

# CHURCH AND SOCIETY COUNCIL

May 2017

## PROPOSED DELIVERANCE

### **The General Assembly:**

1. Receive the Report

### **Speak Out** (*section 4 of the Report*)

2. Approve the Speak Out Implementation Plan and encourage the Church and Society Council in its long-term planning process.
3. Celebrate the outstanding work which local churches are already undertaking to make Scotland fairer, more equal and more just – more like God intends.
4. Instruct the Church and Society Council to work in partnership with other Councils and Committees in the implementation of the Plan.
5. Instruct the Church and Society Council to develop resources to enable congregations to engage fully in the work of Speak Out.
6. Instruct the Church and Society Council to establish a robust monitoring and evaluation framework which will enable the Church to scrutinise, measure and learn from the work of Speak Out.

### **Surveillance** (*section 5*)

7. Instruct the Church and Society Council to develop appropriate resources to ensure the wider discussion of the issues raised in the Surveillance and Social Justice report.
8. Instruct the Church and Society Council to continue to challenge organisations, including governments, in their inappropriate use of surveillance especially with regards to the poorest and most marginalised in society.

### **European Union** (*section 6*)

9. Regret the reported rise in xenophobic and racist attacks on people following the result of the EU Referendum and affirm the valuable role of citizens from other parts of Europe living in Scotland.
10. Encourage congregations to discuss our future in Europe respectfully, using the “Conversation Welcome” resource produced by the Joint Public Issues Team, and to raise their concerns and aspirations with their elected representatives.
11. Call on the Scottish and UK Governments to ensure that the rights and contributions of nationals from other EU countries resident in Scotland are recognised and protected.
12. Instruct the Church and Society Council to ensure the voice of the Church is heard in the public debate around the Article 50 negotiations.

**Asylum and Refugees** *(section 7)*

13. Call on the UK Government to increase the target number of individuals to be resettled under refugee humanitarian programmes in proportion to the scale of global need and the relative size of the UK population and economy.
14. Call on the UK Government to allow individuals resettled through community sponsorship to be counted in addition to, rather than as part of, its target number for refugee resettlement.
15. Encourage congregations that may be considering applying for community sponsorship to be aware of the wider implications outlined in the Report (at paragraph 7.4.5).
16. Call on the UK Government to implement the recommendations of the 2015 UK Parliamentary Inquiry into Detention and to make provision for child refugees to have access to a right to family reunion.
17. Call on the Scottish Government to extend its strategic framework for refugee integration and ensure the participation of the church at a local and national level, both as an organisation committed to working with refugees as well as a body which includes asylum seekers and refugees as members.
18. Encourage congregations and church members to take part in opportunities for encounter and learning with asylum seekers and refugees, through appropriate groups or the programmes from the Scottish Refugee Council including Cup of Tea with a Refugee and Refugee Festival Scotland.
19. Acknowledge the generosity of many congregations in donating aid and money to support refugees and encourage giving money rather than purchasing new goods for donation, and where donated goods are offered that these are given in response to a specific list of requested items and to a registered charity.

**Pilgrimage** *(section 9)*

20. Affirm the place of pilgrimage within the life of the church and encourage congregations to explore opportunities for pilgrimage locally and how to provide practical and spiritual support for pilgrims passing through the parish.
21. Instruct the Church and Society Council, in partnership with the Mission and Discipleship Council and others to develop resources to support pilgrimage in Scotland.

**An Economy Driven by Equality** *(section 11)*

22. Welcome the growth of interest in ethical finance initiatives in Scotland and urge congregations to support the Christian Aid Big Shift campaign on banking and investigate what it means to become an Ethical Money Church.

**Doing Politics Differently** *(section 16)*

23. Welcome the impact of 'Meet Your MSP' and encourage congregations to build positive relationships with their local politicians.
24. Welcome the work on participatory budgeting initiatives being undertaken by local congregations supported by the Council.

**Gender Justice** *(section 17)*

25. Commend the work that the Council of Assembly is doing to explore the best way to take forward broader gender justice work in the Church.

26. Welcome the work being undertaken by the Violence against Women Task Group and Development Officer and urge the Church to continue to work to end violence against women.
27. Commend the new resources created by the Violence against Women Task Group for study and action by local churches and Kirk Sessions.
28. Instruct the Church and Society Council to reflect on the issue of prostitution and the Church's response to it and to report on this subject to a future General Assembly.

## REPORT

### 1. Introduction

1.1 In recent years, the Church and Society Council has begun its report by highlighting the incredible year which has just past. In 2014 we had the Referendum for Scottish Independence. In 2015, it was the result of the UK General Election which reconfigured the Scottish political landscape. 2016 is evidence that this was not a passing phase but that we are living in extraordinary times. The decision to leave the EU and the election of Donald Trump as President of the United States of America feel from the relative closeness of these events, to have been seismic in their impact. Trade deals are being ripped up and others written. The global agreement on tackling climate change is under threat. There is a palpable rise globally, and nationally, of xenophobia and isolationism. We are living in challenging and uncertain times.

1.2 These changes serve as the backdrop to this year's report: Surveillance; gender justice and violence against women; human trafficking; relationships with Europe; and a commitment to climate justice. All of these areas of work are being impacted by what is going on around us.

1.3 It would be easy in this environment, particularly given many of the challenges which the Church of Scotland faces internally, to retreat into our own brand of introspection, isolationism and knee-jerk reaction. This, however, is not what God asks of us. Rather we are called "to love justly; to show mercy; and to walk humbly with our God" (Micah 6:8).

1.4 Our implementation plan for Speak Out is the Council's attempt, alongside the rest of the Church and with many of those who are the victims of our current age, to act prophetically and to walk humbly. It is also deliberately hopeful, which is not the same as being naively optimistic. We live in difficult and challenging times but we know that the Spirit of God remains active in the world. Our calling is to seek out that Spirit and to join in.

### 2. Executive Summary

#### 2.1 Speak Out

Based on its 2016 report to the General Assembly, the Church and Society Council brings an implementation plan which proposes a way in which the Council will focus its work, on the seven themes identified in Speak Out, and in collaboration with others, over the next decade.

#### 2.2 Surveillance and Social Justice

This report seeks to expand the Church's awareness of surveillance as an approach to perceived dangers, as well as its appreciation of how surveillance shapes the behaviour of those being watched and those doing the watching. Theological reflection on contemporary surveillance is a new field of thought, and this report contributes to a national and international debate that is likely to increase in the future.

### **2.3 The European Union**

The result of the European Union (EU) Referendum held in the UK on 23 June 2016 has proved a divisive event in the political life of Scotland, the UK, and other EU members. It has provoked fundamental questions regarding the relationship between Scotland, the UK and other European nations, Scotland's identity, its economy and the position of many for whom Scotland is home. This section of the report explores these issues and the Church's response.

### **2.4 Asylum and refugees**

In 2015, the Church of Scotland, through the Council of Assembly, established a strategic response to issues around asylum and refugees.<sup>[1]</sup> This is delivered across Councils and through the partnership project Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees ([www.sfar.org.uk](http://www.sfar.org.uk)). This report provides an update of the ongoing refugee catastrophe, calls for the UK and Scottish governments to respond more fully to the situation, and provides an outline of the work that SFAR has been doing over the past year

### **2.5 Human Trafficking**

The Council is represented on the Scottish Churches Anti-Human Trafficking Group. Over the past year the group has contributed to the Scottish Government's Human Trafficking and Exploitation Strategy and developed partnerships with frontline services that support victims of trafficking through a befriending service. In January, the Convener of the Group (a Council member) accompanied the Moderator to a meeting with the UK's Independent Antislavery Commissioner, instigated by the Prime Minister, to lay the foundation for future collaboration.

### **2.6 Pilgrimage**

Recent years have seen a huge increase in the number of people interested in pilgrimage. The Camino de Santiago which, 40 years ago, saw a few thousand pilgrims every year, is now travelled by over 250,000 pilgrims each year. In Scotland, pilgrim routes are followed by walkers, cyclists and other pilgrims, young and old. The Church of Scotland

which has historically been hostile to pilgrimage, now has the opportunity to reassess and reconsider this attitude.

### **2.7 Climate Justice**

Since the Paris climate conference (December 2015) there has been a significant series of developments internationally. The Paris climate treaty came into effect in November 2016 after its ratification by 55 countries, accounting for over 55% of total global greenhouse gas emissions. This section outlines some of this progress; the global Church's engagement; the impact of the UK's decision to leave the EU on environmental legislation; and the work of Eco-Congregation Scotland.

### **2.8 An economy driven by equality**

How we use money is an indication of what and who we value. This section highlights our ongoing discussions around disinvestment from fossil fuels, work with credit unions and developments with the Islamic Finance Council.

### **2.9 Welfare**

This is a summary of the Council's work in the welfare sector over the last year, including speaking against the UK Government's lowering of the benefit cap, meetings with UK Government officials regarding the closure of job centres, a response to the Scottish Government consultation on its new welfare powers, and work that the Moderator of the General Assembly has undertaken to highlight the plight of homelessness.

### **2.10 Society, Religion and Technology Project**

Over the past year the Society, Religion and Technology (SRT) Project has been involved with the Edinburgh and Orkney science festivals, the World Congress of Bioethics, and the Bioethics group of the Conference of European Churches.

### **2.11 Education**

An overview of the ongoing work of the Education Committee including meetings with external partners, engagement with the Scottish Government, the Church of Scotland Education Conference, and the work that has

been done on school chaplaincy with plans for the year ahead.

**2.12 Education Review**

The 2016 General Assembly instructed the Church and Society Council, in collaboration with others, to review the work and place of the Education Committee. This section of the report provides an interim update. A full report will be brought to the 2018 General Assembly.

**2.13 Doing Politics Differently**

The Council’s political engagement this year included the Meet Your MSP project and development of a Participatory Budgeting project undertaken alongside a number of local congregations.

**2.14 Gender Justice**

An update on the work of the Violence Against Women Task Group is reported, as well as information on the campaigns the Church of Scotland has undertaken, including the IC Change campaign to ratify the Istanbul Convention. The report also highlights resources developed by the task group, and a proposal to examine the issue of commercial sexual exploitation.

**2.15 Campaigns**

A list of all the campaigns that the Council is involved with on behalf of the Church of Scotland.

**3. Action relating to the 2016 Deliverance**

3.1 The following table summarises actions taken in relation to the Church and Society deliverances agreed at the 2016 General Assembly.

2016 Deliverance	Activity and Outcome
2. Celebrate and endorse the Speak Out: 10,000 Voices for Change participative process as an ongoing means of wider engagement for the work of the Church.	Following the General Assembly of 2016, the Church and Society Council, in collaboration with other councils and committees of the Church, and external partners, brings a proposed Implementation Plan to the 2017 General Assembly.
3. Approve the themes that emerged from Speak Out as strategic areas of work for the Church and Society Council over the next ten years, namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building local communities where people flourish</li> <li>• Doing politics differently</li> <li>• Investing in our young people</li> <li>• Ensuring the health and wellbeing of all</li> <li>• Caring for creation</li> <li>• Building global friendships</li> <li>• Creating an economy driven by equality</li> </ul>	
4. Instruct the Council to bring an implementation plan to the 2017 General Assembly.	

5. Recognise that corporal punishment of children is a violent act, and that violence is damaging to mental and physical health.	A letter has been written to the Scottish Government Minister for Childcare and Early Years calling on the Scottish Government to change the law. Follow-up conversations have taken place with civil servants.
6. Call on the Scottish Government and Parliament to acknowledge the recommendations of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and remove the defence of "justifiable assault" from the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2003.	
7. Instruct the Council to join relevant campaigns, including Children are Unbeatable! Scotland, which seek to end the corporal punishment of children.	The Council has joined the Children are Unbeatable! Scotland campaign.
8. Instruct the Council to work with Crossreach and the Safeguarding Service to provide access to resources to support the development of non-violent parenting skills.	Work is taking place to develop resources which will be available on the Church website.
9. Welcome the outcome of the UN Climate Conference in Paris (CoP21) and call upon the UK Government to ratify and implement the agreement as a matter of urgency.	The UK Government ratified the agreement and it came into force on 4 November 2016.
10. Recognise that Scotland needs to play a leading part in the global drive to reduce carbon emissions through major changes in energy production and consumption and that the Church's ethical investment policies should be aligned with this objective.	The Council has established a short life working group on fossil fuel investment to examine how the Church's investment policies can be aligned to this objective.
11. Call on the Scottish and UK Governments, and businesses active in the North Sea oil and gas industry to help speed the transition to a low carbon economy, and to ensure that the skills and experience of workers in the offshore industry are not lost as North Sea oil and gas fields run down.	The Council Convener has written to both the UK and Scottish Governments, and staff members are engaging closely with the Scottish Government and others on the development of the new Scottish climate plan and energy strategy.
12. Urge the Trustees of the Church of Scotland Investors Trust and the Church of Scotland Pension Fund not to invest in companies which derive more than 15% of their turnover from extraction and/or sale of thermal coal and/or oil extracted from tar sands.	The Trustees of the Church of Scotland Investors Trust and the Church of Scotland Pension Fund have confirmed that they do not invest in companies which derive more than 15% of their turnover from extraction and/or sale of thermal coal and/or oil extracted from tar sands.

<p>13. Instruct the Council, in partnership with Investors Trust and Pension Trustees, to engage with oil and gas companies in which the Church has significant holdings, to establish their commitment to meeting the UN climate change targets and to report back to the 2018 General Assembly.</p>	<p>The short life working group on fossil fuel investment is taking forward these sections of deliverance and will report to the 2018 General Assembly on their progress.</p>
<p>14. Instruct the Council to explore, with the Trustees of the Church of Scotland Investors Trust, the Church of Scotland Pension Fund and others how to alter existing investment policies to promote the transition to a low carbon global economy by 2050 and to report back to the General Assembly in 2018.</p>	
<p>15. Recognise that the issues of climate change and fuel poverty must be tackled together and call on the Scottish and UK governments to do so.</p>	<p>The Council Convener has written to both the UK and Scottish Governments urging them to do this.</p>
<p>16. Note with regret the UK Government's reduced commitment to renewable energy, and other measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; the withdrawal of funding for Carbon Capture and Storage trials, and the reduction in Energy Company Obligation funding, and call on the Government to commit to a programme of action which will lead to a reduction in our wasteful use of energy and the elimination of carbon from our energy sources.</p>	<p>The Council Convener has written to the UK Government urging them to do this but we remain unconvinced that they are committed to this objective; however powers transferred to the Scottish Government allow more progress through the Scottish Energy Strategy 2017.</p>
<p>17. Call on Ofgem and the Scottish and UK Governments to address unfairness in domestic energy pricing.</p>	<p>We note the remedies set out in The Competition and Markets Authority's Energy Market Investigation in June 2016 and will continue to press for further measures to protect the most disadvantaged energy users from systemic unfairness.</p>
<p>18. Regret that the Scottish Government will fail to fulfil its commitment to eliminate Fuel Poverty by November 2016, and call on it to address this issue as a matter of urgency with a new timetable for elimination pending the implementation of the National Infrastructure Priority on Energy Efficiency.</p>	<p>Council staff and members together with other Fuel Poverty campaigners continue to raise this issue with the Scottish Government.</p>
<p>19. Commend congregations involved in local energy schemes and encourage others to consider how they might be involved.</p>	<p>Council staff members have raised this issue with the Scottish Government as part of engagement on the Scottish Energy Strategy.</p>

20. Call on the Scottish and UK Governments to remove unnecessary barriers to Community Energy schemes.	Council staff have raised this issue with the Scottish Government as part of the engagement on the Scottish Energy Strategy.
21. Note with concern the problems caused by the current operation of the electricity supply, transmission and distribution networks in Scotland, and call upon the Scottish and UK Governments to explore measures which address these.	Council staff have raised this issue with the Scottish Government as part of the engagement on the Scottish Energy Strategy.
22. Call on the energy companies to do more to protect vulnerable customers and to publish debt and disconnection figures by postcode area.	Council Staff will continue to raise this concern with energy companies.
23. Instruct the Council, in collaboration with the Education Committee and other Councils of the Church, to review the work and position of the Education Committee within the Church of Scotland and report back to the General Assembly in 2017.	A review group had been established under the conensorship of Rev Dr Robin Hill. An interim report on their work is contained within this year's report. A final report will be brought to the 2018 General Assembly.
24. Affirm the role of school chaplains and encourage the Chaplains Group in their work.	The Council has produced a Chaplains Handbook which provides guidance and examples of good practice for all who are acting as school chaplains. For further information contact <a href="mailto:amullen@churchofscotland.org.uk">amullen@churchofscotland.org.uk</a>
25. Instruct the Council to continue to develop quality Religious Observance resource materials and modules for teachers and chaplains in schools, and to seek the accreditation of these modules from appropriate bodies.	Training events have been facilitated for a number of Local Authorities and conversations with academic institutions are ongoing.
26. Instruct the Council, in consultation with the Legal Questions Committee, to respond to any consultation document which might be issued by the United Kingdom Government on the introduction of a British Bill of Rights to replace the Human Rights Act 1998 and with regard to any amendment of UK Law as regards human rights and access to the European Court of Human Rights for UK Citizens, with particular emphasis on its implications for the operation of the Scotland Acts, the constitutional settlement in Scotland and the impact on citizens as holders of rights, including the workings of the Scottish Parliament and the status of the Church of Scotland.	At the time of writing no consultation document on the introduction of a British Bill of Rights has been published by the UK Government. The Church and Society Council, in collaboration with the Legal Questions Committee, remains ready to respond at the appropriate time.

<p>27. Commend the work of the many local, national and international bodies actively engaged in compassionate care and concern for refugees, and instruct the Council to maintain pressure on the UK Government to allow this nation to remain a safe place of welcome to those seeking and requiring refuge.</p>	<p>The Council has continued to work with Scottish, UK and international partners to raise these issues with the UK Government. Through working with the Churches Commission for Migrants in Europe, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland and the Joint Public Issues Team, a range of engagement with politicians, decision-makers, influence attitudes among the general public have been developed. Further information can be found in the report on Asylum and Refugees, below at section 7.</p>
<p>28. Welcome the appointment of Mr David Bradwell, Refugee Co-ordinator, and instruct the Council to ensure that a report on this work is brought to the General Assembly of 2017.</p>	<p>The report on the work around Asylum and Refugees can be found below at section 7.</p>
<p>29. Note and reaffirm the deliverances agreed by the General Assembly of 1996 and 2014 which give thanks for the work of the European Union in promoting peace, security and reconciliation amongst European nations, note that the UK has been part of the European Union since 1973 and believe that the UK should remain in the EU.</p>	<p>On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June 2016 in a referendum on whether the United Kingdom should remain a member of the European Union the majority of UK citizens voted to leave. Within this report the Church and Society Council reflects on this decision and on some ways in which the Church of Scotland might respond.</p>
<p>30. Acknowledge the deep anxiety caused by the EU Referendum.</p>	<p>In June 2016, the UK voted to leave the EU. In Scotland, the majority voted to remain. Following this result the Church and Society Council submitted a response to the Scottish Government's consultation on "Scotland's relationship with the EU" and attended a round table with the Under-Secretary of State for the Department for Exiting the European Union. This year's report includes reflections on the UK decision to leave and the Church's ongoing role.</p>
<p>31. Instruct the Council, in the event of a decision to remain in the EU, to explore ways of increasing understanding of and engagement with the European Parliament and EU institutions, promoting a Parliament and institutions which support the rights and well-being of the Union's poorest citizens.</p>	

## 4. Speak Out

### *Implementation Plan*

#### 4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 In 2015, the Church and Society Council asked people in every part of the country to imagine Scotland and the world in 2035 as fairer, more equal and more just nation and world more in tune with the sort of world that delights God, and then to indicate what steps are needed

to make such an aspiration possible, starting now. Almost 11,000 people took part. The findings of *Speak Out: 10,000 Voices for Change* were approved by the 2016 General Assembly. At that stage the Council committed to bring forward an implementation plan in 2017. This plan represents a major and strategic shift for the Council, committing it to a decade-long programme of activity, and rooting its work far more deliberately in the life, work and witness of local congregations and communities. It is

about the Church 'tackling injustice' and 'living hope' together.

#### **4.2 Guiding Principles**

**4.2.1** Speak Out is based on the belief that the Church's calling is to seek out the places where God is already at work and to join in. God does not join us in our mission; rather we join in God's mission. To do so is an incredible privilege and a profound challenge. It is an act of discipleship.

**4.2.2** The scale of ambition set out in Speak Out is significant and we must be prepared to fall short: to fail trying is much better than to have never tried. We should also seek to understand this task in terms of what Jesus refers to as the Kingdom of God. Jesus often illustrates the Kingdom of God by referring to small, fragile and temporary changes, as both already present and yet to be fully consummated. We might similarly say that what we are seeking to do is to make earth look a little bit more like heaven whilst knowing that we will never fully succeed.

**4.2.3** Speak Out builds upon the best of the work that has been undertaken in the past but recognises the need to operate in ways which reflect our current reality as a smaller and less influential institution, operating in a hugely complex political, ecological, social, technological, economic and spiritual environment. It draws on some of our strengths: our continuing presence in every community; our partnerships with many other denominations, faith groups and with wider society; the long-term nature of our commitment to tackle injustice and poverty and to promote peace and the integrity of creation; and our passion, motivated by faith, to continue to make a difference.

**4.2.4** Speak Out commits the Council to a long-term process of advocating for and delivering change. This needs to mean that we cover fewer topics than we may have done in the past but that what we do is done in greater depth, over a longer period, and with a clearer understanding of the change that we want to help to bring about. This is a shift to becoming much more deliberately

proactive in our work and our reports to future General Assemblies will reflect this. We will seek to say less and try to do more.

**4.2.5** Policy engagement will remain a vitally important part of the Council's work. However, this new way of working is much more intentional about learning from and resourcing local congregations, and their partners, to bring about lasting change. There is an incredible amount of transformative work which goes on through the Church of Scotland every week. We need to learn from it and encourage even more of it. Our work must also be about learning from and working alongside those who are the victims of injustice and struggle against poverty – making real the Church of Scotland's ongoing commitment to the poorest and most marginalised, not just out of sympathy but because that is the Gospel way to live.

**4.2.6** We need to get better at connecting what the Church does, and wants to do locally, with what the Church says and does at a national level. As such the primary partnership that exists in Speak Out is between the Council and local congregations: we are here to support and resource local congregations and communities and to ensure that their prophetic voice and action is heard and seen more clearly.

**4.2.7** Speak Out should also enable more effective ways of working across the Councils of the Church and fit in as part of the Council's ongoing wider strategic planning process. It will reduce duplication and increase impact. It will support and integrate the strategic objectives of other Councils into its ongoing planning process, supporting for example, the Ministries Council in the training and equipping of ministries in today's Scotland. A Reference Group will be established to coordinate the work. Critically this group must involve those who are most deeply impacted by the changes we are seeking to bring about.

**4.2.8** The work will not only require collaboration across the different strands identified by Speak Out but also be focused on working with a wide range of partners. As well as the foundational partnerships with local congregations

and across the Councils and Committees of the General Assembly, Speak Out will operate collaboratively with other Christian denominations, other faith groups and a wide range of organisations with similar goals and aspirations. This commitment not only makes sense economically and organisationally. It also makes sense theologically: seeking to demonstrate unity within the Church and a recognition that the Spirit of God is never limited to the institutions of the Church. Partnership working means supporting others to achieve aspirations, rather than focusing purely on how we can deliver our own.

**4.2.9** Speak Out will provide the backbone to the Council's work moving forward and will be the framework through which we will operate and report to future General Assemblies. It will not, however, be the only work that we will do. We will need to continue to react to major societal changes and to world events (for example, the decision of the UK to leave the European Union) but we will do so through the lens of our deeper and longer-term work. In this way we will seek to be more proactive; focused on advocating for and creating the sort of society we believe God wants. It will also provide an important focus for elements of our continuing work in, for example, the fields of science and technology, politics, gender justice, and education. Each of these will naturally cut across and inform the work.

**4.2.10** The Church and Society Council's report to the General Assembly in 2016 identified seven inter-related themes (flourishing local communities; doing politics differently; investing in young people; health and wellbeing; caring for creation; building global friendships; and an economy driven by equality) and identified the need to enable change within and across each of them. We used the analogy of the body: the head (bringing about policy change); the heart (culture and attitudinal change); the hands (practical change); and the feet (the people that we will walk alongside/partner with to bring about the desired change<sup>[2]</sup>). Our implementation plan continues to use this framework.

### **4.3 Connecting It All Up**

**4.3.1** The seven themes which emerged from Speak Out need to be understood not as separate entities but as inter-related. Different pieces of work will overlap and impact several different themes at the same time. For example, the work that Council is undertaking around Participatory Budgeting relates clearly to the outcomes identified within both the 'Flourishing Local Communities' and 'Doing Politics Differently' themes: tackling food poverty and insecurity will have not only impact 'Caring for Creation' but also 'Health and Wellbeing', 'Economics Driven by Equality' and 'Flourishing Local Communities.'

**4.3.2** Even more importantly all the different themes relate to a core message which emerged from Speak Out – the importance of relationships. Whilst policy, programme and project work is vitally important, it is relationships which make the biggest difference. 'An overwhelming number of responses emphasised that the way people relate to one another is a key cause of injustice, inequality and unfairness, and correspondingly changing the way we relate is a primary solution' (Church and Society, General Assembly 2016). This is not simply about how we relate to one another. It is about how we relate to God, how we understand God relating to us, and how we understand the relationships which exist within the Trinity. Within the Christian tradition, loving God and loving our neighbour belong together (Mark 12:30-31).

### **4.4 Resourcing and Communicating**

**4.4.1** The effective delivery of Speak Out will require significant changes in the way that we operate and communicate. At an operational level the Council and department are being reconfigured to enable this new way of work, which will require both focus on specific pieces of work and the ability to work across different themes and priorities. It will also require a clear and robust monitoring and evaluation framework to ensure that what we are trying to achieve is being taken forward, and where it is not, our work is adapted to reflect this.

**4.4.2** Speak Out will enable the Council to develop a relatively small number of core media messages about the sort of changes that it wishes to demonstrate and advocate. It will work with the Communications Department to find the most effective way to establish and promote these messages. It will also have several established case studies around each of the themes – stories of the pioneering work that the Church is already doing – which will illustrate the sort of change which the Council is advocating and which is already happening. Undertaking this work over a longer period will enable the Church, and critically local congregations, to become recognised experts within these spheres of work.

#### **4.5 Collaborative Working**

**4.5.1** Congregations are, and will be, the places where the work around Speak Out is most tangible. Clear steps will be required to ensure that local ongoing work is informed by, and informs, the wider work. Doing this effectively will require close working relationships with several key internal partners including: the other Councils reporting to the General Assembly; local ecumenical partnerships; and presbyteries. Particularly close relationships will be needed with the Go For It Fund, the Priority Areas Committee, and the Communications Department. One of the great joys of the last year has been the immensely positive way in which many, both within the Church and beyond it, have spoken about the potential for the integrated approach within Speak Out to make a significant difference.

#### **4.6 At a Glance**

**4.6.1** Our overall aims are that by 2027:

- Scotland will be a fairer, more equal and more just country in a fairer, more equal and more just world.
- The Church of Scotland, in partnership with others, will have played a key role in enabling this to happen.

**4.6.2** Our aims are aspirational, and not all of them will be within our control. Nonetheless we are committed to them. We believe that this is a time for boldness rooted in

faith. This is not about false optimism for the future – we are very realistic about that. It is about ongoing trust and hope in the abiding love of God.

**4.6.3** In our work, we are committed both to ‘tackling injustice’ and to ‘living hope.’ This means standing up against what we believe is wrong, based on our commitment to follow Jesus. It also means demonstrating in clear, compassionate actions that the community of hope (Kingdom of God) is already present. In the words of the prophet Micah, this is about “acting justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with our God.” (Micah 6:8).

**4.6.4** Speak Out will be built around the 7 themes which emerged out of the 2015 engagement exercise in which almost 11,000 people from every part of Scotland took part. These themes, in no particular order, are:

- *Flourishing Local Communities*
- *Doing Politics Differently*
- *Investing in Young People*
- *Health and Wellbeing*
- *Caring for Creation*
- *Building Global Friendships*
- *An Economy Driven by Equality*

**4.6.5** These themes are all inter-related. They should not be seen as separate strands but as different components within a multi-layered web. A small number of specific outcomes have been agreed for each of these themes. Success will be measured against these. Whilst the outcomes will remain consistent through the process, the output – how we will seek to achieve them – will adapt to circumstance and opportunity

**4.6.6** Speak Out is part of the broader strategy being developed through the Council of Assembly. It has a specific focus on how it enables the Church to engage effectively with its neighbourhood and with wider society. It is intended as a collaboration with the other Councils of the General Assembly as well as with congregations and presbyteries, to support them to do their work as

effectively as possible. It will also work in partnership with a broad range of ecumenical and civic partners.

**4.6.7** At the heart of Speak Out will be the commitment to nurture relationships which demonstrate God's passion for justice and deep love for all, especially alongside the poorest and most marginalised. Out of this work, it is hoped that over time a new public theology for Scotland can be developed.

#### **4.7 Flourishing Local Communities**

##### **4.7.1 What success will look like**

**4.7.1.1** The sociologist Manuel Castells, when asked what a good city looks like, replied that it was a place in which his eight year old granddaughter could grow up safe, happy and where she would want to live.

- Flourishing local communities will be neighbourhoods where there is increased community-led activity and cohesion.
- Policy and practice at Scottish and local authority levels will demonstrate an increased transfer of effective power and budget to local communities.
- An increased proportion of churches, and those people and organisations associated with local congregations, will engage effectively with their neighbourhoods.

##### **4.7.2 Where we are starting from**

**4.7.2.1** Historically the Church has been at the heart of community life and although things have changed dramatically for many in recent generations, in many places the Church (its building and its people) remains a key community asset. Local and national festivals, as well as major life events, continue to be celebrated in and around church buildings. Across Scotland, church buildings house an enormous variety of community activities including community cafes, youth clubs, job clubs, parents and toddler groups, AA meetings and slimming groups. A great deal more work with, for example, housing associations, credit unions, community associations, drama and sports groups and community

councils draw significantly on church members for their leadership and membership. Through the success of the *Go For It* Fund, a significant number of new initiatives have started in recent years. The Priority Areas Committee has had a specific focus on enabling new models of community life in Scotland's economically poorest neighbourhoods, including the work of 'Chance to Thrive' which specifically seeks to enable local communities to flourish.

**4.7.2.2** At a policy level, there is a clear interest in and commitment to localism, evidenced for example by the Community Empowerment Act (2015) and the commitment of the current Scottish Government to devolve further power to local communities. Various bodies such as the Christie Commission and the Commission on Strengthening Local Democracy point to the need for ensuring that local neighbourhoods are better able to make decisions about their own context.

**4.7.2.3** At the same time, the impact of budget cuts has been felt disproportionately in many local communities and there is a strong sense that the commitment to local communities is more rhetoric than reality, with many services and organisations, such as the Police, Fire and Rescue and colleges, being centralised in efforts to increase efficiency and make financial savings. Many local community groups have been decimated through reduced funding and growing demand. Cuts in public expenditure are continuing year on year so the situation is likely to get worse, certainly in the short term.

**4.7.2.4** There has also been a growth of interest in Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD), where the focus is more on the strengths of neighbourhoods (with populations in the region of 3000-5000, about the same size as many Church of Scotland parishes) and the power of communities to bring about change.

**4.7.2.5** Housing remains a critical issue and there is a strong perception that previous policy to eradicate homelessness has stalled or is actually regressing.

### **4.7.3 What people told us**

**4.7.3.1** At the heart of what people were keen to see addressed was a deliberate effort to enhance community spirit and increase social cohesion. This was not about a romantic looking back, but a recognition that we need to be more deliberate in our actions in communities, which are incredibly diverse and where many people want to feel more connected but don't know how. People also spoke about a range of critical issues that need to be addressed including: housing; homelessness; social security; domestic violence and gender justice; and a concern about law and order, hate crime and the role of the police.

### **4.7.4 Head: what policy shifts are needed**

**4.7.4.1** There needs to be an ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of current community empowerment legislation, particularly as it impacts Scotland's economically poorest communities, as well as effective and early intervention in the localism policy agenda. We require effective advocacy around the proper resourcing of local communities around areas including: housing, policing and health and social care. We need an increased understanding of why some neighbourhoods are apparently more cohesive than others and a greater awareness and understanding of, asset-based community development. Key learning also needs to be developed about the function of the public sector in an enabling state, and the significance of re-neighbouring policies.

### **4.7.5 Heart: what culture shifts are needed?**

**4.7.5.1** The biggest shift will involve moving from a deficit to an asset-based model where the focus is less on 'sorting problems' and more about 'recognising strengths.' This will involve encouraging churches to move from a primarily service-based model to a way of working that is built around relationships and friendships. ("I do not call you servants any longer, but friends" [John 15.15].) It will be important to encourage and resource local congregations to increase their understanding that the development of 'flourishing local communities' is a core part of mission. The mission of God (Missio Dei) is never limited to the Church.

### **4.7.6 Hands: what needs doing?**

**4.7.6.1** There is already a myriad of outstanding pieces of work going on across the Church of Scotland. Examples include: St Paul's Youth Forum which through diversionary youth work has helped to radically reduce anti-social behaviour in their part of the east end of Glasgow; Richmond's Hope which has pioneered child bereavement support across the central belt from a community base in Craigmillar; Grassmarket Community Project which brings together people from all walks of life to create a community where everyone is a member; Hamilton Presbytery which is facilitating asset-based community work across five parishes; and Havilah, which has just celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> birthday, enabling those struggling against addiction to fulfil their potential.

**4.7.6.2** At an organisational level, *Chance to Thrive* is working with 16 congregations across priority areas to help them make a positive impact in their neighbourhoods; Social Responsibility's Social Care Mission Officer is supporting local churches to engage in a wide range of community activities; and *Go For It* is funding church-based community work across the length and breadth of Scotland.

**4.7.6.3** There is the potential not only to build on what is already happening but to learn from it and to use the best of this work to demonstrate how flourishing local communities can be supported from the ground up.

### **4.7.7 Feet: walking together**

**4.7.7.1** Key internal partners include: the *Go For It* Fund; the Priority Areas Committee; the General Trustees; and Social Responsibility's Social Care Mission Officer.

**4.7.7.2** Key initial external partners include: Scottish Churches Housing Action (SCHA); Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC); Police Scotland; Faith in Community Scotland (FiCS); and Nurture Development.

### **4.7.8 Getting Started**

We will bring together key internal partners to identify ways in which we can collaborate to promote and

encourage greater church involvement in community engagement.

We will learn more about asset-based community development (ABCD) and, with partners, promote this model of working across the Church.

We will engage early with the Scottish Government in their plans for increased local democracy and offer an ongoing assessment of its community empowerment legislation.

We will seek to work with partners in the development of community anchor organisations and leaders across Scotland.

We will work with Police Scotland to identify and promote high quality work which will help to make our communities safer.

We will work with Scottish Churches Housing Action to promote work which will enable congregations to engage more effectively with those who are homeless or in insecure housing.

#### **4.8 *Doing Politics Differently***

##### **4.8.1 *What success will look like***

**4.8.1.1** Martin Luther King, the black civil rights leader, said: "Let us not satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred." These words seem particularly apposite in our current political climate. Jesus' command is not only that we love those that we agree with, but that we also love those that we profoundly disagree with.

- People, particularly those who currently feel most disenfranchised, will feel more engaged in politics.
- Trust in politicians will have increased.
- A variety of new models of democracy will have emerged, helping with the transition from representative to participatory democracy. Churches will have increased their advocacy work.

##### **4.8.2 *Where we are starting from***

**4.8.2.1** Politics in Scotland, the UK, Europe and across the world is in a period of almost unparalleled flux. We need to be able to respond to this and to understand the new relationships which are evolving between, for example, Scotland and the rest of the UK; and the UK and Europe. Constitutional issues which have been an important part of our recent history, are likely to continue to be a focus of attention for many years to come.

**4.8.2.2** In Scotland since 2014, there have been three sets of parliamentary elections (to the European Parliament, Holyrood and Westminster) with local authority elections due to take place in May 2017. In two referendums, Scotland has voted to remain within the UK and the UK has voted to leave the EU. The huge consequences of the latter are likely to dominate national political discourse for some time to come and may trigger a second Independence Referendum in Scotland.

**4.8.2.3** Since May 2015, the Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrats have all changed their UK leaders. There has been a huge upturn in membership of political parties and of political participation whilst, at the same time, an ongoing (and growing) mistrust of politicians and politics. There is, as evidenced by increased voter turnout and engagement, an interest in a different sort of politics but a lack of clarity about how to make the transition from traditional representative democracy to more participatory models. Popular political rhetoric has become more bitter, divisive and personal both in the UK and overseas.

**4.8.2.4** The Scotland Act 2016) has devolved significant additional powers to the Scottish Parliament, and the coming years will bring significant opportunities in how these are used most effectively to create a more equal, fair and just Scotland. The Scottish Parliament has already passed the Community Empowerment Act 2015 and the Scottish Government has committed itself to some decentralisation of power illustrated through, for

example, increased commitment to Participatory Budgeting (PB).

**4.8.2.5** On all sides of the political debate there is an interest in how we 'do politics differently' but a lack of clarity about how to do it. Social media is also changing the way to react to local and global issues, meaning that issues arise (and disappear) rapidly.

### **4.8.3 *What people told us***

**4.8.3.1** The constitutional arrangements between Scotland and the rest of the UK naturally featured strongly. Although relationships with the rest of the EU was a smaller issue of concern (at the time when Speak Out took place) it was nonetheless also present in the responses. Alongside this concern for 'macro-political' issues, there was also a very strong desire to see how local democracy could be strengthened, trust in politicians increased, political tribalism decreased, and a move from representative to participatory democracy enabled.

### **4.8.4 *Head: what policy shifts are needed***

**4.8.4.1** There is a need to engage creatively with the ongoing debate about constitutional reform, including the need to move beyond binary solutions to highly complex matters. This runs parallel with a requirement to move beyond short-termism to developing longer-term political consensus around some core generational matters (e.g. healthcare and education). There is a need to strengthen local democracy, learning from what works in other parts of the world, and to contribute to the current appetite for decentralisation of power, budgets and decision-making.

### **4.8.5 *Heart: what culture shifts are needed***

**4.8.5.1** Our political democracy is based on trust and we have a part to play in restoring trust in politics and politicians. The vast majority of politicians are passionate public servants who have chosen to enter politics to make a positive difference.

**4.8.5.2** In recent years, through our collaboration with bodies such as the *Poverty Truth Commission* and learning from the wider *Citizens* movement, we have become

acutely aware of the requirement to directly involve those who experience poverty and injustice in the political processes which will bring about transformational change – 'Nothing About Us Without Us Is For Us.' This will be seminal to building more effective ways of working.

**4.8.5.3** Advocacy, standing alongside those who are victims of injustice, and campaigning for change is part of doing mission effectively. It is part of what we pray for when we ask for the 'Kingdom to come on earth as it is in Heaven' (Matthew 6:10). The Church, operating within a Christendom model, has often shied away from such activity. We need to have the courage to be more prophetic in our work.

### **4.8.6 *Hands: what needs doing***

**4.8.6.1** *Imagining Scotland's Future* - the model of 'respectful dialogue' developed during the 2014 Independence Referendum debate, the *Meet Your MSP* project (established by the Scottish Churches Parliamentary Office [SCPO] following the 2016 Scottish Parliament elections), the *People's Politics* hustings (2016) and the work of *Scotland's Poverty Truth Commission* (of which the Church has been a core partner and funder since its inception in 2009) are all illustrations of the work that we are already doing to encourage a different sort of political dialogue and structure. Moving forward, we need to build upon these models, develop new ones and root their practices more fully in local communities.

### **4.8.7 *Feet: walking together***

**4.8.7.1** Key internal partners include: the Office of the General Assembly; the Joint Public Issues Team (JPIT) and SCPO.

**4.8.7.2** Key initial external partners include: politicians from across the political spectrum; the Poverty Truth Commission; PB Partners; Place for Hope; Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO); and a range of public policy think tanks.

#### **4.8.8 Getting Started**

We will work with partner churches across the UK to equip our members and communities to increase their understanding of the implications of Article 50.

We will learn from and develop SCPO's work around the 'Meet your MSP' project as part of a wider strategy of developing relationships with, and increasing trust, in elected politicians as a way to strengthen democracy.

We will work with local congregations (and their partners) in a variety of rural and urban settings to develop understanding and experience of participatory budgeting.

We will work with SCVO and their partners in the development and delivery of Scotland's Open Government Partnership (OGP).

We will engage early and creatively with the Scottish Government in their plans for decentralisation of power and services.

We will encourage ongoing and positive debate about Scotland's place in the United Kingdom and Europe, including about constitutional reform.

#### **4.9 Investing in Young People**

##### **4.9.1 What success will look like**

4.9.1.1 According to the French moralist, Joseph Joubert: 'Children need models rather than critics.' In Jesus' ministry, children were identified as having the attributes necessary to enter the Kingdom of God (Luke 18:15 – 17). We are slowly learning that adults need to learn from children rather than children always learning from adults.

- There will be significantly reduced levels of child poverty in Scotland and the gap in education attainment will have narrowed.
- Children and young people will be safer where they live and have greater opportunities to have fun.
- Young people will have an increased role in shaping present and future policy.

- The Church will be recognised as a pioneer in peer-led children's, families and youth work.

##### **4.9.2 Where we are starting from**

4.9.2.1 Life is good for most children and young people growing up in Scotland. This is not to deny that there are pressures on every young person in a rapidly changing environment with significant overall increases in, for example, mental illness and childhood obesity. Many young people faced with the reality of climate change, the ongoing threat of terrorism, economic instability and some of the pressures associated with social media are anxious about the future.

4.9.2.2 For a significant minority, however, life is profoundly challenging. Child poverty is increasing and a child born into poverty is much more likely to remain in poverty throughout her/his life. The Scottish Government, building upon the commitments of previous governments to make Scotland the best country in the world to grow up in, has made reducing the gap in educational achievement the core priority of the current administration. This relates strongly to its prevention and early intervention strategy *Getting It Right for Every Child* (GIRFEC).

4.9.2.3 The Church has a history of investing in young people including the establishment of Scotland's education system and the development of national uniformed youth organisations such as the Boys' and Girls' Brigades. Although much smaller, the Church continues to be one of the largest providers of children's, families and young people's work in the country, as well as supporting the National Youth Assembly (NYA). Chaplains remain an integral part of many schools, colleges and universities.

4.9.2.4 At a national level, much of the work which the Council has done in recent years around this area of work has been through its Education Committee which has an extensive programme that supports Church of Scotland representatives on Local Authority Education Committees, School and College Chaplains, and the Scottish Joint Committee on Religious and Moral Education.

**4.9.2.5** Over the years, the Council has produced a range of pieces of work relating to children and young people, most recently its report on corporal punishment to the 2016 General Assembly. Less has been done to develop policy and practice alongside young people, being led by their experience and insights in the way, for example, *Who Cares? Scotland* and *Young Scot* has operated in recent years.

#### **4.9.3 What people told us**

**4.9.3.1** People were primarily concerned about the children, families and young people who are currently being left behind and for the need to address child poverty, more effective family support, child abuse and domestic violence. There was a core focus on the need for educational models that better equipped young people for the huge moral, ethical and spiritual choices that they are facing and will face in the future. The need to narrow the education attainment gap was also regularly highlighted as was the reality that education is the task of everyone and not just schools.

#### **4.9.4 Head: what policy shifts are needed**

**4.9.4.1** Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) is one of the most advanced strategies designed to ensure the wellbeing of children and young people in the world. Its impact and delivery needs to be evaluated on an ongoing basis, as does the extent to which resources are made available to ensure its effective delivery.

**4.9.4.2** The Scottish Government's ambitions to tackle child poverty and reduce the gap in education attainment are to be welcomed. However, these ambitions will not be realised primarily through the education system. There is a need to develop more effective support for families and particularly for those parents/guardians striving to bring up their children in often very difficult circumstances.

**4.9.4.3** Ongoing work needs to be supported to tackle domestic violence and broader issues of gender justice.

**4.9.4.4** Large numbers of young people became very politically engaged because of the Independence

Referendum. It will be important to build upon this enthusiasm and to look at ways of extending the opportunities for young people to participate in and help to develop new models of participatory democracy.

#### **4.9.5 Heart: what culture shifts are needed**

**4.9.5.1** Young people are consistently portrayed, particularly in the media, in negative terms. This needs to be challenged with an acknowledgement of the positive contribution which the vast majority of children and young people make to society.

**4.9.5.2** There is a need to address the growing animosity which can exist between generations and to deliberately encourage opportunities for inter-generational learning and experience.

**4.9.5.3** It is vital that children and young people are safe. However, consideration needs to be given as to how they are given opportunities to take appropriate risks within safe and supported environments.

**4.9.5.4** In the Church's work with children and young people we need to become less concerned about the future of the Church and more concerned about the current and future experience of the young people we work alongside.

#### **4.9.6 Hands: what needs doing**

**4.9.6.1** The Church currently provides and supports a wide range of pioneering children's, families and youth work. This includes *Messy Church*, uniformed youth organisations, *PEEK* (Possibilities for Each and Every Child), *Hot Chocolate*, *the GKexperience*, *the Shed*, *the National Youth Assembly* (NYA) and *the Daisy Chain Project*. We need to build on this vital work and learn from it.

**4.9.6.2** Over the last number of years the *Poverty Truth Commission* has worked alongside Kinship Carers (primarily grandparents) and young people to change attitudes, public policy and legislation, including the introduction of a national Kinship Care Allowance and a nationally agreed School Clothing Grant.

**4.9.6.3** At a national level, work being coordinated by the Mission and Discipleship Council, is already underway to enable the Church to participate fully with the 2018 Year of the Child. This will give an important opportunity to contribute to the wider development of policy and practice. Through its Education Committee, the Council meets regularly with education providers.

#### **4.9.7 Feet: walking together**

**4.9.7.1** Key internal partners include: Education Committee; *Go For It*; *Ministries Development Staff* (MDS); Priority Areas Committee; Mission and Discipleship Council; and *National Youth Assembly*.

**4.9.7.2** Key initial external partners include: *Young Scot*; *CPAG* (Child Poverty Action Group); the Youth and Children's Parliaments; the *Iona Community*; *Scripture Union*; the Boys' Brigade; the Girls' Brigade; and young people.

#### **4.9.8 Getting Started**

We will complete our review of the work of the Education Committee to ensure that we are able to make the largest possible contribution through that work to invest in Scotland's young people.

We will participate fully with others across the Church, to ensure that we engage with and learn from work undertaken through the Year of the Child (2018).

We will engage early and creatively with the Scottish Government's plans for education reform and its introduction of a Child Poverty Bill.

We will learn from the places locally, nationally and internationally which are successfully breaking the link between local educational attainment and poverty.

With others, we will develop ways of working to ensure children and young people, particularly those growing up in poverty, are involved in our work and deliberations.

We will bring together church-based youth work providers to identify ways in which children and young people can be best supported by the Church.

#### **4.10 Health & Wellbeing**

##### **4.10.1 What success will look like**

**4.10.1.1** Mahatma Gandhi states: "It is health that is real wealth and not pieces of gold and silver."

- There will be political consensus on the role of the National Health Service (NHS) and how it can be properly resourced over the next generation.
- The health gap between the richest and poorest communities will have reduced significantly.
- The levels of poor mental health will have decreased significantly as part of a wider societal transition to promote wellbeing and healthy living.
- There will be more effective integration of health, social care and well-being.
- An increased proportion of churches will provide wellbeing and health activities addressing physical, social, emotional and spiritual health.

##### **4.10.2 Where we are starting from**

**4.10.2.1** The principle of healthcare free at the point of delivery remains at the centre of the National Health Service. At the same time there is a recognition that the NHS is under the greatest period of sustained pressure since its inception. There are a variety of causes for this including: budget constraints; advances in medicine; resource allocation; and an increasingly ageing population. There is a universal recognition of the need for the NHS to move towards a much more preventative agenda but such a transition is costly and hugely complex. Despite recognition of the need for a long-term approach, the NHS remains one of the most contested areas between the different political parties.

**4.10.2.2** Good health remains significantly determined by where people live. If you grow up in one of Scotland's poorest communities you are much more likely to die in childhood, to suffer from a chronic disease, or to die in

your 50s, than if you lived in a more affluent neighbourhood. This remains one of the greatest scandals of our age. Similar disparity exists amongst those who struggle against disabilities, many of whom have also been severely impacted by changes in welfare provision.

**4.10.2.3** As our society changes, we are facing a range of challenges with which we have been grappling in recent years, some of which are becoming better understood. These include: poor mental health; eating the wrong things; rise in suicide; care for the elderly; fractured relationships; insecure employment; and loneliness. In many communities there is a recognition that drugs policy over the last generation has failed and Scotland continues to have a complicated (and disturbing) relationship with alcohol.

**4.10.2.4** Although the Council has engaged with a range of these issues through reports over the years, particularly through its Society, Religion and Technology (SRT) Project, it has focused much less on the general area of health and wellbeing than on other areas such as economics, climate change and international relations. At the same time, congregations the length and breadth of Scotland provide vital preventative healthcare activity from pastoral care to AA groups; from Day Care Centres to walking groups; from exercise classes to healing services; from emergency food provision to arts classes.

**4.10.2.5** As well as physical, social, mental and spiritual healthcare, the Church also provides vitally important care in hospitals, residential care and in local communities. In addition, every day, through the ministries of worship and prayer, the Church contributes to the health and wellbeing of people in every part of Scotland and beyond.

### **4.10.3 *What people told us***

**4.10.3.1** People were clear about the crises which the NHS is facing but were passionate about the need to continue to deliver world class healthcare which remains free and accessible to all at the point of delivery. There was a particular desire to provide more adequate care for the elderly and to address some of the 'social evils' of our

time, including health inequalities, poor mental health, addictions and loneliness.

### **4.10.4 *Head: what policy shifts are needed***

**4.10.4.1** With overwhelming political consensus in Scotland about the value and importance of the NHS, there is a need to de-politicise the future of the NHS and to find agreement on how its future can best be resourced over the next generation. This will inevitably involve making difficult choices about the transition to preventative spending; to the more effective connecting up of health and social care policy; and to facing up to the relationship between healthcare and the pharmaceutical industry.

**4.10.4.2** The development of a long term mental health strategy will be an important policy area and work still needs to be undertaken around addiction (alcohol and drugs), as well as steps to tackle obesity, and the provision of elderly care and support. Above all, there is a need to narrow the gap in health between Scotland's wealthiest and poorest citizens. This will involve addressing, amongst other things, food and fuel poverty and the ongoing 'poverty premium.' It cannot be right that it costs more, in real terms, for those in poverty to live healthy lives.

### **4.10.5 *Heart: what culture shifts are needed***

**4.10.5.1** Whilst recognising the ongoing critical importance of the high levels of expertise and professionalism across the NHS, there is a need to recognise that a great deal of the most effective forms of preventative support take place at a neighbourhood level and through increased support amongst families, friends, neighbours and community associations. This is an area where the Church is well placed to make a significant contribution. We need to develop ways of working that deliberately promote health – "life in all its fullness" (John 10:10) – rather than simply tackle illness.

**4.10.5.2** Ministries of healing were at the heart of the life of the early Church and there is a need for the Church to rediscover this aspect of its work in the broadest sense of healing including: speaking out against inadequate and

unequal health provision; providing places for counselling, care and support; and exercising spiritual care, including prayer. Many local churches could re-imagine themselves as well-being centres in which faith, nurture and contemplation are integral parts of a commitment to promote broader health and wellbeing.

#### **4.10.6 Hands: what needs doing**

**4.10.6.1** The basic, and inclusive, pastoral care offered by churches across Scotland plays an important part in the overall health of the nation. This is augmented by the highly professional social care services provided by Crossreach, healthcare chaplains (and the thousands of people who live out their Christian faith on a daily basis working within the Health Service) and the wide range of health and social care activities operating in many congregations including befriending, lunch clubs, day care centres, bereavement support, addiction services, self-help groups, exercise classes and the provision of alternative therapies.

**4.10.6.2** Moving forward, the wider Church needs to learn from the inspiring work carried out, for example, through *Befriend in Bellshill*, *Richmond's Hope* (Edinburgh and Glasgow), *Heart for Art*, *Bankfoot Parish Church* and *Finn's Place* (Langside, Glasgow) as it contributes to a practical re-imagining of the NHS. This community-based work should sit alongside the spiritual healthcare delivered in hospital and residential care.

**4.10.6.3** Scientific and technological advances will play a significant role in future health and social care provision. There is an ongoing need to remain appraised of these advances, including their potential ethical and practical implications.

#### **4.10.7 Feet: walking together**

**4.10.7.1** Key internal partners include: Crossreach, the *Go For It* Fund; the Priority Areas Committee; and healthcare chaplains.

**4.10.7.2** Key initial external partners include: NHS Scotland and Health and Social Care Boards; Faith in

Community Scotland; Faith in Older People; the Eden Project; a range of Third Sector healthcare providers and campaigning organisations; Alcohol Focus Scotland; and policy think-tanks with a particular focus on healthcare (e.g. the King's Fund).

#### **4.10.8 Getting Started**

We will work with others to gain a better understanding of the current and future needs of the NHS and consider ways in which political consensus around this work can be achieved.

We will monitor the effectiveness of the integration of Health and Social Care Partnerships in ensuring that the broader health and social care needs of people are more adequately met.

We will contribute creatively and early to the Scottish Government's strategy to tackle poor mental health.

We will work with partners to identify ways of reducing harm caused by the abuse of alcohol and other substances.

We will encourage churches to contribute more effectively to a wellbeing agenda, including the tackling the problems associated with loneliness and community-based elderly care.

#### **4.11 Caring for Creation**

##### **4.11.1 What success will look like**

**4.11.1.1** "Climate change is a global problem with grave implications: environmental, social, economic, political, and for the distribution of goods. It represents one of the principal challenges facing humanity in our day." (Pope Francis)

- Scotland will be a leader in responding to climate change and will be on course to reduce its emissions of greenhouse gases to 80% of its 1990 levels by 2050.
- Scotland will have made substantial progress in moving towards a low carbon economy.

- Scotland will have a healthy natural environment with flourishing biodiversity, clean air and rivers.
- Food provision and consumption will be more sustainable with a significant decrease in the levels of food poverty and food insecurity.
- More congregations will be accredited members of Eco-Congregation Scotland: raising awareness of the consequences of climate change; delivering practical local responses; and campaigning for positive change.

#### **4.11.2 *Where we are starting from***

**4.11.2.1** Climate change and loss of biodiversity are global concerns for everyone including scientists, governments and people of faith. Our economy and way of life have led to increasing environmental damage. This damage impacts most heavily on those struggling against poverty. Scientists can point to the causes and consequences of environmental damage but there is also a need to challenge the values and assumptions that have created them: a focus on endless economic growth, consumerism, our sense of entitlement to wealth and our right to dominate the planet.

**4.11.2.2** In December 2015, agreement was reached to tackle climate change at the COP21 summit held in Paris to limit global warming to less than 2° Celsius compared to pre-industrial levels. It is recognised that even this ambitious level will be insufficient to repair the damage and that whilst COP21 was a hugely significant step forward, more needs to be done.

**4.11.2.3** The Scottish Government has set its own ambitious targets. In January 2017, it published plans to further cut carbon emissions and will bring forward proposals for a new Climate Change Bill. Nonetheless there are inconsistencies in this approach, including current proposals to reduce Air Passenger Duty.

**4.11.2.4** The Church of Scotland has played a key role in the public debate around climate change and was amongst the first denominations in the UK to appoint a

Climate Change Officer. It was present at COP21 where the voices of faith groups, particularly those standing in solidarity with the global South, played a critical role in reaching an agreement. The World Mission and Church and Society Councils have both regularly highlighted the consequences of global warming. Current work includes: working with international development partners, such as Christian Aid, to highlight the human realities of climate change; work to tackle fuel poverty and climate change together; and ongoing work to support the Church's transition to investing in renewable energies.

**4.11.2.5** Much of this work is undertaken in partnership. A particularly close working relationship exists with Eco-Congregation Scotland which supports over 380 congregations across Scotland, more than 270 of which are Church of Scotland.

#### **4.11.3 *What people told us***

People were concerned about the impact of climate change and the consequences of this on people across the world, particularly the poorest, and on the planet itself. There was also a desire to move forward land reform, increase access to green space; reform agriculture and tackle food insecurity and poverty.

#### **4.11.4 *Head: what policy shifts are needed***

**4.11.4.1** There is a clear commitment on the part of the Scottish and UK Governments to implement the COP21 agreed in Paris. Work needs to be done to ensure that this remains a core priority of both governments as they face a range of other competing and, at times, more politically immediate issues.

**4.11.4.2** The Scottish Government is committed to making sure that Scotland is a 'good food nation.' This must include policy which is deliberately focused on tackling food insecurity and to the development and delivery of a more environmentally sustainable food system. Similarly work is required around land reform and the ongoing shift to renewables, with ongoing efforts to ensure that there is a connection between tackling climate change and addressing fuel poverty. In this, and in a range

of other areas, there is a need to inform (and be informed by) scientific and technological advances.

**4.11.4.3** Since Speak Out was conducted there have been significant changes in the political climate including the decision to leave the EU. This will mean that there will be substantial work required around environmental, agricultural and fisheries policy.

**4.11.5 *Heart: what culture shifts are needed***

**4.11.5.1** Despite very clear indications of how climate change is impacting on people living in the UK (e.g. increased flooding and a warmer, wetter climate) for many it remains remote, either too big to make any real difference, or something that impacts on others beyond our immediate experience and knowledge. There is a need to counter this: to demonstrate ways in which we can all make a difference and to understand better our global inter-connectedness.

**4.11.5.2** At the heart of many of the problems resulting from climate change are excessive consumerism, materialism and a dysfunctional economy. There is a need to promote – and embody – a simpler lifestyle: ‘to live simply in order that others may simply live.’

**4.11.6 *Hands: what needs doing***

**4.11.6.1** Over the last decade, the Church has played a significant role in advocating for action to address Climate Change and encouraging congregations and communities both to campaign for global change and to deliver practical steps locally. Much of this work has rightly been carried out in collaboration with other partners including Eco Congregation Scotland. Examples of this work includes: *The Climate Justice Baton relay* in the run up to COP21; the creation of community gardens; steps to reduce CO2 emissions in church owned properties; and enabling people to learn from the experiences of the Church’s global partners. It is important that this work is developed and deepened.

**4.11.6.2** Churches throughout Scotland play a very significant role in addressing escalating cases of food

poverty and food insecurity. Alongside foodbanks, a number of congregations are supporting broader community food initiatives encouraging the growing, cooking and sharing of food alongside its emergency distribution.

Recent years have also seen an increased interest in pilgrimage within parts of the Church. This gives new opportunities for people to engage with the wider environment and for the development of walking groups within communities.

**4.11.7 *Feet: walking together***

**4.11.7.1** Key internal partners include: the World Mission Council; the *Go For It* Fund; the Investors’ Trustees; the Guild; and the General Trustees.

**4.11.7.2** Key initial external partners include: Eco-Congregation Scotland; Christian Aid; Stop Climate Chaos Scotland; and CEC (Conference of European Churches).

**4.11.8 *Getting Started***

We will work with others, including the Investors Trust, to bring forward proposals as to how the Church can support the transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy. .

We will increase awareness of the impact that climate change is having on our global partners.

We will engage creatively and early in the Scottish Government’s planned Climate Change Bill.

We will encourage congregations to develop longer-term approaches to tackling food insecurity and food poverty.

We will promote and support pilgrimage as one way in which local congregations can engage more effectively and creatively with their environment.

## **4.12 Building Global Friendships**

### **4.12.1 What success will look like**

“What is at stake is nothing less than the survival and well-being of a generation of innocents.” (Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary General).

- Scotland is providing sanctuary to a fair and generous proportion of asylum seekers and refugees.
- British companies are selling fewer weapons and there is an overall decrease in the percentage of the global economy spent on armaments.
- The UK is taking steps to end its ownership of nuclear weapons.
- Scotland is a Fair Trade nation.
- Congregations are at the forefront of work to highlight global injustice and are providing practical and compassionate support to refugees and asylum seekers.

### **4.12.2 Where we are starting from**

**4.12.2.1** How long you live – and the quality of your life – is significantly influenced by where in the world you are born and grow up.

**4.12.2.2** The global movement of people is at its highest since the Second World War and there is no sign that this is likely to change as the impact of climate change brings additional pressures on where it is possible for people to live. The issues facing asylum seekers and refugees will continue to be, some of the most pressing of our generation. Huge numbers of desperate people are being forced to flee from their homelands and hundreds of thousands are arriving in Europe. The UK’s preferred policy that those seeking asylum remain in the ‘first safe country’ they reach is a failure of moral responsibility given its location at the northern end of Europe, and its commitment to receive 20,000 Syrian refugees during the lifetime of the current parliament is inadequate.

**4.12.2.3** The Church has been an outspoken critic of a great deal of the UK Government’s asylum and immigration policy, arguing for a more just settlement and

greater compassion. In 2015, the Church funded the establishment of *Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees* which supports practical help for asylum seekers and refugees; raises awareness of the local and global issues; and campaigns for a more just asylum system.

**4.12.2.4** In 2016, Westminster voted in favour of the renewal of Trident, Britain’s nuclear weapons system. This was opposed by the Scottish Government, by the vast majority of MPs serving Scottish constituencies and by the Church (in line with its long established opposition to nuclear weapons). UK companies continue to be one of the world’s largest sellers of weapons including to a range of countries which it recognises as being guilty of human rights violations.

**4.12.2.5** There has been a significant increase in racially and ethnically related hate crime in the UK in the lead up to and following the UK’s 2016 decision to leave the EU, including on EU nationals living in Scotland and other parts of the UK. This is a new factor to consider since the initial Speak Out consultation. The decision of the UK to leave the European Union will have important implications for many years to come.

### **4.12.3 What people told us**

Whilst people recognised that the Church has a territorial commitment in Scotland, there was also a clear recognition of the need to speak and act out for justice in the wider world, particularly with our partners in the World Church. Work in support of asylum seekers and refugees featured strongly alongside a commitment to the eradication of nuclear weapons and to the creation of a more peaceful world. There was also recognition of the ongoing threat of terrorism, the need to improve relationships across faiths and a desire to tackle global inequality.

### **4.12.4 Head: what policy shifts are needed**

**4.12.4.1** There are clear differences between the Scottish and UK Governments on immigration policy; the primary responsibility however rests with the UK Government. There is opportunity to engage fully and clearly in the

Scottish Government's strategy relating to 'New Scots.' Both governments have committed to tackling human trafficking.

**4.12.4.2** There is a welcome widespread political consensus on the international aid and development budget, although this is increasingly under attack within sections of the media. Steps need to be taken to ensure that this is being spent in pursuit of the global sustainable development goals and that funds are not diverted from these funds to support either UK interests or to support, instead, the settlement of refugees and asylum seekers in the United Kingdom.

**4.12.4.3** The UK remains one of the largest seller of weapons in the world. This is a multi-billion pound industry. The selling of armaments to nations guilty of human rights abuses and the UK's ongoing retention of nuclear weapons needs to be consistently challenged.

#### **4.12.5 *Heart: what culture shifts are needed***

**4.12.5.1** There are increasing levels of isolationism and xenophobia in the UK. The Church by its very nature operates beyond borders and boundaries. This is likely to be important and prophetic in coming years and needs to be encouraged at local, national and regional levels.

**4.12.5.2** Conventional weapons can only have a limited impact in protecting communities and countries from the current threat of international terrorism. The struggle to overcome such evil is overwhelmingly a battle of attitudes as opposed to weapons.

**4.12.5.3** Across the UK there has been an alarming rise in racist and religious attacks. Although currently less evident in Scotland than in other parts of the UK, it nonetheless exists. Scotland also needs to continue to tackle sectarianism. There is a need to replace the fear of diversity with the ability to see many of the opportunities which such change offers.

**4.12.5.4** Jesus spent his early years as a refugee and indicated that he would continue to be present in the

dispossessed and the stranger. The Church needs to rediscover this reality in the ways in which it works alongside asylum and refugees that end up living in Scotland and other parts of the world where Scotland continues to have a church presence. They can, and will be, a huge blessing to the Church and to the nation.

#### **4.12.6 *Hands: what needs doing***

**4.12.6.1** The establishment of the Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees and the response of congregations across Scotland (and across the world) to the refugee crisis are examples of the Church's ongoing ability to rise to the challenge of being alongside the poorest and most marginalised. Its ongoing opposition to nuclear weapons, and the willingness of several of its members to campaign non-violently for peace, is evidence of doing the right thing even when that is unpopular.

**4.12.6.2** As many communities become more diverse, traditional congregations have found creative ways to reach out to new communities, providing opportunities for new Christian communities to meet and grow, and for more effective engagement with other faith communities.

**4.12.6.3** It is vitally important that the Church continues to engage effectively with its global partners, to work alongside and to learn from them. It is also increasingly important that congregations are able to engage creatively and prophetically with the global communities within their own parishes.

#### **4.12.7 *Feet: walking together***

**4.12.7.1** Key internal partners include: the World Mission Council; the Interfaith Officer; Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees; and the Ecumenical Relations Committee.

**4.12.7.2** Key initial external partners include: Christian Aid; the Joint Public Issues Team (JPIT); the Churches Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME); the Scottish Refugee Council (SRC); and Scottish Christians Against Nuclear Armament (SCANA).

#### **4.12.8 *Getting Started***

We will campaign for the just treatment of EU nationals from other parts of the EU living in the UK.

We will contribute creatively and practically to the Scottish Government's 'New Scots' strategy.

We will support peace-making efforts in areas of conflict.

We will offer practical support and resources to congregations seeking to engage with asylum and refugee issues, either in their community or globally.

#### **4.13 *Economy Driven by Equality***

##### **4.13.1 *What success will look like***

**4.13.1.1** "I believe with all my conviction that humanity has the talent, the skills and the imagination to build a fairer, safer world for everyone." (Winne Byanyima, Executive Director of Oxfam International)

- The gap between the richest and poorest in Scotland is narrower.
- A progressive taxation system helps to ensure more effective redistribution of wealth.
- There are increased routes into fair and sustainable employment.
- There is a more equitable distribution of resources across the Church as it models the sort of society it is advocating.

##### **4.13.2 *Where we are starting from***

**4.13.2.1** In Scotland, the wealthiest 10% of the population own almost 45% of the wealth, while the least wealthy 50% own 9% of the wealth. This means that Scotland remains one of the most unequal countries in the world. There is increasing recognition that this sort of inequality gap has a profoundly negative impact on societies and countries. Whilst there has been a great deal of policy developed around tackling poverty, far less work has been done to address the ever increasing gap between rich and poor.

**4.13.2.2** Since 2008, there have been £15billion worth of cuts to the benefits system across the UK, meaning that many of those who were least responsible for the financial crash have paid the highest price. . At the same time those on relatively high incomes have been largely insulated from the impacts of public sector austerity. The impact has also been disproportionately felt by women who have experienced 74% of the cuts. Child poverty and in-work poverty are both on the increase. Families living in poverty where at least one adult is working now constitute over 50% of those struggling against poverty.

**4.13.2.3** The global economy is substantially driven by private and corporate wealth, the great majority of which prioritises profit to businesses, over the wellbeing of customers and employees. This model of growth feeds rampant consumerism and the value of people is increasingly measured in terms of their capacity to spend.

**4.13.2.4** The Scottish Government has stated its desire to develop an economy focused on narrowing the gap between the rich and the poor – a strategy advocated in the Church's Special Commission on the Purposes of the Economy (2012) – but there is recognition that this is an ambitious aspiration and one that will be challenging to achieve. Oxfam's work in developing a Humankind Index is one of a variety of models which demonstrate the potential to measure worth and value in different ways. The Church's own work (A Right Relationship with Money, 2012) also laid out four important principles: reducing inequality; ending poverty; ensuring sustainability; and promoting mutuality.

**4.13.2.5** Over recent years the Church has supported and encouraged a wide range of initiatives designed to tackle social and economic activity, including the work of *WEvolution*, support for credit unions, job clubs and the encouragement of employers, including the Church, to pay the Scottish Living Wage. It has also continued to advocate for Fair Trade and measures which address global as well as national inequality. Each of these represent efforts to imagine the economy differently – where the

economy serves people, rather than people serving the economy.

#### **4.13.3 What people told us**

**4.13.3.1** People expressed significant concern that our current economic models generate inequality and imbalance and are, as such, unsustainable. The failure of our financial systems; the disproportionate cost of living for the poorest in society; the need for fair work and just business; and the decline in the value of social security (welfare benefits) all featured strongly.

#### **4.13.4 Head: what policy shifts are needed**

**4.13.4.1** The promotion of a Living Wage by both the Scottish and UK Governments is an excellent illustration of the lobbying power of civic society, including faith communities. There is the opportunity to build upon this pressure and to ensure that employees have fair and decent working conditions.

**4.13.4.2** Although most of the Benefits System will remain reserved, the Scottish Parliament does now have significantly new powers, giving the opportunity to advocate for (and implement) a new social security system which is based on dignity, and which provides a decent standard of living for those on low incomes (whether in paid work or not).

**4.13.4.3** The Scottish Parliament also has newly devolved taxation setting and raising powers. This gives an important opportunity to develop and deliver a progressive model of taxation. If Scotland wants to have a world class system of care and support, it cannot be delivered on the current levels of taxation. Consideration could be given to promoting and piloting a Citizen's Income and other models which ensure an adequate minimum standard of income.

**4.13.4.4** Tax evasion and avoidance are increasingly condemned across a wide political consensus but there appears to be relatively little progress beyond the rhetoric to bring about change, whereas evading tax is punished at least as severely as those who are guilty of benefit fraud.

The impact of the former is immeasurably greater for the Scottish and UK economy.

#### **4.13.5 Heart: what culture shifts are needed**

**4.13.5.1** The current economic model is increasingly based on unsustainable models of growth which are damaging to people and to the planet. There is a need to develop a deeper understanding of 'enough' which challenges the current throw-away and replacement culture.

**4.13.5.2** Taxation is overwhelmingly viewed in negative terms. It needs, instead, to be understood as a valuable social and economic contribution which is made towards the wellbeing of others, and to society as a whole, by those who can afford it.

#### **4.13.6 Hands: what needs doing**

**4.13.6.1** Local churches in communities such as Larkhall and Cranhill are providing valuable support to assist people into paid employment opportunities. In other communities, congregations are providing debt advice and access to affordable credit. The Churches Mutual Credit Union (CMCU) is growing as is the engagement of local churches with credit unions serving their neighbourhoods. The Church, through its support of *WEvolution* and the *Poverty Truth Commission*, is enabling new and progressive economic and social models for change. A growing number of churches are also pioneering social enterprises and social business where the balance between value and profit has been recalibrated. The Church's partnership with the Islamic Finance Council, looking to develop an ethical finance framework drawn from the traditions of both faiths, is a demonstration of what can be done together.

**4.13.6.2** There is not yet clarity on what a new economic paradigm might look like; but there is the recognition that one is needed. The Church locally, nationally and internationally, can play a significant part here, experimenting with new ways of working, and learn from these experiences.

**4.13.7 Feet: walking together** Key internal partners include: the *Go For It Fund*; the *Priority Areas Committee*; and the General Treasurer's Department.

Key initial external partners include: the *Poverty Truth Commission*; *WEvolution*; the *Joseph Rowntree Foundation* (JRF); the STUC (Scottish Trades Union Congress); Islamic Finance Council (IFC); Positive Money; and the Poverty Alliance.

#### **4.13.8 Getting Started**

We will encourage and learn from social enterprise and social business.

We will consider the viability of a Citizen's Income, in collaboration with other partners.

We will seek to encourage greater understanding across the Church of how the economy works.

We will highlight the disproportionately negative impact which the current economic system has on women and young people.

#### **4.14 Monitoring & Evaluation**

**4.14.1** Given the long-term nature of the strategy envisaged in *Speak Out*, and as a model of basic good practice, it is vitally important that robust monitoring and evaluation is embedded within the overall strategy. This will enable progress to be monitored and the strategy to remain flexible in its delivery whilst clear about the outcomes that it seeks to achieve. This will help us to identify and celebrate short term success whilst continuing to be committed to long term change.

**4.14.2** The framework should be set against the overall aims of the strategy and the success indicators highlighted within each of the themes. Support has been sought from key agencies, including those working with faith groups, with expertise in both qualitative and quantitative methods of monitoring and evaluation. The *Speak Out* evaluation framework should be integrated into the wider tool currently being developed by the Council of

Assembly. Consideration should also be given to external evaluation partners, with a fully independent evaluation carried out after five years.

#### **4.15 A Public Theology for Scotland**

**4.15.1** This work is first and last an act of faith and discipleship. It is an attempt to enable the Church to live humbly as prophetic announcers of the Good News of the Kingdom which is always breaking into our midst. That it is doing so at a profoundly challenging time, for both society and the Church, makes the task even more significant.

**4.15.2** Not only is the Church changing, as it always must, but the society that we are immersed within is also changing rapidly and in ways which are unsettling to many. The Church's position can no longer be taken for granted: 'Christendom has left the building.' There is: a rise in political and religious extremism; a growth of isolationism; and considerable economic, environmental and social insecurity. In faith, however, we believe that God is still at work in the world, not limited to the old ways or by the walls of the community of faith. Our calling, as it has always been, has been to get out there and join in.

**4.15.3** This new landscape calls for new ways to communicate, nurture and demonstrate faith, much of it from the margins and some of it small and almost unseen unless we have the eyes to see and the ears to hear. A great deal of the old language makes increasingly less sense but the yearning for a world as God intends it to be remains redolent.

**4.15.4** It is hoped that *Speak Out* can help the Church to discover and contribute to a new public theology for Scotland; one which makes sense for the new times in which we are operating, helping people to connect their spirituality and their advocacy; their worship and their activity. It is intended that this public theology will emerge out of the work that is being undertaken and that it will continually evolve. It will be created on the streets, on the forest paths, on the city pavements and in church halls, alongside people struggling against poverty, clamouring for justice and seeking faithfully to follow Jesus.

## 5. Surveillance and Social Justice

'Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground unperceived by your Father' (Matt 10:29 NRSV)

'O Lord, you have searched me and known me...Such knowledge is too wonderful for me' (Ps 139: 1, 6 NRSV)

### 5.1 Introduction

**5.1.1** David, who suffers from chronic anxiety, had his welfare benefits cut for three weeks because he was late for an appointment at the Job Centre. David is subject to surveillance. Sarah tests the hardware that collects communications data from every mobile phone and internet browsing data from every user in the UK. Sarah is a surveillance agent. Tom develops computer code that enables commercial companies to categorise and filter-out less profitable customers. Tom is a surveillance analyst.

**5.1.2** Jack suffers from dementia. His daughter carries a pager that alerts her when he steps on the mat inside his front door during the night. Jack is subject to surveillance. Anne manages a team at the security checks at Glasgow airport. Anne is a surveillance agent. Charles designs algorithms that cross-reference NHS and international databases to identify trends in disease risk. Charles is a surveillance analyst.<sup>[3]</sup>

### 5.2 Rationale

**5.2.1** Surveillance encompasses many, if not all, areas of life. Entire populations experience suspicion-less surveillance, sifting through data which might identify targets for more focused scrutiny. Such closer observation may be aimed at detecting criminal activities - but equally it might be to find potential customers, more risky borrowers, or people vulnerable to disease. Police investigations, covert monitoring by the intelligence services and tactics associated with oppressive regimes are only *some* of what surveillance means today.

**5.2.2** Mirroring the focus of Jesus, this report highlights those who are already marginalised and often find their experience of surveillance to be counter to their

flourishing. It is a timely report because it has become increasingly easy to collect and speedily process complex data. There is increased public awareness of surveillance. Particular groups of people in our society are unfairly under considerable suspicion.

**5.2.3** Whilst digital surveillance is absent from the Biblical narrative, the Psalms and the New Testament provide a picture of a God who sees all. In the portrayal of some Pharisees, the Gospels also illustrate the power that can come from being those monitoring other people. At a more fundamental level, Scripture addresses fear, to which surveillance is often a 21<sup>st</sup> century response: "perfect love casts out fear" (1 John 4:18).

### 5.3 Aims

**5.3.1** Many of us are, often unwittingly, surveillance agents (towards our family, friends, colleagues, parishioners, students, patients, or strangers). It is hoped that the report will encourage Christians to engage in re-considering surveillance in everyday contexts.

**5.3.2** In this report, we seek to expand the Church's understanding of surveillance as an approach to perceived danger and its appreciation of how surveillance shapes those being watched, and those doing the watching. Appeals in society are regularly, and often rightly, made to the right to privacy (Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights) and we contribute insights from within this paradigm. Data Protection Legislation also exists to protect people's privacy and we seek to broaden the discussion into how 'cultures of surveillance' can intensify discriminatory relationships.<sup>[4]</sup> Theological reflection on contemporary surveillance is a new field of study, so this report contributes to a national and international debate that is likely to grow.

**5.3.3** It is our intention that this report and its outcomes will contribute to the Church and individual members being able to offer biblical and theological affirmation and challenge of everyday surveillance culture and, in some

cases, of expert knowledge systems. The report comprises three major sections.

- ‘**Surveillance from the Data-centre**’ examines what we mean when we talk about surveillance, who it affects and in what way. It explores contemporary understandings of surveillance.
- ‘**Surveillance from the Cross**’ opens up theological perspectives that re-orientate surveillance in terms of the Cross, God’s relational way of knowing, privacy as a gift for dignity and flourishing. It draws on Biblical examples of how people manage their visibility, as a way of connecting with contemporary cultures of surveillance.
- ‘**Bio-data, Borders and Benefits**’ articulates a dialogue between ‘Surveillance from the Data-centre’ and ‘Surveillance from the Cross.’

#### 5.4 Surveillance from the Data-centre

**5.4.1** Merely watching people does not generally imply surveillance; there must be some intentional effort to collect information. Surveillance can be defined as ‘the focused, systematic and routine attention to personal details for purposes of influence, management, protection or direction.’<sup>[5]</sup> Personal details are much more than birthdate, address, ethnicity or employment statuses which were easily available in earlier times. Today, however, personal information may include biometrics such as retina patterns, samples of DNA in saliva, and fingerprints. Our digital footprint can be extensive: alongside a list of actual purchases, data can be collected about the alternatives we explored before coming to a decision. A record of phone numbers we call can be enriched with not only information about when, and for how long we spoke, but the geographical location of that call.

**5.4.2** There are many times when consent to our personal details being “collected” is assumed. For example, the act of using an airport implies that our consent to surveillance has been given; if we do not wish this to happen then our only option is not to fly. When data is not

available for the behaviour that interests an organisation, proxies or stand-in data can be substituted. For example, statistical correlations might be identified between someone’s postcode and age and their potential to repay a loan. The extent to which acting upon such proxies is discriminatory and/or illegal varies from country to country.

#### 5.5 Theories of surveillance

**5.5.1** Earlier forms of surveillance (familiar to anyone who remembers their teacher sitting at a desk on a raised dais at the front of the classroom) could be described as *the few watching the many*. This is the notion of *panoptic* surveillance.

**5.5.2** Such a model is increasingly accompanied by one in which the many watch the few. ‘The few’ can be those who are deemed to be in some way different: ‘them’ rather than ‘us’; deviant and dangerous rather than normal and law abiding.<sup>[6]</sup> This can be termed *synoptic* surveillance<sup>[7]</sup> - a term that helps draw attention to the ways in which already present ‘them-and-us’ categories are replayed and reinforced. ‘Immigrants’, ‘benefit scroungers’, ‘foreigners’, and ‘Muslims’ are each in their own way containers which can then be populated with prejudice and bias.

**5.5.3** There are also practices of “*surveillance from below*” (sousveillance) for example, when protestors record the actions of police officers to secure evidence of civil rights breaches.<sup>[8]</sup> In many cases, surveillance is not targeted at suspects, but at whole populations. That does not mean, however, that the consequences of surveillance are the same for everyone. If you are on welfare benefits you may experience surveillance that is unknown to others fortunate enough to be spared such intrusions into their personal life.<sup>[9]</sup>

**5.5.4** In much the same way that, to our shame, an Irish accent once aroused suspicion in the UK, or skin colour could be legally used to bar someone from rental accommodation, many Muslims currently find themselves frequently designated as members of an outsider group,

assigned to a 'them' rather than 'us' category, and consequently put in danger of physical or verbal attack.

**5.5.5** While surveillance does not impact all equally, the consequences of surveillance do not fall only on minority groups. Anyone using the internet is presented with online advertising, much of it picking up on data from previous searches, seeking to influence not only what you purchase, but possibly affecting how you see the world.<sup>[10]</sup> State authorities make the case that it is necessary to be able to break encrypted emails and online messaging on grounds for example of national security or child protection.

## 5.6 Datafication

**5.6.1** We are living in an age of 'datafication', where more and more forms of social interaction and transactions produce collectible digital data.<sup>[11]</sup> It is possible to analyse many more different *types* of data using complex, automated algorithms, some of which are designed to be self-learning and refine their processing over time. Commentators are moving from talking about data as being 'collected' to talking about it being 'ingested'.<sup>[12]</sup> This opens possibilities for 'predictive policing' where patterns of behaviour can point to *potential* (as opposed to actual) criminal acts.

**5.6.2** Not all databanks are capable of being accessed or cross-referenced by particular corporations or even government investigators. Nevertheless, as sources of data, we become valuable commodities when corporations can monetarise us. Our propensities and tendencies extrapolated from the fragments of our past may be misleading or unrepresentative- but are commercially valuable.<sup>[13]</sup> It could be argued that, whilst workers choose to sell their labour we now have little option about our (digital) selves being sold.

## 5.7 Security

**5.7.1** States gather intelligence and choose to designate particular threats as imperilling "national security." There then follows a 'securitisation of identity', which offers 'conditional access to...the benefits of liberty'.<sup>[14]</sup>

**5.7.2** Fear of the unknown operates against a possibly catastrophic horizon of devastating harm (such as a biological weapon in terrorists' hands), and the more immediate horizon of day to day surveillance. We are sure that significant terrorist threats exist but unsure of the specifics.<sup>[15]</sup> However, state authorities can retrospectively justify their practices by claiming it impacts on security, which offers the possibility of using fear and unease as a way to govern.<sup>[16]</sup> To designate a group or person as a threat to 'national security' attempts to close down critical discussion.

**5.7.3** The assertion of human rights can be used to push back against this trend, but, under the European Convention on Human Rights, a fundamental danger is posed by the absence of any agreed definition of 'national security'. National security is frequently invoked to erode human rights, not only with regard to the right to privacy (Article 8, ECHR) but Article 6 (the right to a fair trial). For a right to a fair trial to be assured, it is essential that communications between lawyers and their clients are protected by rules of professional privilege and professional secrecy. However, there is constant pressure from security services in democratic societies (including the UK) to be able to conduct surveillance of such communications, leading to a need for lawyers to seek to use technical means (which can never be wholly effective) to prevent such intrusions.<sup>[17]</sup> Human rights activists, journalists, lawyers and arguably ministers of religion may need to have secure ways of communicating confidentially, especially where governments are hostile.<sup>[18]</sup>

**5.7.4** In the event that there is any future change in Human Rights law in the UK, vigilance is required to prevent any further erosion of the benefits of liberty in the name of 'security'.

**5.7.5** Securitisation comes into focus at international borders. Passenger information goes ahead of travellers with clearance sometimes given before departure (as with US immigration operating at Shannon airport in the

Republic of Ireland or British immigration officials working on French soil in Calais). However, for many people the 'border is everywhere' with negative effects in cities where ID cards and identification are checked in multiple ways.<sup>[19]</sup> We cannot even be confident that our bodies present a border to the securitisation of identity. Invasive and non-invasive gathering of biometric data, including swabs for DNA sampling, can be utilised in surveillance.<sup>[20]</sup>

## 5.8 Risk and mistaken public perception

**5.8.1** The perception of threats can emanate from specific sources, such as actual terrorist threats, calculated economic risks, or published local crime rates<sup>[21]</sup>. Fear can mean that strangers need to demonstrate they are harmless.<sup>[22]</sup> Whereas we once 'took a risk,' we now tend to think of ourselves as 'being at risk.'<sup>[23]</sup>

**5.8.2** Public perceptions, fuelled by sections of the media, are often wildly mistaken. For example, there is a widespread perception that £24 in every £100 claimed in welfare benefits is fraudulent; the actual figure is 70p in every £100.<sup>[24]</sup>

**5.8.3** This degree of public misperception is the context in which severe bureaucratic surveillance blights the lives of people claiming welfare benefits, resulting for many in punitive sanctions. In 2015, the Church of Scotland as part of the Joint Public Issues Team, called for the UK Government to rethink benefit sanctions.<sup>[25]</sup> Ken Loach's 2016 film *I, Daniel Blake*, tells the story experienced in real life by too many in our society.

**5.8.4** The Campaign for a Fair Society argues that budget cuts by the UK government disproportionately fall on people in poverty and those with disabilities. The campaign estimates that people with the severest disabilities will be burdened by government cuts 19 times more than the rest of the population.<sup>[26]</sup>

**5.8.5** Datafication together with securitisation can exacerbate our sense of being at risk. On the other hand, datafication provides evidence to contradict false perceptions of risk, and perhaps challenge the

securitisation of people too readily framed as threats. This is one of the paradoxes of contemporary data-gathering.

## 5.9 Convenience and privacy

**5.9.1** Another paradox lies in the need to balance convenience and privacy. Datafication eases life, yet it reshapes our idea of privacy. Data protection and regulatory regimes attempt to balance these potentially competing desires.

**5.9.2** Tailored financial services, ease of online shopping, recommendations for similar purchases and cashless travel cards all rely on data-gathering and processing. These conveniences depend on our willingness to share (or surrender) personal data. At the same time we are concerned about 'identity theft', illegitimate sharing of data between companies, and intrusion by state intelligence services.<sup>[27]</sup>

**5.9.3** The mantra 'I have nothing to hide so have nothing to fear' is widespread but mistaken. It wrongly assumes that privacy is simply about secrecy, and that secrecy is only about hiding bad things. However, aggregating personal data might, for example, disclose that someone searching online for wigs and books about cancer is undergoing chemotherapy. This should be a matter in which they have the right to privacy.

**5.9.4** At another level, governments gain considerable power over citizens (and non-citizens) by processing vast amounts of personal data. Currently governments may have honourable intentions; future governments may not. Discrimination in the future could be made systematic through data given today in good faith. It is 'the accretion of a slow series of relatively minor acts' that threaten privacy.<sup>[28]</sup> Given that we can become acclimatised to surveillance by accepting it in many rather inconsequential areas of life, we might well condone it unthinkingly in more significant domains.<sup>[29]</sup> As the German Constitutional Court noted, surveillance changes the way people behave. If you feel controlled you behave differently and this endangers your participation.<sup>[30]</sup>

**5.9.5** The opportunities and challenges of contemporary surveillance are immense. Finding and developing theological and biblical resources by which to engage critically with it is a vital task.

### **5.10 Surveillance from the Cross**

**5.10.1** Sparrows fall to the ground, and people's innermost thoughts and every action takes place within the sight of God. This is a powerful theological paradigm. At different times in the Christian life, this can be comforting and unsettling. A framed motto hanging above your bed reminding you that God sees everything, coupled with reminders of sin and its consequences can turn the comfort of God's watching into a threat.

**5.10.2** Sadly, censorious and intrusive disciplinary actions by churches (mostly in the rather distant past), and Christian traditions that have deployed sacramental confession to keep people in line, tend to convey a negative dimension to the notion of God's gaze.<sup>[31]</sup>

### **5.11 The Surveilled and Surveilling One**

**5.11.1** In an approach aimed at redressing such dominating associations around God's watchful gaze, a number of theologians have advocated that we talk about 'surveillance from the Cross.'<sup>[32]</sup> Jesus was a man under surveillance, by the Pharisees, the Romans and his followers. More importantly, the Cross is not only an event but it discloses the character of the one crucified. It is the self-surrendering, caring Jesus who expresses his nature as God on the Cross.

**5.11.2** As one who himself knew surveillance, Christ watches the world. He places Himself in solidarity with all under surveillance, particularly those for whom the consequences of surveillance may be discriminatory. Surveillance from the Cross focuses our attention on the qualities of the One watching; One who is *with* us rather than dominating us.

**5.11.3** This understanding of God's watching over us (surveillance) distances the more imperialistic connotations of traditional images. Surveillance from the

Cross affirms the possibility that 21<sup>st</sup> century surveillance systems can be acts of care. It rehabilitates our language about surveillance so that it cannot simply be dismissed as bad. At the same time, Jesus' solidarity with marginalised people turns attention to the ways in which contemporary systems of monitoring reinforce (or even create) new forms of injustice and discrimination.

### **5.12 Relational knowledge**

**5.12.1** Some Christians feel uncomfortable talking of God's *surveillance*, even when this is articulated as the caring gaze of Jesus. Quaker theologian Rachel Muers has explored the idea of relational knowledge as a challenge to de-contextualised and objective information *about* someone.

**5.12.2** True knowledge is not about information possessed, shorn of context or wrenched from the matrix of relationships in which it is gained. Knowledge arises within specific relationships which carry and invest knowledge with responsibilities. Muers builds this model of 'hearing knowledge' from God's way of knowing which, she argues, is 'knowledge within the context of God's relation to what – and whom – God knows.'<sup>[33]</sup> God's knowledge is thus relational or covenantal knowledge; God does not gather information about us.

**5.12.3** We have here a theological critique of contemporary datafication. In counterpoint to much of modern surveillance, a Christian theology of surveillance is built on relational knowledge and has care and solidarity at its heart.

### **5.13 Privacy as a gift for dignity**

**5.13.1** In 1973 the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church in the USA, demonstrating a remarkable level of foresight, rendered its discussion of privacy in a resolutely theological key:

"It is especially important to be reticent about demanding or exposing another's record, and to respect each person's unique context. Christian faith stresses the dignity of persons and groups living by

grace in a fallen world. We rejoice in a forgiving God who in his mercy can decide to forget the past and to open the future to his creatures. His liberating grace empowers us to care all the more for individual and social freedom.<sup>[34]</sup>

We are, they argue, not to be reduced to information, but our personhood is to be respected: “we belong to a social system of informational exchange; but we belong to it also, or seek to, *as persons*.”<sup>[35]</sup>

**5.13.2** The Background Report draws on the Book of Genesis to talk about the “gift of privacy” which comes from the garments of animal skin that Adam and Eve receive from God (Gen 3:21). With this gift of privacy, humans receive “the right of...reticence before the eyes of each other, and even before the eyes of God.”<sup>[36]</sup>

**5.13.3** Human dignity and the freedom to flourish authentically is the Roman Catholic Church’s principal theological defence of the right to privacy.<sup>[37]</sup> There are inter-personal dimensions too. We respect another’s privacy and hold confidences shared with us because we are obligated to be faithful to truth. We are to give others a just portrayal, and not constrain the space in which they might develop their God-given potential.<sup>[38]</sup>

**5.13.4** To put this into a Reformed key, John Calvin’s theology of liberty of conscience can help us see how privacy is not so much a withdrawal into ‘private space’ but into Christ who is the believer’s righteousness (Matt 6 v 6).<sup>[39]</sup> What matters far more than the state’s intrusion into your ‘private life’, Calvin says in effect, is what use you make of that privacy. Do you use it for bolstering your own self-righteousness or is it a meeting point with the Grace of God?

## **5.14 Visibility**

**5.14.1** Whilst we will struggle to find ‘privacy’ directly within the Biblical narratives, the notion of being made more or less visible is present.<sup>[40]</sup> To varying degrees Jesus managed his own visibility, often removing himself from the crowds or going off to pray on his own. Much of the

infancy narrative is about Jesus being made invisible on the journey to Egypt so that the holy family are kept safe from King Herod. Once his ministry begins to unfold, Jesus consciously makes his table fellowship both obvious and controversial: “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” (Matt 9:12).

**5.14.2** In another example, Jesus makes Zacchaeus very visible, not only in the immediate moment of summoning him from his vantage point, but in Zacchaeus’ response - paying back in abundance what he has taken from the poor (Luke 19:8). If anything is going to make you hyper-visible in your community it is giving people money, especially when that is money that you have illegitimately taken from them. It was not Zacchaeus’ choice to manage his visibility in this way. His visibility was taken out of his hands by Jesus with profound implications for how Zacchaeus and his family lived.

## **5.15 Bio-data, Borders, and Benefits**

‘Surveillance from the Datacentre’ should be evaluated in terms of ‘Surveillance from the Cross’. Affirmation as well as challenge arises when we bring contemporary understanding and practice of near all-pervasive surveillance into the light of Christian theological commitments. This task is best carried out with reference to particular contexts rather than about surveillance as a general concept, therefore we narrow our attention to three significant arenas that serve as examples of what a Christian critique of surveillance might look like.

## **5.16 Bio-data**

**5.16.1** Datafication can save lives and our theological framework encourages us to affirm important acts of care. Physician John Snow’s information gathering in London in 1854 enabled him to understand that cholera was water-borne rather than air-borne. Sir Richard Doll’s informal observations in Oxford of cigarette smokers developing lung cancer led to later painstaking statistical testing that established a causal link. Records stored for one purpose can, perhaps years later, be of use for a totally different purpose. It is possible that had there been a robust

programme of post-marketing surveillance in place when the drug thalidomide (“distival”) was licensed in 1958, the correlation with birth defects might have been identified earlier and the drug withdrawn sooner than 1962.

**5.16.2** Early intervention to prevent a genetically-transmitted disease occurring may be counselled within NHS support systems. However, there are also commercial companies who offer genetic testing for a wide range of genes known to be implicated in a variety of diseases. Ease of collection of DNA samples (e.g. a hair bulb or smear of cells from inside a cheek) raises concerns that the stored samples could be used by the firms for other studies without the knowledge and consent of the donor. It is not difficult to imagine the value of such data to insurance companies who could ameliorate potential losses by ever more targeted, premium, rates for people labelled as having a higher likelihood of developing certain conditions.

**5.16.3** Surrendering bio-data is integrally bound up with the notion of informed consent to any intrusion into a person’s privacy. In other words, *informed* consent is a social justice issue. The solidarity of Christ, expressed in the metaphor of ‘surveillance from the Cross’, demands justice, not mere equity of treatment where consent to bio-data gathering is dependent upon educational or economic advantage.

**5.16.4** Similarly, surveillance that enhances the flourishing of people must take seriously the threat of re-identification of anonymised information.<sup>[41]</sup> ‘People with leprosy’ who feature in the Gospels can be a paradigm for all who are sorted and acted upon by the gathering of surveillance data. On the one hand, concerns for public health are valid, but as re-identifying of individuals within large datasets becomes more sophisticated the temptation to monetise this information increases considerably.

**5.16.5** Whether by accident or malicious intent, data that can be processed to re-identify people with existing or likely future conditions endangers not merely their privacy

but their status in society. Their visibility is taken out of their control. Jesus who surveilled from the Cross is the one who declared in his Nazareth Manifesto that he had been sent ‘to proclaim release to the captives...and to let the oppressed go free’ (Lk 4:18). Rigorous legislation does not immunise against temptation, so whilst Christians ought to advocate for the former we must be ready to be bearers of the Kingdom of God, that is evident in freeing those who are, or who will become, oppressed through re-identification of anonymised personal health information.

## **5.17 Borders**

**5.17.1** National borders are sites of particularly keen surveillance, especially if one is assigned to a category deemed risky, suspicious, or otherwise unwelcome.

**5.17.2** The Old Testament contains sufficient endorsements of keeping watch on city walls or at gates to highlight the necessity of guarding against attacks. The shepherd analogy in the New Testament likewise affirms an appropriate defence of the ‘borders’ of the fold. Yet, there is a significant difference between a predominant disposition to embrace strangers, and an attitude that first and foremost considers others as a threat to be managed, even excluded.<sup>[42]</sup>

**5.17.3** In this sense, borders become focal points around which a state’s self-image and values are disclosed. Rigorous scrutiny of travellers is appropriate given the history of successful attacks upon aircraft, but unwillingness to acknowledge and address unjust scapegoating and discriminatory sorting is not. Surveillance that is welcoming is attentive to discrimination; rejecting surveillance has little regard for the misuse of the power to monitor. Another shepherding analogy familiar to hearers of Jesus’ parables endorses the search for one missing rather than the overwhelming majority (here the 99%) having a monopoly on the shepherd’s protective care (Lk. 15:4).

**5.17.4** Borders are not confined to ports of entry but appear at multiple points in everyday life, whenever identification for authorised access to services or buildings

is required. It is when people cross cyber-borders that they are made more visible. In a search for missing persons the police can make extensive use of such 'border-crossings' to trace someone's path from one CCTV coverage to another, or for example when they withdraw money from a cashpoint or use a form of electronic payment.

**5.17.5** Prejudice on grounds of, for example, race, religion, gender, age, or socio-economic status can be played out through surveillance strategies. A young black man may well have a very different experience of being monitored to that of a middle-aged, middle-class white woman travelling through the cyber-check points of a busy retail park. Jesus' warning to those who judged by external appearances sits alongside the apostle Paul's radical vision of dismantled social divisions, which although a charge to the Church, overflows as a critique of prejudice more widely in society: "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28).

**5.17.6** Where people are categorised through big data their identity is at stake. Surveillance systems may deploy the power to name someone as a perpetrator on the basis of what people like them have done. Instead, it is God who gives a new name, new nature and a new future.<sup>[43]</sup> By making people visible at national and everyday cyber-borders, surveillance imputes identities at the same time as it demands identification. Attitudes of prejudice, fear and suspicion alter people's life chances. The process of accessing welfare benefits bring these to the surface to a profound degree.

## **5.18 Welfare Benefits**

**5.18.1** The proper administration of welfare benefits requires information about people to be gathered and retained. It helps to ensure that people get the benefits to which they are entitled. The hitherto neglected widows of the Early Church could testify to the positive contribution of others watching and reporting their need to the Apostles (Acts 6:1).

**5.18.2** The same monitoring systems raise alerts when someone makes a mistaken benefit claim. In a political climate where welfare benefit clients are regularly vilified as a group, it is distressing that data gleaned through surveillance is conflated in such a way that figures for mistaken claims are included within those for fraudulent claims.<sup>[44]</sup> This is a clear example of the wilful misuse of information.

**5.18.3** A Judeo-Christian position can be shaped by remembering the Biblical figure of Hagar.<sup>[45]</sup> Hagar is oppressed in three ways: as a slave; a foreigner; and as a woman.<sup>[46]</sup> In the midst of her oppression, she speaks up for herself finding that this has negative consequences. Those who are under surveillance, possibly sanctioned for actions over which they have little room for manoeuvre, are sisters and brothers of Hagar who is honoured in the biblical narrative as the only woman to name God: *el Roi*, the God who sees. This mirrors the warning of Jesus in his parable of the unwittingly righteous (Matthew 25) that he *is*, and not merely *with*, the 'least of these.'

**5.18.4** In a culture of a suspicion-driven welfare system, claimants are easily de-humanised within a regime of datafication. It is Jesus who is under surveillance whether the monitoring is disproportionate, intrusive and life-quashing, or proportionate and enabling. Conscientious and compassionate advisors and managers working within the benefits system may feel they are a minority, but their kindness towards those whose data is demanded is, from a Christian perspective, thoughtfulness toward Jesus himself.

## **5.19 Conclusion**

**5.19.1** We live in a world in which the level of surveillance has been increasing as the technology which facilitates it has become more sophisticated. Such developments, though rapid, have tended to be incremental. Thus, the considerable changes in society which they bring have tended to escape public notice.

**5.19.2** It is vital that we reflect upon these developments, and grapple with the profound modifications they make to society. Our report is a contribution to this debate.

**5.19.3** Surveillance from the data-centre can be immensely valuable but deeply discriminatory. Although cloaked in the seeming objectivity of computer coding, surveillance is a social phenomenon that often reflects and shapes subjective prejudices. Surveillance is frequently legitimated on the grounds of security, safety and crime prevention, and too readily absorbs and magnifies fear and suspicion.

**5.19.4** Surveillance from the Cross offers a counter-vision that makes compassion the dominant response. We are known not as objects of information but as people enjoying a relationship of divine love. Privacy is to be protected because it is a sacred space for becoming all we can be in God. As UK citizens we have the responsibility to welcome or challenge specific surveillance strategies carried out in our name. As Christians we are called upon to embody Christ's love by solidarity with those for whom surveillance diminishes dignity.

*O Lord, we are being searched and known...Such knowledge is too unnerving for us.*

*O Lord, we are searching and knowing...Such knowledge is too tempting for us.*

*O Lord, you have searched us and known us...Such knowledge is too wonderful for us.*

## **6. EU Referendum**

**6.1** The result of the European Union (EU) Referendum held in the UK on 23 June 2016 has proved a divisive incident in the political life of Scotland, the UK, other EU members and the wider world. It has provoked fundamental questions about the relations between Scotland, the UK and other European nations, about Scotland's identity, its economy and the position of many for whom Scotland is home.

**6.2** In 2016, the General Assembly debated the report *Our Place in Europe* and reiterated the Church's established position that the UK should remain a member of the EU. This was a view shared by 62% of voters in Scotland as well as the Scottish Government and the Scottish Parliament.

**6.3** The decision to leave the EU has dominated political and economic life since the outcome of the referendum, and is likely to do so for several years to come. The UK Government announced that before the end of March 2017 it would exercise its right under article 50 of the Treaty of Lisbon to withdraw from the EU, beginning a two-year process by which the UK will exit the EU in 2019.

**6.4** The Church of Scotland set out its initial response to the referendum in its evidence to the Scottish Parliament in September 2016. The submission raised concerns about the uncertainty and fear that has resulted from the referendum among members of the Church, particularly those nationals from other EU countries. One minister, who wished to remain anonymous, commented as follows.

**6.5** *"The vote to leave the EU has left me and my family with deep sadness. My wife is Scottish and our three children consider themselves as Scottish and European citizens.*

**6.6** *"One of the biggest concerns that I have is the rise in intolerance and racism in the aftermath of the referendum. Soon after the referendum my son (who is in the high school) was twice called by one of his peers in the school 'dirty immigrant' - and my son was born in Scotland and lived all his life here."*

**6.7** The First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, has sought to reassure nationals from other EU countries that they are welcome in Scotland, but uncertainty created by the referendum remains, and any suggestion that the right of EU citizens to stay in the UK may be used as a bargaining chip in any future negotiations should be resolutely condemned.

**6.8** The situation remains fluid and it is impossible to predict the nature of future negotiations both within the UK and between the UK and the EU. At the time of writing (February 2017) the Supreme Court has ruled that Parliament must be responsible for triggering Article 50; a Parliamentary Bill and supporting White Paper on leaving the EU is before the Westminster Parliament; and the Prime Minister has laid out several key objectives which the UK Government will be seeking in its negotiations. The Supreme Court has ruled that there is no legal requirement to involve the devolved assemblies in Wales and Northern Ireland and the Scottish Parliament in the decision to trigger Article 50. The Scottish Parliament has voted for a motion rejecting the UK Government's expected decision to trigger Article 50 and begin the process of leaving the EU; a vote which will have no effect on the decision of the UK Government, but reveals the deep fault lines that now exist between the two governments. The UK Government has also indicated that it intends to leave the Single Market and Customs Union, a position which runs counter to wishes laid out by the Scottish Government in *Scotland's Place in Europe* (December 2016).

**6.9** At this time the Council, along with other parts of the Church, has sought to engage appropriately with the ever-changing political landscape. In December, the Council alongside representation from the Legal Questions Committee, was represented at a meeting with the UK Government, hosted by the Church of England, to consider the legal implications for churches resulting from the decision to leave the EU. In March, Council representatives will meet with the Minister for UK Negotiations on Scotland's Place in Europe within the Scottish Government.

#### **6.10 Despondency or hope?**

Many people were disappointed and angry at the outcome of the referendum. While to some it may symbolise a reassertion of British sovereignty, for others it can feel like a retreat into isolationism. Such responses are understandable as is the frustration of many in Scotland who voted for continued EU membership but who are

overruled by a larger number of voters in England. However, the Church – despite its own well documented support for continued membership of the EU preceding the referendum – cannot afford to ignore either the very sizable minority in Scotland who voted to leave, nor the very substantial number of people across the UK who voted to remain. Engaging with all parts of the community, however deeply divided views may be, is an important role for the church in the difficult period of change that lies ahead. To this end the Council, through the Joint Public Issues Team, has produced a “Conversation Welcome” resource (available from [www.jointpublicissues.org.uk](http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk)) to aid congregations in facilitating constructive discussions about the country's future.

**6.10.1** This is a time to have the courage to imagine a better future and to encourage others to develop and maintain their dreams and visions. *Speak Out: 10,000 Voices for Change* and the earlier *Imagining Scotland's Future* (2014) have set out a clear vision by the Church of Scotland and that vision is not limited to Scotland; it is one we can share with our European partners. The political circumstances in which this vision can be brought about are uncertain. Nonetheless, whatever Scotland's future will be, the vision of a country in a world that is pleasing to God must inspire and direct our actions.

**6.10.2** In this context the Church of Scotland will play its role as a European church. Its historical roots with other European churches are deep and strong, from pre-reformation theologians and pilgrims to the central role the Genevan Church played in shaping the Reformed Church in Scotland; from the post Second World War partnership with the Reformed Church in Hungary around the life and death of Jane Haining; and to the vibrant life and worship of Church of Scotland congregations across many parts of Europe today. We work closely with the Conference of European Churches and other European partners and will continue to do so on a range of projects: on refugees; care for creation; tackling poverty and on injustice. The Church of Scotland is part of the community of God's people in every part of the world; it is a church for

the people of Scotland but it will also remain a European church which, in collaboration with our sisters and brothers across Europe, seeks to worship God and demonstrate our shared commitment to the Gospel.

## 7. Asylum and Refugees

**7.1** The 2016 General Assembly requested a report on the work of the newly established refugee co-ordination project. This report covers the main social, political and humanitarian aspects of this work.

### 7.2 International Context

**7.2.1** Despite the obvious and visible increase in humanitarian need, the response of some peaceful and prosperous countries has been woeful. The example and rhetoric of the US President in his approach to immigration and refugee protection could have devastating consequences if it continues along its current path. If the leader of a nation so influential in the world embarks on an insular, isolationist and exclusive cultural and ethnic agenda, it can be expected that others around the world will follow suit. Anti-immigrant, anti-refugee, antisemitic and Islamophobic movements continue to operate and provide an extremely difficult environment for people with well-founded fears of persecution.

**7.2.2** The United Nations describes the contemporary situation as one of forced migration on an unprecedented scale; a year ago it was estimated that approximately 65 million people around the world have been forcibly displaced from their homes. Rising numbers over the past five years are attributed to three main reasons:

- Conflicts which cause large numbers of people to flee their countries are lasting longer (e.g. Somalia and Afghanistan)
- Conflicts, new or reignited, are occurring more frequently. (e.g. Syria, South Sudan, Yemen, Burundi and the Central Africa Republic)
- The rate at which solutions are being found for refugees and internally displaced persons has been

falling since the end of the Cold War, leaving a growing number in limbo.

**7.2.3** One of the consequences of the international community's failure to build peace, prevent conflict and provide humanitarian protection for civilian victims of conflict and instability, has been the sight of hundreds of thousands of people risking their lives attempting to cross borders to reach a place of safety. The deaths of tens of thousands of people in the Mediterranean Sea in recent years is a crisis of moral, ethical, political and spiritual leadership by those who live in relative peace and safety, and have the ability to help.

**7.2.4** According to the International Organisation for Migration's Missing Migrants<sup>[47]</sup> project 12,135 people have died in the Mediterranean over the past three years (3,279 in 2014; 3,777 in 2015; and 5,079 in 2016).

### 7.2.5 Mediterranean Hope

Mediterranean Hope is a project of the Federation of Protestant Churches in Italy, born from the awareness of the dramatic situation of migrants who try to reach the coast of Sicily by sea and, in particular, the southernmost point of the island of Lampedusa. The Church of Scotland supports this work.

**7.2.6** Mediterranean Hope is divided into four closely related areas: analysis and information on migration flows via the Mediterranean; reception and orientation of migrants and asylum seekers; integration programmes; and actions aimed at promoting effective migration policies that respect human rights:

- The 'Observatory on Mediterranean Migration' is based in Lampedusa. It ensures constant information sharing on migration flows in the Mediterranean to churches and society in Italy and abroad. It maintains regular relationships with local and regional institutions; promotes intercultural initiatives to create awareness on the issue of global migration; manages the training of volunteers, both Italian and

international; provides advice to associations, journalists and researchers interested in the social dynamics of the Mediterranean; promotes ecumenical and interfaith initiatives focused on the theme of migrant reception.

- The House of Cultures (Casa delle Culture) is based in Ragusa, Sicily. It is a multipurpose facility which accommodates up to 40 migrants and is committed to creating various intercultural programmes for both guests of the House and Sicilians. The House of Cultures provides shelter to vulnerable people such as unaccompanied minors and single women with children. In keeping with its name, the House of Cultures also promotes social and cultural actions of integration, dialogue and intercultural exchange.
- The 'relocation desk' is a service that accompanies and guides migrants who pass through the House of Cultures. It provides a guidance and counselling service that interacts with Protestant communities in Italy and abroad, willing to support the integration paths of individual migrants and migrant families.
- Mediterranean Hope has developed "Humanitarian Corridors," aimed at offering humanitarian protection to migrants in need, allowing them to obtain an entry visa to Italy and Europe so that they can travel in safety and therefore escape the blackmail and violence of people smugglers and criminals who manage human trafficking in the Mediterranean. It has opened a dialogue with Italian authorities as well as institutions and associations operating in Morocco. The right of migrants and asylum seekers to move freely in Europe is a key element of this intervention model. This part of the project is promoted and implemented in consultation with the Community of Sant'Egidio.

**7.2.7** In October 2016, Christine Murray, the Community Outreach worker at Glasgow: St Rollox participated in an ecumenical visit to the island of Lampedusa which included taking part in a service of commemoration for those who had lost their lives at sea.

### **7.3 Child refugees**

**7.3.1** The situation facing children and young people has generated particular concern. In January 2016 Save the Children estimated there were 26,000 unaccompanied children in Europe seeking asylum, and called on the UK Government to agree to resettle and support 3,000 – as the UK's fair share given the size of population and economy. A public campaign led to the UK Parliament including Section 67 Immigration Act 2016; the so-called 'Dubs Amendment' (named after Labour peer Lord Dubs, who was himself on the Kindertransport from Prague to escape the Nazis). The provision required the Home Secretary to make immediate arrangements to relocate unaccompanied child refugees to the UK from other countries in Europe. Following the decision by the French Government to close the camp at Calais in October 2016, around 750 children were transferred to the UK either under the Dubs amendment criteria, or through existing EU family reunification legal routes. However, campaign groups, refugee organisations and Lord Dubs himself have condemned the limited action of the UK Government for taking too long, for not being prepared to transfer more children, and for making non-transparent and arbitrary decisions about who can be transferred - sometimes leading to siblings being separated, with one allowed to come to the UK and the other refused. In February of this year the UK government announced its intention to terminate the implementation of the Dubs amendment having accepted less than 12% of the suggested 3,000 unaccompanied child refugees. In a joint statement following the announcement Church and Society Council Convener Rev Dr Richard Frazer, and Honor Hania, Chair, Commission for Justice and Peace, Catholic Bishops' Conference of Scotland called the move "reprehensible" and urged the UK government to reconsider[48]. The Very Reverend Russell Barr also sent a letter to the Home Secretary Amber Rudd.

**7.3.2** In the UK the involvement of local councils in the process of receiving the 'Dubs' children is a critical factor, especially as the provision of services including fostering, education, social care and health may be involved. In

addition to the Dubs refugees relocated from Europe, the UK has also established a mechanism for redistributing unaccompanied asylum seeking children who have already made it to the UK and are in the process of having their claim and status determined. A number of local authorities in south east England, including Kent (the Channel Ports) and the London Borough of Hillingdon (Heathrow Airport) are witnessing a large and growing population of children in this situation. In the year up to 30 September 2016, there were 3,144 applications for refugee status from unaccompanied asylum seeking children in the UK. The UK Home Office, Department for Education and Department for Communities and Local Government issued an Interim National Transfer Protocol for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children 2016-17 in July 2016. As responsibility for local government and social work is devolved, Scottish local authorities may voluntarily take part in the scheme, but they are not required to do so.

**7.3.3** Refugees have rights to family reunion but the UK Government has decided that these rights only apply to adults who have made it to the UK to be reunited with their family. Unaccompanied refugee children in the UK are not allowed to apply for family reunification, but with increasing numbers of child refugees from the Calais camp and elsewhere, Amnesty International are campaigning to seek a change in the Home Office family reunion rules; the UK's asylum policies are isolating children at a time when they need their families most. Many of these children will not have or may not know if they have any family left, but if they are able to make contact, it is devastating to find out that they may not be able to be reunited with them. This should also cover extended family, because if a child's mother and father are dead or missing, it is just as important that they have the ability to be reunited with a cousin or grandparent if required.

**7.3.4** Edinburgh Peace and Justice Centre, in partnership with Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees, the Scottish Refugee Council, the Scottish Government and the University of Bedfordshire published a report, *Addressing the needs of unaccompanied asylum seeking children and*

*child refugees in Scotland*, in May 2016 which sets out some of the Scottish issues in more detail.

#### **7.4 Syrian resettlement**

**7.4.1** In addition to the relocation from Europe and transfer within the UK of child refugees and asylum seekers, the UK Government has continued to implement its Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement programme. In September 2015, the then Prime Minister David Cameron announced that up to 20,000 people living in refugee camps around Syria would be offered resettlement in the UK over the period up to March 2020. In April 2016, the Government agreed to also offer protection to a further 3,000 children at risk and their families from the wider North Africa and Middle East region. The criteria for the Syrian programme and the Children at Risk programme are determined and assessed in conjunction with the UN High Commission for Refugees. The mechanism for these programmes is a process of negotiation between individual local authorities and the UK Home Office. In Scotland all 32 Local Authorities have agreed in principle to take part. At the end of September 2016 (the most recent statistics available at the time of writing) Scotland had received 1,147 applications under the Syrian programme in 29 different authorities, representing 27.6% of all those who had been relocated to the UK. This means that almost every community in Scotland will now have refugees living either nearby or at least within the Local Authority area, and that the experience in Scotland of welcoming refugees is both more widespread and more numerous compared with the other nations and regions of the UK. Consequently the experience in Scotland could have a significant impact on the future development of refugee policy and integration in years to come.

#### **7.4.2 Our fair Share?**

Despite the channels of resettlement and the willingness of Scottish local authorities to play their part, the number of people that the UK is prepared to offer humanitarian resettlement remains woefully inadequate, both in relation to what other countries are doing, and in response to the catastrophic refugee emergency now taking place

on the borders of Europe. Oxfam has produced a report which presents the estimated need for aid funding as well as places for emergency resettlement for those most in need, and have allocated what would be the fair share for the 32 wealthiest countries.<sup>[49]</sup> Thanks to the UK's commitment to spending 0.7% of Gross National Product on Overseas Development Assistance (a longstanding priority for the Church of Scotland and a range of humanitarian and development organisations), UK aid for humanitarian work in and around Syria in 2015 was US\$ 702.4million, far more than what would be the 'fair share' of \$296.8million. However, due to underfunding by many rich countries, only 56.5% of the funding needed was provided. With regards to resettlement and humanitarian admissions, the UK's fair share in 2016 was calculated as 23,982; however, the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement scheme is limited to 20,000 over a four-and-a-half-year period.

**7.4.3** The shortfall in funding highlights the urgent need for money. It is often preferable to give cash rather than donated goods; it is much more useful to both aid agencies and the refugees they are seeking to help; and there is a considerable logistical cost in time and money. Church of Scotland congregations and church members are encouraged to continue to give to the Place at the Table fund for refugee work carried out by the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon. Donated goods can be useful especially if they are items which have been specifically requested by a registered charity, or if requests for particular items have been made by families of refugees who have recently arrived and might need things such as bed linen, prams etc.

#### **7.4.4 Community Sponsorship**

One new aspect of the resettlement programme is that of Community Sponsorship.<sup>[50]</sup> This is a scheme whereby a charity working in partnership with a local authority agrees to provide accommodation and support for a family under the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement scheme. A sponsorship model has existed in Canada for several years and has resulted in large numbers of refugees

being resettled and supported by citizens, providing benefits for integration and intercultural dialogue. The UK scheme was launched in 2016 with an announcement that the Archbishop of Canterbury would have some Syrians move into accommodation in Lambeth Palace. A number of church groups from different traditions in English local authorities have proceeded to apply and accept Syrian refugees as sponsors.

**7.4.5** Refugees brought under the Community Sponsorship scheme count towards the limit of 20,000 individuals as part of the wider Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement programme. The Home Office has reported that it already has enough commitments from local authorities to provide homes for 20,000 people. Where local authorities are resettling people they receive central Government funding to support them with the costs to do so. The Community Sponsor needs to provide accommodation and have sufficient financial resources to cover any particular costs. Where a local authority is already engaged in the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement scheme, it may be better for a church or community group to engage in supporting integration for all the refugees, rather than focussing mainly on only 'their' family or families. As Scottish local authorities have been at the forefront of engaging with the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement scheme, the Community Sponsorship scheme should only be considered by Church of Scotland congregations if:

- They are already contributing financially to international humanitarian and relief appeals, as the need overseas is greatest and the Community Sponsorship scheme will not see any extra lives protected, given the sponsored refugees will count towards the UK limit of 20,000, and that 20,000 places have already been pledged by UK local authorities.
- They are already involved in a meaningful way in community development work with refugees, asylum seekers or migrants in their area, and have experience of interfaith and / or intercultural dialogue work.

- They are actively supporting political advocacy campaigns aimed at the UK Government which call for an overall increase in the number of people offered humanitarian resettlement (to a figure such as Oxfam's calculated 'fair share') so that refugees coming through a Community Sponsor are not counted towards the 20,000 limit (instead there should be a differentiation between what civil society will do voluntarily and what the UK Government's previously commitment to moral and humanitarian obligations ought to be).
- ending dawn raids and indefinite immigration detention
- improving access for family reunion
- ending the policy of destitution for asylum seekers who have had their claim refused but who are not able to be returned to their country of origin
- improving the understanding of the Christian faith by Home Office immigration officers making decisions about asylum claims especially in cases where the applicant has converted to Christianity.
- seeking to challenge media and political rhetoric which dehumanises and divides people.

#### 7.4.6 Room for Refugees

If you have a spare room or spare accommodation and would be willing to house a refugee or asylum seeker in need, a far more practical scheme would be to register with Room for Refugees,<sup>[51]</sup> a project run by Glasgow Charity Positive Action which has a longstanding and successful track record of matching offers of help to provide shelter and security to those that need it.

### 7.5 Asylum Seekers

**7.5.1** The newer issues of resettlement and transfer of children, and the schemes which bring refugees directly from refugee camps are just one aspect of the UK Government's refugee policy. The longstanding issues around the asylum system are often forgotten or ignored, and there is a dangerous trap which some politicians and media commentators fall into which distinguishes between 'deserving, good' refugees from Syria, and 'underserving, bad' asylum seekers. The Church must speak out; all of us are made in God's image, and all people regardless of immigration status deserve to be treated with respect and dignity. The Church continues to call for reform of the UK asylum system, including:

- replacing the Azure pre-payment benefit card with cash
- offering the right to work for asylum seekers who have been resident in the UK for six months
- improving the system of asylum application, legal representation and appeals

#### 7.5.2 Detention

Detention is one of the most harmful aspects of the asylum and immigration system. Over 30,000 people are detained each year, without time limit, in conditions tantamount to high security prison settings. Tens of thousands more live with the fear of this harmful and unjust practice, not to mention the families and communities damaged by the policy of detention. The 2015 UK Parliamentary inquiry found that current policy is "seriously detrimental to individuals in terms of their mental and physical wellbeing.[52]" It is also hugely expensive to the taxpayer.

**7.5.3** Detention is a barrier to justice, as the charity Right to Remain has demonstrated, preventing people from establishing their legal rights. Immigration and asylum legal cases are complex but people in detention are frequently unable to secure high quality and timely advice.

**7.5.4** Detention also impedes the ability of groups and communities to support each other, and to work together and organise together for migration justice. It is also a "stain" on the UK; a society that deprives people of liberty purely for the 'administrative convenience' of the state is a worry for all of us.

**7.5.5** There have been some positive signs that there is realistic potential to persuade policy-makers to reform the system. There has been positive political movement on

detention, increased media coverage of the issue, successful legal challenges to operational aspects of detention, and a groundswell of popular action at the sites of detention. There is an important role for faith leaders and bodies in this, as respected figures and institutions, both among the public and with those who have the power to change policy.

**7.5.6** Some will wish to call for an end to all detention, whereas others will argue that this is neither achievable nor desirable in the immediate future. In the meantime, there is a growing sense of urgency that the UK Government should detain fewer people, and for shorter periods of time. The General Assembly is invited support calls for the implementation of the recommendations of the 2015 UK joint inquiry by the all-party parliamentary group on refugees and on migration<sup>[53]</sup>, which set out the need for radical reform of the detention system. Most notable among these recommendations was the introduction of a maximum 28 day time limit on detention, and a move towards cases being resolved in the community ("alternatives to detention").

**7.5.7** In 2016, the UK Government announced its intention to close the only detention centre in Scotland at Dungavel, to be replaced by a Short Term Holding Facility nearer Glasgow Airport. Although this announcement was broadly welcomed, the implications for people being held in detention centres in other parts of the UK, with different legal codes and access to legal aid, and many hundreds of miles from friends and support groups, have raised serious concerns. Following a unanimous decision by Renfrewshire Council's planning committee to refuse permission for the new facility near the airport; the UK Government announced that it would not close Dungavel after all in 2017.

## **7.6 Transforming attitudes and behaviours to overcome racism and hate**

**7.6.1** The murder of Jo Cox MP by a far-right terrorist; the former leader of UKIP standing in front of a racist campaign banner during the final days of the referendum

campaign; issues of racism, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia all demonstrate the need to challenge and change attitudes and behaviours. Although Scotland has not experienced the same increase in hate crime as other parts of the UK following the result of the EU Referendum, racism, fear and misunderstanding of people from different religions and cultures is present.

**7.6.2** One way to respond is through encounter - it is through personal relationships that our attitudes and behaviours can be transformed. And so we commend the 'Cup of Tea with a Refugee' campaign from the Scottish Refugee Council, which aims to bring people together to get to know one another, to make sure refugee voices are heard, to help them achieve their aspirations and use their skills, and to help them connect and bond with local communities – whether on their street, in the classroom, at work, on the football pitch, or in a knitting group.

**7.6.3** The Daily Express, the Daily Mail and the Sun newspapers have published inflammatory articles, opinions and cartoons about refugees, asylum seekers and migrants in general. Recently the tone of these newspapers has become more extreme to the point of dehumanising the target of their story.

**7.6.4** A new non-political group called Stop Funding Hate is campaigning to influence the marketing and advertising decisions of mainstream businesses, to ask them if they are comfortable having their brand associated with media outlets that are reporting in a way that is openly hostile and often inaccurate in its portrayal of foreigners. The Church of Scotland cherishes the freedom of speech: it is what allows this report to roundly criticise the UK Government for its moral failure to do enough for refugees. This campaign is not calling for these papers to be banned, but rather that editors and opinion-formers be more responsible in their journalism. The right to free speech is fundamental.

## **7.7 New Scots and refugee integration**

**7.7.1** The Scottish Government have a strategic framework for refugee integration called New Scots. It is

a programme of work which was initially designed to run from 2015-2017; at the time of its design most of the focus was around Glasgow and asylum seekers. Since the roll-out of the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement scheme, new challenges and opportunities for refugee integration in many parts of Scotland have now developed. At the time of writing, a successor to the New Scots strategy is being developed and it is anticipated that this will begin in the Autumn. The Church of Scotland and other churches and faith groups will seek to engage with and support positive outcomes of integration. According to the Conference of European Church, integration is: “a dynamic two-way process of mutual accommodation where all parties give and receive. In this sense integration means respect for different cultural identities. This involves a shift in the majority communities’ ways of thinking. It is necessary to understand and accept that cultures and identities – including our own – are not static but changing. Integration is also a process of reducing socio-economic barriers between people or groups of people, creating equal opportunities and enabling people to participate actively in the public, economic, social, and political as well as church or religious spheres. It is a common effort towards a peaceful and equitable society.”<sup>[54]</sup>

**7.7.2** Two particular areas for consideration by local congregations are language and employment:

- Language practice, which can be informal and basic, can be delivered through a variety of activities, from chats over cups of tea, to football, knitting, eating, and walking. This brings people together and benefits everyone. If your congregation, or indeed yourself, would like to find out more about opportunities to offer this kind of practical support to integration, find out what is happening already in your area at the section Take Action – Actions Within My Neighbourhood ([www.sfar.org.uk/actions-with-my-neighbourhood](http://www.sfar.org.uk/actions-with-my-neighbourhood)) on the website, or contact the Refugee Co-coordinator David Bradwell [dbradwell@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:dbradwell@churchofscotland.org.uk).
- One of the most difficult things for refugees is to get into paid work. There are lots of reasons for this, but a big one is the lack of a demonstrable employment record and the lack of opportunity to gain one in a new country. Employers, managers and business owners should be encouraged to think about how they can offer appropriate experience and work. This barrier to stable employment can also apply to others, such as people with a criminal record or people with disabilities. Perhaps the Church as an employer, nationally and locally, could support the development of a culture that welcomes people who lack experience into our work places, and offer the opportunity to demonstrate what they are capable of?

## **7.8 Action by the Church of Scotland**

**7.8.1** In communities across Scotland where Syrian refugees or asylum seekers have been resettled, local Church of Scotland congregations have often been at the heart of the response. Some of the common practical responses have included the provision of English language support, befriending, sourcing donated household items, and clothing have been. In other places, churches have provided space for meetings, or church members and ministers have been involved in community organising and setting up local refugee support organisations to co-ordinate activity across a particular area.

**7.8.2** Internationally, both through the World Mission Council and the International Presbytery, work to support refugees and internally displaced people continues through grant giving and practical support where the Church of Scotland has a presence or close partners on the ground, including in Italy, Belgium, Hungary and Malta.

**7.8.3** In Advent 2016, the Joint Public Issues Team (of which the Church of Scotland is a member) published a video, ‘A Very British Nativity’, retelling the story of Jesus’ birth as if Mary and Joseph had to come to the UK to register as asylum seekers rather than being sent to

Bethlehem. By Christmas more than 200,000 people had viewed the video (<http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/>).

#### **7.8.4 Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees**

The Church of Scotland has established a joint response by a range of Scottish faith groups to issues around asylum and refugees. This is delivered through the partnership project Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees<sup>[55]</sup> ([www.sfar.org.uk](http://www.sfar.org.uk)).

**7.8.5** The project is overseen by a coordination group which meets three times a year; one person from each of the partner organisations is nominated to serve on this group which helps to exchange ideas, pass on communication and act as a useful sounding board for new ideas.

**7.8.6** The multi-faith approach adopted in Scotland is ground-breaking. The willingness of the Church of Scotland to offer leadership is respected and appreciated by other churches and faith groups, and the participation of such a wide range of organisations demonstrates the maturity of interfaith relations in Scotland and a degree of trust. There is hope that this project can further deepen understanding and friendship across religious boundaries, as well as combining voluntary efforts to offer practical humanitarian assistance for people in need.

**7.8.7** Over the past year some of the key strands of the work of the refugee coordination project include:

#### **7.8.8 Edinburgh Weekend Club**

Inspired by a successful model developed by Interfaith Glasgow, Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees has established an equivalent programme in Edinburgh. The Weekend Club is a series of monthly events aimed at meeting the needs of asylum seekers, refugees and new migrants who often experience loneliness and social isolation, especially at weekends. The programme of events is organised by a multi-faith group of volunteers, and each event is designed to encourage opportunities to speak English and learn more about Scottish history, culture and society and, most importantly, to have fun and

make friends. The first event took place at the end of January: a Burns' Supper and ceilidh hosted at St-Columba's-by-the-Castle Scottish Episcopal Church.

#### **7.8.9 UK Interfaith Refugee Initiative**

In September 2016, the Moderator and a number of Scottish and UK church and faith leaders signed a statement of principles with regard to UK refugee policy, directed at the UK Prime Minister. It outlined a series of common values compelling the Prime Minister to affirm the dignity of all human beings and to offer help to anyone in need. The letter called on the UK Government to do more to help refugees, the text of which can be found at [www.interfaithrefugeeinitiative.org](http://www.interfaithrefugeeinitiative.org)

#### **7.8.10 Conferences and Events**

A key function of the project has been to offer information and advice to people involved in church and faith group activities at a local and national level. Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees organised conferences in Edinburgh (in June) and Aberdeen (in October) and remains willing to offer speakers for meetings, conferences and events. This has included workshops at a Mission and Discipleship Conference for elders and office bearers, a presentation for Ministries Development Staff, and participating in Sunday services through leading worship and answering questions.

#### **7.8.11 Website: Actions Within My Neighbourhood**

The project website was updated over the summer and now includes a section Take Action – Actions Within My Neighbourhood ([www.sfar.org.uk/actions-with-my-neighbourhood](http://www.sfar.org.uk/actions-with-my-neighbourhood)) which includes a page for each of Scotland's 32 local authority areas, listing all the local groups, initiatives and projects that people are encouraged to support and find out more about. To keep these pages relevant and up-to-date, Commissioners are invited to visit the page for their local authority area, and to let the project know if they can provide more up to date information

**7.8.12 Booklet**

An information booklet, 'Scotland for Sanctuary', explores a range of relevant issues, aimed at people involved in local church, faith and community life in Scotland, has been published. Copies are available from 121 George Street, Edinburgh.

**7.8.13 Theology resource**

At the time of writing, plans are developing to produce a paper in partnership with Christian Aid Scotland exploring some of the Biblical and theological perspectives on refugee issues, set in the context of Scotland in 2017 and from a Reformed point of view. It is anticipated that printed copies will be available by the time of the 2017 General Assembly.

**7.8.14 Friends of SFAR**

Plans are being developed for a 'friends' programme, whereby individuals, congregations and other Scottish faith-based groups can express their solidarity with the work of the project and have a direct link so that when requests for action, funds or prayer are made, more people can feel part of the movement of welcome and offering sanctuary to those in need.

For more information visit the website [www.sfar.org.uk](http://www.sfar.org.uk), follow @WithRefugees on twitter or like the Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Scottish-Faiths-Action-for-Refugees/673263399494413>

**7.9 Conclusion**

**7.9.1** Church members are asked to consider what kind of immigration policies they would wish the UK to present to the world: something which reflects both the Christian tradition of hospitality and loving our neighbour as well as common humanitarian values. The current system creates pockets of peace and affluence for a few, and excludes many others in desperate need. This is not only immoral but it is unsustainable and it will lead to a more conflict-driven and unstable world.

**7.9.2** Society needs to invest in supporting integration for the sake of the common good. Newcomers are

generally very motivated and work hard to fit in. However, there are many obstacles that society needs to identify and take responsibility for removing. Many of these are not within the power of incoming migrants to deal with and so we, as the host society need to take responsibility for them.

**7.9.3** One of the biggest challenges is to bring refugees and other people together in ways that enable them to form equal and respectful relationships. As Christians we should be challenging a purely 'charity' model (of helping the vulnerable), and promoting models of help that allow refugees to gain confidence, independence, self-respect and a place of value in our midst. The Church of Scotland needs to also recognise and stand alongside those of its own members who are migrants, refugees or asylum seekers.

**7.9.4** This is the tenth report on migration, refugee and asylum issues which the General Assembly has received in the past 15 years. This is a reflection of the growing scale of global migration, local churches' increasing experience of intercultural and interfaith encounter, and recognition that despite our sympathy and concern, the situation for refugees remains extremely precarious.

**7.9.5** There are some positives. Scottish local authorities have been swift to participate in Syrian resettlement, and the Scottish Government is to be commended for its national approach to an integration strategy. The response of community groups to offer welcome and hope, and to challenge racism and nativism is something of the goodness in the world which we need to cherish and share.

**8. Human Trafficking**

**8.1** Human trafficking is one of the world's most lucrative illicit businesses. It operates on a global scale with almost every country in the world being involved. It may be over 200 years since the UK Government passed the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act but the trade in human beings is rising year on year (United Nations 2016<sup>[56]</sup>).

**8.2** Human trafficking is covert and hidden. No-one knows precisely how many people have been sold into slavery today but reports range from almost 21 million<sup>[57]</sup> to over 45 million people<sup>[58]</sup> worldwide. In the United Kingdom, Professor Bernard Silverman, Chief Scientific Adviser to the Home Office, has estimated that in 2013 there were between 10,000 – 13,000 potential victims of modern slavery in the UK<sup>[59]</sup>. The number reported to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), which is the body to which potential victims have to consent to be referred in order to be eligible for support, is very much smaller, reflecting the fact that many are undetected, and a proportion do not consent to referral. This may be because they are fearful of the authorities, are fearful of retribution from their traffickers to themselves or their families or perhaps because they do not recognise that they are victims who have been exploited.

**8.3** In Scotland the most recent NRM statistics available at the time of writing, show that in 2015 there were 145 referrals to the NRM (i.e. potential victims of human trafficking) first encountered in Scotland, representing a 30.6% increase on 2014. Of these, 71 (49%) were female; 74 (51%) were male, and 42 (29%) were minors.

**8.4** As Christians we are called to care for God's creation. The Scottish Churches Anti-Human Trafficking Group is an ecumenical group that is committed to working towards the eradication of human trafficking. It is a Programme Group of Action of Churches Together in Scotland (ACTS). Through the group, the Church of Scotland, alongside other denominations, has delivered talks and workshops with various church groups, charitable organisations such as Rotary, and school pupils as part of the RME curriculum. Meetings have ranged from Stonehaven in the north-east to Dumfries in the south-west. The group has also produced information leaflets and collated a number of liturgical resources on human trafficking.

**8.5** The Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Scotland) Act was passed in 2015. The ACTS Anti-Human Trafficking group continues to be fully engaged in the development

and dissemination of the Scottish Government's Human Trafficking and Exploitation Strategy, both as a stakeholder and as a member of the Strategy Oversight Group. Dr Hazel Watson, Convener of the ACTS group and a Church and Society Council member, was invited by the Scottish Government to assist in disseminating the draft strategy by speaking at one of its public meetings.

**8.6** A recent new initiative is to pilot a scheme to offer spiritual befriending to women who are recovering from the ordeal of having been trafficked for sexual exploitation and who wish to attend church or to talk about their spiritual needs.

**8.7** The Moderator, the Very Rev Dr Russell Barr, highlighted the work of the Scottish Churches Anti-Human Trafficking Group when he met with the Prime Minister in November 2016. On the Prime Minister's instigation, the Moderator and the Group's Convener met (January 2017) with the UK's Independent Antislavery Commissioner to discuss the potential for joint working. Following very constructive discussions, we look forward to working together to develop educational resources for potential victims of trafficking and enhancing legal services in source and transit countries. We hope that this will provide opportunities to build on our previous work with partner churches in Africa and Asia to combat the crimes of human trafficking and exploitation.

## **9. Pilgrimage**

**9.1** The 21st century has seen a huge rise of interest in pilgrimage. The Camino de Santiago which 40 years ago saw a few thousand pilgrims every year, is now travelled by over 250,000 pilgrims annually. In Scotland, pilgrim routes are being followed by walkers, cyclists and other pilgrims, young and old. The Church of Scotland, historically hostile to pilgrimage, now has the opportunity to reassess its position and attitude.

**9.2** Reformed churches were traditionally critical of pilgrimage, and even in the Catholic countries of southern Europe the practice fell out of favour after the

Reformation. Martin Luther was particularly damning of pilgrimage and the suspicion of superstition and idolatry strongly discouraged the practice. Yet the idea never entirely disappeared. In 'Pilgrims Progress', John Bunyan reminds us of pilgrimage as a metaphorical journey through life and all the snares and temptations we are subject to. There are a number of reasons why we should now assert that pilgrimage has a place in the life of the Church of Scotland.

### 9.3 Reconciliation and rehabilitation

**9.3.1** Jim had been estranged from his family since his teens, had been addicted to heroin for nearly 30 years and had spent periods of his life homeless and in prison. He got involved in a church-based project that provides hospitality and support to anyone who might benefit from a sense of community. A group from the project decided to go on a pilgrimage walk, following the St Cuthbert's way to the holy island of Lindisfarne. Along the way, Jim suffered from a huge amount of self-doubt and inner turmoil. He doubted he had the stamina to complete the walk, and wondered if he had ruined his life in a wilderness of misdirection and abuse. But as the week progressed a great deal of his past poured out in conversation along the way, his resilience increased, and the walk became an opportunity to find forgiveness, reconciliation and renewed self-worth. A year later, Jim's father passed away and he was able to arrange a memorial service for the family that restored a fractured relationship and enabled Jim himself to grow in faith.

**9.3.2** The Christian faith has its origins in pilgrimage, sacred journeys that awaken people to the presence of God. Almost at the very beginning, Abraham, ripe in years, left his homeland at Haran and became a "wandering Aramean" following God's call. (Genesis 12:4). And in his restless wandering he was blessed and the promise was given that he would become the father of many nations (Genesis 17:5).

**9.3.3** In the story of the Road to Emmaus (Luke 24), two of Jesus's disciples head off from Jerusalem following the

events of Jesus's arrest, trial and crucifixion. They were puzzled by stories that Christ had risen from the dead, and along the way they encountered a stranger who journeyed with them. As they came to the end of the day, they offered hospitality to the stranger and realised that they had encountered the risen Christ. Their hearts "burned within them" as they conversed along the way. This is the first episode of what pilgrims have come to understand, that Christ often comes in the stranger's guise. The unanticipated encounter, the surprising exchange can become a moment when we discover that Christ is risen, present and active in the world when we anticipate blessings in unlikely places and from unlikely people.

**9.3.4** Jesus spent his entire ministry on the move, going from place to place encountering new situations and sometimes heading into the wilderness and remote places to sharpen his own sense of vocation, to pray and prepare himself for what he had to face. He said of himself that he had no place to rest his head, no home of his own and was frequently dependent on the hospitality of others. His entire ministry could be seen as a pilgrimage towards the holy city of Jerusalem, where the drama of his arrest, trial and resurrection was to take place. Even the road to Golgotha becomes a significant journey, filled with meaning, not least of which is the kindness of a stranger, in the form of Simon of Cyrene, the cross bearer.

**9.3.5** The early Christians became known as the people of the Way. From the very earliest of times it was the "peregrinari" for Christ, the travellers for Christ, who journeyed across the known world to share the Good News, just as Jesus had instructed his first disciples to do, travelling light and depending on the kindness of others. Early on too, Christians sought to visit places of particular significance in the Christian story and Jerusalem soon became a place of pilgrimage. It is worth reflecting, however, that in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, the destination only appears in the title. The real story happens on *the way* in the shared stories, the lessons learned, the insight gained, and most significantly, the

discovery of the risen Christ present amongst people and circumstances.

**9.3.6** This report seeks to rehabilitate pilgrimage as a genuine and meaningful spiritual pathway, officially to reverse a policy that has suppressed and discouraged pilgrimage since the Reformation. For some there is a crisis of faith in the West, but perhaps it more of a crisis of faith in the institutions of religion. The numbers of people who embark on sacred journeys in the western world increases every year, as people encounter the risen Christ at loose in the world and out there in the green, in encounter and friendship that is ripe with freshness, illumination and spiritual nourishment.

**9.3.7** For those who embark on a pilgrimage, the landscape is not a mere backdrop to the journey, it frequently carries the marks of a narrative that tells the story of faith down the centuries, in living places of worship and service and in long abandoned sacred sites. In addition, the landscape can become an active participant in the spiritual journey connecting the pilgrim to the environment, testing us and reminding us of our dependence on a thriving and living planet. In a time of ecological crisis, pilgrimage helps to remind us that God so love the world, not just its people.

**9.3.8** The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews invited followers of Jesus not to wait for Christ in the sanctuary of safe, familiar places, but to head out and encounter his risen presence as those first disciples did on the Road to Emmaus, on the journey. "Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the disgrace he bore. For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come" (Hebrews 13).

#### **9.4 The development of modern pilgrimage in Scotland**

**9.4.1** A few examples point to the growth of pilgrimage in Scotland today. The Scottish Pilgrim Routes Forum (SPRF) was established in 2012 and is a collaborative network of over 60 organisations and individuals committed to developing walking routes for off-road

pilgrimage travel across Scotland. It is supporting the development of a number of new routes including the Fife Pilgrim Way from Culross and North Queensferry to Dunfermline and St. Andrews, and a long-distance Coast to Coast Pilgrim Way from St. Andrews to Iona. Details of all SPRF activities can be found on its website (<http://www.sprf.org.uk>).

**9.4.2** Pilgrim routes are also being developed by congregations across Scotland. Callander Kirk has an annual eight mile pilgrimage by Loch Venacher to Trossachs Kirk, and churches in East Lothian and Berwickshire joined together in 2016 to walk to Lindisfarne with a view to establishing a Forth to Farne pilgrim route connecting North Berwick, Coldingham, Berwick and Lindisfarne. This is also the destination of the cross-border St. Cuthbert's Way, established in 1999 which celebrates the life of the bishop of the Northumbrian church. In Argyll, Gilbert Markus is helping the presbytery explore the history of pilgrim sites in Cowal, including the rediscovery of St. Modan's Well near Kilmodan Church in Glendaruel. Over 20 years ago the late Rev. Andrew Patterson wrote The Way to Whithorn, a pilgrim route to Whithorn in Dumfries and Galloway now being taken forward as the Whithorn Way. The St Magnus Way, a 51-mile pilgrimage route through Mainland Orkney, has been developed by Orkney Pilgrimage, a partnership involving churches and others. It will be launched in 2017 on the 900th anniversary of the death of St Magnus. It uses new technology to link waymarks to online resources, enabling pilgrims to learn about Magnus and his faith while on the Way.

**9.4.3** There are many more examples but this short list points to the range of pilgrim activities now under way in Scotland, both in the Church of Scotland and other denominations.

**9.4.4** A pilgrimage route does not have to be long distance or require foreign travel even though both are valid. It can be local, within a parish, and a pilgrim journey may just take a few hours rather than days or weeks. But

we do believe it is best undertaken on foot or otherwise, under our own efforts if possible, rather than by powered transport. A journey by car or plane to a holy site may offer spiritual benefits but we are primarily concerned here to promote pilgrimage which involves some physical commitment by the pilgrim.

### 9.5 The opportunity for congregations

Pilgrimage offers new opportunities for churches and congregations on pilgrim routes to serve others, for example by providing shelter and hospitality. Many of the medieval *refugios* or pilgrim hostels on the Camino were founded and managed by monasteries or other religious foundations, and many remain so today. We encourage churches in Scotland to follow this example and to look at the opportunity to offer hospitality or perhaps help support community businesses to provide food and shelter for pilgrims in Scotland. This is also an opportunity for ecumenical development supported by ACTS, in partnership with the SPRF.

## 10. Climate Justice

**10.1** The Church of Scotland remains passionately committed to seeking climate justice and shares the vision of Eco Congregation Scotland to help create a country that cares for God's creation, now and forever. At a time of political uncertainty we restate our commitment to both.

**10.2** Since the Paris climate conference in December 2015 there have been a significant series of developments internationally. The Paris climate treaty came into effect in November 2016 after its ratification by 55 countries, accounting for over 55% of total global greenhouse gas emissions. The enthusiasm with which the agreement was greeted was tempered by the election of US President Donald Trump, a climate sceptic presiding over a deeply sceptical cabinet and Congress. Delegates to the climate conference at Marrakech in November 2016 were determined to press ahead with implementation. Churches were strongly represented at Marrakech by delegations including the World Council of Churches. The leader of the WCC delegation met Scottish Government

Minister Roseanna Cunningham to brief her on the global role of churches in promoting climate justice. It is a tribute to many years of hard work by congregations and churches across Scotland that the Scottish Government now takes very seriously the role of churches and other faith groups in tackling climate change.

**10.3** In January 2017 the Scottish Government published a new Climate Plan and Energy Strategy. The Church is actively contributing to the development of this work and continuing to draw attention to the profound link between climate justice and poverty, both locally and globally.

**10.4** A highlight of partnership working in the year was the conference *Climate Change Changes Lives* with the World Mission Council, The Guild, Christian Aid and Eco-Congregation Scotland, held at Bridge of Allan Church in October 2016. Speakers from partner churches around the world brought stories on the impact of climate change and how partners are responding in often difficult circumstances. Close partnership working with Christian Aid and others offers opportunities to share resources, both to promote local action and effective advocacy. The SCPO Meet Your MSP project has added a welcome additional opportunity to address these issues.

### 10.5 Environmental impact of Brexit

The implication of the UK's decision to leave the EU on climate justice and other environmental action in Scotland is unclear. The EU has played a leading role in many environmental policies over past decades - setting standards for air and water quality and nature conservation. Future funding such as the £17.6m Horizon 2020 grant from the European Commission for the MeyGen tidal power project is very much at risk, and there is little confidence that the UK Government will be as committed to renewable energy investments in Scotland as in the rest of the UK.

### 10.6 Eco-Congregation Scotland

The past year has seen continued growth in the number of eco-congregations registered across Scotland. By the

end of 2016 the number had risen to over 380, of which 270 are from the Church of Scotland. An exciting new development has been a pilot project developed in partnership with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) in the north east of Scotland. Members of the eco-congregation network in Aberdeen are working with the RSPB area office to help churches in the north east learn about wildlife, and how they can take practical steps in their communities to promote nature conservation.

## **11. An Economy Driven by Equality**

### **11.1 Towards an economy that promotes equality and protects creation**

One of the themes identified in the Speak Out consultation is the need to build an economy that promotes equality. In the UK, the richest 10% of households hold 45% of all wealth and the poorest 50%, by contrast, own just 8.7%.<sup>[60]</sup> Globally, inequality has created a world where eight men own the same wealth as the 3.6 billion people who make up the poorest half of humanity.<sup>[61]</sup>

**11.2** The 2012 General Assembly approved the report of the Special Commission on the Purposes of Economic Activity, a report that highlighted the need for reform. Circumstances have not improved and decision to leave the EU can be understood in part as a cry of frustration from people who feel that they have been marginalised in a global economy that creates such disparity of wealth.

**11.3** At the same time, campaigners have pointed to environmental damage that the economy has created particularly climate change and loss of biodiversity. The 2016 General Assembly instructed the Church and Society Council to work on the complex and challenging subject of fossil fuel investments and how the Church might use its investments to promote the transition to a low carbon economy. A full report will be made to the 2018 General Assembly. In the meantime, the Church continues to support and develop a range of initiatives to help in the transition to a fairer and more just economy.

**11.4** In January, Christian Aid launched The Big Shift ([www.christianaid.org.uk/campaigns/climate-change/the-big-shift-resources](http://www.christianaid.org.uk/campaigns/climate-change/the-big-shift-resources)) encouraging supporters to ask their bank to help combat climate change. In particular, Christian Aid are calling on banks to stop financing coal power plants; publish details of the carbon emissions resulting from their investments and loans; and publish a transition plan outlining how they will meet the Paris Agreement.

**11.5** The growth of the Churches Mutual Credit Union ([www.cmcu.org.uk](http://www.cmcu.org.uk)) has been very encouraging, and many opportunities to encourage interactions between local churches and credit unions have arisen, some as a result of participation in the Scottish conference of the Association of British Credit Unions (ABCUL) in December.

**11.6** The Good Money Week conference in November 2016 was promoted with partners that included Triodos Bank and Rathbone Greenbank. It attracted a large attendance with excellent discussion. Among the participants was the Ethical Money Churches (EMC) Project that helps congregations explore Christian stewardship of financial resources and assets. EMC provides opportunities for learning about the ethical use of money and what it means to be an “Ethical Money Church” through the use of interactive study resources, worship material, advice and speakers, discussion groups, conferences, and information and support on practical ways to engage with financial issues. These are available at: [www.eccr.org.uk/what-we-work-on/ethical-money-churches](http://www.eccr.org.uk/what-we-work-on/ethical-money-churches).

**11.7** Over the last year, the Council has continued to work closely with the Islamic Finance Council not only to identify shared values around ethical finance but also to consider how we could, together, develop concrete proposals which would improve the quality of life for some of the poorest in our society. This can be difficult work, not least because it is challenging to operate creatively within a risk averse culture, but it is of considerable potential significance and continues to attract widespread interest both in Scotland and in other parts of the world.

**11.8** This range of work demonstrates some of the ways in which congregation members can engage to help reshape our economy, and we urge congregations to get involved.

## **12. Welfare Reform**

**12.1** Throughout the past year, the Very Rev Dr Russell Barr has highlighted the plight of homelessness one of the hallmarks of his Moderatorial year, encouraging not only greater awareness of the homeless but also the need for a change in policy if the aspiration to end homelessness in Scotland is to be achieved. Working with Scottish Churches Housing Action, the Council will be pleased to take up this ongoing challenge in the coming year.

**12.2** The Council spoke out against the decision of the UK Government to lower the cap on welfare benefits to £20,000 per annum (from £26,000 the previous year). The Council has also been active with others in challenging the decision to close a significant number of Job Centres across Scotland. Initial plans to close eight (or 50%) of Glasgow's Job Centres were announced in December 2016 with plans for a further seven across Scotland announced in January 2017. The Council worked closely with the Priority Areas Committee and Faith in Community Scotland to gather the testimonies of some of those who will be most affected by the proposed closures and also met with the Minister for Employment in the UK Government to express the concerns of the Church. At the time of writing, the Council was also scheduled to be giving evidence to the Scottish Affairs Committee on the plans.

**12.3** The Scottish Government has spent part of the last year consulting on how it might best use its new welfare powers to create what they have referred to as a social security system underpinned by dignity. The Council has responded to the government's consultation on this matter and welcomes its decision to involve welfare claimants in the design of the new system. Such an approach is strongly in line with the recommendations of

the Poverty Truth Commission of which the Church has been a strong supporter since its inception.

## **13. Society, Religion and Technology (SRT) Project**

**13.1** The work of the SRT continues to help equip the Church to engage with ethical issues in science. The consideration of issues around surveillance and social justice is included in section 5 of the report. This year has seen the birth of the first babies with more than two parents, and also the first use of gene editing in humans. What has long been the subject of science fiction is now medical fact, and the need for ethical considerations to keep pace with scientific practice has never been greater.

**13.2** Events supported by the SRT have taken place at the Edinburgh and Orkney science festivals, and congregations are encouraged to get involved in their local science festival. For more information please see: [www.srtp.org.uk/srtp/view\\_article/scottish\\_science\\_festivals](http://www.srtp.org.uk/srtp/view_article/scottish_science_festivals). Plans for involvement in book festival events continue to evolve. The SRT also participated in the World Congress of Bioethics which took place in Edinburgh in June 2016.

**13.3** Public engagement by the SRT has also included visits to schools, churches and Presbyteries, and engagement with the Scottish and UK government consultations on issues such as mental health and three-parent babies.

**13.4** The SRT project serves on the Bioethics group of the Conference of European Churches, leading a working group on human gene editing, and also contributing to work on issues around assisted reproductive technologies.

**13.5** The Good Money Week conference in November attracted a large attendance, and generated excellent discussion. The shape of possible future involvement in this area will partly be informed by the emerging theme of the work of the Church and Society Council around the

issue of disinvestment, especially from fossil fuel companies.

**13.6** The annual SRT week of prayer (June 11-17 2017) continues to generate interest and to be a vital aspect of our work.

**13.7** Looking to the future, the SRT will be integral to the development of the Speak Out theme of Health and Wellbeing, as well as contributing to the work in other themes.

**13.8** The SRT Project was established in 1970; and will celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2020. The Very Rev Dr Angus Morrison has agreed to chair the SRT@50 working group, which has begun to plan events and other ways to mark this milestone for the SRT Project.

## **14. Education**

**14.1** Within the gospels Jesus describes young people in these terms, “it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs.... And whoever welcomes a little child like this in My name welcomes Me” (Matthew 19). According to Jesus, there is a level of significance about young people that should inform our treatment of them and their place within society. The Church of Scotland has regularly sought to recognise this, whether through the establishment of a school in every parish, the work of the National Youth Assembly, or the work of individual congregations supporting, equipping and enabling young people across the country. It is this desire to invest in young people that has historically been at the root of the Education Committee’s work, and something that is true to this day.

**14.2** This year, through the Church and Society Council, the committee has engaged with the Scottish Government on a number of educational issues, responding to Scottish Government consultations on the governance of education within Scotland, the position of religious representatives on local authority committees responsible for education, and Scottish Government guidance on Religious Observance within Schools. These

consultation responses are publically available on the Scottish Churches Parliamentary Office website ([www.scpo.scot/consultations/education](http://www.scpo.scot/consultations/education)). In addition to these responses, the Education Committee has met a range of bodies involved in education including SQA, COSLA, and EIS. It has also met with politicians including Liz Smith MSP, Ross Greer MSP, Tavish Scott MSP, Iain Gray MSP and John Swinney MSP, with the focus being on the ways in which young people are best supported and provided with opportunities to achieve and develop.

**14.3** Throughout the year the Committee’s primary focus has been on school chaplaincy and the important role chaplains play in the educational communities of which they are part. A working group composed of school chaplains from around the country has developed a guidance document for school chaplains. This document refers to the ways in which a chaplain can support a school individually and as part of a chaplaincy team including; pastoral support, teacher support, curriculum support, opportunities for pupils and students, input to the planning and delivery of Religious Observance, involvement in the life of the school and its community, and developing the role of the chaplain.

**14.4** A significant aspect of the Committee’s work this year was the newly re-designated Church of Scotland’s Annual Education Conference which was held in September for school chaplains, teachers of RME, and Church of Scotland representatives on local authority committees responsible for education. The conference held over a period of three days heard from a number of key speakers including John Swinney, Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, Sarah Brown, President of “TheirWorld”, Tam Ballie, Scotland’s Commissioner for Children and Young People, and a range of practitioners involved in delivering Religious Observance / Time for Reflection and Religious and Moral Education within schools. Feedback from the conference was very positive and plans are being made for 2017 to coincide with local council elections. Alongside this conference, the Education Committee has supported a number of regional

training conferences for Head Teachers and teaching professionals and chaplains providing input on religious observance in schools and school chaplaincy among other things.

#### 14.5 Plans for the coming year include:

- Collaboration on Speak Out themes as a key driver of future work plans;
- Finalising published guidance for school chaplains;
- Working collaboratively with others on professional learning opportunities for school chaplains;
- Working within the Church and Society Council in planning for the 2018 Year of Young People;
- Developing the Serve Your Local School project in partnership with Scripture Union Scotland and CARE;
- A review of the Moderator's Medal and Stevenson Prize competitions with a view to delivering a celebratory award for 2018;
- Raising awareness of the need for equal access to opportunities for personal achievement as a contribution to closing the attainment gap;
- Supporting new and established local authority representatives through a series of meetings following the local authority elections, including the publication of revised literature;
- Fostering links with presbyteries in support of the nomination of representatives and their reports to Presbytery and the Education Committee; and,
- Continuing to respond to consultations and to meet with organisations and politicians associated with the education of children and young people.

## 15. Education Review

15.1 The 2016 General Assembly instruct[ed] the Church and Society[Council, in collaboration with the Education Committee and other Councils of the Church, to review the work and position of the Education Committee within the Church of Scotland and report back to the General Assembly in 2017. The desire for this review came from

the Education Committee itself with the intention of refocussing and energising its work within the Church and wider society.

15.2 When the Church and Society Council was created in 2005, the work of the former Education Committee was incorporated into the Council's remit and work along with other pieces of work which had not previously been part of the former Church and Nation Committee, such as the Society, Religion and Technology Project. Five members are appointed to the Council because of their expertise in the field of education. The Education Committee thereafter reported to the General Assembly through the Council.

15.3 The Education Committee has carried out an expansive programme of work over the last decade. Its workload includes: Religious and Moral Education (RME); Religious Observance (RO)/Time for Reflection; support for Chaplains in schools and Further Education colleges; work with local and national government; and educational attainment. The Committee has a work plan agreed by the Council in 2015 and is extensively represented on a number of national bodies.

15.4 It is recognised both that this is a very substantial workload and that it operates across a number of different Councils, including the Ministries Council and the Mission and Discipleship Council as well as Church and Society. The Church and Society Council have also agreed over a number of years that this area of work is under-resourced and whilst various short-term efforts have been made to address this, it is recognised that a more systematic and longer-term solution is required.

15.5 In June 2016, the Church and Society Council agreed that a review group comprised of members of the Church and Society Council, Ministries Council, Mission and Discipleship Council and the Education Committee itself should be created, with the intention of consulting widely across the church and with key external partners. In particular the agreed remit of the group was to review the following:

- the current work of the Church in education and to recommend medium and long-term priorities;
- the Church's current links with local authorities and other education bodies;
- how the Church can contribute to the broader emphasis on reducing disparity in the current levels of educational attainment and achievement;
- the current structure and location of the Education Committee.
- how the Church's work in education establishments (schools and colleges) can be most effectively resourced.

**15.6** At the time of writing the group has met four times under the convenorship of the Rev Dr Robin Hill and has consulted with a range of individuals. From these initial meetings, the group has raised a number of important areas on which to form the basis of its approach. These include:

- The importance of promoting the wellbeing of young people rather than promoting the Church
- The importance of linking the parish church with the school
- The importance of early years work
- The concept of education around school and not just in school
- The idea of an education forum bringing together different areas of the Church

The group will bring a final report to the 2018 General Assembly.

## **16. Doing Politics Differently**

### **16.1 Scottish Churches Parliamentary Office**

The Scottish Churches Parliamentary Office (SCPO) continues to serve a broad range of Scottish Churches on parliamentary and political affairs in the Scottish Parliament as well as at Westminster. A review of SCPO took place during 2016. As a consequence of the review a new SCPO remit has been put in place. The SCPO brand

has been refreshed with the launch of a new logo, website and newsletter. For further information please go to [www.scpo.scot](http://www.scpo.scot).

### **16.2 Meet Your MSP Project**

**16.2.1** The Meet Your MSP project, led by SCPO, has been running since last June following the Scottish Parliament elections in May 2016. The idea is a simple one: to actively make connections between churches and local politicians in a variety of ways. SCPO has been equipping congregations to contact their local MSPs, inviting them to get involved in something that their church is doing.

MSPs have been asked along to special services, attended informal coffee mornings, visited homelessness projects and launches of foodbanks, met church goers at environmental lobbies, and meet with local church groups and members over tea and coffee.

**16.2.2** By January 2017 around 60 Meet Your MSP meetings had taken place over a wide geographical area including Orkney, the Western Isles, the central belt and the Borders. In Orkney, Liam MacArthur MSP went to Peedie URC Kirk to a meeting of the lunch club, signing a pledge to help tackle loneliness and isolation in the community. In the Western Isles, local MSP Alasdair Allan visited drug and alcohol services run by the Church of Scotland's social care arm Crossreach. And at the opposite end of the country, in the Borders, Oliver Mundell MSP visited Kate's Kitchen in Annan which is supported by local churches and the Church of Scotland's Go For It project. These are just a few of the many positive encounters that the project has helped to facilitate.

**16.2.3** In February 2017, the Scottish Parliament hosted an event to celebrate the project and to encourage MSPs and churches to continue with the work they have started and build on the relationships made. The Meet Your MSP project is ongoing and SCPO would like as many churches as possible to get involved.

### 16.3 Parliamentary Visits, Events and Meetings

**16.3.1** Each February the Moderator of the General Assembly spends a week in the Scottish Parliament. The Very Rev Russell Barr met with all party leaders, including the First Minister, and hosted an event showcasing the work of Christian organisations tackling homelessness. This event was sponsored by Christina McKelvie MSP in her capacity as Convener of the Equalities and Human Rights Committee of the Scottish Parliament.

**16.3.2** The Scottish Churches Parliamentary Officer has given evidence to the Scottish Parliament Equalities and Human Rights Committee about the Council's work programme.

### 16.4 Liaison, communication and relationships

**16.4.1** The office is always happy to receive requests to speak or lead workshops from churches, Presbyteries or other groups who would like to find out more about the work of SCPO or about a specific Parliamentary issue.

**16.4.2** SCPO has supported Parliamentary engagement across the Church providing briefings and supporting meetings with politicians.

**16.4.3** SCPO has briefed MSPs on a number of issues including the rights of UK residents from other EU nations and fracking.

**16.4.4** SCPO is a member of:

- The Scottish Churches Anti-Human Trafficking Group
- A monthly meeting of UK Churches Westminster Parliamentary Officers
- The Scottish Churches Committee
- The Association of Scottish Public Affairs and subscribes to their voluntary Code of Conduct

### 16.5 Participatory Budgeting Project

The Council has received funding from the Scottish Government to work with four congregations serving parishes in some of Scotland's economically poorest urban and rural communities. The project will introduce the

model of participatory budgeting (PB) in those communities through the local churches; provide training; and enable each community to carry out a small scale PB activity disbursing public funds. The work will build capacity for PB, and participatory democracy more widely, in these communities, and links closely to the themes of Doing Politics Differently and Flourishing Local Communities within Speak Out. Taking part in this pilot are congregations from Glasgow, Arbroath and Edinburgh.

### 16.6 Index of consultation responses

The following official responses were made by the Church of Scotland to consultations or enquiries in 2016. Copies of the consultations are available on the SCPO website at [www.scpo.scot](http://www.scpo.scot).

### 16.7 Scottish Government Consultations

- A Scottish replacement to Air Passenger Duty (June 2016)
- Mental Health in Scotland– a 10 year vision (September 2016)
- Child Poverty Bill for Scotland (September 2016)
- Social Security in Scotland (October 2016)
- Governance of Scottish Education (January 2017)

### 16.8 Scottish Parliament Inquiries

- Scotland's Relationship with the EU (European and External Relations Committee, September 2016)
- The Council Tax (Substitution of Proportion) (Scotland) Order 2016 (Local Government and Communities Committee, September 2016)
- A Scottish approach to Taxation (Finance Committee, September 2016)

### 16.9 Scottish Churches Anti-Human Trafficking Group

- Scottish Government consultation on a Human Trafficking and Exploitation Strategy for Scotland

- Scottish Government consultation on Sections 9(2)(b)(i) of Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Scotland) Act 2015

## 17. Gender Justice

### 17.1 Gender Justice in the World

The importance of the Church continuing its work on gender justice has been highlighted by both global and domestic events that have occurred in the last year. In the three months leading up to the writing of this report we have seen the inauguration of a President in the United States who has normalised sexist and racist rhetoric, the decriminalisation of domestic abuse in Russia, and an inquiry being launched into historic sexual abuse in care institutions in Scotland. In the same time period, millions of women across the world marched in solidarity with the women of America for gender justice. The Church of Scotland has just celebrated 50 years of the ordination of women elders and is close to marking 50 years of women's ordination as ministers, yet we are aware that the Church still faces challenges in achieving full gender justice. It is clear that there is a need for the Church to continue to engage with this issue and create a space to engage with gender justice as an issue which affects each and every one of us, man or woman, adult or child.

**17.1.1** Focusing on gender justice allows us to look at the needs of all genders, to explore all of our relationships and to examine how we relate to each other. Instead of treating everyone the same, regardless of the circumstances they are living and working in, gender justice calls us to treat people more justly, more fairly and meet them where they are on their life journey, taking into account their personal experiences and needs. Gender justice calls for transformational change in our lives, communities and society in order to restore our relationships with each other. Gender injustice is both a cause and a consequence of violence against women and the Church's violence against women work should be considered in this wider context.

### 17.2 The Violence against Women Task Group

The Violence against Women Task Group continue to offer advice and guidance on issues relating to violence against women to all those within the life of the Church. The Task Group membership has increased this year and there is now representation from the World Mission Council, Ministries Council, Church and Society Council, Mission and Discipleship Council, the Guild, the National Youth Assembly and the Safeguarding Service. This broad makeup allows the group to draw on a wealth of knowledge and expertise from across the Church.

### 17.3 Campaigning and Awareness Raising

The Task Group has promoted and supported a number of campaigns related to violence against women, including:

**17.3.1** *Thursdays in Black*: Thursdays in Black is an international campaign urging people to wear black on Thursdays in order to show solidarity with survivors of gender-based violence and to call for a world without such violence. During the 2016 General Assembly, 1000 badges and leaflets promoting Thursdays in Black were handed out. Subsequent comments and correspondence from church members, commissioners and survivors were a reminder of the importance of the Church of Scotland making such a public statement against all forms of gender based violence.

**17.3.2** *Side by Side*: During the year, the Council, on behalf of the Church, joined Side by Side. This is an international movement targeted at engaging faith communities and faith leaders with gender justice. The Task Group are members of the recently formed Side by Side Scotland working group and are looking forward to working with other faith communities to progress gender justice in Scotland. In 2016, a youth focus group for Side by Side was held with the Scottish Episcopal Church and Christian Aid, looking at what young people in Scotland think the focus should be on.

**17.3.3** *ICChange*: The Church and Society Council, on the recommendation of the Task Group, also promoted the ICChange campaign, a grassroots UK based campaign

aimed at getting the UK Government to ratify the Istanbul Convention on Violence against Women and Domestic Abuse. Through this campaign, the Church urged public engagement with a Private Members Bill seeking ratification going through Westminster and attended an interfaith event urging faith communities to support the Bill. The Bill passed its second reading in December and the Task Group will continue to promote the campaign.

#### 17.4 Faithshare Visitor Programme

The Task Group was successful in an application to the World Mission Council's Faithshare Visitor Programme and has received grants for four members to travel to Pakistan for 10 days in February/March 2017. The Task Group members involved represent Church and Society Council, the Guild, World Mission Council and the National Youth Assembly, as well as the VAW Task Group. The trip will be taken forward in the acknowledgement that gender justice and violence against women are issues that affect people worldwide and that we have much to learn from, and share with, our global partners. During their visit, the Task Group delegation will meet with Church of Scotland partner organisations that are working on gender justice issues in Pakistan. At the time of writing (February 2017) the Task Group is working closely with World Mission Council and the Communications Department to ensure that the learning and partnership work taken forward through this Faithshare trip is effectively conveyed throughout the broader Church.

#### 17.5 Resources

This year a significant amount of time has been spent creating and developing resources on violence against women, for use by congregations and others in the life of the Church. The resources, which are a mixture of printed resources and online information, include:

- Information sheets on violence against women, domestic abuse and spiritual abuse
- A violence against women charter for churches to sign up to
- A poster for display in churches

- A self-assessment tool for churches with advice on first and next steps
- An interactive guide to specialist and local support agencies across Scotland

The resources are freely available on the Church of Scotland website. For more information contact Katherine Gilmour at [kgilmour@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:kgilmour@churchofscotland.org.uk)

#### 17.6 The Violence against Women Development Officer

The appointment of the Violence against Women Development Officer (in February 2016 for one year) has allowed this vital area of work to expand significantly in 2016-17 in three main ways: through the development and implementation of a new violence against women strategy; by representing and promoting the work of the Church externally; and in supporting the internal work of councils and departments within the Church. In December 2016, the Council of Assembly supported a four-month extension to the post to consider how this work can be most effectively resourced and supported in future years. Violence against women, and the broader issues around gender justice are vital issues which the Church has highlighted for many years. The need to ensure that we do all we can to tackle them, and to speak out against injustice, has rarely been more important.

#### 17.7 Strategy and Action Plan

The strategy and three-year Action Plan has four key themes:

- *Capacity Building*: ensuring people in the Church have the knowledge and skills to respond to violence against women;
- *Representation and Power*: modelling positive and healthy power dynamics in Church relationships; working so that women and men have fair and balanced representation at every level of the Church;
- *Engagement and Changing Attitudes*: creating a culture where there is zero tolerance to violence against women in the Church and where everyone

feels safe, respected and equal in communities and congregations

- *Partnership*: working with other faith groups and specialist organisations to ensure that the Church is recognised as a positive contributor on this topic, and that those who are survivors of abuse can access appropriate support services through their Church.

For more information on the strategy and action plan please contact: [CHURCHANDSOCIETY@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:CHURCHANDSOCIETY@churchofscotland.org.uk).

### 17.8 Promoting the Church of Scotland's work

Links have been made or strengthened between the Church and Third Sector violence against women organisations including: Scottish Women's Aid, Jewish Women's Aid and the Women's Support Project; Christian organisations such as Christian Aid, International Justice Mission and Restored Relationships; and other denominations including the Scottish Episcopal Church and the Baptist World Mission service. Throughout the year there has been a range of opportunities to highlight the work the Church is doing to counter violence against women in the media and at conferences both in Scotland and overseas.

### 17.9 Supporting the work of the Church

The Task Group, through its Development Officer, has also worked internally across the Church in order to support work related to violence against women and gender justice including:

- Membership of the Safeguarding Service's Domestic Abuse working group;
- Supporting the Mission and Discipleship Council as they 'promote congregational learning and awareness of the issues that transgender and gender non-conforming people experience, in order to better facilitate pastoral care... and inclusion' (General Assembly 2016);

- Delivering inputs on violence against women in ministerial training at the Candidate's Conference, the Probationer's Conference and the Ordained Local Minister's Conference;
- Delivering sessions to the National Youth Assembly on Gender Justice and a workshop on sexual violence in partnership with Christian Aid; and,
- Delivering a keynote speech to the Guild's Regional Gathering on violence against women.

### 17.10 Commercial Sexual Exploitation

During the year, the Church and Society Council has briefly considered the issue of prostitution and how this relates to calls from sections of civil society for an 'end demand' approach to prostitution. Variations of 'end demand' approaches to commercial sexual exploitation have been adopted in Sweden, Iceland, Northern Ireland, Denmark and France amongst other countries. These approaches are usually contrasted with legalisation approaches (such as in Germany) or decriminalisation approaches (such as in New Zealand). An end demand approach in Scotland would mean the criminalisation of the purchase of sex, providing greater support and exiting services for those involved in prostitution and decriminalisation of acts related to the sale of sex such as soliciting or loitering.

17.10.1 The Church has considered prostitution and commercial sexual exploitation on a number of occasions but does not have a recent position that deals with current questions in a single report. There have been moves towards legislative change in Scotland and it is likely that the topic will come up again within the next three years of the current Scottish Parliament. The Council proposes to explore this issue in more depth and report to a future General Assembly.

## 18. Campaigns

The following provides a list of the campaigns that the Council is involved with on behalf of the Church of Scotland.

**In sympathy with** (The Church broadly shares the campaign's objectives and ways of working)

Campaign for a Fair Society ([www.campaignforafairsociety.com](http://www.campaignforafairsociety.com))

Churches Together in Britain and Ireland's Good Society Vision 2020 ([www.ctbi.org.uk](http://www.ctbi.org.uk))

Kairos Britain ([www.kairosbritain.org.uk](http://www.kairosbritain.org.uk))

Scottish Campaign on Welfare Reform ([www.cpag.org.uk/scotland/SCoWR](http://www.cpag.org.uk/scotland/SCoWR))

Stop Funding Hate (<http://www.stopfundinghate.org.uk/>)

**In association with** (The Church shares the campaign's objectives and agrees that its name and logo can be used in publicity)

The Living Rent Campaign ([www.livingrent.org](http://www.livingrent.org))

Flesh and Blood ([www.fleshandblood.org](http://www.fleshandblood.org))

Justice for Bangladeshi Garment Workers ([http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news\\_and\\_events/news/archive/articles/2013/former\\_moderator\\_in\\_justice\\_campaign\\_for\\_bangladeshi\\_garment\\_workers](http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news_and_events/news/archive/articles/2013/former_moderator_in_justice_campaign_for_bangladeshi_garment_workers))

Trace the Tax ([www.christianaid.org.uk/tax](http://www.christianaid.org.uk/tax))

White Ribbon Scotland ([www.whiteribbonscotland.org.uk](http://www.whiteribbonscotland.org.uk))

**Members of** (The Church is in full membership of the campaign and is active in promoting its aims, involved in developing its strategy and in implementing activities)

ACT Palestine Prayer Vigil ([www.actpalestineforum.org/vigil](http://www.actpalestineforum.org/vigil))

Children are Unbeatable ([www.childrenareunbeatable.org.uk/about-us/scotland.html](http://www.childrenareunbeatable.org.uk/about-us/scotland.html))

End Child Poverty Scotland ([www.endchildpoverty.org.uk](http://www.endchildpoverty.org.uk))

Existing Homes Alliance (<http://existinghomesalliancescotland.co.uk/>)

National Ethical Investment Week (formerly Good Money Week) ([www.neiw.org](http://www.neiw.org))

Robin Hood Tax ([www.robinhoodtax.org.uk](http://www.robinhoodtax.org.uk))

Scottish Leaders Group on Welfare ([www.cas.org.uk/news/new-group-aims-investigate-scotlands-broken-welfare-system](http://www.cas.org.uk/news/new-group-aims-investigate-scotlands-broken-welfare-system))

**Scottish Living Wage Campaign (<http://slw.povertyalliance.org/>)**

**Scottish Pilgrim Routes Forum ([www.sprf.org.uk](http://www.sprf.org.uk))**

**Side by Side ([www.sidebysidegender.org](http://www.sidebysidegender.org))**

**Stop Climate Chaos Scotland ([www.stopclimatechaos.org/scotland](http://www.stopclimatechaos.org/scotland))**

**Jubilee Scotland ([www.jubileescotland.org.uk](http://www.jubileescotland.org.uk))**

**Poverty Alliance ([www.povertyalliance.org](http://www.povertyalliance.org))**

In the name and by the authority of the Council,

RICHARD FRAZER, *Convener*  
PAULINE EDMISTON, *Vice Convener*  
WENDY YOUNG, *Vice Convener*  
MARTIN JOHNSTONE, *Secretary*

[1] The Council of Assembly retains its strategic and cross-Council oversight over the project, and an update on two of the main decisions taken by the Council of Assembly relating to the refugee project can be found in its section of the 2017 Blue Book.

[2] Our partners will inevitably change and develop over the period of Speak Out.

[3] These vignettes capture the reality of contemporary surveillance.

[4] Torin Monahan, 'Surveillance as Cultural Practice,' *Sociological Quarterly* 52 (2011), 495-508. See also David Lyon, 'The Emerging Surveillance Culture,' in André Jansson and Miyase Christensen (eds), *Media, Surveillance and Identity: Social Perspectives* (New York: Peter Lang, 2014), pp. 71-88.

[5] David Lyon, *Surveillance Studies: An Overview* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), p. 14.

[6] Rachel Finn and Michael McCahill, "Representing the Surveilled: Media Representations and Political Discourse in Three UK Newspapers," in *Political Studies Association Conference Proceedings* (2010).quoted in Inga Kroener, "Caught on Camera": The Media Representation of Video Surveillance in

Relation to the 2005 London Underground Bombings,' *Surveillance & Society* 11: 1 / 2 (2013), 121-33.

[7] A term coined in Thomas Mathieson, 'The Viewer Society: Michel Foucault's 'Panopticon' Revisited,' *Theoretical Criminology* 1 (1997), 215-34.

[8] Steve Mann, Jason Nolan, and Barry Wellman, 'Sousveillance: inventing and using wearable computing devices for data collection in surveillance environments,' *Surveillance & Society* 1: 3 (2003), 331-55.

[9] The classic study is John Gilliom, *Overseers of the Poor: Surveillance, Resistance, and the Limits of Privacy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).

[10] The personalisation to different users of content within web pages can result in living in a 'filter-bubble' that reinforces rather than challenges one's existing views.

[11] 'Datafication' was likely coined by Kenneth Neil Cukier and Viktor Mayer-Schoënberger, 'The Rise of Big Data: How It's Changing the Way We Think About the World,' *Foreign Affairs* May/June (2013), 28-40. Also, it is important to note that personal information is only one dimension of Big Data because it includes non-personal information such as weather forecasting or environmental monitoring, see House of Commons Science and Technology Committee, *The big data dilemma*, 2016. HC468.

[12] Louise Amoore and Volha Piotukh, 'Life beyond big data: governing with little analytics,' *Economy and Society* 44: 3 (2015), 341-66 at 345..

[13] Louise Amoore and Volha Piotukh, 'Introduction,' in Louise Amoore and Volha Piotukh (eds), *Algorithmic Life: Calculative devices in the age of big data* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), pp. 1-18.

[14] Nikolas Rose, *Powers of freedom : reframing political thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 243.

[15] Claudia Aradau and Rens Van Munster, 'Governing terrorism through risk: taking precautions, (un)knowing the future,' *European Journal of International Relations* 13: 1 (2007), 89-115 at 108.

[16] Didier Bigo, 'The (in)securitisation practices of the three universes of EU border control: Military/Navy – border guards/police – database analysts,' *Security Dialogue* 45: 3 (2014), 209-25 at 211.

[17] 'Recommendations on the Protection of Client Confidentiality Within the Context of Surveillance Activities'

(CCBE: Brussels, 2016); 'Guidance on Improving the IT Security of Lawyers Against Unlawful

Surveillance' (CCBE: Brussels, 2016).

[18] In July 2015, Amnesty was informed by the UK intelligence tribunal that its private communications had been intercepted and accessed by the UK's intelligence agencies, Tanya O'Carroll, "Human rights groups cannot do their jobs in a surveillance state", Amnesty International <http://bit.ly/1HeB0rN> (accessed 10-Feb-16).

[19] David Lyon, *Identifying Citizens: ID Cards as Surveillance* (Cambridge: Polity, 2009), p. 142.

[20] Irma van der Ploeg, 'Biometrics and the body as information: normative issues of the socio-technical coding of the body,' in David Lyon (ed.), *Surveillance as Social Sorting: Privacy, Risk and Digital Discrimination* (London: Routledge, 2003), pp. 57-73 at p. 71.

[21] Sandra Walklate and Gabe Mythen, 'How Scared Are We? ', *British Journal of Criminology* 48 (2008), 209-55.

[22] Gabe Mythen, Sandra Walklate, and Fatima Khan, 'I'm a Muslim, but I'm not a terrorist: victimization, risky identities and the performance of safety,' *British Journal of Criminology* 49: 6 (2009), 736-54.

[23] Frank Furedi, *Politics of Fear: Beyond Left and Right* (London: Continuum, 2005), p. 79.

[24] IPSOS MORI, *Perils of Perception* (London: Royal Statistical Society, King's College London and Ipsos MORI, 2013).

[25] Joint Public Issues Team, *Time to rethink benefit sanctions* (2015).

[26] Simon Duffy, "A fair society? How the cuts target disabled people", Centre for Welfare Reform <http://www.centreforwelfarereform.org/uploads/attachment/354/a-fair-society.pdf> (accessed 26-Oct-2016). This figure seems to refer to England.

[27] Something of the extent of state data-collecting was exposed by Edward Snowden, see Glenn Greenwald, *No Place to Hide: Edward Snowden, the NSA, and the U.S. Surveillance State* (New York: Picador, 2014).

[28] Daniel J. Solove, *Nothing to Hide: The False Tradeoff Between Privacy and Security* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2011), p. 30.

[29] This is what is called 'liquid surveillance', see Zygmunt Bauman and David Lyon, *Liquid Surveillance: A Conversation* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013).

[30] BVerfG, Judgment of 15 December 1983 - Cases 1 BvR 209, 269, 362, 420, 440, 484/83 (Volkszählungsurteil/ Microcensus case)

[31] For but one source, see Alison Hanham, *The Sinners of Cramond: The Struggle to Impose Godly Behaviour on a Scottish Community, 1651-1851* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2005).

[32] Eric Stoddart, *Theological Perspectives on a Surveillance Society: Watching and Being Watched* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2011). There are not many other theological treatments of surveillance but important contributions are made by David Lyon, 'Surveillance and the Eye of God,' *Studies in Christian Ethics* 27: 1 (2014), 21-32; David Lyon, 'Whither Shall I Flee? Surveillance, Omniscience and Normativity in the Panopticon,' *Christian Scholars Review* 14: 3 (1995), 302-12. In Sweden, Susanne Wigorts Yngvesson of Stockholm School of Theology is currently developing theological work on surveillance, particularly around the tradition of the eye of God.

- [33] Rachel Muers, *Keeping God's silence : towards a theological ethics of communication* (Oxford: Blackwell Pub., 2004), p. 194.
- [34] United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 'Privacy: The Preservation of Privacy - Policy Statement and Recommendations adopted by the 185th General Assembly (1973);' *Church & Society* 63: 6 (1974), 22-28 at 22.
- [35] United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 'Right of privacy and its protection,' *Church & Society* 65: 2 (1974), 4-49 at 5.
- [36] United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 'Right of Privacy,' at 13.
- [37] *Dignitatis humanae* (1965)
- [38] *Communio et progressio* (1971)
- [39] John Calvin, *Institutes*, trans. Henry Beveridge (London: James Clarke & Co., 1957). Book 3, Chapter 19, especially sec. 7.
- [40] Sociologist, Andrea Brighenti has proposed that proper attention is paid to visibility as an important dimension of how we organize our social relations, Andrea Brighenti, 'Democracy and its Visibilities,' in Kevin D. Haggerty and Minas Samatas (eds), *Surveillance and Democracy* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2010), pp. 51-68. Visibility is a social process in which 'seeing and being seen are intimately connected,' A. Brighenti, 'Visibility - A Category for the Social Sciences,' *Current Sociology* 55: 3 (2007), 323-42 at 325.
- [41] Yves-Alexandre de Montjoye and others, 'Unique in the shopping mall: On the reidentifiability of credit card metadata,' *Science* 347: 6221 (2015), 536-39; Greg Slabodkin, "Data Re-Identification Remains Risk Despite HIPAA Safeguards", HealthData Management <http://www.healthdatamanagement.com/news/data-re-identification-remains-risk-despite-hipaa-safeguards> (accessed 30-Oct-2016); Russ B. Altman and others, 'Data Re-Identification: Societal Safeguards,' *Science* 339 (2013), 1032-33.
- [42] Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996).
- [43] Jürgen Moltmann, *Theology of Hope: On the Ground and the Implications of a Christian Eschatology* (London: SCM Press, 1967), p. 286.
- [44] <http://www.methodist.org.uk/news-and-events/news-archive-2010/churches-write-to-cameron-asking-him-to-set-the-record-straight>
- [45] Genesis 21
- [46] Elsa Tamez, 'The woman who complicated the history of salvation,' *Cross Currents* Summer (1986), 129-39.
- [47] <https://missingmigrants.iom.int/>
- [48] <http://www.sfar.org.uk/scottish-church-leaders-keep-taking-child-refugees/>
- [49] <https://www.oxfam.org/en/research/syria-crisis-fair-share-analysis-2016>
- [50] <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-for-full-community-sponsorship>
- [51] <http://www.paih.org/host-a-refugee/>
- [52] <https://detentioninquiry.files.wordpress.com/2015/03/immigration-detention-inquiry-report.pdf>
- [53] <https://detentioninquiry.files.wordpress.com/2015/03/immigration-detention-inquiry-executive-summary.pdf>
- [54] From the Conference of European Churches Church and Society Commission / Churches Commission for Migrants in Europe response to the Council of Europe White Paper consultation on Intercultural Dialogue, p.3 available <http://www.ccme.be/fileadmin/filer/ccme/>

**70\_DOWNLOADS/95\_ARCHIVE/2007/2007-06-14\_CSC-CCME\_Response\_to\_the\_CoE\_White\_Paper\_consultation\_on\_Intercultural\_Dialogue.pdf**

[55] In 2016 the substantial report on refugee co-ordination was found in the Report from the Council of Assembly. As the programme for delivery of the refugee project is included in the Church and Society department, this year the report on activity is included in this section of the Blue Book. The Council of Assembly retains its strategic and cross-Council oversight over the project, and an update on two of the main decisions taken by the Council of Assembly relating to the refugee project can be found in its section of the 2017 Blue Book.

[56] UNODC, *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2016* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.16.IV.6).

[57] International Labour Organisation, <http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/forced-labour/lang--en/index.htm>

[58] Global Slavery Index [http://www.global-slaveryindex.org/findings/?gclid=Cj0KEQIAzsvEBRDEluzk96e4rqABEiQAezEOoGuViNA1W2KTRuXNZq3FgKBkQ0iWFf\\_z1DVgG8GvHagaAir38P8HAQ](http://www.global-slaveryindex.org/findings/?gclid=Cj0KEQIAzsvEBRDEluzk96e4rqABEiQAezEOoGuViNA1W2KTRuXNZq3FgKBkQ0iWFf_z1DVgG8GvHagaAir38P8HAQ)

[59] [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/383764/Modern\\_Slavery\\_Strategy\\_FINAL\\_DEC2015.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/383764/Modern_Slavery_Strategy_FINAL_DEC2015.pdf)

[60] <https://www.equalitytrust.org.uk/scale-economic-inequality-uk>

[61] <https://www.oxfam.org/en/research/economy-99>