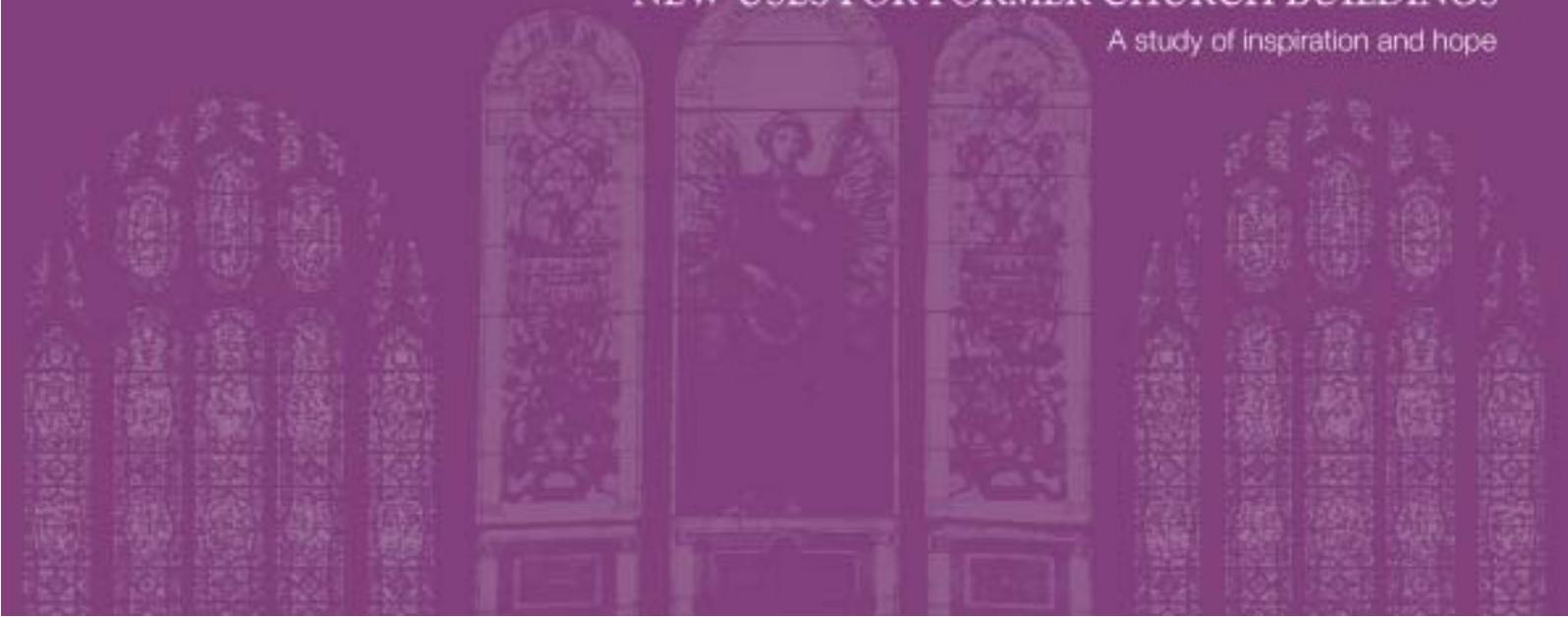




## Scottish Civic Trust

### NEW USES FOR FORMER CHURCH BUILDINGS

A study of inspiration and hope



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Front cover images: (from top left): Òranmór (Former Kelvinside Parish Church) Glasgow; Strathnaver Museum (former St Columba) Bettyhill; The Barony Hall (former Barony Church) Glasgow; Former St Monan's Falkirk; The Wynd Centre (former St John's Church) Paisley; Cotterill Light Centre (former Salisbury Church) Edinburgh; Dunkeld Antiques (former Free Church) Dunkeld; St Andrew's in the Square, Glasgow (image copyright Glasgow Building Preservation Trust).

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## NEW USES FOR FORMER CHURCH BUILDINGS

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# NEW USES FOR SUMMARY FORMER CHURCH BUILDINGS

THE ISSUE OF **VACANT AND DISUSED CHURCHES** IS A **SIGNIFICANT CONCERN TO OUR BUILT ENVIRONMENT.**

The last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw dramatic changes to our ecclesiastical fabric. Redundancy became commonplace and the demolition threat was frequent. In 1998 the Scottish Civic Trust's Buildings at Risk Register for Scotland, established in 1990, had recorded over 180 churches 'at risk'. Religious buildings now represent 12% of properties at risk on the register, the third largest group after residential (48%) and farming (19%).

Out of this concerning situation, the creative adaptation and reuse of Scotland's church buildings has grown in recent years. In addition, a number of organisations have been established which specifically address the problem, such as the Scottish Redundant Churches Trust and The Church Buildings Renewal Trust.

This publication seeks to demonstrate the diversity of new uses by drawing upon research carried out by the Scottish Civic Trust (2006). The study identified some 310 examples of alternative use throughout Scotland, of which 85 were previously 'at risk'. This study is neither exhaustive nor conclusive. Instead it presents a snap shot of the reuse of a particular type of building and provides the basis for the examples and case studies that follow.

The purpose of the publication is to display the wide variety of potential adaptive reuses of church buildings. It is hoped that this approach will stimulate and inspire future conversions. It does not advocate any particular use. There is no single solution. What is required is creative and innovative thinking for each individual building.

The first sections touch upon the common issues related to the redundancy and reuse of church buildings. The thematic case studies will then highlight positive examples of successful conversion. The centrepiece is an illustrated summary of some 101 uses for a redundant church.

When research started on this publication, its working title in the Trust office was '*101 Uses for a Dead Church!*' In fact, we were able to identify some 130 uses, suggesting that finding a new role for a former church is not as difficult or daunting a task as many anticipate.

The impressive view from the battlements of ► Edinburgh Castle encompasses the spires of three of Edinburgh's most significant church buildings on the Royal Mile: in the distance the former **Tron Church** (currently in use as Old Town Information Centre), with **St Giles Cathedral** in the centre. The 74 metre high Gothic steeple of the former **Tolbooth, St John's Church** can be seen in the foreground. It dominates the Old Town's skyline. Benjamin Tindall Architects converted the building in 1999 to form the new home of the Edinburgh International Festival - The Hub.





# TELFORD'S PARLIAMENTARY CHURCHES

**2007 WAS THE 250TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF SCOTTISH ENGINEER THOMAS TELFORD (1757 -1834)**

During the 1820s, further to an Act of Parliament and government grant of £50,000, 32 churches were built to the designs of renowned engineer Thomas Telford. The churches were to provide a place of worship in some of the most remote parishes scattered throughout Scotland's Highlands and Islands, from Quarff in Shetland to Oa on Islay. The churches were constructed to a standard T-plan design, six with an upper gallery, at a cost of approximately £1,500 per church.

Today only 24 of the original church buildings survive. Those at Knock and Cross on the Isle of Lewis, at North Ballachulish, and at Sheildag in Ross have been demolished without construction of another church. A further 4 have been lost with a replacement church erected on the site.

The churches at Stoer in Sutherland, Berneray and Trumisgarry on the Western Isles, and Oa are now roofless ruins.

Of the 24 surviving church buildings 11 remain in ecclesiastical use, for example at Croick in Highland and at Duror in Argyll & Bute. A number have had their interiors recast. 7 have been converted to new uses. This includes residential properties, a museum at Ullapool and a community hall on the small isle of Ulva.

At present, the future of 2 of the buildings remains uncertain: the most northerly church at Quarff is vacant and at risk; and the church at Berriedale, Caithness closed as a church in 2008 but remains under the protection of the Berriedale Church and Cemetery Association.



Poolewe, Rosshire, recently sold.



A church at risk in Stoer, Sutherland

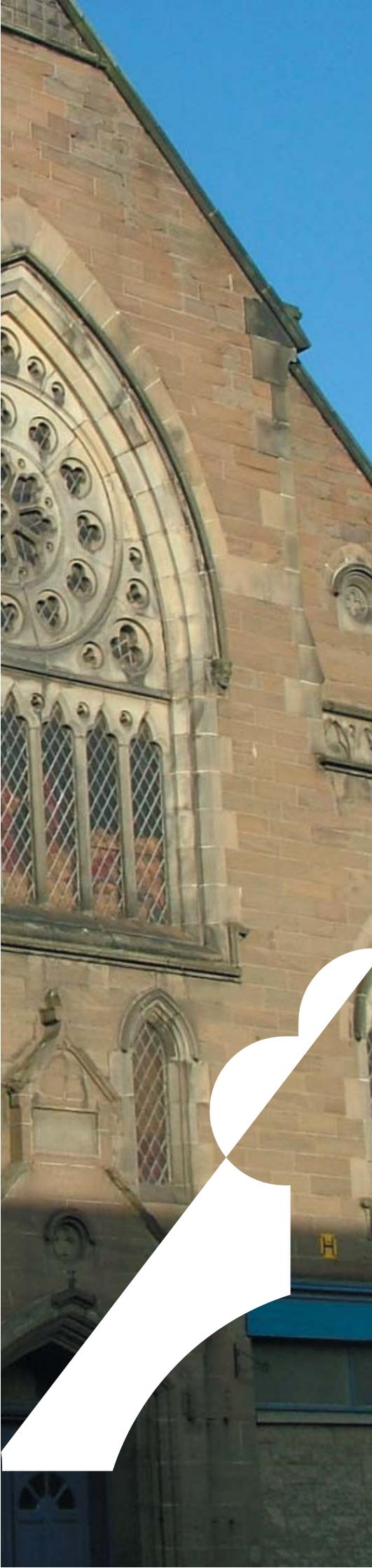


Kinlochspelve, Mull, at risk in 1997 prior to conversion to holiday accomodation.



A church at risk in Quarff, Shetland





# NEW USES FOR WHY DO CHURCHES BECOME REDUNDANT? FORMER CHURCH BUILDINGS

THERE ARE A VARIETY OF FACTORS WHICH MAY BRING ABOUT THE REDUNDANCY OF A CHURCH OR INDEED OF ANY BUILDING. EACH BUILDING WILL HAVE ITS OWN PARTICULAR SET OF CAUSES.

Scotland has a rich and complex religious history. Most towns, and even villages, can contain several churches of various denominations. In addition, the unprecedented population growth in our towns and cities throughout the 18<sup>th</sup>, and particularly the 19<sup>th</sup>, centuries led to a huge expansion of our built environment.

Notwithstanding other issues, this factor alone resulted in large numbers of urban churches representing a considerable part of our cultural heritage.

Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century Scottish towns and cities have witnessed continued demographic change. However, unlike the previous centuries, there has been a general decentralisation of communities from urban centres to suburban areas. This population movement has reduced the numbers of urban congregations. Within Scotland's rural communities a trend towards urbanisation of the population has in turn led to a decrease in the numbers of rural congregations. In both instances, many churches have thus become surplus or redundant as a result.

◀ The former **Morrison Congregational Union Church** in Guthrie Street, Dundee built in 1887 at a cost of £1,800. This church was constructed amidst the hub of industrial activity in the city's Blackness district. However, when the jute industry went into decline in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century many buildings in the area became redundant. In the early 1980s the Blackness Business Development Area was established with investment to regeneration of the district. The church building is one of several buildings that have found a new use, bought by the Downfield Music Society for use as clubrooms and rehearsal space in 1983.

It is important to recognise that unwanted and redundant buildings are not a new phenomenon. Change in our built environment is a natural process; however, the rate of redundancy of church buildings in the last three decades has been unprecedented. According to a Council of Europe assessment, Scotland is one of the countries in which the problem of redundant churches is most severe (Comedia, 1995). For example, the Church of Scotland owns approximately 70% of ecclesiastical buildings. Between 1978 and 1991, 148 churches were sold by the General Trustees of the Church of Scotland alone i.e. an average of 12 per annum, or one a month (Parker 1991).

# NEW USES FOR WHY SAVE A CHURCH BUILDING? FORMER CHURCH BUILDINGS

A CHURCH BUILDING CAN HAVE **HISTORIC, ARCHITECTURAL, AND CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE**. IT IS A VALUABLE AND IRREPLACABLE RESOURCE.

The value of a church building can be described through several factors which together contribute to cultural sustainability.

## **Historic importance and continuity**

Many churches occupy sites of earlier ecclesiastical buildings. Their fabric may incorporate previous structures, or significant events may have occurred there. All these factors contribute to their historic significance on a local and national level.

## **Aesthetic and architectural merit**

Many church buildings are significant examples of a specific architectural style or period. They can express a wealth of architectural detail and decoration both externally and internally. Church buildings are often valued as works of art in themselves.

## **Townscape value**

Many church buildings make an important contribution to the character of their built environment. Church buildings can offer distinction in areas of otherwise indifferent architecture. They form key elements in the understanding of our urban environment. They add townscape value and identity to both the immediate locality and as landmarks in the wider urban context.

## **Social landscape**

Whether urban or rural, church buildings make a key contribution to the sense of place and can offer an extension of the public realm. In the countryside, rural church buildings act to orientate, marking out small settlements in the wider landscape. They have been, and continue to be, a focus for local communities.

## **Community value**

The role of the church as a community resource derives from medieval times. The social and cultural importance of a church building's connection to past events cannot be underestimated. Many individuals hold deep feelings for a church building irrespective of personal belief. A recent survey showed that 86% of people in the UK had visited a place of worship in the previous 12 months, and more than 60% said that they would be concerned if their local church were no longer there (HLF 2005).

## **Life cycle value**

The construction of any building represents a capital investment in terms of material and effort. The embodied energy of the building can in itself be cause enough to advocate conservation and appropriate reuse of the built fabric.



## NEWARK PARISH CHURCH, PORT GLASGOW



THIS CHURCH BUILDING PROVIDES ONE EXAMPLE OF THE MANY CHURCHES WHICH HAVE SUFFERED FROM **LACK OF REPAIR, INACTION, AND VANDALISM** OVER AN EXTENDED PERIOD, BUT WHICH HAVE **SURVIVED** TO FIND A **PRACTICAL NEW USE.**

The former Newark Parish Church (before the fire in 1999) occupies a prominent setting on the axis of Balfour Street.



The building after an extensive fire gutted the former church in 2000. The charred roof timbers remain in place; allowing the roof to be reconstructed to the original profile.



The austere, classical style former Newark Parish Church was built in 1774. The oldest church building in Port Glasgow, it is an important piece of local heritage, representing a time when Port Glasgow was a flourishing 18<sup>th</sup> century community. By the 1980s major roof repairs were required to maintain the building's structural integrity. The prohibitive cost of these repairs led the Church of Scotland to lodge a demolition application on two occasions, both refused by Inverclyde District Council. The congregation were keen to repair the building however, the church was put up for sale with conditions which stipulated against the building's use for drinking or gambling. The church was eventually sold, but repair and reuse did not materialise. By then the building had lost its interior joinery, fittings and significant stained glass. In 1998 a Dangerous Building Notice was served. The following year an extensive fire gutted the building.

Finally in 2001, under the new ownership of Eaglescraig Properties Ltd planning permission and Listed Building Consent were granted, for a change to use and conversion to 14 flats. The restoration and conversion was completed in 2003.

◀ The former Newark Parish Church after reconstruction and conversion to residential use.

# NEW USES FOR ADAPTABILITY FORMER CHURCH BUILDINGS

**THERE ARE A RANGE OF ISSUES TO CONSIDER IN ASSESSING THE ADAPTABILITY OF A SPECIFIC CHURCH BUILDING.**

Adaptation will always require careful consideration to achieve a balance between the requirements of a new function whilst retaining the best qualities of the original building. Some key considerations are:

## **CONTEXT & CONTENT**

The building's locality and individual design can vary enormously.

### **Context**

The context of any redundant building is central to establishing its viable long-term reuse. This is no different for church buildings. Changes to the building in terms of both function and physical alteration must be carefully considered in relation to its specific locality. This will include the contribution the church building makes, and could make in the future, in social, economic and environmental terms.

### **Content**

A church building's structure, its spatial qualities, materials and architectural detail can all affect its suitability for adaptation. The most significant features of the church building should be established at an early stage and incorporated into the design. The most successful conversions work in a manner sympathetic to the existing building, for example retaining its spatial quality or highlighting architectural detail.

### **Interior elements**

Often the most difficult aspect of adaptation is to find an appropriate way in which to incorporate interior elements such as pulpits and pews. Where elements cannot be retained, planning consent may be required for their removal.

Advice should be sought on possible salvage, or transfer to a church in ecclesiastical use. The retention and possible restoration of stained glass may also be an important consideration.

## **CHANGE OF USE & CONVERSION**

### **Statutory requirements**

A change of use and alterations will require planning consent, and any new works required to facilitate that change will require a building warrant. Local councils will have policy related to change of use. Many church buildings will also require Listed Building Consent for any change of use or alteration. Early consultation with the planning authority and, if the building is listed, Historic Scotland, is advised. Historic Environment Scotland's 'Interim Guidance on the Principles of Listed Building Consent (2019)' and 'Ecclesiastical Exemption: A Guide to How Listed Building Controls are applied to Places of Worship (2019)' are useful resources to consult.

### **Repair and restoration**

In some cases restoration of all or part of the church fabric may be required. It is important to acquire professional and expert advice at the outset in order to identify requirements.

### **Design proposals**

Detailed architectural plans will be required to ascertain the merit of a potential new use, and to minimise the impact on the significant aspects of the historic building. For example, new uses, which require subdivision of the original church, should be considered in a sympathetic manner. There are many examples of 'gut and stuff' projects, which reflect a missed opportunity to create spaces of quality and individuality.

Similarly, designing to meet the current Building Standards (Scotland) Regulations to obtain a building warrant (for example

the lining of interiors for thermal insulation; introduction of new services for heating and ventilation) can be a challenging task. Sensitive alterations often require dynamic and innovative solutions. Alterations should be given careful consideration to minimise their impact on the character and appearance of the church building.

### **Windows**

A particular difficulty can be when a change of use requires the replacement of original windows. Building regulations may require existing windows to be replaced or altered for ventilation, fire escape and cleaning purposes. Any changes to a church building's fenestration can seriously affect both its interior and exterior appearance.

In many cases the insertion of a new floor may cut across the typical tall lancet windows of a church building. In these cases the proportion and detail of the new windows can play a major part in the character of the converted building.

Alterations can drastically change internal lighting conditions. Some areas may require the introduction of windows and rooflights. The impact of the additions must be carefully considered, in particular on the original roof of the building.

### **Graveyards and carved stones**

A church building may stand within a graveyard, often in local authority ownership. In this instance, access for the public to visit family graves or for genealogical and historic research will be required.

A differing land ownership may also require negotiations regarding access and car parking to be made at an early stage.





The former **Half Morton Parish Church** at Timpanheck, Dumfriesshire dates from 1744 and underwent several alterations and additions in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In 1990 it was recorded on the Buildings at Risk Register as vacant. Despite having no water or gas supply, or drainage system the churchbuilding was sold and is now a single dwelling. The building sits within the historic churchyard with 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century carved stones.

## NEW USES FOR FORMER CHURCH BUILDINGS

# CASE STUDIES: COMMERCIAL USE

A WIDE RANGE OF USES CAN BE BROADLY DESCRIBED AS COMMERCIAL. FROM **FOOD AND DRINK ESTABLISHMENTS** TO **PROFESSIONAL SERVICES**, FROM **RETAIL OUTLETS** TO **LIGHT INDUSTRIAL USES**.

Whilst initially some controversy existed over the reuse of places of worship for sale of alcohol and gaming, this obstacle to some developments has now been largely overcome. The former St George's Chapel in Edinburgh is now a casino. Church buildings have been converted to restaurants, bars and nightclubs; the Òran Mór, recently opened in the former Kelvinside Parish Church, Glasgow, combines all three in what is described as a 'cultural centre'.

In urban areas, the strategic location of an existing church building often on main thoroughfares or prominent intersections has obvious advantages for the commercial sector. An assortment of retail uses includes a lighting emporium in Edinburgh (former Salisbury Church), an antiques showroom in the former Free Church in Dunkeld, and a bookstore in the former Grey Friars Free Church of Scotland in Inverness. City centre office space has been created for Keppies Architects, in Glasgow, in the former John Ross Memorial Church for the Deaf. In Edinburgh, the Association of Goldsmiths have their offices and workshops in the former Church of the Nazarene.

## CASE STUDY 1: Lyon & Turnbull Ltd, Edinburgh

The former **Broughton Place Church**, designed in 1821 by Archibald Elliot, occupies a prominent site on the edge of Edinburgh's New Town. Its imposing Greek Doric portico closes the vista of Broughton Place. The church was added to the Buildings at Risk Register in 1992 when the congregation relocated. Sold by the Church of Scotland in 1993, the building went through a period of varied intermittent use before auctioneers, Lyon & Turnbull, moved here in 1999. A new use secured, the subsequent conversion by Malcolm Fraser Architects was completed in 2003.

# COMMERC





# IAL USE



# COMMERCIAL

## CASE STUDY 2: Òran Mór, Glasgow

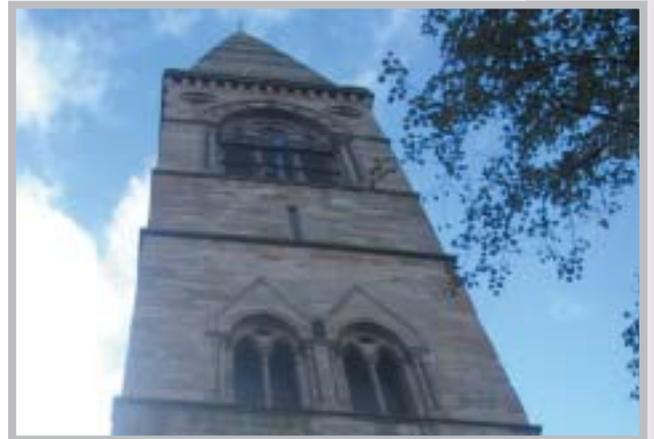
Founded in 1862, the former **Kelvinside Parish Church** is sited at a strategic crossroads in the heart of Glasgow's West End. After a short time as the Bible Training Institute, the building was put up for sale. The building has been spectacularly converted and enhanced as a cultural centre at a cost of £7.4 million.

Opened in 2004, the building now houses several independent yet complimentary facilities under one roof. In the basement, the former crypt has been successfully transformed to provide a venue for theatre, concerts and nightclub use.

The Brasserie Restaurant and two public bars occupy the ground floor. A new upper floor inserted at the original gallery level, has created The Auditorium, a multi-functional event space crowned by the new celestial ceiling mural by Alasdair Gray. A small gallery overlooks this space, used for private functions or as additional space for large events in The Auditorium. Both spaces are highly individual and atmospheric, creating a balance between the original features of the church and contemporary design. The Auditorium, restaurant, bar and nightclub can all be reached from separate entrances, original to the church buildings.



The Auditorium provides a unique event space capable of holding up to 450 people. The ceiling mural by Alasdair Gray provides a rich enhancement of this newly created upper level.



The bell tower provides a private entrance to the main event space, The Auditorium. The original church bells survive and are rung on Armistice Day.

## COMMERCIAL USE

### CASE STUDY 3: The Priory, Aberdeen

Built in 1865 as the first Congregational Church in the city, this Category A listed building has been carefully converted. Retaining its attractive stained glass windows and upper gallery, much of the quality of the original space is evident and a special atmosphere created. The conversion, of the former **St Nicholas Congregational Church** to a nightclub, was controversial, largely due to concerns over the potential late night disturbance of the proposed new use. An Aberdeen-born

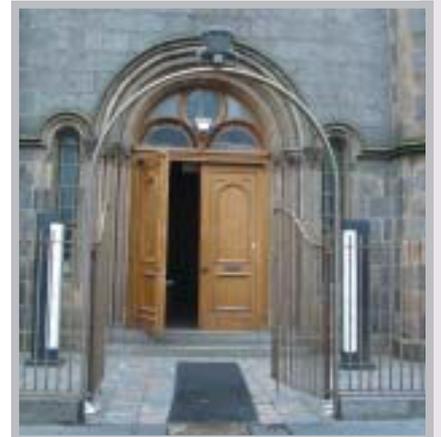
businessman, Michael Wilson successfully took the application to appeal and in 2002, some 5 years after plans were initially submitted, the completed project received an award from the Aberdeen Civic Society. In particular the Society commended the quality of the conversion work, which both respects the original building and can easily be removed should the use change in the future.



Interior fixtures such as the bar have been simply designed.



Much of the interior atmosphere is generated by the retention of the original stained glass.



The club's entrance and signage are understated.

## CASE STUDY 4: Kilmorack Gallery, nr Beauly

The former **Old Kilmorack Church** sits 13 miles west of Inverness and 3 miles from Beauly. The building is dated 1786 and is a good example of a traditional 18<sup>th</sup> century church, symmetrical and rectangular on plan with harled stone walls and dressed stone margins. The former church sits within its enclosing burial ground accessed by two separate entrances. Listed Category B in 1971, the building was then vacant, and its interior fittings had been removed. The church building was purchased in 1997 by art dealer Tony Davidson for adaptation to an art gallery.

No alteration of the exterior was required, the original tall round headed sash and case windows on the south elevation are still in place. The interior is still as it was after being recast in 1835. The former church is now amongst the largest commercial galleries in the Highlands and one of the most respected in Scotland. It provides the perfect location to exhibit and sell the works of many of Scotland's established artists who are often inspired by the Highlands.



The distinctive character of the former church makes the gallery immediately identifiable to visitors.

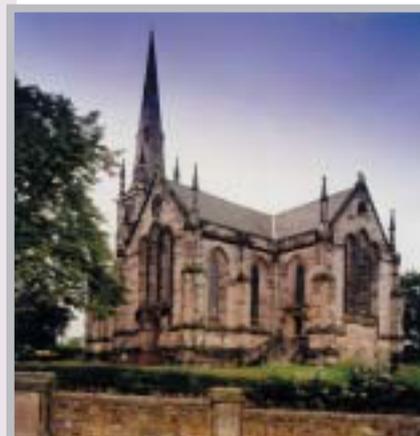


The main exhibition space, the interior recast in 1835 remains although the fittings had previously been removed. Images copyright Kilmorack Gallery.

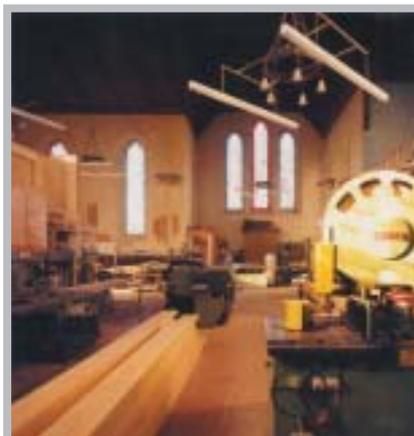
## CASE STUDY 5: Charles Taylor Woodwork, Dalkeith

The landmark **West Church** was built to the designs of William Burn in 1840 for the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Buccleuch when the old church of St Nicholas became overcrowded. The church was vacated in the late 1980s when the two congregations unified and the historic church of St Nicholas, dating from 15<sup>th</sup> century, was chosen to continue its religious role. At risk for over 5 years, the Church of Scotland sold the building in 1994, with its manse and hall, on the open market to Charles Taylor.

Looking for a suitable base for his architectural joinery and cabinet making business, the large church volume, with over 4500 sq ft of floor space, was perfectly suited to the scale of operations and machinery used by the company. Much of the interior features of the church had already been removed and those remaining, the flooring and light fittings were retained, the latter adapted to the requirements of the new working environment. All alterations to the interior are reversible. The important exterior, built of fine Craigeith sandstone is well maintained.



The West Church, a significant landmark in the centre of Dalkeith, with the highest spire in Midlothian. Image copyright Charles Taylor Woodwork.



The church interior provides an appropriate backdrop for the company's conservation work. Image copyright Charles Taylor Woodwork.



View of the workshop from the former public entrance.

## NEW USES FOR FORMER CHURCH BUILDINGS

# CASE STUDIES: EDUCATIONAL USE

A NUMBER OF CHURCH BUILDINGS HAVE BEEN CONVERTED FOR EDUCATIONAL AND INSTITUTIONAL PURPOSES. EXAMPLES RANGE FROM NURSERY AND PRIMARY LEVELS THROUGH TO SECONDARY AND FURTHER EDUCATION.

In some instances, a church building has supplemented existing provision, in particular for large educational institutions. The University of Strathclyde occupies two church buildings in the centre of Glasgow: the former Barony Church and the former Ramshorn Kirk. Glasgow University has converted the former Anderston Free Church for its Department of Theatre, Film and Television Studies which contains a cinema and theatre as well as ancillary accommodation.

Educational institutions have used former church buildings as classrooms, libraries, dining rooms, and assembly and games halls. Smaller independent educational organisations have found church buildings to be appropriate spaces for learning such as the Leith School of Art (the former Norwegian Seamen's Church), and the Hawthorn School of English in Edinburgh.

Other institutional uses could include libraries, public and church halls and exhibition spaces.

## CASE STUDY 1: Hawthorn School of English, Edinburgh

Part of the the former **Canongate United Presbyterian Church** was converted around 1990 and is now the Hawthorn School of English. The building is located on Edinburgh's historic Royal Mile and was listed by Historic Scotland in 2003 specifically for its value to the streetscape. The courtyard garden, enclosed by low sandstone walls and cast-iron railing to Canongate and Cranston Street, provides a green space with a mature tree and low planting in an otherwise hard urban environment.

# EDUCATIO





# NAL USE

# EDUCATIONAL

## CASE STUDY 2: National e-Science Centre.

The former **South College Street United Presbyterian Church** was built in 1856 to the designs of Patrick Wilson in Renaissance style. Only the impressive façade indicates the former church building's presence to this narrow street. Used as a store for many years, the Category B listed building was skilfully converted by architects Reiach & Hall in 1996 to provide a training and conference centre for the University of Edinburgh. The building now functions as the National e-Science Centre and is home to the e-Science Institute.

The centre houses several rooms and open plan areas that can accommodate a variety of activities including conferences, meetings and office workspace. On four levels, the uppermost level contains a top-lit lecture theatre which seats just over 100 persons. Below, a flexible open-plan exhibition area is also used for catering, receptions and demonstrations. In many instances, the insertion of the new floors brings the visitors up close to the original detail of the building.



The impressive Greco-Roman façade of the former church. The stained glass of the central window has been restored and internally forms an attractive backdrop to the main staircase.



The original cast iron columns and architectural detail of the building add character to the circulation space and adjacent offices



The Newhaven Lecture Theatre, inserted on the upper most level retains the glazed clerestory of the former church.

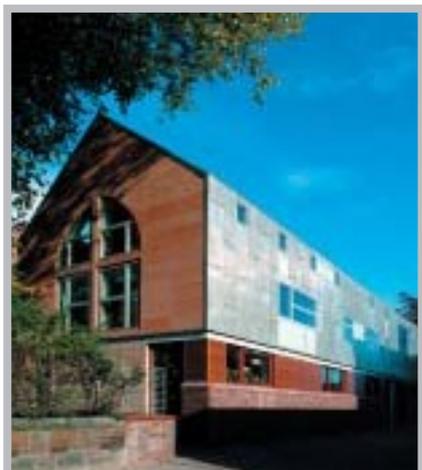
## CASE STUDY 3: Fotheringay Centre, Glasgow

# EDUCATIONAL USE

The former **Pollokshields United Reformed Church** is a Victorian style Category C (S) listed building situated adjacent to Hutchesons' Grammar School. The Hutchesons' Educational Trust (HET) acquired the church buildings in 1999. Davis Duncan Architects were appointed by limited competition to design a centre of excellence for music and ICT at the school. The church congregation, although dwindling, had an emotional involvement with the building and a wish to maintain worship there.

building fabric, which had suffered from water ingress and rot. The second phase saw construction of a new build extension in a sympathetic and contemporary design. This accommodates specialist teaching rooms for music and ICT on three floors. The final phase involved the adaptation of the original building. The shallow building undercroft was excavated to create a suite of individual, acoustically sealed music practice rooms and a breakout space / open plan computer area. Above, the main body of the former church provides a multi-purpose space for performance and rehearsal and state of the art lecture theatre. The congregation, given a 25-year lease, continue to use this space as their place for modern day worship.

Restoration, adaptation and extension of the original church buildings were programmed over three phases and the Fotheringay Centre was completed in August 2003. The first phase included works to repair and restore the dilapidated



The design of the new extension, is sympathetic using a blend of traditional and modern materials: Locharbriggs red sandstone, cedar cladding and tinned stainless steel.



The former main body of the church provides a venue for performance and rehearsal and a second assembly hall for the school. The congregation use it as a place of worship on Sundays.



The Atrium gives access to the new facilities in the excavated undercroft of the former church. The design is handled in a contemporary manner.

All images copyright of Davis Duncan Architects.

## CASE STUDY 4: University of Strathclyde, Glasgow

The University of Strathclyde has found successful new uses for two of Glasgow's architecturally and historically significant church buildings.

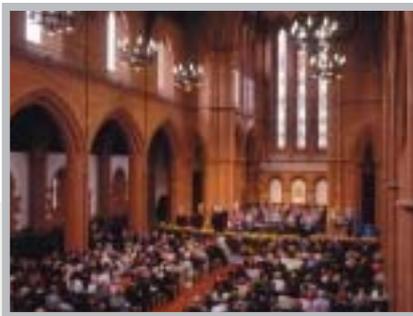
The former **Barony Church**, completed in 1889, is a magnificent Category A listed church building designed by competition winners J J Burnet & J A Campbell in Gothic Revival Style. The university purchased the building in 1986 to create a dedicated ceremonial and graduation hall. Following a year of essential repairs, the extensive restoration and conversion of the building was carried out in three phases completing in 1995. The interior, simply handled, is atmospheric and warm with dark wood fittings, new timber flooring, red sandstone dressings and stained glass. A covered walkway was introduced to provide wheelchair access at the west side which leads to the glass roofed Winter Garden behind the main church hall. The development, designed by David Leslie Architects, cost £3.4 million, with sums received

through grants and hundreds of private donations. Now known as the Barony Hall, the conversion has won several awards.

The Ramshorn Theatre is housed within the **Ramshorn Kirk**, a landmark building in Glasgow's historic Merchant City district. Replacing the original St David's, demolished during the widening of Ingram Street, the Kirk was built in 1824 to the designs of Thomas Rickman in elegant early gothic style, one of the first examples of the Gothic Revival in Scotland. The demise of the Merchant City as a residential area ultimately led to its sale by the Church of Scotland and, in 1982, the University (whose founder, John Anderson, is buried in the crypt) acquired it for £5. Page & Park architects designed a 'black-box' theatre within the space and, reopened in 1992, the building is now home to the Strathclyde Theatre Group. In addition to providing a city centre performance space, the venue is used for concerts, exhibitions and conferences.



The Barony Hall Winter Garden is a glass roofed reception space created in the former courtyard between the Main Hall and the Bicentenary Hall.



The Barony Hall can be leased for many other functions as well as providing a spectacular ceremonial space for university graduations.

Image copyright of University of Strathclyde.

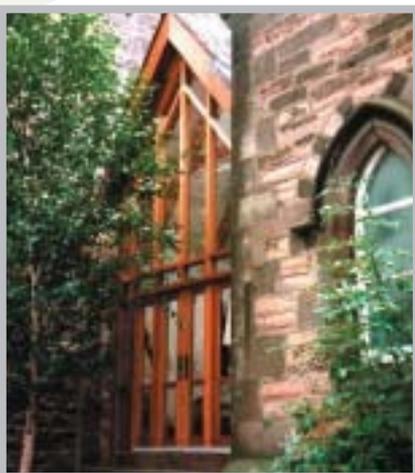


The former Ramshorn Kirk forms an important landmark, closing the vista of Candleriggs in Glasgow's Merchant City district.

## CASE STUDY 5: Leith School of Art, Edinburgh

Built in 1868 the **Norwegian Seamen's Church**, now the Leith School of Art, is still in occasional use by the Norwegian community in Edinburgh. Founded in 1988, the art school provides a small independent and vibrant facility for the teaching and practice of art and design. The distinctive building was adapted and extended in 2001 by the Hugh Martin Partnership to provide multi-purpose studio spaces.

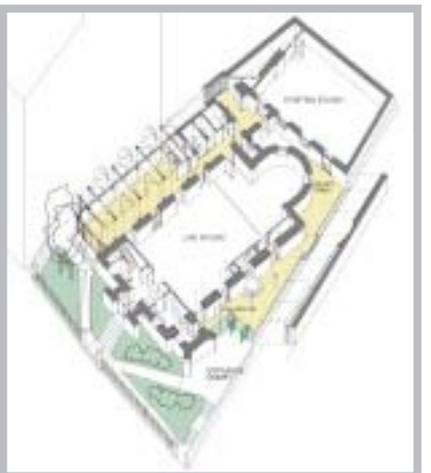
The project aimed to accommodate the diversity of courses and functions provided by this locally based art school and increase capacity. The extension around the existing church building created a new main entrance and reception space, top lit library and sculpture court. Workspaces have a variety of different lighting levels creating special environments that lend themselves well to the creative process.



Detail of the façade showing the new extension which forms the sculpture court.

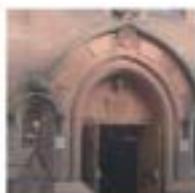


The library created in the space between the original church and the church hall.

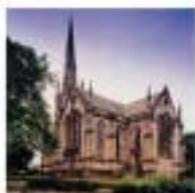
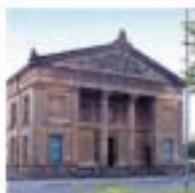


Drawing illustrating the extension which surrounds the original church building.

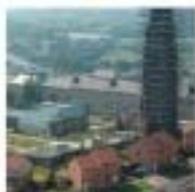
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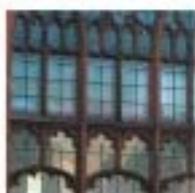
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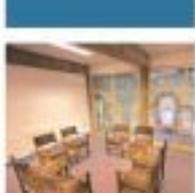
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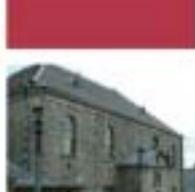
61 - 70



71 - 80



81 - 90



91 - 101



# 101

## USES FOR AN OLD CHURCH

1. Antiques Showroom
2. Archaeological Exhibition
3. Architects' Office
4. Archives
5. Artist's Studio
6. Arts Venue
7. Auction House
8. Backpackers' Hostel
9. Banana Ripening Warehouse
10. Bar
11. Bathroom Showroom
12. Bed & Breakfast
13. Billiard Room
14. Bridge Club
15. Business Centre
16. Cabinetmaker's Workshop
17. Café
18. Cancer Care Centre
19. Car Showroom
20. Carpet Warehouse
21. Casino
22. Cinema
23. Clan Centre
24. Climbing Centre
25. Community Centre
26. Community Park
27. Concert Venue
28. Craft Shop
29. Creche
30. Crematorium
31. Dance Studio
32. Dining and Assembly Hall
33. Doctor's Surgery
34. Doll Museum
35. Drama Centre
36. Drug User's Support Centre
37. Dwelling
38. Elderly Care Home
39. Electric Transformer Station
40. Festival Centre
41. Film & TV Studies Department
42. Football Supporter's Club
43. Foyer
44. Funeral Parlour
45. Furniture Store
46. Gallery
47. Graduation Hall
48. Grain Store
49. Guest House
50. Hay Loft
51. Health Club
52. High School Library
53. Holiday Accommodation
54. Homeless Centre
55. Hotel
56. Indoor Market
57. Islamic Centre
58. Kids' Indoor Play Centre
59. Language School
60. Library
61. Lighting Shop
62. Local History Museum
63. Maritime Museum
64. Meeting Space
65. National Piping Centre
66. Newspaper Printing Works
67. Nightclub
68. Nursery
69. Offices
70. Petrol Station
71. Plumber's Showroom
72. Primary School Classrooms
73. Private School Games Room
74. Public House
75. Recording Studios
76. Residential Flats
77. Restaurant
78. Restored Monument
79. School of Art
80. Scottish National Orchestra HQ
81. Secondary School
82. Sheep Shed
83. Sheltered Housing
84. Sikh Temple
85. Single Homeless Housing
86. Social & Industrial Museum
87. Squash Courts
88. Stained Glass Workshop
89. Stonemason's Premises
90. Theatre
91. Traditional Scottish Music & Dance Centre
92. Under 18's Club
93. University
94. University e-Science Centre
95. University Works Department
96. Upholstery Shop
97. Visitor Centre
98. Volunteer Centre
99. Wax Museum
100. Youth Hostel

The above uses represent former and current uses of illustrated church buildings.

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A STUDY OF INSPIRATION AND HOPE

# NEW USES FOR FORMER CHURCH BUILDINGS

## CASE STUDIES: RECREATIONAL USE

A CHANGE FROM **ECCLESIASTICAL** TO **SECULAR** USE **DOES NOT** MEAN THAT THE BUILDING HAS TO **LOSE ITS FOCUS** IN THE COMMUNITY. IT MAY INDEED BE DIFFERENT BUT NOT NECESSARILY OF LESS VALUE.

Recreational uses maintain the cultural and social function of the building albeit in a different form.

Large church auditoria lend themselves well to performance and event spaces, often without major alterations to the original church architecture. There are now a number of dedicated venues and important performance spaces in Scotland's urban centres. In Glasgow, the Henry Wood Hall (former Trinity Congregational Church) and Cottier Theatre (former Dowanhill Parish Church). In Edinburgh, the Queen's Hall occupies the converted former Newington & St Leonard's Church and The Hub, Edinburgh's Festival Centre, is in the former Tolbooth St John's Church.

Conversion to museum use is found throughout Scotland. Museums at Strathnaver and Ullapool in the Highlands, and the Museum of Islay Life, Argyll and Bute in particular maintain a connection to the local community and expression of its cultural heritage. All occupy their former parish churches.

### CASE STUDY 1: Auld Kirk Museum, Kirkintilloch

The former **St Mary's Church** dating from 1644, is one of the oldest buildings in Kirkintilloch. It was last used as a church in 1914. Converted by the Town Council, the museum opened in 1961, an early example, following receipt of grants from the Historic Buildings Council and the Pilgrim Trust. Displays cover all aspects of local history, especially social and industrial, with regular temporary exhibitions. Improvements in 2001 were awarded the Countess of Perth Trophy, a Scottish Museum of the Year award.



All images courtesy of Douglas Robertson.

# RECREATI



# DUAL USE

# RECREATIONA

## CASE 2: Ullapool Museum, Highland

Situated in the town's outstanding conservation area, the Category A listed former **Ullapool Parish Church**, one of Telford's Parliamentary Churches, was built in 1829. It closed for worship in 1935 when its congregation combined with The United Free Church. The next 60 years witnessed only sporadic use, as a food store and then mortuary. It was not until 1988, when the building hosted a temporary exhibition to commemorate the Bicentenary of the town's foundation by the British Fisheries Society, that its sustainable reuse as a permanent museum was considered and actively pursued by the local community. The redundant church was considered an appropriate historic setting for such a facility.

The successful restoration and conversion of the church building

for the Ullapool Museum Trust included retaining and incorporating much of the interior in the scheme. The unusually unaltered church is one of the best surviving examples of a Telford's churches, with pulpit, Precentor's box, gallery and pews intact. Below the pulpit, the Elders' pews and communion table now provide study areas for archival and genealogical material.

One of early entries on the Buildings at Risk Register, the Award winning museum celebrated the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its opening this March. Its conversion was made possible by a package of grants (around £425,000), which included significant monies from the European Regional Development Fund, Ross & Cromarty District Council, Ross & Cromarty Enterprise, Historic Scotland and £65,000 raised locally.



Ullapool Museum, formerly one of Telford's 32 Parliamentary Churches.



A view of the interior of the museum from the original gallery level.



The original Elders' pews and communion table provide a study area.

# RECREATIONAL USE

In this project the former **Trinity Congregational Church** formed an extension of the existing Maritime Museum, housed in the adjacent Provost Ross's House, alongside the opportunity to introduce a modern flexible exhibition space on the site between the two historic buildings.

The Tall Ships visit to Aberdeen in 1991 renewed interest in developing the Aberdeen Maritime Museum. Aberdeen City Council together with Grampian Enterprise Limited (GEL) realised the tourism potential of an enlarged museum. Both recognised the importance of the tourism strategy to encourage regeneration of the Shiprow/Adelphi area of the city and the drive to rejuvenate the link between the harbour area and the retail zone of Union Street. The resultant funding partnership meant that GEL contributed 25% to the project.

Opened in 1984, the museum had proven immensely popular but the restricted accommodation of the old house meant that exhibits and services were limited. At the time the Church had been vacant for nearly 10 years. Acquired by the City Council, the church was deemed to be in very poor condition and was as a result gutted. However the large volume of the building has provided good exhibition space on 3 floors with a café in the original undercroft.

The museum has been successful in acting as a catalyst to further regeneration of the area. The decision to provide a second museum entrance on Adelphi Street and retain a link from this street to Shiprow saw the restoration of derelict early 19<sup>th</sup> century houses to low cost affordable housing. The new museum was awarded the RIAS 'Supreme Award' for regeneration in 1997 and currently attracts 90,000 visitors per year.



The former church's windows provide views over the harbour area from the exhibition space. Interior images copyright of Ken Taylor.



The volume of the church building has provided large exhibition spaces; at the uppermost floor the decorative ceiling has been preserved.



A new glazed intervention links the church building to the former Provost Ross's House, and clearly signals the museum's presence on Shiprow. Image copyright of Aberdeen City Council.

# CASE STUDY 4: St Andrew's in the Square, Glasgow

The former **St. Andrew's in the Square Church** was built between 1739-1756 to the designs of Allan Dreghorn. It is considered one of the six best neo-classical churches in the UK and is of similar design to that of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields in London (1722).

In 1993 the dwindling congregation approached the Glasgow Building Preservation Trust (GBPT) who acquired the building at their request. Set against the backdrop of preparations for the 'Glasgow 1999 UK City of Architecture', the announcement that the Trust was to proceed with the restoration of the former church gave confidence to others to embark on several ambitious projects. These included the redevelopment of the surrounding square and the 'Design Homes of the Future' project. As a result this important area of Glasgow's Merchant City has been consolidated and regenerated. The bold adaptation, designed by architects Nicholas Groves Raines, was constructed in two phases.

The first phase involved the creation of an extensive basement to the former church building. This 4-5 metre deep excavation provided space for a café bar /restaurant with ancillary accommodation which made the project commercially viable. The second phase, 10 months later, involved the restoration of the interior, including removal of all later Victorian additions, returning its original lightness and elegance. The project cost of just under £3.7 million was provided by a variety of public sources, the largest contributions from the Heritage Lottery Fund (40%) and Historic Scotland (27%). The building was completed on St Andrew's Day 2000.

The building remains in the ownership of the GBPT and is leased to the St Andrew's in the Square Trust who manage the facility as the city's Centre for Scottish Culture. A variety of events and classes are hosted including traditional music, song and dance. The main space is used for local and national performances, conferences and weddings.



This fine Georgian building is recognised to be of national importance.  
All images copyright Glasgow Building Preservation Trust.



The church building viewed from gallery level during the restoration works.



The main hall was returned to its original Georgian splendour. The ornate gilded plasterwork of the vaulted ceiling has been meticulously restored.

## CASE STUDY 5: Avertical Wall, Dundee

The former **St Mary Magdalene's Episcopal Church** in Blinshall Street was built in 1854 amongst the tenements and textile mills to serve as a mission for the district of Blackness. By 1908 it was the largest Episcopal Church congregation in Scotland. The building has been in secular use since the 1950s. Once an auction house, the former church is now put to use as Tayside's first dedicated indoor climbing centre.



## CASE STUDY 6: Dansarena, Ayr

Dansarena Studios was created in 1984 when Karen Mitchell and her husband Dennis Gage bought the former **Cathcart Church**, Ayr from the Church of Scotland. The Category B listed building was designed by David Hamilton and constructed in 1807-10. It has an imposing pedimented façade. It was converted to provide four dance studios with ancillary accommodation including a coffee shop. The academy provides a variety of dance and fitness classes.



The climbing walls are constructed within the tall volume of the original nave.

he space of the former church is well utilised: a new floor inserted at the gallery level has created the principal Arena Studio with the original pews retained to provide spectator seating. Copyright Dansarena Studios.

# CASE STUDIES: RESIDENTIAL USE

## CASE STUDY 1: Babylon, Scalloway, Shetland

The unlisted former **Congregational Church** at Braehead is sited behind the close network of lanes above the town's historic waterfront. The church building was purchased by Mike Skinner & Lorna Graham to convert to residential use. Work has been undertaken as time, and the weather, have permitted to create a very individual home full of colour and

atmosphere inside a very simple church exterior.

A memorial marble reused to decorate the bathroom.

# RESIDENT





AL USE

# CASE STUDY 2: The Cross/Oakshaw Conservation Area, Paisley

The Oakshaw district of Paisley forms part of the outstanding conservation area of The Cross/Oakshaw. This quiet enclave, just off the town's High Street, still reflects its medieval origins in its street pattern of narrow lanes. Its buildings are later; an eclectic mix of civic and ecclesiastical architecture set amongst traditional housing. This rich townscape includes nine churches as well as the Coats Observatory, the Paisley Museum & Art Gallery, library and the former John Neilston Institute.

Since 1987 the area has undergone phased redevelopment and enhancement. Funding from a variety of sources encouraged local developers to restore key listed buildings, securing their future. Of the nine churches, excepting the two which remain in religious use (Oakshaw Trinity Church & Coats Memorial Baptist Church), six have new uses (two as community facilities and four in residential use). The conversion of the former Oakshaw East United Reform Church is currently underway.

Two of the aims of the Oakshaw Improvement Scheme were to find alternate uses for redundant buildings and consolidate and increase the residential base of the area. The conversion of three churches, illustrated here, has contributed to this.

The former **Middle Church** was opened in 1781 to serve the growing population of Paisley due to its industrial expansion. This Category A listed church was internally divided in 1981 during its conversion to the Paisley Christian Social Action Centre, a resettlement residence for single homeless men. At that time £250,000 was paid in grants to restore the building envelope.

When the Centre relocated in 2002 the vacant church building and adjacent hall were added to the Buildings at Risk Register after being targeted by vandals and suffering slight fire damage. Following sale of the fine Classical style church in 2003, Oakshaw Developments successfully converted the building to 11 flats (with a further 10 flats in the hall) during the third phase of the area's redevelopment.

Further west, the Category B listed **Orr Square Church** was vacated in 1994 when the congregation joined with the Oakshaw Trinity Church. The building, in poor condition in 1995 with rot and water ingress, was purchased by Noah Design Developments Ltd. After a protracted planning application, which initially proposed substantial demolition, the church buildings were converted during 1997-8 to 21 apartments. The renovation received over £370,000 in subsidy from Renfrewshire Council, Renfrewshire Enterprise and Scottish Homes, representing a substantial percentage of the total cost. One of the most distinctive apartments, set in the tower, was recently remodelled by its new owners to create a stylish modern home.

On Oakshaw Street the former **Gaelic Church** was constructed in 1793. The Category B listed building underwent an early adaptation in 1909 when TG Abercrombie altered the church for school use. It was last used as an occupational therapy unit by Strathclyde Regional Council. Once they vacated, the building was subject to vandalism and recorded as at risk. In 1992 it was successfully converted to 6 distinctive split-level apartments.



A view of Church Hill illustrates the key role played by ecclesiastical architecture in the character of Oakshaw.



The elegant west elevation of the former Middle Church on Church Hill. The church last served as a place of worship in 1975.



New timber sash and case windows on the former Middle Church are well designed and appropriate to the period of the original church building.



Built in Romanesque revival style in 1845, the former Orr Square Church sits within a secluded forecourt behind Paisley's High Street.

Orr Square Church images copyright Jeremy Stockton.



The double height living space of the tower apartment in the former Orr Square Church. Little of the church interior was considered significant however, the light and space available within the structure has created desirable homes.

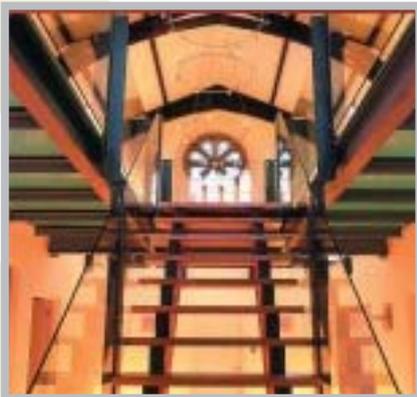


Simple classical 'box' style churches, such as the former Gaelic Church, have accommodated residential conversion well. Large 12 pane Georgian windows offer fine views and room settings.

# CASE STUDY 3: Cairns House, Stichill, Borders

The former **United Presbyterian Church** was last used for worship in 1938. Used as a grain and potato store, and latterly a stonemason's workshop, its inclusion in the Buildings at Risk Bulletin in 2000 generated several expressions of interest. However, the reuse of the former church building was complicated by the continued use, and separate ownership, of the adjoining church hall by the congregation after the church had been vacated. Their relocation led to the sale of both buildings to the current owners in 2001. The conversion project took two and a half years to complete.

The result is a beautifully detailed and individual modern family home reflective of the personal attention the owners gave to the project. Remaining original features are maximised by the detailing of modern interventions that extenuate their qualities. The setting out of the new upper floor level was critical to retaining the integrity of both the upper tracery window and arched main entrance on the main façade. The floor, whilst bisecting the original tall lancet windows of the side elevations, creates an appropriate proportion for the new windows. Cairns House, named after the last serving minister, was completed in 2006.



On entering Cairns House, there is an uninterrupted view of the stained glass rose window in the rear wall. Maximising the potential of the existing windows was a crucial factor in the design.



The sense of space of the main living area is extenuated by the original vaulted ceiling and timber beams.

All images copyright Brendan Macneill.



The new upper floor provides open plan kitchen, dining and living space. The opaque glass floor panels act as a light box when illuminated from below.

# CASE STUDY 4: Rhynd, Perthshire

Built in 1842 in the small village of Rhynd, near Perth, this Category B listed church was designed by architect William Mackenzie in Tudor Gothic style. The building had lain vacant for a number of years before The Church of Scotland put it up for sale in 2001. Bruce & Anne Bannerman purchased the building with a view to conversion and worked with cousin Calum MacCalman of Davis Duncan Architects to design a family home with an uncluttered interior. The project took almost 3 years to complete from purchase offer to moving in. However, this lengthy process has been outweighed by the owners' delight at the results. The former **Rhynd Parish Church** now provides a modern flexible living environment.

The building was split into two levels. The new upper level contains the living space in a semi open plan arrangement. The living room and kitchen/dining room sit either side of a stair which at the upper level is banked by functional walls. These walls, articulated as objects within the overall space, do not extend full height allowing the original arched ceiling to remain intact. The ground floor contains the sleeping accommodation with four bedrooms. Two of the bedrooms have large pivoting walls, which can be opened up to provide a larger open space at the entrance. The layout maximises the potential of the original church windows: tall windows with cills high of the ground. Now throughout the upper level the windows continue to floor level providing beautiful views across Rhynd and the adjacent farmland.



The largely unaltered 19<sup>th</sup> century exterior disguises the transformation of the interior of the former church to provide a modern flexible living environment.

Image courtesy of Davis Duncan Architects, copyright Andrew Lee.



The new upper level provides a semi open plan arrangement either side of a stair that is enclosed by functional walls; the living room wall contains an inset fire and concealed storage.

Image courtesy of Davis Duncan Architects, copyright Keith Hunter.



The original window openings played a key role in planning the conversion. New double glazed units improve the thermal value of the building whilst their low profile steel frame remains architecturally sympathetic.

Image courtesy of Davis Duncan Architects, copyright Andrew Lee.

# CASE STUDIES: MULTIPLE USE

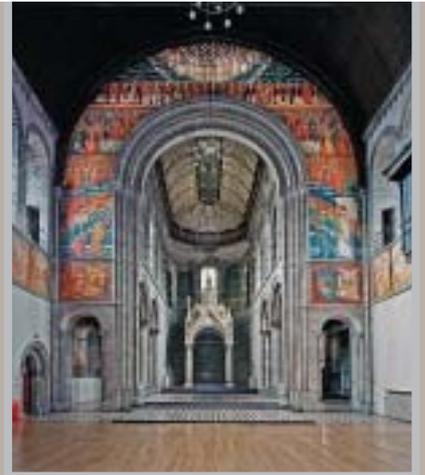
## CASE STUDY 1: Mansfield Traquair Centre, Edinburgh

The former **Mansfield Place Church** was the largest and most ambitious of architect Robert Rowand Anderson's churches, designed for the Catholic Apostolic Church in a limited competition in 1872. After the departure of the Catholic Apostolic congregation in 1958, the building was left to decay, finally being rescued in 1998 as a result of the united efforts of the charitable Mansfield Traquair Trust (MTT), the City of Edinburgh Council and Historic Scotland. The repair, restoration and alteration of the building (Simpson and Brown Architects) was completed in 2002. The restoration of the outstanding murals by artist Phoebe Anne Traquair was completed in 2005. The former church building is now the headquarters of the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations. An open-plan

office space with mezzanine gallery was created below the nave, linked to the entrance by a dramatic stair inserted below the baptistery. The main architectural spaces function as a venue for public events, corporate entertainment and private functions.

Phoebe Traquair decorated the interior of the church between 1893 and 1901. The decoration complemented not only the fabric of the building but also responded to the liturgy of the Catholic Apostolic Church with its services rich in symbolism. The restoration of the murals over 2 years provided unique work experience for mural conservators, interns and students of conservation and art. The colour and detail of the restored murals are spectacular.

# MULTIPLE





All images by Stewart Guthrie, copyright Mansfield Traquair Trust.

# USE

# MULTIPLE USE

## CASE STUDY 2: Adelaide's, Glasgow

The **Adelaide Place Baptist Church**, designed by Glasgow architect T L Watson, opened for worship in 1877; it is now the last remaining Baptist Church in the centre of Glasgow.

Depopulation of the city centre led to falling membership of the church, with costs to maintain the fabric constantly rising. By the late 1980s the church was in need of extensive repair with the prospect of closure a strong possibility.

The congregation chose to redevelop the church property to provide a financial income and in a manner that would match the needs of the people, who live, work and play in the city centre area. The Church formed a development company in 1991 and

finance was raised to meet the £1.2million project costs from church members, Historic Scotland (just over a third), Glasgow Development Agency and Glasgow District Council; a substantial bank loan was also secured. The building is now run by the limited company of behalf of the Church from whom the building is leased.

Reopened in 1995 the understated alterations to the original church and adjoining ancillary buildings has provided a multi-use city centre facility providing a flexible auditorium (concerts, rehearsals, conferences), 8 guest house rooms, a multi purpose room and nursery. The Church remains the owner of the building and holds weekly services.



The auditorium (which can seat up to 450 people) is a flexible space for lease. The seated gallery has been retained.



Adelaide's occupies a prominent corner site in the city centre of Glasgow.



The nursery is a key income component for the church and important resource for the community. Two basement halls were converted to provide facilities for babies and children in 3 separate rooms, with 2 external play areas.

Image copyright Adelaide's.

## CASE STUDY 3: Eric Liddell Centre, Edinburgh

Holy Corner, as it is locally known, derives its name from the presence of 4 churches, one on each corner of the crossroads at the start of Morningside Road. In 1980, the four congregations decided to form a shared Church Centre the purpose of which was to act on behalf of the four to provide services to all members of the community irrespective of age, circumstance or denomination. The **North Morningside Parish Church** became available when its congregation merged with that of the Morningside Congregational Church. In 1981 the Morningside Baptist Church, Christ Church Morningside and the Morningside United Church formed a charitable trust and purchased the former church building for £20,000. The new Church Centre became known as the Eric Liddell Centre.

In 1987 an architectural competition to design the centre was won by Nicholas Groves-Raines Architects with a dramatic intervention. The insertion creates additional floor space on five levels providing dramatic new views of the interior architecture of the former church. The centre accommodates a wide range of functions for community care, support, recreational activities and education. This includes a counselling service, café and bookshop, conference and meeting room facilities, rehearsal space, and offices accommodation for other charities. 25 years after its establishment there were, including the Centre's own projects, over 100 user groups serving approximately 2,000 users of all ages each week of the year. Nine other charities occupied office space.



Gallery access to offices and meeting spaces on the upper floors allows the opportunity to view the impressive collection of stained glass.



The new architecture provides dramatic contrasts to the original features of the church interior.



Consultancy spaces are created underneath the arches of the original church aisles.

## CASE STUDY 4: Glencairn Studio, Kilmaurs

The **Glencairn Church** at Kilmaurs was built in 1864 to the designs of Peddie & Kinnear. A vestry and hall were added in 1894. A church of the same design was built in neighbouring Galston. The building was developed over the next century with various additions. In the 1960s the congregation merged with another in the town and used their church for worship. The building was used as a church hall and split into two levels.

In 1991 the present owners (Paul Lucky and Susan Bradbury) purchased the building, converting the ground floor into a stained glass workshop, employing 7 people, and the upper floor, the original gallery level, into their residence. The hall and extensions were removed apart from the vestry, to bring it back (almost) to its original form. The ground floor affords a very flexible space for the needs of the workshop.



A major alteration was removal of the dilapidated hall and the insertion of a large window in therear wall to improve natural light, a very important requirement when working with stained glass.



The upper floor has been sensitively converted to create a unique residence.



Modern stained glass designed by the owners has replaced the former plain glass of the church and enhanced the living space. The cost of stained glass (£5 in 1864) had been too expensive for the congregation at the time of construction.

## CASE STUDY 5: Forgandakey, Fife

**Forgan Parish Kirk**, designed by David Bryce in 1841, was completed in 1843 replacing the earlier St Fillan's Church. The church closed for worship in 1975. Patricia Coelho, an Environmental Space Planner, and Dakers Fleming, a chartered architect, purchased the church building and are converting it into their home and studio.

The church building is cruciform in plan with galleries on three sides. The owners have taken great care to respect the original design of the building and to incorporate all of its ecclesiastical

features in the design of their conversion. The central nave remains open and their studio is located in the main gallery. Bedroom suites are inserted into both of the side galleries and other accommodation has been located under the galleries. Considered planning, and internal glazed screens have ensured that daylight penetrates throughout the building. The result is a comfortable home within the original church. Externally the building constructed of coursed whinstone rubble with sandstone details, has been repaired and restored.



Externally the former Forgan Parish Church remains as originally designed with semi-circular arched windows and doors and its distinctive bellcote.



This interior view shows how the pulpit has been integrated into the design of the library and the central living space. Both images copyright Fleming and Coelho.

# NEW USES FOR OTHER ALTERNATIVES FORMER CHURCH BUILDINGS

**SOMETIMES CONVERSION OF A FORMER CHURCH TO SECULAR USE, IN FULL OR PART, MAY NOT BE POSSIBLE OR APPROPRIATE.**

## Restored monuments

The architectural or cultural significance of a building may be such that preservation is a priority. The Scottish Redundant Churches Trust was established in 1996. Its aim is to secure the survival of outstanding churches by conserving them primarily as 'historic monuments', a use in itself. The restoration of St Peter's Kirk, Orkney was their first 'flagship' project. The significance and well-preserved interior of this early 19<sup>th</sup> century Presbyterian Church had been recognised to be of national importance. The church is now open to visitors and holds occasional services and other cultural events.

In other instances, derelict structures may be preserved as consolidated ruins such as the Kildalton Chapel on Islay and the 19<sup>th</sup> century Blairdaff Church in Aberdeenshire.

## Partial use

Not all church buildings can be rescued and reused. The building fabric may be beyond viable repair. Such circumstances arise due to a number of factors. Often there is deterioration of the building fabric through a lack of maintenance, or through vandalism and fire damage, especially once a building is vacant.

Several projects have been carried out which retain only part of the original building. In Aberdeen the finely tooled granite façade of the former Trinity United Free Church is now the 'face' of The Foyer restaurant and gallery, the financial arm of this charitable organisation. The remainder of the former church, in a dangerous condition, was demolished

and the site redeveloped, but the original planning was amended to retain the elevation which forms a distinctive part of the streetscape. In Glasgow, the landmark spire of the former Townhead Blochairn Parish Church at Royston was given a last minute reprieve after the remainder of the church had been demolished.

## Demolition and rebuild

The financial value of the redeveloped site, the condition of the building, or needs of the surrounding area, may dictate the future of the certain church buildings and make demolition the chosen solution. However, demolition should always be the last option, and only be undertaken after all other avenues have been exhausted.

In these circumstances the use of the site and replacement buildings will be a key planning consideration. In the past, decisions to replace church buildings with new structures of the same form or volume was a response to an understandable desire to provide a 'memory' of the building to be lost. Examples can be seen at Eyre Crescent and off London Road in Edinburgh. This approach now appears unduly limited. A new development need not relate to the previous building, but should address its current context and needs of the locality. It should be assessed for its contribution to the cultural sustainability of the area.

A local pressure group formed and was successful in securing funding to restore the spire of the former **Townhead Blochairn Parish Church** with the aid of the Glasgow Building Preservation Trust. Now the floodlit spire is the focal point of a new community park and symbolic of the regeneration of the area.

Main image copyright Glasgow Building Preservation Trust.



## DEMOLITION & RE-DEVELOPMENT Duke Street, Leith, Edinburgh

**SCOTTISH CHURCHES HOUSING ACTION**, A CHURCH-OWNED CHARITY, HAS A VISION THAT THERE CAN BE A SCOTLAND FREE OF HOMELESSNESS.

One way it mobilises churches to reduce homelessness is the Churches Property & Housing Programme, encouraging Affordable Homes from Surplus Church Property. An example is the **United Reformed Church** in Duke Street, Leith.

Founded in 1829, the 450 seat Victorian church was built in 1847. In 1997 maintenance costs were becoming prohibitive and the building was not meeting the congregation's needs. A feasibility study revealed around £250,000 was needed for immediate repairs and maintenance. The congregation did not have these funds. They also questioned the morality of this cost given local social needs and, while demolition was not taken lightly, decided to develop a new church centre incorporating affordable housing. Historic Scotland advised that, apart from the stained glass windows, the building was of insufficient architectural merit to warrant listing.

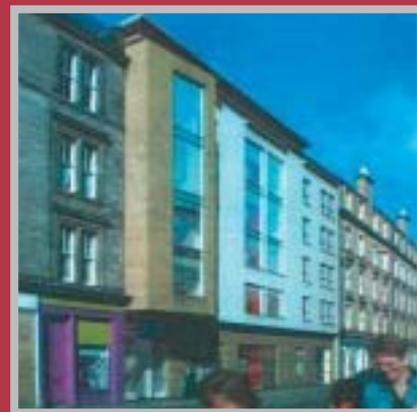
The development will open in March 2007 and includes a new church centre, twenty-two 2 and 3 bed-roomed flats for affordable rent and 4 workshops. Port of Leith Housing Association bought and is

developing the site and the congregation will buy back its new church.

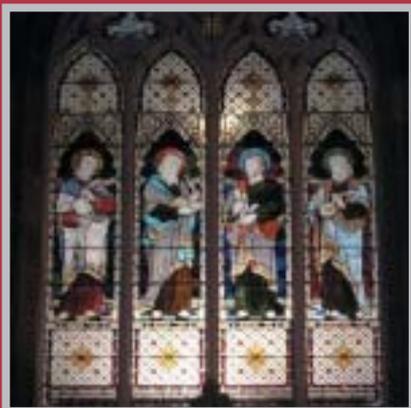
The images below illustrate that new architecture can make a positive contribution in some cases where the former church building presents a major problem for congregations, no longer fulfils a useful role nor maximises the potential of the location or site.



The former church building on Duke Street, now demolished.



An artist's impression of the new building that includes 22 flats, workshops and a new church centre.



The stained glass windows have been carefully removed and will form mobile screens in the new church centre.

All images copyright Scottish Churches Housing Action.



# NEW USES FOR CONCLUSIONS FORMER CHURCH BUILDINGS

THIS PUBLICATION, **NEW USES FOR FORMER CHURCH BUILDINGS**, HAS YIELDED ONE IMPORTANT FACT – WE IN SCOTLAND ARE CAPABLE OF **CREATIVELY ADAPTING** SUCH STRUCTURES TO ACCOMMODATE A WIDE VARIETY OF **NEW ACTIVITIES**.

The execution of such changes of use range from the brilliant and sensitive to the crass and objectionable! However, all show ingenuity in solving a common problem - that is, redundancy.

## Churches at risk

Nevertheless, the problem of buildings falling out of ecclesiastical use persists, clearly signalling that the issue of redundant churches remains to be addressed. The Buildings at Risk Register, operated by the Trust, clearly reflects this with 314 churches being included on the register since its inception in 1990. However, a good proportion of these have found a new life, so it is important to appreciate that the loss of the original use does not spell doom and gloom for a former church. Indeed, the lesson is that opportunities can fall from difficult

circumstances if enough time and energy is put into finding a solution. Today's crumbling eyesore can indeed be tomorrow's new house, restaurant, office or theatre.

## Avoid vacancy - Manage redundancy

When a church becomes surplus to its congregation's needs, securing an appropriate new use (ecclesiastical or otherwise) should be a priority. The earlier this can be determined, the better. Once a building is vacant, physical deterioration can be rapid. Damage to a building's fabric can be exasperated by failure to carry out regular maintenance inspections and undertake repair, or through vandalism and theft. As such, a maintenance strategy for an empty or under-used building should be put in place as an early action.

## Maintain building fabric - maximise value

In addition, further action is required to encourage timely and effective maintenance of the physical fabric of church buildings. All too often, expensive repair work is cited as the reason for abandoning a church as a place of worship. This may also lead to the potential loss of the structure itself. Ultimately the value of the asset in monetary, as well as architectural terms, will decline: representing a 'lose-lose' situation.

## A worthwhile challenge

In considering the challenge of changing use, the importance and qualities of the original building must be recognised and valued. In some adaptations, the standards of design, and the quality of materials and skills employed have fallen short. Yet it is clear that in most cases we have the ability to reuse these structures, adding value socially, economically and environmentally to the places in which they sit. As such, we must strive to improve the quality of conversion of all church buildings.

As this publication has noted, a church building that is no longer in ecclesiastical use remains an important part of our architectural and historic heritage. In many instances, the benefits, which have resulted from the reuse of a redundant church building, have far outweighed any difficulties that the original challenge presented. By sustaining their use, we continue to support the cultural and creative ideals that produced them in the first place - historic building conservation and cultural sustainability go hand-in-hand.



The former Clune Park Church of Scotland, Port Glasgow, has been on the Buildings At Risk Register since 1997 after its congregation merged with the neighbouring church of St Andrews.

It must also be noted that the majority of church buildings in Scotland retain their original function as places of worship. Congregations and church organisations should be encouraged and assisted to remain in their buildings, especially when the building is of particular social, architectural or historic merit.

As illustrated above in Aberdeen, local school children have pointed out that a 'chuch' can still be used as a church!

## BUILDINGS AT RISK REGISTER



The Buildings at Risk Service has operated for 16 years. It was established and is maintained by the Trust on behalf of Historic Scotland who recognised a need to address the decline of many of our listed buildings across Scotland.

Resulting from this, a computerised database now contains illustrated details of over 1000 properties considered to be at risk throughout Scotland. The primary function of the Service is to raise awareness as to the existence of such buildings. However the Service also acts as a catalyst in marrying up potential restorers with suitable available properties.

For those wishing further details about the buildings at risk service or about a specific property our website provides a comprehensive and informative source of information.

For further information please visit [www.buildingsatrisk.org.uk](http://www.buildingsatrisk.org.uk)

## STATISTICS

### Total number of Buildings at Risk 1014

Total number of A-listed	108	10.6%
Total number of B-listed	531	52.4%
Total number of C (S) listed	196	19.3%
Total unlisted	179	17.7%

### Total number of churches at risk 117

% of churches at risk to overall total number of buildings at risk 11.5%

Total number of A-listed	11	9.4%
Total number of B-listed	72	61.5%
Total number of C (S) listed	18	15.4%
Total unlisted	16	13.7%

### Classification of Condition

Ruinous	9
Very poor	7
Poor	42
Fair	52
Good	7

### Location

Remote	0
Rural	58
Semi-rural	6
Urban	53

### Saved/Demolished

Total number of buildings at risk saved since 1990	918
Total number of churches at risk saved	85

Total number of buildings at risk demolished since 1990	274
Total number of churches at risk demolished	36

Total number of churches at risk where restoration is currently in progress	8
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Note: These figures only relate to buildings on the Buildings at Risk Register (November 2006). Many more churches have found new uses and their details are not entered on the database. Likewise we are often not aware of the demolition of a church before it can be added to the Register.

## SCOTTISH CIVIC TRUST

The Scottish Civic Trust was founded in 1967 to improve the quality of Scotland's built environment and to work with Scottish people and communities towards that goal. Simply stated, the Trust aims to involve people, promote respect and understanding and pursue technical excellence in all aspects of Scotland's built environment. The Trust achieves these aims by:

- Promoting initiatives which inform and educate people on environmental issues
- Contributing positively on planning matters
- Encouraging the highest quality in new architecture
- Supporting the conservation and reuse of historic buildings
- Working to improve Scotland's townscapes.

The Scottish Civic Trust is a registered charity. Much of its work is unique, and whilst it works closely with others, no other body lobbies so effectively over such a broad spectrum. It is our belief that old and new fit together, and need to be mutually respected and valued. To find out more, please contact: [sct@scottishcivictrust.org.uk](mailto:sct@scottishcivictrust.org.uk) or visit [www.scottishcivictrust.org.uk](http://www.scottishcivictrust.org.uk)



## RELATED ORGANISATIONS & USEFUL LINKS

**Association of Building Preservation Trusts** - [www.ukapt.org.uk](http://www.ukapt.org.uk)

**Heritage Lottery Fund** 28 Thistle Street, Edinburgh EH2 1EN; [www.hlf.org.uk](http://www.hlf.org.uk)

**Historic Scotland** – Longmore House, Salisbury Place, Edinburgh EH9 1SH; [www.historic-scotland.gov.uk](http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk)

**National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts Societies (NADFAS) Church Recorders** – [www.nadfas.org.uk](http://www.nadfas.org.uk)

**Scottish Church Heritage Research** –12 Wardlaw Gardens, St Andrews, Fife KY16 9DW [www.scottishchurchheritage.org.uk](http://www.scottishchurchheritage.org.uk)

**Scotland's Churches Scheme** - Dunedin, Holehouse Road, Eaglesham, Glasgow G76 0FJ [www.churchesinscotland.co.uk](http://www.churchesinscotland.co.uk)

**The Church Buildings Renewal Trust** – Glasgow City Council, Development & Regeneration Services, 229 George Street, Glasgow G1 1QU.

**The Dictionary of Scottish Architects 1840-1940** - [www.scottisharchitects.org.uk](http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk)

**The Royal Commission on the Ancient & Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS)**, John Sinclair House, 16 Bernard Terrace, Edinburgh EH8 9NX; [www.rcahms.gov.uk](http://www.rcahms.gov.uk)

**The Scottish Redundant Churches Trust** - 4 Queen's Gardens, St Andrews, Fife KY16 9TA; [www.srct.org.uk](http://www.srct.org.uk)

## CONTRIBUTORS' WEBSITES

**Aberdeen Maritime Museum** - [www.aagm.co.uk](http://www.aagm.co.uk)

**Adelaides** - [www.adelaides.co.uk](http://www.adelaides.co.uk)

**Auld Kirk Museum** - [www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk](http://www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk)

**Avertical World** - [www.averticalworld.co.uk](http://www.averticalworld.co.uk)

**Barony Hall & Ramshorn Theatre** - [www.strath.ac.uk](http://www.strath.ac.uk)

**Brendan Macneill** - [www.macneill.co.uk](http://www.macneill.co.uk)

**Charles Taylor Cabinetmakers** - [www.ctww.co.uk](http://www.ctww.co.uk)

**Dansarena** - [www.dansarena.com](http://www.dansarena.com)

**Davis Duncan Architects** - [www.DavisDuncan.co.uk](http://www.DavisDuncan.co.uk)

**Eric Liddell Centre** - [www.eric-liddell.org](http://www.eric-liddell.org)

**Forgandakey** (Partners in Planning Architecture Design) - [www.ppad.co.uk](http://www.ppad.co.uk)

**Fortheringay Centre** - [www.hutchesons.org](http://www.hutchesons.org)

**Glasgow Building Preservation Trust** - [www.gbpt.org](http://www.gbpt.org)

**Hugh Martin Partnership** - [www.hughmartinpartnership.com](http://www.hughmartinpartnership.com)

**Kilmorack Gallery** - [www.kilmorackgallery.co.uk](http://www.kilmorackgallery.co.uk)

**Leith School of Art** - [www.leithschoolofart.co.uk](http://www.leithschoolofart.co.uk)

**Lyon & Turnbull** - [www.lyonandturnbull.com](http://www.lyonandturnbull.com)

**Mansfield Traquair** - [www.mansfieldtraquair.org.uk](http://www.mansfieldtraquair.org.uk)

**National e Science Centre** - [www.nesc.ac.uk](http://www.nesc.ac.uk)

**OranMor**- [www.oran-mor.co.uk](http://www.oran-mor.co.uk)

**St Andrew's in the Square** - [www.standrewsinthesquare.com](http://www.standrewsinthesquare.com)

**Scottish Churches Housing Action** - [www.churches-housing.org](http://www.churches-housing.org)

**The Foyer** - [www.aberdeenfoyer.com](http://www.aberdeenfoyer.com)

**The Hub, Edinburgh International Festival HQ** - [www.thehub-edinburgh.com](http://www.thehub-edinburgh.com)

**Ullapool Museum** - [www.ullapoolmuseum.co.uk](http://www.ullapoolmuseum.co.uk)



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