



# Edinburgh Churches Together

## Annual Report 2018

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**This report covers 12 months from March 2018 to March 2019.**

**Issued on March 14<sup>th</sup> 2019**

## 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. The purpose of ECT 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/events as a witness to the presence of Christ

**Membership** Open to any Trinitarian Christian Church working within the area covered by the City of Edinburgh Council, members are currently made up from:

- The Church of Scotland
- Methodist Church
- Religious Society of Friends
- Roman Catholic Church
- Salvation Army
- Scottish Episcopal Church
- United Free Church
- United Reformed Church

**Current Representatives** Each member church is invited to send one member of clergy and one lay person to meetings of the Council.

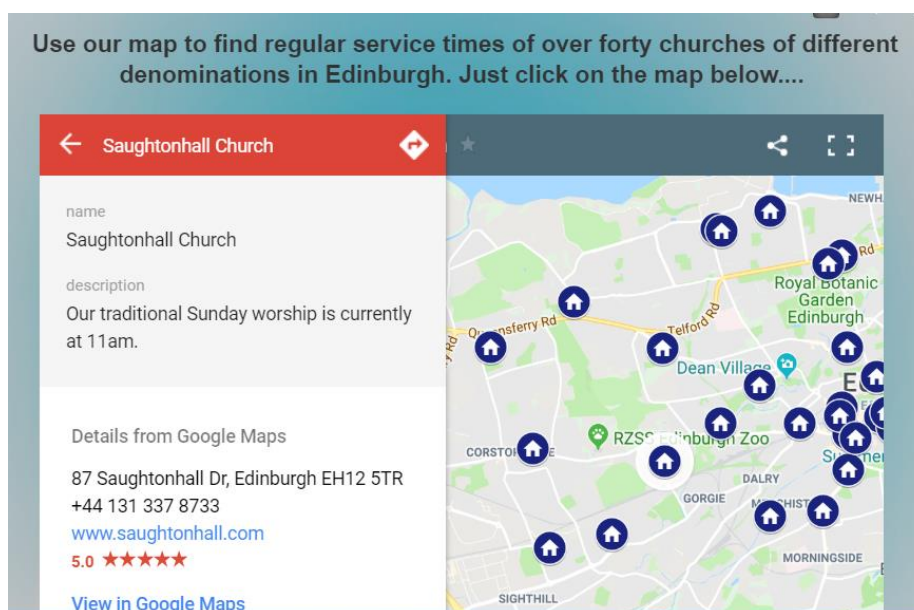
Church of Scotland	Rev Marjory McPherson, Dr David Holton
Methodist Church	Rev Helen Jenkins, Mr. Tim Martin
Religious Society of Friends	Mr. Steve Tilley
Roman Catholic Church	Mgr. Philip Kerr, Mr. Paddy Ferry
Salvation Army	<i>Both positions currently vacant</i>
Scottish Episcopal Church	<i>Vacancy</i> , Mrs. Judith Scott
United Free Church	Rev Duncan Whitty, <i>Vacancy</i>
United Reformed Church	Rev Steven Manders, Mrs. Doris Caldwell

Convener:	Mgr. Philip Kerr
Vice Convener:	Rev Marjory McPherson
Treasurer:	Mrs. Sandra Endicott
Communications and Admin	Imogen Gibson

## Activities in 2018

There were a number of goals set out in the 2017 Annual Report and these have either been achieved or are currently in progress:

**Communicating the Christmas Story across the city** ECT emailed all churches within each member denomination to ask for the times of their Christmas services. A website page with an interactive map was added to the website. Visitors could click on the map and find their nearest church with details of the Christmas services. If the church had a website, this was also linked.



Over forty churches sent their Christmas service details and the page was publicised on social media. After Christmas, the service details were amended to reflect normal service times.

**Advertising Easter Services** Easter services were also advertised using a flyer directing people to a page on the website. The intention is to repeat this for 2019 and contact churches again for details of their Easter services.

**Explore Ways to Increase number of churches signed up as rest centres** An existing flyer was amended with Imogen Gibson's details and this was emailed out to the mailing list. Church of Scotland Presbytery also emailed churches. We now have details of 17 churches on our database willing to act as rest centres in the event of an emergency. A page dedicated to information about this has been added to the website with a downloadable form to send details. Imogen Gibson was

invited to attend the Lothian and Borders Local Resilience Partnership Voluntary Sector Group. This is a group meeting quarterly to share best practice and information across the voluntary sector in the event of an emergency providing a central point of contact for Council and local government. Members were very enthusiastic about ECT's initiative. It was suggested that a 'trial run' should be made with participating churches to test response times. Watch this space!

**Possible Event for week of Christian Unity** This goal was particularly successfully achieved with an ecumenical service for the week of Christian Unity at Palmerston Place Church on January 21<sup>st</sup> 2019. Participants numbered around 100 and the service was followed by refreshments and fellowship. Thanks go to Paddy Ferry for organising this. Feedback was very positive and it is hoped that ECT can make this a fixture in the Edinburgh ecumenical calendar.

**City of Edinburgh Council Parking Proposals** CEC now has three proposals that may affect parishioners in the city centre. The first is the introduction of Sunday parking charges. These are apparently going to start at 12.30pm and will be implemented in May. The second is the decision to close roads in the city centre on the first Sunday of every month. The third is a city centre wide application of parking restrictions, pedestrianisation and road closures during the Summer. ECT has tried to publicise these measures at every opportunity so city centre churches are aware of the changes. However, proposals have only very recently been confirmed and made public and details are still not clear. At the time of writing, Canongate Kirk will be hosting a meeting on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> March with Old Town Churches affected by the proposals and transport officials from CEC. The results will be fed back to ECT.

**Court Listening Service** Based at Edinburgh's Sheriff Court, the Service now has a team of 25 trained volunteers from the city's faith and humanist communities who provide an independent, confidential support service to all court clients and staff – of all faiths and none. A new round of volunteer recruitment took place in the Autumn and this was publicised by ECT. There is a continued need to secure funding in order to ensure that the Service can continue and ECT helped advertise a recent quiz night for the service at Central Edinburgh Methodist Church. An update from Margaret Walker, board member of the Listening Service, tells us that the current board Chair and Project Leader are stepping down and there will

hopefully be a new Chair by end of the month. The Project Leader post is currently being advertised and ECT have advertised it on the website and social media. At present all enquiries should be sent to [listeningserviceedinburgh@gmail.com](mailto:listeningserviceedinburgh@gmail.com) ECT was involved in the creation of the Court Listening Service so a special page has been dedicated to it on our website.

**Continue to put energies into Website, Social Media and Newsletter** Imogen has ‘rebranded’ the existing website with a different format incorporating separate pages for ECT’s projects, a ‘Newsletter and News’ section and a redesigned ‘Find a Church Service’ page. The Newsletter and News page has a link to the newsletter but also provides an opportunity to advertise events sent after the Newsletter publication deadline.



*Website Home Page*

Our social media profile has been significantly increased: our Facebook page now has 174 followers, an increase of about 20% 6 months. Our Twitter followers



*Edinburgh Churches Together Facebook Profile page*

have increased to 332. Our Twitter feed is prominently displayed on the home page of the website. An on-line presence is especially important for an organisation like ECT with a small budget and no office premises.

**Connection with local church groups** Communication with other Churches Together groups continues. Imogen gave a short presentation to Edinburgh City Centre Churches Together last month. The ECCCT logo has been added to our home page.

**Newsletter** Items and contributions for an electronic newsletter continue to be collated from partner churches every two months. The newsletter is sent round an ever-expanding mailing list and provides details of 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. The newsletter has also expanded to include articles such as Andrew Gregg’s description of his work as a city centre Workplace Chaplain. The newsletter is also available as a link on the website and social media. Feedback for the newsletter has so far been positive and constructive: for example, a request to make sure it is available at least two Sundays before the first advertised event (not always possible but definitely a goal worth aiming for!) Another request was made for posters and flyers to be downloadable as links on the ECT website for display in churches.

**Accounts**

Annual Contributions were not requested last year due to an error. To rectify this, invoices and a letter were recently issued to member churches requesting the annual contribution for 2019 together with 2018, the latter optional. Sandra Endicott, as Treasurer, issued the 2018 end of year balance and 2019 draft budget.

**Balance as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018**

BALANCE SHEET		AS AT 31ST DECEMBER 2018	
RECEIPTS		PAYMENTS	
Opening Bank Balance	£ 5,316.38	Salary	-3920.3
Partners Contribution	£ 3,675.00	Salary Costs	-240.00
Other	£ -	Insurance	-211.14
		N. Robinson Expenses	-299.44
		Other expenditure	-535.6
		balance to carry forward	
	£ 8,991.38		-5206.4
Balance as above	£ 8,991.38		
o/s cheques	£ 331.61		
less payments	-£ 5,206.44		
balance per bank statement	£ 4,116.55		

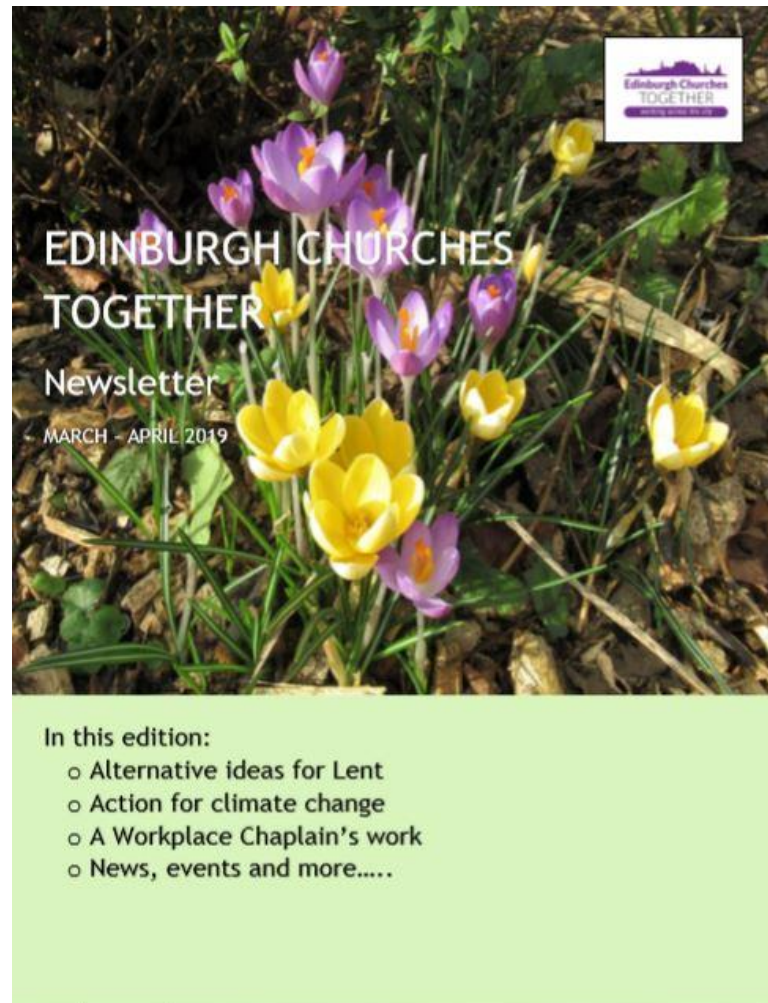
## Draft Budget for 2019

EDINBURGH CHURCHES TOGETHER									
BUDGET 2019									
Central Edin Quakers	£	75.00		1	Employment costs	£	3,979.32		
Salvation Army	£	75.00			Computer virus check etc	£	400.00		
United free Church	£	75.00			Stationary & Postages	£	150.00		
URC Synod of Scot	£	300.00			Travel	£	100.00		
Edin MC Methodist	£	300.00			Insurance	£	300.00		
Edin Diosean	£	750.00			Administer's expenses	£	250.00		
Church of Scot	£	2,250.00			Advertising etc	£	500.00		
Roman Catholict	£	2,250.00							
		£6,075.00		2			£5,679.32		
					2 These figures show that income should exceed expenditure by				£ 395.68
					Also there are back payments due in for years 2017 & 2018 which have not yet been received				
					1 There is potention for an uplift in salary				
					Bank balance is healthy				£ 3,784.91
					2 Am not sure about contributions figure as 2016 only gives				£ 6,000.00

## Priorities for 2019

1. Continue to strengthen connections with other Churches Together groups with visits, adding their details to our website.
2. In the light of the new parking restrictions, continue to make CEC aware of worshippers' need for access to church particularly on Sundays.
3. Increase the number of churches signed up as Rest Centres
4. Maintain contact with the Listening Service and publicise its activities.
5. Confirm a date for the 2020 ECT Week of Christian Unity service.
6. Continue to increase social media followers and newsletter subscriptions

7. Add Easter and Christmas services to the website map.
8. Finish the make-over of the website, add to resources page and improve Google search results.
9. Highlight the activities many church groups are engaged in regarding climate change.
10. Consider the shape of ECT in light of changes to ACTS following on from the ACTS review



[www.edinburghchurchestogether.org.uk](http://www.edinburghchurchestogether.org.uk)

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