SCT

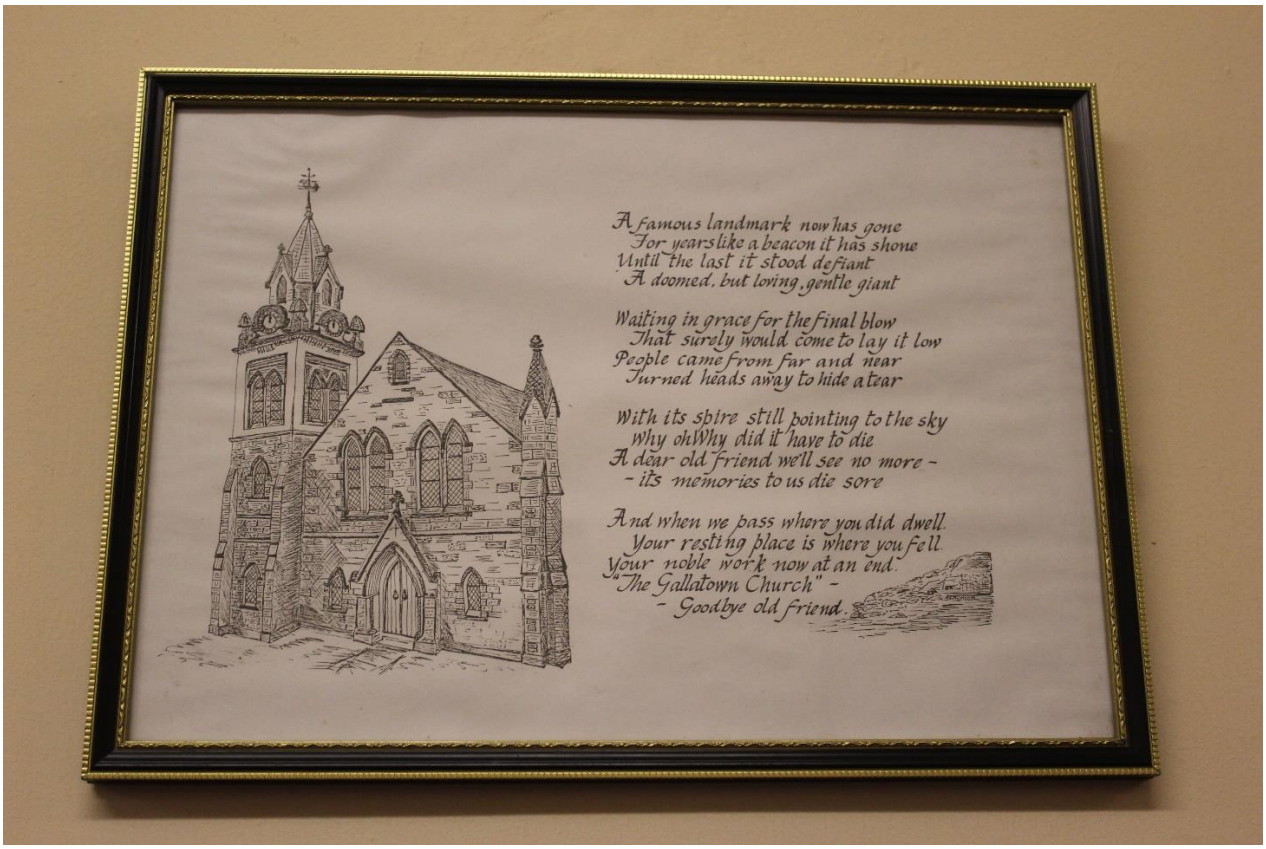
Sustaining Scotland's Places of Worship

Newsletter August 2021: **Focus on Church Recording**

Prof Adam Cumming

We have written a lot about church recording over the last 3 years and with the pandemic that is nearly all we have been able to do! However, as restrictions ease we are beginning to look at what we can do and how we can both renew our efforts and redirect them.

The 2021 General Assembly of the Church of Scotland looked at the Kirk's stock of buildings and how they could be used and in what way. They also looked at disposing of surplus buildings – of all kinds. This approach is not limited to the Kirk but is common across all denominations. This means that there is a great risk of the loss of not just buildings but the heritage they represent through their furnishings and contents. While the contents may well survive, they will be out of context and hence harder for future generations to understand.



Kirkcaldy Viewforth and a picture of one of the churches merged into Viewforth – Galatown.

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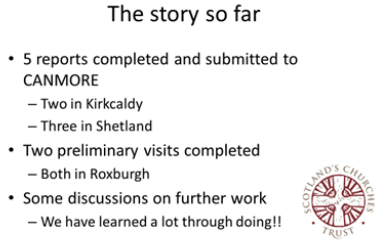
We would love you to forward or circulate this newsletter to members of your congregation. You may print copies as you wish or we can send these by post. Thank you for telling others!

This can be true even if the use of the building only changes with newer forms of worship or community use. Yet I am sure many of you have seen either TV programmes or articles about reuse of church buildings as housing and while that reduces some of the impact it does change the interior almost certainly beyond recognition. This is why our Church Recording Project is so important for producing that information both for now and for the future. These reports are being placed on the HES CANMORE database as part of a national record. You can help with that as we need volunteers!

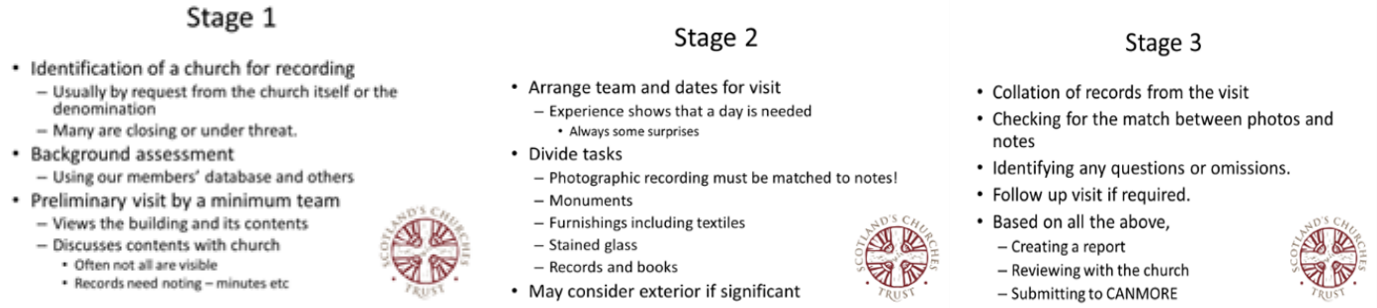
We recently held a webinar where we described the approach and activities as well as the links with other interested organisations, the UK-wide Church Recording Society and the Scottish Historic Churches Trust. The details and recording of the Zoom webinar presentations are available from the office if you wish to know more or get involved.

It is worth noting the approach and its limitations:

It was well attended and provoked discussion on the approach and what has been achieved so far:

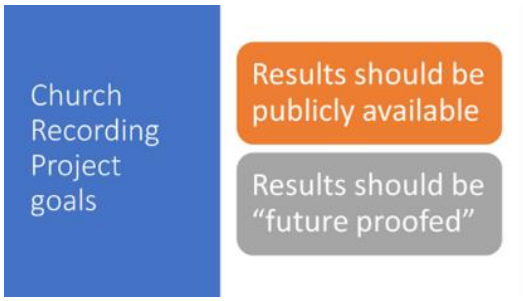


The approach was summarised in three stages:



However, there is a lot more than this including a template for the approach so that the details are complete and standardised:

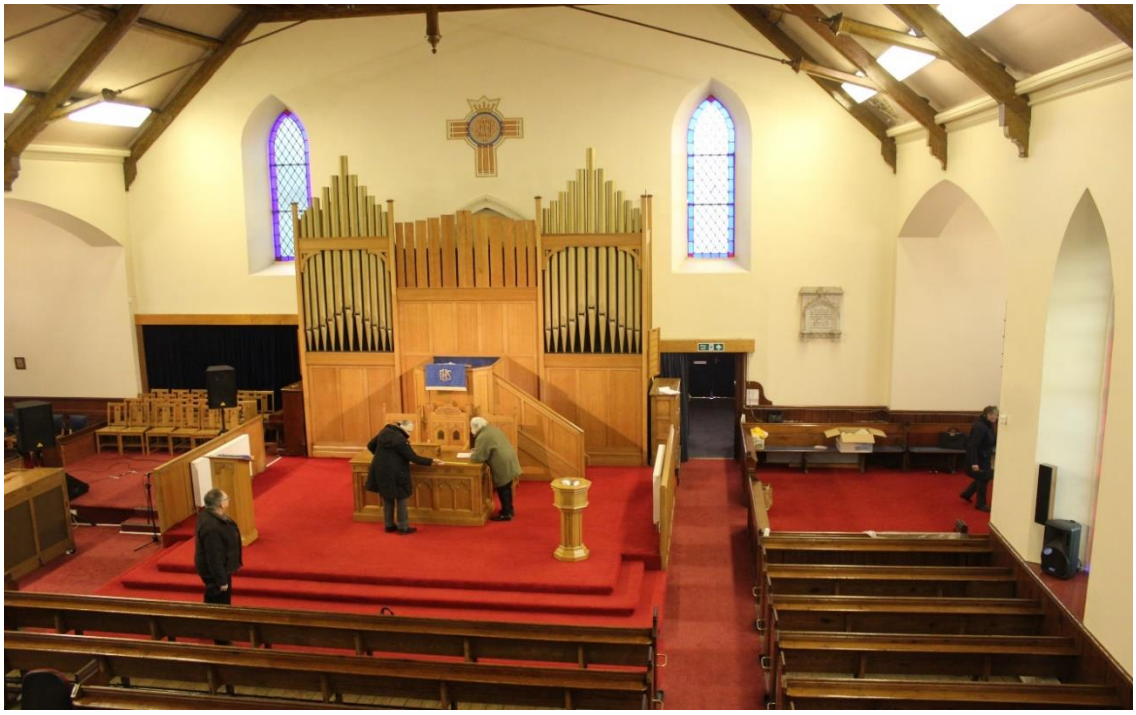
This is in part to ensure it all works for the future!



It is rewarding and enjoyable – you learn so much while helping to ensure the detail are preserved for the future. We are always looking for volunteers so if you wish to get in touch and we can discuss it. Adam Cumming is leading on the project and would be happy to talk to you about it.

Recording in progress and what we hope to record, a study in pictures:

Wrap up well, volunteers! A cold but keen Lesley Cumming at Smailholm / Recording at Viewforth



These could so easily be lost:

Above – a donation record kept in Roxburgh and a map of Roxburgh

Below – plaque of Royal arms of King James IV and some tankards

Coffee and biscuits provided! / Template of Church Recording Categories

SCOTLAND'S CHURCHES TRUST
NAME OF CHURCH
DATE

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

EXTERNAL ARCHITECTURE

INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE

For each item in each category the following information should be provided together with a photograph:
Description:
Material:
Measurements Height, width, depth, diameter etc in cms
Memorial Inscription:

ARCHIVES inc. REGISTERS for example:

- Proclamation of Banns
- Register of Services

BIBLES & HYMNARIES for example:

- Church Anthem Book
- Good News Bible 1993
- New English Bible
- King James Bible
- Sacred Songs and Solos book

MEMORIALS for example:

- War Memorial 1914-1918
- War Memorial 1939-1945
- Memorial to a particular person

METALWORK , INCLUDING COMMUNION PLATE for example:

- Glass candleholders
- Lamps
- Memorial/Presentation glass vase
- Sundial on exterior wall
- Tea Light stand

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS for example:

- Organ
- Clavinova
- Electronic organ/piano
- Electronic workstation
- Piano

PAINTINGS/PICTURES for example

- Framed Trinity symbol
- Framed cross stitch Picture
- Framed drawings
- Framed textile collage
- Framed black and white sketch
- Framed stencilled Wall decoration
- Unframed photos
- Unframed drawings

TEXTILES for example

- Banner
- Choir seat cushions
- Communion tablecloths
- Fabric bookmarks
- Organ stool cushion
- Pulpit Fall

WINDOWS for example

- Nave windows
- Transept Window

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