



Edinburgh Churches Together

Annual Report 2016

About Us:

Edinburgh Churches Together (ECT) was formed in the early 1990s as a local response to the establishment of Action of Churches Together in Scotland (ACTS). ECT is an ecumenical group of churches working in partnership across Edinburgh City.

The purpose of Edinburgh Churches Together is to help member churches work together so as to:

- jointly address issues of concern and interest within our city and beyond
- support each other in times of challenge and celebration
- provide a meeting point between the Christian Church and the City
- encourage local congregations to work together
- share resources, ideas, insights and best practice
- create city scale projects and events as a witness to the presence of Christ in Edinburgh

Membership is open to any Trinitarian Christian Church working within the area covered by the City of Edinburgh Council.

It is made up of members from the Church of Scotland, Methodist Church, Orthodox Church, Religious Society of Friends, Roman Catholic Church, Salvation Army, Scottish Episcopal Church, United Free Church and United Reformed Church.

Current Representatives

Each member church is invited to send 1 member of clergy and 1 lay person to meetings of the Council.

Church of Scotland

Rev Dr George Whyte, Dr David Holton

Methodist Church

Rev Andrew Letby, Mr Tim Martin

Orthodox Church

Archimandrite Raphael Pavouris

Religious Society of Friends

Mr Steve Tilley

Roman Catholic Church,

Mgr Philip Kerr, Mr Paddy Ferry

Salvation Army

Lieut-Colonel Carol Bailey, Vacancy

Scottish Episcopal Church

Bishop John Armes, Mrs Judith Scott

United Free Church

Rev Duncan Whitty, Vacancy

United Reformed Church

Rev Fiona Bennett, Vacancy

Officers

Communications and Administration Officer: Dr Nicola Robinson

Treasurer: Rev Andrew Letby

Convenor: Rev Fiona Bennett

2016 Goals

The purpose of ECT shall be to help member churches to work together so as to:

- jointly address issues of concern and interest within our city and beyond
- support each other in times of challenge and celebration
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- share resources, ideas, insights and best practice
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Communications and Organisational Life

An administrative system is in place which helps ECT to run smoothly and efficiently and encourage participation from all partner churches.

The system entails the following:

- creating and maintaining a register of all partner churches including all the different systems of contact (representatives from local churches, dioceses etc.)
- preparing a meeting Agenda
- issuing Call and Agenda to ECT Council members prior to the date of meetings
- preparing meeting Minutes and distributing them timeously to members.

Accounts

Invoices were issued to member churches for their annual contribution (subscriptions run for the financial year).

Andrew Letby, as Treasurer, created the annual budget (on the next page) and received annual contributions.

Edinburgh Churches Together

Financial statement - year to 31st December 2016

	Income		Expenditure
Balance b/f (old ECT)	£6569.44		
Methodist Church	£375.00	Salary N Robinson	£3680.00
United Reformed Church	£225.00	Expenses N Robinson	£257.68
Church of Scotland	£2250.00	Salary admin fee	£240.00
Scottish Episcopal Church	£750.00	Employer's Liability Insurance	£166.98
Roman Catholic Church	£2250.00	AGM	£43.20
		Training	£230.00
(total contributions)	(£5850.00)		
		Balance c/f	£7801.58
Total income	£12419.44	Total expenditure	£12419.44

Newsletter

Items and contributions for an electronic newsletter are collated from partner churches every two months. The newsletter is sent round an ever-expanding mailing list and provides details of exciting ecumenical events, courses, training and volunteering opportunities taking place across the city. This type of advertising enables the inter-church sharing of news and encourages each denomination or local church to support one another and think about the type of events, volunteering and training that they could open up to others as a shared resource. For example, previous newsletters have included information about SafeTalk Training, Fresh Start volunteering and spirituality retreats.

The readership and distribution of the newsletter is increasing through a number of new individuals signing up to receive the newsletter. There has also been independent churches including Destiny asking to be added to the mailing list. Both the current and past issues of the newsletters are also available on the website.

**2015 goal addressed:
share resources, ideas, insights and best practice.**

The newsletter also includes relevant Edinburgh City Council consultations. On a semi regular basis the Council releases consultations about how the city should be "run".

**2015 goals addressed:
provide a meeting point between the Christian Church and the City
jointly address issues of concern and interest within our city and beyond**

Social Media

Over the past year, efforts have been taken to increase the number who engage with our social media. At present, we are followed by more than 130 people on Facebook and Twitter.



Edinburgh Churches Together



@ECTEdinburgh

Website

This year, we recognised the need for a website. Nicola Robinson attended a 4 day residential iChurch Training course in Cambridge which resulted in the creation of an ECT website from scratch. The website provides details of member churches' websites, ecumenical news, resources and events.

Since September, there have been over 350 views.



<http://edinburghchurchestogether.org.uk/>

Relationship Building

In order to raise the profile of ECT and establish positive working relationships Nicola has met with representatives from Actions for Churches Together in Scotland (ACTS), Edinburgh Churches for Sanctuary, Edinburgh City Centre Churches, Edinburgh Inter-faith Association, Glasgow Churches Together, Positive Help, Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees (SFAR), Stonewall Scotland, Student Christian Movement.

Nicola was also invited to attend the Churches Together in Britain and Ireland AGM in May.

These meetings have led to an increased awareness of ECT across the city and beyond and has begun to usefully inform ECT of potential opportunities for our future role.

2015 goals addressed:

share resources, ideas, insights and best practice

provide a meeting point between the Christian Church and the City

Furthering the membership of ECT

ECT identified the idea to invite other Christian denominations and independent churches to join ECT. Nicola contacted churches to explore this possibility with an email and included attachments of the most recent newsletter and constitution.

In the past year, The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) and Orthodox Church have become member churches of ECT.

Membership

We are delighted to be members of Edinburgh Inter-Faith Association and Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees.



SCOTTISH FAITHS
ACTION FOR REFUGEES

2050 Edinburgh City Vision workshop



2050 Edinburgh City Vision Churches' Workshop *Sunday 20th November 2016, 3-5pm Augustine United Church, 41-43 George IV Bridge, EH1 1EL

The City of Edinburgh Council is embarking on a project to develop a vision for Edinburgh 2050. The 2050 vision aspires to be:



Ambitious

One that we can all understand and buy into

Developed with involvement from residents of all ages, businesses and groups from all sectors and

The City of Edinburgh Council wants to hear from everyone with an interest in the city:

- What is great about Edinburgh as a city in 2016?
- What could be better?
- What should Edinburgh be like in 2050?

particularly in relation to key themes of: *Community, Digital & Technology, Built Environment, Business & Work, Health, Faith, Transport, Sustainable Development, Young People, Housing, Education, Physical Activity & Sport, Culture & Tourism, Community Safety, Natural Environment.*

They have launched a city wide conversation to hear peoples' views, which can be offered as individuals, but also as groups. (www.edinburgh.org/2050-edinburgh-city-vision/)

Edinburgh Churches Together in partnership with Edinburgh Presbytery

would like to invite churches and faith groups across the city to a workshop, to respond to this conversation as a group. This does not mean our responses have to agree, but that we can submit a collective response to ensure our voice is heard in the process of shaping this vision. The submission deadline for responses is December 2016. We have therefore organised our group workshop for Sunday 20th November 2016.*

The proposed program for the afternoon workshop is:

3:00pm	Welcome
3:05pm	Representative of City of Edinburgh Council to offer overview of 2050 Edinburgh City Vision
3:15pm	Rev Carol Ford to explain the 2050 consultation process
3:25pm	16 discussion groups offer around the room. Each taking one of the Themes and exploring the 3 Questions in relation to it.
3:55pm	Break
4:00pm	16 discussion groups offer around the room. Each taking one of the themes and exploring the 3 Questions in relation to it.
4:30pm	Facilitators briefly feedback the responses on their flip chart sheets.
4:50pm	Closing Remarks
5:00pm	Finish

We would like to encourage all Churches across the city to send **at least one** representative to participate in the workshop, so that our response is as honest a reflection as possible. Each participant will be able to take part in 2 workshops, engaging with 2 of the 15 themes which are of greatest interest to you.

If you are able to send a representative please register for free through

<https://edinburghvision2050workshop.eventbrite.com/>

If you prefer to register by phone please call Nicola at 07950 431513.

The City of Edinburgh Council is embarking on a project to develop a vision for Edinburgh 2050. They have launched a city wide conversation to hear peoples' views.

ECT in partnership with Edinburgh Presbytery organised and invited churches from across the city to a workshop on Sunday 20 November, to respond to this conversation as a group. In the weeks before the event, flyers and information about the event were sent and posted in emails, newsletters and websites from most of the denominations ECT represent as well as other churches and organisations.

On the afternoon of the event, responses to a vision for Edinburgh 2050 were explored in relation to the key themes of: Community, Digital & Technology, Built Environment, Business & Work, Health, Faith, Transport, Sustainable Development, Young People, Housing, Education, Physical Activity & Sport, Culture & Tourism, Community Safety, Natural Environment.

Each participant was able to take part in 2 groups, engaging with 2 of the 15 themes. Each group was led by a facilitator who took notes. On the afternoon of the event, 50 folk attended, representing at least eight different denominations.

Following the workshop, Nicola collated the hand written responses and typed them up for submission to the Edinburgh 2050 Vision website and, also sent them to the workshop participants.

2015 goals addressed:

jointly address issues of concern and interest within our city and beyond

provide a meeting point between the Christian Church and the City

share resources, ideas, insights and best practice

create city scale projects and events as a witness to the presence of Christ in Edinburgh

Emergency Planning

As representatives from ECT, Fiona Bennett and Nicola Robinson met with Edinburgh City Council. The meeting at Waverley Court was also attended by Jean Midwinter from the Salvation Army and Paul Young, Marian Gray, Jamie Macrae and Russell McLauchlan from Edinburgh City Council. We explored the kind of support and resources that the member churches of Edinburgh Churches Together (ECT) might be able to provide in a serious emergency incident affecting the City. The Council are interested in a database with key holders/ caretakers, capacity, and facilities including toilets and kitchens that the member churches from the 7 denominations can offer in the event of a serious incident affecting Edinburgh. They are interested to see if local churches could be used as Rest Centres (places for people to go for safety and information in the midst of the crisis - where there would be always a manager and 3 other representatives from the Council) and whether there are groups and resources which could be offered to support post-incident. The Council agreed that this database would be welcomed and helpful and agreed to provide a template document.

Letters of explanation about the database and a table (on the next pages) to fill in were distributed to ECT member churches which asked them if they had resources that they would be willing to make available as part of this response in order to support those affected by an emergency in Edinburgh.

As a consequence, a number of churches are signed up to act as a Rest Centre in the event of an emergency and Nicola has begun compiling the database.

Next Steps

We will continue to encourage more churches to sign up as Rest Centres and then send the database to Edinburgh City Council.

2015 goals addressed:

jointly address issues of concern and interest within our city and beyond

provide a meeting point between the Christian Church and the City

share resources, ideas, insights and best practice



Dear All,

Edinburgh Churches offering support for City's Emergency Planning

In case of a major incident within our city, such as flooding or serious fire, The City of Edinburgh Council along with other agencies (including the Emergency Services) have a system of Emergency Response in place. The City Council are keen for Churches to get involved and to offer their buildings and resources to help local Edinburgh people if affected by an incident.

They are interested to see if local churches could be used as Rest Centres (places for people to go for safety and information in the midst of the crisis - where there would be always a manager and 3 other representatives from the Council) and whether there are groups and resources which could be offered to support post-incident.

On your behalf, Edinburgh Churches Together (ECT) have been in consultation with the City Council and are compiling a list of local church resources across the city. These resources include buildings, kitchens - including size and standard, toilets, hall space etc and whether keyholders and/or caretakers are available in a reasonable time frame, and which we can offer as part of the response to an emergency situation.

Does your local congregation have resources which they would be willing to make available as part of this response in order to support those affected by an emergency in Edinburgh?

If your congregation would be willing to get involved with this response please contact, Nicola Robinson (ECT's Communications and Administration Officer) at nicola.robinson.ect@gmail.com, who is compiling an Edinburgh Church Response Database on behalf of ECT partners.

Yours Sincerely,

Fiona Bennett

Andrew Letby

Convenor of Edinburgh Churches

Treasurer of Edinburgh Churches

Together

Together

The Listening Service¹

New Multi-Faith Chaplaincy for Edinburgh Sheriff Court



A new chaplaincy initiative called ‘The Listening Service’ has been launched in Edinburgh, with a team of 19 trained chaplains from the city’s faith communities beginning work on Tuesday 6 December at Edinburgh Sheriff Court. These new court’s chaplains will provide an independent, confidential support service to all court users and staff - of all faiths and none. Court staff and staff from other agencies at the court (e.g. Social Work, Victim Support) will be able to refer court users to the Listening Service. The service is free, private and confidential; a listening ear for all who request it, when it is most needed

The court chaplaincy service will be the first of its kind in Scotland but is based on a successful model that has been running in Bradford since 2009.

Local faith leaders and the Edinburgh Inter-Faith Association have been involved in the Listening Service project since it was proposed in January 2016. Operational procedures and lines of accountability have to the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service have been developed in conjunction with the Sheriff principal and the Sheriff Clerk.

The Project Leaders for the Listening Service are Andrew Letby and Hilda Warwick of the Methodist Church.

Looking ahead

Find ways of developing funding streams which will need to include non Christian contributions. Recruiting and training of the next batch of volunteers will be in the new year.

¹ Taken from the Press Release

Priorities for the year ahead (taken from our 2016 goals)

Jointly address issues of concern and interest within our city and beyond AND
Create city scale projects and events as a witness to the presence of Christ in
Edinburgh

Organise and host events to address city wide issues and raise the profile of ECT.

Provide a meeting point between the Christian Church and the City

Continue to engage with emergency planning in the city by providing a database for Edinburgh City Council.

Encourage local congregations to work together

Continue to build up local relationships by organising an event/gathering for local Churches Together groups - formal and informal - to share stories, challenges and explore how we can help and support each other.

Share resources, ideas, insights and best practice

Continue to use the newsletter, social media and website to publicise exciting ecumenical events, courses, training and volunteering taking place across the city.

Participate in and share the emergency training that the Salvation Army are providing for suitable volunteers.