includes 2 BB Officers) are giving time as church volunteers and within the 45 to 64 age group the relative figure is 35.

4.2 **Buildings** – *Sanctuary, halls, manse, church officer's house, etc.*

- How are your premises used?
- What is their state of repair?
- Describe their suitability for purpose?
- What projects (refurbishment, repair, extension) are in hand or planned?
- Anything else you would like to tell us?

Responses:

- *The Church*

The Quinquennial Report of 2008 highlighted a number of issues which detracted from the sense of wellbeing in the Church buildings, including the failed sink unit and floor coverings in the Utility Area and the lack of a good spacious toilet facility.

To address the issues, Kirk Session has approved a £200,000 plan which will be implemented in 2014. The plan follows six general themes, namely to comply fully with the spirit of the Disability Discrimination Act (wheelchair access/toilet facilities accessible to wheelchair users), to convert the east transept to a multipurpose space, to install an audio visual system, to improve the heating throughout the buildings, to create kitchen/pantry facilities which would enable greater flexibility in the use of the Session House and to extend the Link Building northwards creating a spacious, flexible area for fellowship.

The redevelopment work at the church will enable us to terminate our tenancy of the building currently used for Sunday School and refreshments after worship. This will result in an annual saving of circa £3,500.

- **Gibson Craig Halls**

Our Halls are used extensively with very few vacant "slots". Within Currie there is no major provider of accommodation for community events other than the church and therefore the Gibson Craig Halls are used by many community groups (70% of our regular lets). While annual rental income amounts to around £22,000 (11% of total income), we are conscious of the tension between keeping in balance the financial stream and space for church mission purposes.

Internally the Halls are in a good state of repair. The Church Office, kitchen and rear hall were redecorated this year and it is planned to budget in 2014 for redecoration of the main hall. There is a possibility that after sixty years of wear the floor in the main hall may have to be replaced, but this will be a matter we will be looking for guidance on from the Property Quinquennial team when they visit later this year. Estimated cost of a replacement floor is £12,000.

Consequent upon the granting of the Public Entertainment Licence for the Gibson Craig Halls in 2011 certain health and safety issues require to be addressed. These include:

- The creation of a new, gated pedestrian path at the extreme west (Balerno) end of the car park, linking up with the slabbed path along the west side of the hall (a right-of-way to the Guide Hall) and also the main hall entrance. The path would be separated from the car park by a wrought iron railing for safety.
- The creation of a new, ramped emergency exit designed to serve both the main entrance and the front hall, with appropriate alterations to the steps.
- The widening of the vehicle access by the width of the pillars on either side of the opening, the pillars being reinstated in the new position.
- The repositioning, and the increasing, of car park spaces, two to the west and three to the east side of the vehicle entrance. This will necessitate the removal of the kerbed and chipped areas and the replacement of the existing trees with three columnar yews (which the Council deem more appropriate). The notice board will remain in situ.
- Clearly defined "no parking" areas (possibly by hatching).

We await definitive costs for the work and while a Budget of £15,000 has been made available it may not be sufficient. In that event we will look at whether rather than using a sole contractor, a cheaper option might be to try and break the project down into smaller units, (although it does not naturally lend itself to this approach) and make use of local contractors.

- **Manse**

The manse is in a good state of repair and subject to annual inspection with any areas of concern highlighted dealt with as and when required.

4.3 **Money** – *Income, reserves, stewardship, etc.*

- **Comment on your ability to finance all you are currently doing.**
- **How is the work of your church financed – is it mainly from givings or is it dependent on income from hall lettings, legacy interest, etc?**
- **Are you over-dependent on givings from any particular age group or individuals?**
- **When did you last address stewardship, what stewardship programme are you using and when will stewardship next be addressed?**
- **Anything else you would like to tell us?**

Responses:

Currently, we are able to finance all that we do. The Finance Group operate on a five year Budget programme with a traffic light system tracking income and expenditure over that period. The 2013 Budget shows a forecasted deficit of £17,016 but this is within the Finance Group's tolerance level set at 10%.

The redevelopment of our church is a significant future expenditure at £200,000. However, we have been allocating £20,000 per annum towards the project for a number of years and now have circa £100,000 set aside. The Listed Places of Worship VAT Grant Scheme should enable us to recover much of the VAT and as there are various allowances/contingencies for costs that might not arise the net spend should be well under £200,000. We will, however, be making grant applications to appropriate bodies and have applied for a £50,000 loan from the Central Fabric Fund which would only be drawn down as a last resort.

Our annual income is heavily dependent upon members' offerings. Including Gift Aid recovered, 80% of income is offerings based. Of the remaining 20%, rental income from our halls accounts for 11%.

We regularly update our givings profile which is devised on an age related basis. From this we know that the largest proportion of our givings - 20% - comes from the 80 -84 age group, while 70% comes from those aged 65 and over. Projecting forward enables us to predict that in ten years' time our total ordinary offerings will decrease by 30/40%. This is a major concern given the age profile of our congregation in the 25 – 44 group.

As we had already undertaken a Stewardship Money Programme in 2010, when we decided to adopt the Stewardship Season Programme we focused on time in 2012 and on talents in 2013. Money will again be the focus in 2014.

While we are very supportive of the underlying ethos of Ministries and Mission, we have a concern that the formula used discriminates against the wealthier churches. Currie Kirk is not in this category, but nevertheless we feel that with financial resources tightening across many parts of the community/country, a more equitable system needs

to be found which will enable wealthier churches to spend more in local mission while still contributing significantly to the wider work of the Church.

5. Presbytery Plan

5.1 Presbytery Plan – A Plan for Presbytery 2012-2022.



Currie

History

Currie is a historic Kirk with roots traced back over a thousand years. The present church was constructed in 1784 and the Gibson Craig Halls in 1901.

The Parish

The parish of Currie is the middle one of three parishes stretching westwards from Edinburgh, beyond the City Bypass along the A70 Lanark Road and the Water of Leith valley. The origins of the Kirk and early village lie back in the 13th Century and while some ribbon housing development took place in the inter-war years along Lanark Road, modern Currie was developed in the 1950's and 60's. It is now a commuter village for Edinburgh comprising low-rise low-density villa housing with private gardens.

Education is provided by Currie and Nether Currie Primary Schools and by Currie High School.

North of the main residential area but within the parish bounds is the extensive Riccarton Campus of Heriot-Watt University, which in addition to being a major seat of learning and term-time home to many students, is the major source of employment in the area.

The resident population was estimated to be just over 8,700 people in 2008 and with accommodation for more than 1,600 students in the Riccarton Campus; the population structure is heavily weighted towards the student (16 to 24 years) age group. A quarter of all Currie's population are in this age group compared to 14% for the city. For further comparison the neighbouring parishes of Balerno and Juniper Green both have student age groups of 10% of the total population.

There are development plans which would markedly increase the size of the parish population and alter considerably the social mix as well as introducing other forms of commercial activity.

Mission

Currie Kirk is a community based congregation and its mission is to the whole community although the student population at Heriot Watt is a matter for the wider church as well. Although the building suggests a country church, the challenge for the Minister and Kirk Session is to

work on the scale appropriate to the challenges of a significant city parish. In particular there should be a focus on:

- young families
- building community, and
- developing leadership.

The congregation should continue to develop links with neighbouring congregations along the Water of Leith.

Presbytery Plan

Currie Kirk should be led by one Minister of Word and Sacrament inducted on a basis of Unrestricted Tenure.

- How do you see the above being worked out?
- Anything else you would like to tell us?

Responses:

Currie Kirk already operates on a significant scale, and has looked to address the suggested areas for focus accordingly. We have established Messy Church and a Summer Holiday Club in the last couple of years to appeal to young families, and in September of 2013 established a Café Church initiative for youth. Messy Church regularly attracts around 40 children and 30 accompanying adults to its gatherings, and this year's Holiday Club had 50 children registered.

Currie is very much a community and a large community, so building community is a challenge for the church and other community groups. We are represented on Community Council, and are part of an on-going Community Glue project to link up more with all the different groups/associations that are represented in the community, so that we all might communicate better with one another.

Our church halls are the "Community Centre" and we have an open policy for advertising and usage, having recently gone through refurbishment and upgrading to gain a Public Entertainment Licence.

Our Kirk Building is part of an on-going redevelopment plan, which will see the space being more open and user friendly with disabled access, and new audio visual technology. A beautiful historic building in a less than central location is always a challenge, but Currie Kirk is looking to build on the past for the future.

Developing leadership remains a real challenge in order to continue our current work as well as looking to develop that for the future. An ageing membership and a high pastoral demand in the community are real challenges. Leadership for new initiatives is hard to find as people already find themselves over committed in other ways.

Developing links with the neighbouring congregations is on-going. We have an annual joint service and a pulpit swap each year too. Holy Week services have been shared over the last few years, and there is a willingness to share further in appropriate ways. The ministers meet throughout the year to build on these relationships and support one another.

6. Communication

6.1 **Communication Strategy** – *Tell us about your communication strategy/plan including website use:*

- **How do you promote your vision and mission?**
- **How do you keep in touch with members?**
- **How do you encourage members to keep in touch with one another?**
- **How do you advertise your church and its activities?**
- **Anything else you would like to tell us?**

Responses:

Our Communication Strategy is modelled on that of Presbytery adapted to suit our local situation and followed by all our Committees.

Our Mission Statement "*Where Faith and Life Cross Paths*" is visible on all our documents, i.e. letterheads, posters, weekly Orders of Service, magazine and website.

Included in the Orders of Service is an Update section which highlights church events/activities both locally and, when appropriate, those in other churches within the Presbytery.

Our magazine, "*Clipboard*", is published nine times a year and delivered to all our members including a number of associate members who have expressed a desire to maintain contact with the church in this way. This year the Christmas edition will be delivered to every home in the parish at the same time as our annual Christmas Card. Clipboard is also available in the Local Library, Medical Practice, Dentists, Opticians and in colour on our website.

Our website was redesigned three years ago to make it more user-friendly and every effort is made to ensure that it is up-to-date as it is regarded as an important outreach tool in relation to our connecting with people who may be looking for a "church home". We also see the website as having an environmental capability as we seek to encourage our members (target 100) to take Clipboard electronically and save paper and printing costs. The website calendar is also used for advertising our services, messy church and holiday club.

We have notice boards both within and outside the Gibson Craig Halls and by operating an open advertising policy we advertise events on behalf of the community so long as they do not offend our Christian principles. The railings outside the Halls are ideal for banner advertising.

We also make use of digital signage available in the local Post Office to advertise our Sunday Services and special Services during Christmas and Easter.

We encourage members to keep in touch with each other by offering fellowship after services, occasional congregational lunches and a variety of social events over the year.

