

# Lochend and New Abbey Church

## Parish Profile



### Summary

Lochend and New Abbey is an historic parish with a friendly and vibrant congregation, which is economically viable and in a beautiful setting. The elders and members of the congregation are active through the organisation of various events, and building renovations have recently been carried out. All of this promotes our worship, outreach to the wider community and sense of fellowship.

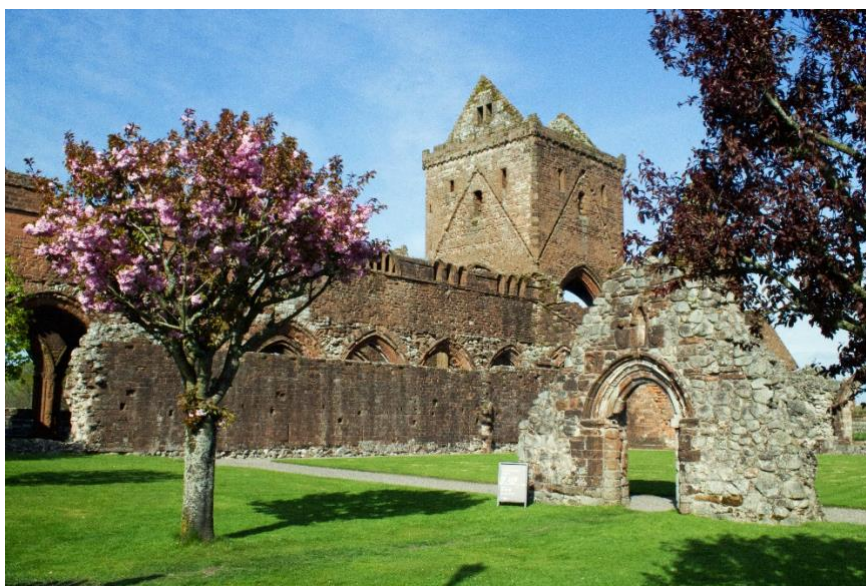
## Introduction

Lochend and New Abbey Church has been granted permission to call another minister on a 50% basis, following the retirement of Rev. Maureen Duncan who has been our minister for the last four years on the same terms. The congregation currently helps to organise music, worship and pastoral care.



We are seeking a minister who will help us continue to grow as one Church family; who can inspire and lead us to make the best use of our talents; who can help our Church family face the challenges of the future with creativity.

Lochend and New Abbey Church is in the picturesque village of New Abbey, Dumfries & Galloway. The old part of the village is a conservation area, one of 36 conservation areas in this beautiful region of South West Scotland. New Abbey is an important visitor and tourist destination with the ruins of our 13<sup>th</sup> century Cistercian



Sweetheart Abbey forming a beautiful focal point for the village.

At Lochend, the Beeswing Memorial Village Hall is used by our church for occasional services.

## History



There has been Christian worship in this area for almost one thousand years. The early church in New Abbey parish was on an island in Loch Kindar and in 1273 Sweetheart Abbey was founded by Lady Devorgilla in memory of her husband, John Baliol. By the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century the parish church was meeting in the old refectory of Sweetheart Abbey and Patrick Coul became the first Reader. In 1731 a new parish church was built against the ruined wall of the Abbey on the edge of what had been the Cloister Green. This church was dismantled in 1877 when the present New Abbey Church was built. In 1930 New Abbey United Free Church joined with the Parish Church and members in the Beeswing area joined Lochend Church.

New Abbey and Lochend churches were linked in 1952, and in 2006 they formed a union known as Lochend and New Abbey Church. The church at Beeswing was closed and subsequently sold. There are 195 members on our Communion Roll.

Our Church is administered in accordance with the terms of the Deed of Constitution (Unitary Form).

We have welcomed 16 new members since September 2016. Between 35 to 40 people regularly worship each week, with quite a broad age profile, ranging from early 20s to over 90s. Our congregation is drawn from a much wider area than just

the parish. This friendly group of people gather together each Sunday and are uplifted by fellowship, support and interaction.

Five new elders were inducted in March 2018, bringing our total of elders on the Kirk Session up to 19 (8 men and 11 women) ranging in age from 50 to over 90 years.

Sub-committees include the Worship Group, Fabric Group, Outreach & Mission Group.

Our Guild of 11 members meets once a month from September to March hosting speakers who complement the Guild 3-year strategy, and the current year's theme and discussion topic. Two of the meetings in the year are open and are held in the village hall.

The current headteacher of New Abbey Primary School is keen to maintain links with the church and make use of the church for concerts and other events. The pupils are always very enthusiastic when invited to decorate the "School" Christmas tree in the church. Our locum minister liaises with the head teacher to arrange regular visits and to take school Assemblies.

### **Community Profile**



Our parish is rural, and many of the congregation live in the unspoilt countryside or by the coast. The farms belong to families who have lived and worked here for generations. There are several forests and woods which can be accessed for walking. There are two beautiful lochs in the parish, Loch Arthur and Loch Kindar, nestled at the foot of Criffel, which is stocked with trout.

The village of New Abbey has a primary school, a village shop, tearoom, hotel and a village hall. We have an excellent, and much envied, GP Practice, Shebburn Surgery, a dispensing practice.

The village hall is next to the bowling green, both of which are used regularly. As well as the bowling club, New Abbey village hall is the meeting place for many clubs and organisations, A variety of businesses thrive in the parish. New Abbey village has a Facebook page which has been set up by a member of the Community Council and aims to foster community spirit.



In 2018, the villagers of New Abbey were once again honoured to win the Small Village award in the annual Nithsdale Village in Bloom competition.

The small village of Beeswing, formerly known as Lochend, is about 6 miles from New Abbey and lies on either side of the A711. The Loch Arthur Camphill Community is in Beeswing. This community provides supportive homes and meaningful work for about 26 adults with special needs. It has a farm, a large garden, a creamery, a bakery and craft workshops as well as a thriving farm shop and cafe.

Our parish lies 7 miles south of the town of Dumfries, known as the Queen of the South. It has 4 secondary schools, a university, an excellent modern hospital, supermarkets and High Street shops, Scotland's oldest theatre, a cinema, a museum with an Observatory, an art gallery and libraries with an Archive Centre. Robert Burns lived, worked and is buried in Dumfries, J M Barrie got his inspiration for Peter Pan while playing in the Garden of Moat Brae house, which is now a centre for children's literacy, and in 1306, Robert the Bruce murdered the Red Comyn in the old Greyfriars Monastery in the town.



We are less than 5 miles from the nearest beach and only 3 miles from Mabie Forest where there are walking and cycling routes. This is a tourist destination with many attractions and leisure facilities within easy reach.

Glasgow, Edinburgh and Carlisle are all within a couple of hours drive, but there are also bus and train links.

## **Worship Life**

Services of worship are held every Sunday in New Abbey Church and occasional services are held in the Memorial Hall in Beeswing. There are no services in New Abbey church on those Sundays. Our services include readings delivered by church members. Our Worship Group takes part in the worship every Sunday, leading prayers or delivering the contemporary address. They also plan and deliver the Advent and Lent midweek services.

On Maundy Thursday each year we have a supper to which people bring their own food and a little extra. We share our meal, have a short service of worship and communion. Our Good Friday worship is a time of meditation with prayers, hymns and readings.

Our Projection team makes sure that announcements and hymns, mainly from CH4, are available on screen on Sunday mornings and members of the team operate the system. There are also printed hymn sheets for those who prefer to use them.

We are lucky to have a fine organist who enjoys playing our new digital organ, a 2 manual and pedal organ, manufactured by Eminent UK. This uses the latest harmonic voicing system developed by Eminent. Our sound system was upgraded in 2018 and an induction loop installed.

Since December 2012, 11 children have been baptised in Lochend and New Abbey Church and there have been 18 weddings.

## **Pastoral Care**

Pastoral care is a very important part of our ministry. As our parish is very much a community, we are aware of our neighbours' needs, and are encouraged to inform our minister of any Pastoral care issues. Support is offered by congregation members, our Elders and our Minister, who all share in visiting the sick and vulnerable in our community at home or in hospital. Members of the congregation, who are 80 years old or more, are sent a birthday card each year from the church. Over the past 5 years our minister has conducted 29 funerals.



## **Christian Education**

Though our Young Church do not meet during morning services, each year we have about 15 -20 children, under the age of 12, who attend our Holiday Clubs in the summer, and our Christmas Club in December. Our Young Church leaders' team strive to make these sessions exciting and welcoming, whilst delivering the message of God's love.

For adults, we run occasional Bible study sessions, usually themed. These are well attended, including Christians from other denominations and churches, who live within our parish.



## **Ecumenical Context**



Unusually for a small village, New Abbey has a small Catholic Church. Although there are no longer regular Sunday services held in it, its congregation comes together with our congregation to provide four evening services during Advent. Two are held in our church and are led by our Worship Group. The other two are held in St Mary's Catholic Church and are led by the members of its congregation.

## **The Wider Church**

Our congregation supports Christian Aid, by donating part of the proceeds of our annual Garden Safari. We run a plant stall at the local Christian Aid coffee morning, and we also support them with extra donations in times of crisis. One of our congregation is a representative on the local Christian Aid committee.

We have recently formed a partnership with Gary Brough, who is supporting the work of Livingstonia Synod's Church and Society Programme as Communications and Resource Mobilisation Manager in Malawi.

An ongoing collection of used stamps goes to the World Mission Stamp Appeal.

We have a regular food bank collection in church, which is delivered to First Base in Dumfries, who organise emergency food parcels for needy local residents.

## Stewardship and Finance

In 2013 we participated in the National Stewardship Campaign with time, money and talent being the three aspects explored. This was hugely successful as the following summary of regular giving over the past five years, clearly illustrates.

<b>LOCHEND &amp; NEW ABBEY CHURCH REGULAR GIVING</b>							
	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>CHANGE since 2013</b>
<b>WFO</b>	<b>£2,180</b>	<b>£2,170</b>	<b>£1,830</b>	<b>£350</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>-100%</b>
<b>OPEN PLATE</b>	<b>£3,400</b>	<b>£5,740</b>	<b>£5,510</b>	<b>£6,610</b>	<b>£6,330</b>	<b>£7830</b>	<b>+130%</b>
<b>STANDING ORDERS</b>	<b>£5,490</b>	<b>£8,690</b>	<b>£14,200</b>	<b>£15,210</b>	<b>£17,510</b>	<b>£18,620</b>	<b>+239%</b>
<b>OTHERS</b>	<b>£1,610</b>	<b>£1,500</b>	<b>£1,540</b>	<b>£1,470</b>	<b>£1.050</b>	<b>£400</b>	<b>-98%</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£12,680</b>	<b>£18,100</b>	<b>£23,080</b>	<b>£23,640</b>	<b>£24,890</b>	<b>£26,850</b>	<b>+112%</b>

A full summary of the 2018 finances are available on our website.

Although we are not presently participating in the Stewardship Campaign our church is constantly thinking about its commitment to outreach and mission, not just in the parish, but in the region and beyond. Our outreach group work closely to involve the



community in the life and work of the church. Every year since 2001, the church has organised a New Abbey Village Garden Safari with the proceeds going to the church and Christian Aid. The Garden Safari has become an event which the whole village embraces and, in 2018, thirty villagers opened their gardens to support the church and the community. A plant stall and teas are provided in the village hall.

In early summer our annual “Going for Gold” fun and games afternoon attracts young and old in fierce competition for a gold medal. A picnic is shared and enjoyed by all on the church lawn.





During Advent and Christmas, the church in New Abbey is adorned with Christmas trees. Each tree is decorated by a local organisation, business or club and the school. We open the church to allow viewing of the trees and enjoy a refreshment and a mince pie. One of the trees is decorated by St Mary's Catholic Church in the village.



### **Staffing**

The church building is well looked after by our Church Officer and Beadle who make it a welcoming place each Sunday.

There is no employed secretarial staff to support the minister, but the Session Clerk and members of the congregation contribute. One member has taken responsibility for our quarterly church newsletter. It is distributed to every household and business in the parish by a willing team of 14 volunteers, who are not all members of the congregation.

### **Properties**

Lochend and New Abbey Church has two properties under its ownership, namely the church building and the manse. Our Fabric Convenor and committee are a dedicated team who make sure that the buildings are well maintained and up to standard. Over recent years we have benefitted from a refurbishment in the church. This has enhanced the building by including facilities for the disabled and a kitchen allowing us to serve refreshments after our Sunday services as well as at other times when the church is in use. The front pews of the church were removed and replaced with chairs, making the church a much more versatile facility. This work has not only ensured that we are complying with the law but has also helped promote our efforts in respect of outreach and fellowship.

Both the local primary school and the Community Council use the church as a concert venue. On occasions where a larger space is required for church events the local village hall can be hired for a small fee.

## The Manse

The manse is located in the village looking across to the church. It is set back from the main street and looks onto the beautiful Sweetheart Abbey to the rear. It was built in the early sixties and underwent significant refurbishment in 2012. With oil central heating and double glazing throughout it has two reception rooms, a large kitchen diner, three bedrooms and a study. It has been well maintained and is in excellent condition.

