

# Brightons Parish Church

Scottish Charity Number SC001385

## Appendix to Parish Profile

### Appendix 2:

Kirk Session submission to Presbytery  
5-yearly visiting team (May 2017)

Table of Church Organisations and Numbers

GB Captain's Annual Comments/Summary 2017

BB Captain's Annual Comments/Summary 2017

## PAPER A – QUESTIONS FOR THE OFFICE BEARERS

### Instructions:

The Visiting Team will be using the response to this questionnaire to form the basis of discussion between the Visiting Team and the Office Bearers. It is, therefore, important that all Office Bearers are involved in the response and so you are encouraged to make an effort to hold a special meeting with all your Office Bearers, to openly and honestly discuss and answer these questions, giving as much explanation as necessary that will inform the Team of your congregation's life. Simply giving a yes or no answer may not always be a sufficient response. Please give your answers on a separate sheet of paper and headed and number accordingly – this will give you as much space as you deem necessary for each answer you wish to give to each question.

### **1 WORSHIP**

- 1.1 What worship opportunities are available to the congregation and community at what specific times throughout the week and at Liturgical seasons? **Worship takes place each Sunday morning and monthly on a Sunday evening from September through to June. Early Watchnight (for families and older folk), Watchnight and Christmas Day services are held. Easter services are held during Holy Week in conjunction with other churches in the Braes area. A special service is held annually for those who have been bereaved. Other services, appropriate to the time of year and the timetable of the church organisations, for example, Harvest and the Dedication of the Leaders and Officers of the uniformed organisations and Sunday Schools are held.**
- 1.2 Have any difficulties arisen from the administration of the Sacrament of Baptism (give examples) and how often is the Sacrament of Holy Communion celebrated? **If a request for Baptism is received from a non-member, they will be asked to consider worshipping with us for a period of time, attending Open Door classes and then joining the Church by profession of faith. If this is something that they feel they cannot do then the alternative of a Dedication or Thanksgiving Service can be made available to them. There is the option for grandparents who are members of the congregation to bring a child for Baptism. The Sacrament of Holy Communion is celebrated in March, June, September and December with morning and afternoon services. There is also a short Communion held immediately after the morning service for those teaching Sunday School who otherwise would not be able to participate. Home Communion is also offered for those who are unable to attend worship. Holy Communion is also celebrated on the Thursday of Holy Week if that particular service is being held at Brightons.**
- 1.3 What changes have been made in style or form of worship in the last five years and how have such changes been received by the congregation, and in what way does Sunday worship reflect this pattern of praise, prayers, scripture and sermon, and what changes, if any, are planned for the future? **In the past, we have run specific Youth Services and, although they are not taking place at present, this may be something to explore again in the future. Some of the evening services are planned and led by different groups within the Church Other than that there have been no fundamental changes made over the last five years and none are currently planned.**
- 1.4 Describe the extent of any participation there is in the preparation and leading of worship by members/office bearers. **At each morning service, the Scriptures are read by a member**

of the congregation and, with the exception of Communion Sunday, the prayer of thanksgiving and intercession is also given by a member. We have rotas of volunteers for both these duties which are coordinated by the Depute Session Clerk. For the majority of Sunday morning services, the Youth Message will be given by a member with the Minister covering perhaps 40% of the Sundays in the year. On infrequent occasions, the service will be led by one of the Elders or our Pastoral Assistant. Family Services are held at Christmas and summer with planning, leading and participation from many of the children and their leaders. Special dedication and end of session services are held for the uniformed organisations with members of those organisations taking part. Some of the evening services are "special" (for example, Lessons and Carols or Christingle, Bereavement Service, tailored for those with Learning Difficulties) and these will be coordinated and led, with the Minister in attendance, by members or groups from the congregation. Occasional Pulpit Exchange services are held.

## 2 OFFICE BEARERS

- 2.1 Please tell us the number and approximate age spread of your active Office Bearers, how new Office Bearers are encouraged to accept an invitation to Office, and how they are trained (initially and ongoing). Show figures for elders separately from any other Court. We currently have 37 active Elders (27 men and 10 women) and 16 Deacons (7 men and 9 women). The age range is from around 35-40 up to 80+ although skewed to the upper ages. Office bearers are encouraged to consider Office through a personal approach from the Minister in the case of Elders, and additionally from other Court and Session members in the case of Deacons. We have an Elders' Handbook which is currently being revised and over the last 18 months, the Session has held discussions during some of their meetings on the Role of an Elder. A number of sessions have been held for Elder training although there is a feeling that as training should focus on both "instructional" and "building up" elements. With that in mind a successful "Getting to Know You" supper has been held for Session members.
- 2.2 Are the office bearers representative of the age and gender "spread" of the congregation? If not, please tell us the apparent differences. There is a "gap/absence" of office bearers in the lower age ranges relative to the congregational profile with more "mature" groups having a larger representation.
- 2.3 Are all elders expected to perform the same duties or is there any allocation according to personal gifts? Not every Elder carries out the same duties. A number, who are gifted in the area, are involved with Youth Work, some Elders convene or serve as members of the Pastoral Care, Discipleship, Community Outreach and Up & Coming (Youth) Session Teams. One or two Elders, gifted with administration/management abilities will move from project to project within the Church (for example Clerking the Safeguarding Panel, looking at Data Protection issues etc). Six of the Elders, because of health or other commitments, do not have responsibility for a district. Session noted the importance of the role of District Elder and, as planning for the future shape of Kirk Session takes place, this will be highlighted. All except two Elders whose health does not permit it, participate in the serving of the elements at Communion.
- 2.4 How do the office bearers see the church? (e.g. an institution, the body of Christ, a church family, the people of God). And because there are many different views, do you have any

shared views of how the church is seen? The National Church is seen as an institution perhaps because of its layers of organisation. The office bearers see the local church very much as the body of Christ and a family. There are differing views within the congregation regarding different topics but not any which lead to conflict. When asked for words to describe the church locally they included people / link / care / relations / Murdo / community / outward-looking.

### 3 CONGREGATION

- 3.1 Please list the organisations and groups under the auspices of the Kirk Session, their approximate membership and tell us how well they are doing? To what extent do external groups use the church premises? A list has been prepared on a separate sheet – including Crèche, Beginners, Juniors, SSS, FLAIM, Waitforit, Boys' Brigade, Girls' Brigade, Pre 5s, Guild, Fellowship Groups, Friendship+, Prayer Meeting, Holiday Club, Friends of Jesus, Choir, Praise Group. These organisations have visiting Elders assigned to them and are regularly visited with reports being brought back to Kirk Session. In 2015/16 a Science and Faith Group was set up to progress a specific project with funding from the Templeton Trust – this was led by an Elder and a Member and organised various events and discussions throughout the year. The Church and Halls are almost fully occupied and so the extent to which external groups use them is very limited. Those which do are a local Art Group (weekly over the winter), Scottish Blood Transfusion Service (3 times pa), Polmont Horticultural Society (once pa), members of congregation/organisations for children's birthday parties. Other organisations use them from time to time for committee and other meetings (Prospects Scotland, Vis de Copil, Boys' Brigade Battalion, Wycliffe Bible Translators). The local Primary School holds end of term services, class visits and the Halls are the emergency evacuation point (used once in last few years).
- 3.2 Does the congregation employ any paid staff and what do they do? A cleaner and a Church Organist are paid staff. The congregation also has a Pastoral Assistant who receives a salary and travel expenses.
- 3.3 We will have access to the last Statistical Return which you submitted. Please tell us of changes to the Roll since that Return. An update will be provided at the time.
- 3.4 Approximately what proportion of the membership live outwith the parish boundaries? 17 of the 39 Elders' districts containing 254 of the 608 members (42%) lie outside the parish boundaries.
- 3.5 How has God blessed the work of the church over the past 5 years? Many examples were given – the growth in the work with the under-5s including the Nativity Fun Day; the work with adults with learning difficulties under the Friends of Jesus banner; the establishment and growth of the Friendship Plus group to replace the WRVS meeting locally which had ceased; the work with children and the fact that many are still involved on into secondary school age ranges; stability in ministry; outreach work which has been carried out via Quest Club (SU) and the Guild; continued stable, sound finances; the continued work of the Fellowship Groups especially the one for young mums, the range of gifts and talents in the congregation covering such diverse areas as music, practical property maintenance and administration.

3.6 Please tell us about the prayer life of the congregation. There is a Prayer Promoter in the church, a prayer meeting is held before each morning service (3 or 4 attend), a fortnightly evening prayer meeting is held (8-10 attend) and times of prayer are held before each Session and Court meeting (3 or 4 attend). Prayer cards are available in the pews, the church is open every week from September through to June on a Thursday morning for quiet prayer and meditation and prayer is an integral part of the Church Organisations' routines week by week. Special "Prayer Taster Sessions" have been held on a number of afternoons where people have been welcomed into a friendly, "less threatening" environment and encouraged to think about, and take part in, prayer. Brightons has hosted the World Day of Prayer service in the last five years and members attend this service in other churches across the area.

#### 4 SAFEGUARDING

4.1 Please complete the attached questionnaire regarding compliance with the Church's Good Practice in relation to Safeguarding. Form SG11, which is required for attestation will be completed and available.

#### 5 CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

5.1 Is the responsibility of the Minister and Kirk Session for the continuing Christian education of ALL age groups within the congregation being exercised? Please tell us about the evidence which supports your answer. As well as the youth message and main message in the Sunday morning services we have an active Sunday School and Youth programme, uniformed Youth Organisations and a number of Fellowship Groups. The Guild, Friendship Plus and Friends of Jesus groups all include Christian Education elements. For those interested in the Christian Faith and membership we have "Open Door" classes and we have also run the Alpha Course and the Grace Course in recent years. At the start of each Deacons' Court and Kirk Session, time is taken to read, and briefly expound, the Word of God. We have training programmes in place for Sunday School leaders. Each Church organisation is allocated visiting Elders and reports are received from them to the Kirk Session which should include evidence/comment on Christian Education within that organisation.

5.2 In what ways are the office bearers committed to personal Christian growth and maturity? When this was discussed at Kirk Session, prayer, daily bible reading, involvement in Bible Study and Fellowship Groups were highlighted.

#### 6 MISSION

6.1 To what extent do the office bearers understand social and spiritual outreach in the context of seeing the mission of your congregation/church? There are many ways in which social and spiritual outreach takes place. Support for Falkirk Foodbank, involvement with HMP Polmont Young Offenders Institution at Christmas, Easter and, for some in the congregation, week by week. We run special "fun days" at Christmas and Easter, organised by the pre-5s Group but welcoming, and attended by, children and adults of all ages from both Church and community. Supporting and taking part in Christmas and Easter outreach events in the Howgate Centre in Falkirk, running Friendship Plus and Friends of Jesus groups. Brightons

Praise Group performs across the country with a repertoire including sacred music, sometimes leading full services and, in the process, often raising money for charities. The Guild supports National and International Projects and, as a congregation, we help to financially support Vis de Copil, Christian Solidarity Worldwide, Christian Aid and CrossReach. Members of the congregation are active in The Cross coffee shop and drop in, situated in the centre of Brighton, and in helping with the Quest Group at the local Primary School, while the Guild visits St Margaret's Home in Polmont twice pa. We also have links with Summerdale, another local care home.

- 6.2 What are the mission needs in your parish? You might consider for example a) children b) youth c) young families d) elderly e) any others you may have identified - and how do you respond to those needs? Brighton is still a rapidly expanding area with lots of new housing. Pressure on services (schools, shops) means that to some extent a sense of community has been lost and Session felt that problems of mental health, for example, loneliness, were an issue. This applies to younger as well as older people. Current groups such as Pre 5s, Friendship Plus and Friends of Jesus go some way to addressing this but thought should be given to the future.
- 6.3 In what ways are the congregation or groups from it involved in the life of the community (including links with other congregations, denominations or groups)? Volunteering for, and supporting, Falkirk Foodbank, running the congregational A Place at the Table project which supplies food to local families in poverty, organising the Friends of Jesus group for adults with learning difficulties which includes members from many churches and none (meet at Redding), taking part in joint Easter services during Holy Week, undertaking a recent Braes pulpit exchange, helping at The Cross coffee shop in the village, reaching out through the Guild share/care to those in the community, running the Friendship Plus group for the elderly in the community, reaching out to young parents and children through the Pre 5s group, running an annual Holiday Club, being involved in the work of the Family Hub at Polmont Prison.
- 6.4 What demands upon the congregation may be made by foreseeable changes in the community? The area is still seeing an expansion in housing and the school is becoming increasingly pressurised. The challenge will be to reach out and minister to those in the growing area.
- 6.5 What obstacles to good relationships exist within the community? There are not any major obstacles that we are aware of but "little" things can sometimes have the potential to adversely affect relationships – for example the church car park is physically open to the community and is used quite heavily throughout the day. We have had a constructive dialogue with some neighbours who have sought to be able to use this on a long-term basis as they have no off-street parking. In most instances, this has had a successful outcome but grace and tact are having to be used with some who don't see the importance of parking such that the car park space can be accessed to the maximum extent by those involved in the very busy evening programme that runs in our Halls.
- 6.6 How are members of the congregation encouraged to share in the wider work of the Church? Locally by the publication of needs/items in Bright Lights, our quarterly magazine delivered to the members by the visiting elder, the weekly newssheet and from the pulpit. Nationally by publications/posters from e.g. Guild, Council of Assembly etc. Life & Work is

available in the Church and Crossreach publications are received and distributed. One of our members is a member of the Guild Central Council.

- 6.7 Please tell us what provision is made for people (members and non-members) in supported accommodation and residential or nursing homes (a) within your parish (b) beyond your parish. **We keep in regular touch with all members in this situation, we run Friendship+ group which links in with local care homes, the Guild visit St Margaret's Home in Polmont and conduct worship and we run the Friends of Jesus Group. Elders visit the care homes as part of their district and so the congregation is known to those residents who are non-members**
- 6.8 What facilities are within your parish – schools, other churches, shopping facilities, health centre, community centre, leisure centre, park, offices, factories? **The local Catholic Church, one Primary and one Secondary School, two community centres (one adjacent to, and used by, the church), a large open park with community football pitches, a large Tesco supermarket, the train station and the Prison close by.**
- 6.9 What outreach is undertaken and how often to a) members; b) parishioners; c) other people who may come into the parish each day, and d) businesses? **The Discipleship Group encourage personal Christian growth for our members - e.g. Bible Reading Notes, prayer cards etc. A lot of our outreach comes via personal interaction, either at groups such as Pre-5s or Friendship Plus or on an informal basis in the groups of parents/carers picking up children at the end of Boys' and Girls' Brigade meetings. We have a welcome pack which is available to give to those moving into the parish, with information about the Church and its activities.**

## 7 STEWARDSHIP & FINANCE

- 7.1 We will have access to a summary of your accounts over the last few years. Please tell us about any significant changes or future major expenditure since you last submitted Accounts to Presbytery. **No major changes since Accounts submitted. Currently discussing in Session the possibility of recruiting a Youth Worker.**
- 7.2 What changes do you see, or foresee, to the pattern and amount of giving by the members of the congregation? **The Congregational finances have remained stable and viable over the last few years – however this is largely due to good cost control (particularly in heating/lighting and copying costs) coupled with the receipt of a small number of legacies. Underlying giving from the congregation has been largely unchanged although one or two people, giving significantly, have left the congregation following General Assembly decisions. Efforts continue to be made to encourage people to give regularly by Standing Order and make use of the ability to Gift Aid any givings. It was recognised that the recent years of recession and doubt over the GA decisions have stalled the considerations normally accorded to givings and this is something we would seek to address. There is a desire to encourage people to look at their level of giving on an annual basis.**
- 7.3 In what ways does the Kirk Session exercise encouragement to good Stewardship of time, skills and resources among the congregation? **We have instituted a vacancy list, highlighting the needs across the various church organisations and functions, looking for ways to draw people in to “fill the well” which is slowly being drained of money and time/effort. We are starting to encourage better church attendance with a focus on taking an “active part in**

family life” for the congregational family. This includes drawing in members to events such as the Christmas and Easter Fun Days, the Holiday Club and Praise Band “open sessions”.

- 7.4 When did the congregation last hold a stewardship programme? Pre 2007 – note the comment above regarding the difficult financial environment which has made it more difficult to consider a formal financial stewardship programme. The current “vacancy list” drive emphasises time and talents and is seeing some success.

## 8 FABRIC

- 8.1 Please list the congregation’s buildings, including those (for example a school) which may be hired on a regular basis. Comment on the overall condition of each, externally and internally, and indicate whether each is adequate for its purposes and used to the full.  
Church: constructed circa 1850. The property is in good repair. Accommodation comprises: Entrance hall, Nave with gallery above, Rear hall, Vestry, Office, Toilet  
Halls: constructed circa 1980. The property is in good repair. Accommodation comprises: Entrance hall, East Hall, West Hall, Toilets, Kitchen  
Halls are well used by church and external organisations (ref point 3.1)  
Manse: constructed circa 1970. The property is in good repair. Accommodation comprises: 2 public rooms, Study, Kitchen, Toilet, 4 bedrooms, Bathroom.
- 8.2 Are Church and/or halls made available to the local community and, if so, on what basis? The Church and Halls are almost fully occupied and so the extent to which external groups use them is very limited. Those which do are a local Art Group (weekly over the winter), Scottish Blood Transfusion Service (3 times pa), Polmont Horticultural Society (once pa), members of congregation/organisations for children’s birthday parties. Other organisations use them from time to time for committee and other meetings (Prospects Scotland, Vis de Copil, Boys’ Brigade Battalion, Wycliffe Bible Translators). The local Primary School holds end of term services, class visits and the Halls are the emergency evacuation point (used once in last few years).
- 8.3 Please tell us about any foreseeable changes to the local community which may alter the demand for or use of these buildings. The local community is still subject to increased house building while community facilities (school, community centres etc.) are finding themselves stretched. For example, the school is no longer able to hold “full school” end of term services in the church because of insurance restrictions on numbers and alternative ways of the church being involved in assemblies are having to be sought. The future of the local community centres is currently subject to some uncertainty.
- 8.4 Please tell us about your ongoing strategy for the maintenance and development of your buildings, including the Manse. The strategy for the maintenance of the properties is done by a number of dedicated church members. The members meet on a Wednesday and Saturday morning to carry out repairs, improvements and routine checks. Each property is inspected on a regular basis with 1 inspection being formally recorded for establishing a programme of works and budget proposal. Should roof works, electrical works or major works be required approved contractor will quote for works.
- 8.5 Have the recommendations in the last Property Survey been implemented (a) in full, (b) in part or (c) not at all. If not implemented in full, please tell us why this is the case. With regard to the quinquennial inspections from 2011, items have been addressed in full for

Halls and Manse. With regards to the Church the repointing to stonework continues, this will be an ongoing piece of work in the life of the property due to its age.

## 9 FUTURE PLANNING & VISION

9.1 Please tell us what anticipated changes will take place in the congregation or community in the next five years. There is definite potential for more housing in the local community, thus increasing the population, without necessarily increasing the provision of local amenities such as community centres etc. This would certainly give greater potential for outreach which is a positive and might lead to an increase in membership, and increased demand for use of the church premises. There are implications in this for the number of elders required and also the way in which the eldership interacts with the congregation. We would hope and pray that the increase in membership would be from those who would become active members, able to fully participate in the life of the congregation.

Changing the way that the church as a whole interacts with the community is important, with more welcoming events and potentially the use of social media seen as relevant over the coming years. This is not just "rearranging the deckchairs on the Titanic" but rather a need to "be" in the community as opposed to "going out to" the community or waiting for it to come to us.

There is a recognition that the age profile of the congregation will change (to a greater proportion of older people) and thus requirements for pastoral and bereavement services will need to be looked at going forward.

There was significant discussion and recognition that, in today's society which is "membership averse", we should avoid the hierarchy of "elders, members, adherents, others"

9.2 Please outline three definite aims for your congregation over the next five years and the reasons for them.

1) to increase and enhance the prayer life of the congregation, seeking God's direction, asking for, and depending on His power, and having Him as our reference point for all that we as a family try to do. What we see ahead is a challenging scenario and we are clear that we must avoid "going it alone" in our own strength.

2) expanding the range of how we "do church". We recognise the need to be a church in the community, being in the community and meeting people where they are rather than sitting and waiting for the community to come to us. We need to provide a service to the community – not a "Sunday Service", literal or figurative. A quoted example of such a presence is "The Cross" shop where residents and visitors alike interact with Christians each time they pop in for a cup of tea or coffee. Our presence needs to have the same principles.

3) to carefully manage the resources God has given us – our Minister, people skills and time, space and facilities, our money. This is not merely "management accounting" but rather the stewarding of the skills and talents within our congregation and the drawing on years of Christian experience in many of our members. God has given us so much and, while our natural reaction may be to be apprehensive at the challenges ahead, we believe we have to look at the opportunities and work prayerfully to ensure the continuation and growth of His work in the parish.

- 9.3 Are you aware of the current Presbytery Plan and if so, what steps are you taking to work towards future change? **Currently, we are unaffected by the Presbytery Plan in terms of our own congregation but are conscious that a number around us are affected and may be likely to link/unite.**
- 9.4 How does the Kirk session see future worship, teaching, evangelism in the light of Jesus' promise to build His Church and other commands?  
**A number of points were raised in response to this:**
- 1) **We cannot depend on "family succession" i.e. that children will come along just because their parents do – this means that we need to look out/reach out to those (families or otherwise) who are moving in to the area**
  - 2) **We identified the need to prepare our young people to continue in the faith after moving on from school and from Brightons. It may be that the proposal for a Youth Worker will help with this but other suggestions around pointing them to other churches/Christian Unions etc. in the places they are moving to would help.**
  - 3) **We concluded the discussion with a strong statement that we believe that there will be change in the years ahead, whether growth in some areas or perhaps pruning for growth in others. We believe that we should prepare to be surprised and challenged by this but that if we do not face up to the situations which we will encounter in God's strength, we are, in effect, denying the core beliefs of our faith in God's love, care, protection and help for those He loves and who trust in Him.**

## 10 CIVIL LEGISLATION

- 10.1 Please tell us what steps the congregation takes to comply with local/national health and hygiene legislation. **We have documented procedures which are clearly displayed and subject to periodic review. One of our Elders works in this area.**
- 10.2 Please tell us what steps the congregation takes to comply with local/national health and safety legislation including fire safety regulation. **We have a Fire Safety Officer role on the Deacons' Court and audits have been carried out. An evacuation plan is in place and is displayed on the screens each week before morning worship. PAT testing is regularly carried out and one of our members has obtained the necessary qualifications meaning that we are now able to offer this service to other congregations in Presbytery.**
- 10.3 Please tell us what provision there is within your buildings to encourage access and movement by disabled people including those who have eyesight or hearing disadvantages. Please include any developments which are underway or under active consideration. **Ramped access to the Church and Halls is available, appropriate toilet facilities are present, a hearing loop is installed in the church and linked to the audio system, there are specific spaces provided in the sanctuary for wheelchairs and the church has wheelchairs of its own available. Large print Orders of Service are available every week at worship. During the service, the screens are used to display clear, simple, understandable symbols so that those with sight or hearing disadvantages can be clear as to what is happening.**
- 10.4 Are you aware of the responsibilities that OSCR places on you as Trustees? If not, what information could Presbytery assist you with in this regard? **Yes, the Kirk Session and Deacons' Court recently had a presentation on this.**

## Brightons Parish Church - Numbers in church organisations and comments from leaders

Organisation	Numbers	Comment
Creche	6	Varies in number from week to week – staffed by a rota of helpers
Beginners' SS	18 on register – attendance of 9-12 each week	The leaders of each group meet 3 or 4 times a year to think about how things are going. For the three groups above we're continuing to use the same material as previous years which we're happy with.
Junior SS	16 on register – attendance of 9-12 each week	We have a great group of kids in each of the 3 groups above. No major challenges with the kids but a key challenge is having enough leaders to 'lead' and succession planning. We need to support, build up and sustain the current leaders and attract new ones in. A youth minister would greatly help with this.
SSS	12 on register – attendance of around 8 each week	The older groups are looking at how we engage with churches around us more. 7 of the leaders attended Deep Impact so have come back with good contacts and ideas we want to take forward.
FLAIM (S1-S3)	12 on register, 8 on average each week.	Led by two couples, who meet each term to reflect and plan. We mostly write our own material to suit the specific needs of the group, and work within a three-year curriculum framework. Once per term we have an "issues session" where we discuss a specific question or issue that has been raised by the young people (e.g., Heaven, Karma vs Grace, Self-esteem, Doubt). We also have occasional social events (the Brightons Bake Off was very popular) and take a few of the youth to Powerpoint and other events.
Waitfortl	2-3	Very low numbers this year – expecting increase next session – highly interactive group where discussion is encouraged given that these are people moving from childhood to adulthood. Some of the older young people have moved to stay in the service each Sunday, perhaps helping with audio etc.
Girls' Brigade Explorers	13	See the separate sheet of Captain's comments – rather than try and precis this inadequately, it is quoted in full
Girl's Brigade Juniors	25	
Girls' Brigade Brigaders	13	
Boys' Brigade Anchor Boys	30	The Anchor Boys have around 30 boys and 4 regular staff as well as 2 Queen's badge boys helping out. They have been to the battalion Anchor Boy fun day as well as doing all the usual Anchor Boy things like games, storytelling and craft.

Boys' Brigade Junior Section	20	See the separate sheet of Captain's comments – rather than try and precis this inadequately, it is quoted in full
Boys' Brigade Senior/Company Section	33	
Holiday Club	70 ish	A mix of church and non-church children – facilitated by over 40 helpers from the congregation. Notable that 8 of the older young folk have been involved and helping as part of a “young leaders’ programme”
Pre 5s	60 adults 74 children	Typical Tuesday attendance is around 90. We also have around 20 helpers. The sessions are going well, and the morning group now has a waiting list. We are building good relationships with a number of the families, and we are encouraging them to find out more about Jesus with the Nativity and Easter Fun Days.
Friendship Plus	46 members 15 volunteers	We meet once per month on a Wednesday afternoon for 2 hours. Members include 4 residents and 2 carers from Summerdale (though not on a regular basis) & 1 wheelchair resident from St Margaret's. Volunteer drivers pick up members from Slamannan, Shieldhill, California, Brightons, Rumford, Maddiston & Polmont (in shorter terms -The Braes) Members age range is from 70 - 97 and includes people from Church of Scotland, Baptist, Methodist, Episcopal & those with no church connection. The aim is to encourage people in the Braes area to enjoy company in Christian fun & fellowship. All is going well & displays great team work using the gifts God has given us.
Choir	23	Going well – the choir works hard and they seem to be enjoying their contribution to weekly worship
Praise Group	41	Still going strong and have had around 15 concerts this year
Fellowship Groups	7+8+12+6+7 Total 40	5 Groups in total – 4 meet in the evening and one on a weekday morning. Groups are using a range of study and group materials
Guild	62	This includes 2 x housebound members and 1 x Care Home resident
Prayer Meeting	12	Core attendance is 12 with 4 others who come on occasions

## Girls' Brigade Captain's Report

### Explorers

This year we chose to follow the theme: "Animal Kingdom"

We started off the session looking at "Creation". For the first 2 weeks we learned the story of creation, made a frieze, decorated cakes light and dark with sun moon and stars and played various related games. We then looked at "Noah". We made an Ark, and animals going into Ark, we made rainbow fish, rainbow kebabs, Next we then looked at "Farmyard Animals". The girls took part in musical stories, played farmyard snakes and ladders, iced Kelpie biscuits and learned story of Kelpies.

We then moved onto look at "Sea Animals" learning of Jonah & Whale, the story of Loaves & Fishes, made foam fish mobiles and played flip the kipper.

Our Christmas Party this year we had a visit from Magic Den the magician. A great evening was had by all when the girls were entertained with magic tricks followed by games and dancing.

After Christmas we looked at "The Rainforest". The girls learned about animals, birds and people in the rainforest, played games, made foam monkeys, monkey cupcakes and our last few weeks were spent looking at Zoo Animals. The girls heard about Daniel In The Lion's Den and various other Bible stories, played Lion & Tiger Hunt game, made lion cupcakes with popcorn, sewed animal puppets and cards.

### Juniors

In Juniors this year, the girls have been studying, "Learning to Live God's Way" for their Spiritual section. They have investigated such things as how sin stops us from being God's friend, how God steps in and helps us when we're in difficult situations and how we can thank God when He provides for us. The girls performed a skit at parents' night explaining how Noah thanked God for rescuing Him and his family from the flood.

For the Service section, they have been finding out about MacMillan Cancer Support. They had a visit from a MacMillan nurse who told them how and why the charity was started and what it does to support those going through cancer treatment and their families. The girls have been raising money for the charity with bake sales, a themed party and by making crafts to sell.

For Educational section the girls have been making a right mess of themselves, the tables, floor, us and anything else that got too close to their baking efforts. They have tried their hand at truffles, lemon and coconut slices, fairy cakes, top hats and mocktails to mention just a few.

In our Physical section the girls have been looking at fitness. This has taken many forms, circuits, pilates, bleep tests, aerobics, dancing and others. The girls choreographed a dance and performed this at parents evening.

At Christmas we went to the cinema to see "Moana"

We had a fun filled year and are looking forward to our sleepover before Summer Holidays.

### Brigaders

This year for our Educational section we have been on a tour round Scotland looking at towns, cities or areas that were different in demographics: Glasgow, Inverness, Isle of Lewis, The East Neuk and of course Brightons. We looked at small villages in the East Neuk and some vocabulary specific to that region. We heard what it was like growing up during the war and we even saw some shrapnel and parachute silk.

For our Spiritual we have been looking at Hymns. We had people from our congregation visit us, telling us about their favourite hymns and what they meant to them. We also enjoyed joining the Church Praise Band for a jamming session.

Dance was our choice for Physical which we choreographed and performed at Parents' evening.

For Service we held a successful coffee evening and split the money raised between company funds and Vis De Copil charity for street children in Romania. We purchased hats, scarves and gloves and some toiletries for Kate Cloke to hand out on her return to Romania.

We have two young leaders working on their Queen's Award at present and have a couple of more younger girls interested in starting this.

## BB Captain's Comments 2017

All the sections have been busy taking part in the full range of Battalion and National competitions. A good number of boys and officers from both Junior & Company Sections attended the Battalion **TURNABOUT** event in Falkirk Town Hall in March where the MC was Stephen Allison, a former member of 1<sup>st</sup> Larbert BB who is now in training for the ministry, we were entertained by the puppets from the Peoples Church and the music was provided by "Rise" a Christian rock band from Larbert Pentecostal Church. [REDACTED] from our junior section raised the flag and 3 of our officers performed a short sketch explaining how the decision was made to introduce younger boys into the BB in 1917 in the context of Jesus inviting all young people to come to him. The Battalion Chaplain led us in Prayer and boys from 2<sup>nd</sup> Larbert and 8<sup>th</sup> Falkirk also took part.

**Junior Section Report:** We keep saying, "How time flies when you're having fun". This session in the Junior Section has been no different.

We started back in August with 20 boys and have maintained this figure most Friday evenings. Once again the boys have enjoyed games which were organised by the Company section boys working towards their Queen's badge. They have also worked hard on their achievements, learning to help in the home, all about the 1<sup>st</sup> Polmont Company, how to polish their shoes and healthy eating. We tried our hand at some crafts and planted some bulbs which are on display this evening. We took part in all the competitions again this session, finishing 3<sup>rd</sup> in the 5-a-side football and regaining the figure marching trophy. The boys also did well in all the other competitions - Spiritual, Alan Douglas Trophy and Swimming. We are looking forward to the sports competition down at Grangemouth on 21<sup>st</sup> April where we will be trying to hold onto the cup we won last year. As usual, our Boys were always well behaved and participated in the right spirit. It is important that the boys enjoy taking part and do their best - if they win, great. The results of all the competitions go towards the general efficiency trophy and we will need to wait for the results of the sports to see how we have finished out of the 17 sections in the Battalion. These competitions are an important part of the BB work in the district and they are a great way of the Boys meeting up with Boys from other sections.

We held our Christmas party in the church halls in December; the boys enjoyed a "potted sports" evening finished off with some hot dogs and juice whilst watching the Tom & Jerry Cartoons. We have also had great help from some of our senior boys who are working for their Queen's badge. We held a Scottish night at the end of January when the boys tucked into oatcakes and cheese washed down with juice while a number of the boys entertained us with the Scot's verse poems they'd been learning at school

**Company Section Report:** This session we've had between 25 – 30 boys attending most weeks, ranging in age from P7 to S6. We have been involved in the normal BB activities on Fridays with the emphasis being on Scripture knowledge, PE and BB knowledge including leadership exercises, which will hopefully give the Boys a good start in life as they develop into young men in our society. We had a busy session in the Battalion competitions. The Pulpit Fall competition for Bible Knowledge was held in February, and we were delighted that our team of [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] managed to win this again with a fantastic score of 75/82. We finally managed to win back a badminton trophy with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] winning the junior event. At the Battalion Cross Country event in October, [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] won the intermediate team event while [REDACTED] ran well to finish 6<sup>th</sup> in the junior race and qualified for the battalion team who finished 9<sup>th</sup> at the Scottish championships at Bellahouston park last Saturday. We only had 3 boys available for the swimming gala in February but they all swam well, winning 2 of their races. In the individual 100m freestyle event [REDACTED] won the race by the tiniest of margins to win the Westquarter trophy. We took part in the senior 5-a-sides competitions this session finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> in the league competition then going one better in the knock-out cup beating 1<sup>st</sup> Larbert on penalties. We have been taking part in the **National** Master-team quiz competition for a few years now and

have qualified for a few Scottish Finals but this year we have gone one better. We hosted the Scottish final in February with teams from Inverness, Gourrock, Denny, Bearsden and Edinburgh joining us in Brightons. After 10 very close rounds, we finished ½ point behind 3<sup>rd</sup> Bearsden and ½ point ahead of 65<sup>th</sup> Edinburgh. This means that the team will now travel to Northern Ireland for the National final on 8<sup>th</sup> April. The national competitions can mean a bit of travelling around the country but they are a good way for boys to meet up with fellow BB members from throughout Scotland and beyond. It also lets them see that there is more to the BB than turning up at our church hall on a Friday evening.

We held our Christmas outing to the 10-pin bowling in December then came back to hall to finish sorting the Christmas cards so we could deliver them over that weekend. We delivered somewhere in the region of 1,800 cards, thanks very much to everyone who got involved in this. As a result of the Christmas card deliveries we were able to make a donation of £250 which was used to help out families in the local area who have been struggling to buy food. We look forward to delivering even more cards this Christmas. The senior boys missed out on the trip to the bowling as they were helping at the Junior section party so we organised a trip to "The Peak" at Stirling to have a go at Curling, we were joined by Alan Hunter from Carronvale and a good time was had by all. Curling looks easy but I am sure all who took part will agree that it is a lot harder than it looks. There were a few dramatic falls but no serious injuries

**President's Badges & Queen's Badges:** We are pleased to be able to present **President's Badges** to [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] & [REDACTED] this evening. [REDACTED] was unable to attend the leadership course in February but is attending one in Edinburgh on Sunday will qualify for his President's badge after that. We hope they will go forward now and work towards their Queen's Badge.

The 6 boys who gained their President's badges last session are getting on with their Queen's badge work and will hopefully be ready to attend their completion course during the October holiday. We are delighted to report that another 6 young men from our Company have completed all of the work for their **Queen's Badges** and attended their completion course in October last year. We offer congratulations to [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. This is the highest award in the BB and they have worked hard for it. They have spent time doing voluntary work as well as helping in our own Company over the last 2 sessions. They had to learn a new skill and take part in a physical activity then complete their record books and attend a residential course at Carronvale. A special service will take place on 11<sup>th</sup> June in Blairgowrie where they will be formally presented with their certificates by the Queen's representative, the Lord Lieutenant of Perth & Kinross.

**Boys' Brigade Staff:** The BB cannot operate without leaders; we have a great bunch of officers and helpers who give their time willingly to help the Boys in our care. Across the 3 sections, the staff team has given up well over 1,000 hours this session attending on Tuesday and Friday evenings as well as organising and attending Battalion events. We are fortunate in 1<sup>st</sup> Polmont that we have so many members of staff who have given up so much time over the years. It's really important that we bring in more people to take on a leadership role within the Company and I would encourage anyone who is interested in what happens at BB on a Tuesday or Friday night to get in touch with either the minister or myself. You will be made very welcome and who knows, you might even find yourself getting involved. If you are able to come along on a regular basis, great, if you can only give your help on an occasional Tuesday or Friday, fine. The main thing is that you get involved. The BB in Brightons has a history going back 130 years. I like to think that we have made a positive impact on congregational and community life in Brightons during that time and we look forward to this continuing.

**Billy Rankine**

Captain 1<sup>st</sup> Polmont Company