



Newsletter July 2021: **Focus on communication**



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT **Col Jamie Erskine MBE**

At this time of the year the Chairman usually writes a few remarks for the annual report. However, it was decided this year we would try something new. As opposed to producing an Annual Report, we are going to produce a series of Newsletters throughout the next twelve months. This will enable us to keep in touch with you on a more regular basis, the news will be more current, and each edition may have a focus to it. I also hope that, by sending the

newsletters out electronically, they can then be forwarded to a wider readership.

It has been a torrid last twelve months for everyone and I think the resilience that has been shown has been remarkable. However, there currently seems to be a degree of optimism in the country which did not exist this time last year. Let us just hope the optimism and opening up of the country are neither misplaced nor premature. As the country re-opens and restrictions are lifted, so the need to sustain and support Places of Worship becomes more sharply into focus, not least because over the lockdown they were often not given the attention

they needed. We, in Scotland's Churches Trust, have our part to play and are anxious to do so. Additionally, last year all of our events were cancelled but it is hoped that they can be resurrected in the forthcoming year and that you will support them whenever possible.

At the beginning of the year, we carried out a survey and were very grateful to those who replied with their thoughts on what we did. Gratifyingly there is generally broad support for what we do but we are now looking at how we can improve the way we do our business as a result of the responses and as a result of last year's experience.

Throughout the lockdown Stuart

Beattie and Graeme Green have continued to work hard on behalf of the Trust and I am indebted to them, our trustees, committee members and volunteers, all of whom are motivated by the desire to promote our places of worship. You may have already seen or heard that Stuart is due to handover his role as Director at the end of the year. He has been a passionate supporter of SCT and the Trust owes him a huge debt for what he has achieved. As I write this, we are looking for a successor. If anyone knows anyone who may be interested, please do let us know.

Missed it? You are still welcome to respond to the survey via a link that we can send you.

Survey results!



It is vital that we are driven by the needs of our supporters. Here is a link to the summary results of the recent opinion survey:

[SCT Opinion Survey Results - Scotlands Churches Trust](#)



Homework!

Stuart and Graeme continue to work mostly from home where we can perform the vast majority of SCT business online including all forms of contact as before. Our landline software forwards voicemail to us instantaneously and emails arrive as normal. Even meetings and seminars are easy via Zoom. We have occasional visits to the Mound to pick up the post and literature or books for sale to supporters of SCT.

Winter is coming!



Although not directly associated with SCT, here is a University of Edinburgh project that may be of interest to many. It is a service in which volunteers help churches understand how to heat their buildings efficiently. Building managers or similar are invited to a short Zoom interview which will focus on their experience of heating their building which will then lead to a related workshop. Sign-up form and more info: <https://forms.office.com/r/g2d8gml0J2> Contact details: k.m.doherty-1@sms.ed.ac.uk or 07720909483 to chat informally.

Our newsletters

In the coming months we aim to keep regular contact with you, highlighting topics of interest such as

Church Recording, our partnerships with other organisations, how best to complete your grant application, how to use our website to effectively publicise your church and online webinars. You are also very welcome to contact us at any time to comment on issues that interest you or suggest future topics. Previous copies, along with other blogs and articles are available at: [The blog - Scotlands Churches Trust](#)

There are many benefits of membership of the Trust that all enhance our ethos of Sustaining Scotland's Places of Worship such as grants and publicising your church online. However, we would encourage you to log into your account, check your contact email address and let us know if updates are needed. Likewise, please add [info@](mailto:info@scotlandschurchestrust.org.uk), [office@](mailto:office@scotlandschurchestrust.org.uk) and newsandevents@scotlandschurchestrust.org.uk to your safe senders list to help avoid our emails going to SPAM.

National Churches Trust Essay Project on the Future of Churches



Thank you so much to our supporters who contributed to this which will be published in September and is likely to be a core component of a future newsletter.

Help us to help you!



Churches are there for everyone and we encourage congregational and community involvement. Please circulate this newsletter far and wide. A message from the pulpit or bulletin or simply pinning to the local library noticeboard would help connect with those that could benefit from SCT's support.

Thank you again.