

PRESBYTERY OF CLYDE · CONGREGATIONAL SUPPORT COMMITTEE

Congregational Action Plan

Information Session for Ministers, Session Clerks and Kirk Session Representatives

A two-hour gathering · Planning cycle 2027 to 2031

Why We Are Doing This



It is required

Act VIII 2021 (as amended) requires every charge to have a five-year Action Plan.



It sits under the Mission Plan

Your Action Plan must be consistent with the approved Presbytery Mission Plan.



The Kirk Session owns it

The Kirk Session prepares, approves and submits the plan.



It turns us back to mission

The focus moves from structures and administration to God's mission in your parish.



It starts a rhythm

Plans are reviewed every year and re-evaluated every five. This is not a one-off exercise.

What the Action Plan Covers

Five mission areas



Worship and Teaching



Pastoral Care and Fellowship



Youth and Children



Local Mission and Community Outreach



Wider Mission: ecumenism, interfaith, World Church

Four cross-cutting areas



Finance



Communications



Property



HR / Staffing

These four straddle every mission area. Almost no outcome lives in one place.

Plus a vision for your congregation's mission over the next five years, and honest reflection on resources and challenges.

WALKING ALONGSIDE YOU

The Committee's Role



Guidance

We provide the three documents and answer questions as you work: the Template, the Completion Guide and the Vision Guide.



Comment on drafts

We give written comments on every draft plan submitted by 30 November 2026, returned within six weeks.



Facilitators

Named Congregational Facilitators walk with each Kirk Session through the months ahead. You will meet yours today.

Talk to us at any point. Do not wait until something has stalled.

Completing the Action Plan

The structure, a worked example, and the questions each Kirk Session will need to answer.

What Kind of Plan Is It?



High-level and five years long

It sets direction. It does not record every detail.



Grown from your Vivid Vision Day

It reflects the hopes, priorities and direction discerned there, whether that day has happened or is still ahead.



Old and new together

It can include work already happening, work that needs reviewed, and new steps you hope to take.



Short and clear

Use bullet points. The people responsible for each area develop the detail later.

What's in the Template?

Page 1

Your congregation

Your name and three factual questions: has a union taken place, is your ministry allocation in place, are listed buildings sold. Write “not applicable” where needed.

Pages 2–6

Five mission areas

One page for each area of congregational life. Every page follows the same pattern.

Page 7

The joined-up picture

Gathers the finance, communications, property and staffing points from every earlier page.

Page 8

Specific projects

A desired outcome in one of the four resource areas. Copy the page if you need more than one.

Boxes in the Word template expand as you type. You will not run out of space.

The Pattern for Each Mission Area



Learn the pattern once. Use it on every page.

COMPLETING THE ACTION PLAN

Writing a Desired Outcome

AN ACTIVITY

“Run pastoral-care training.”



A DESIRED OUTCOME

“We hope to strengthen relationships across the congregation so that people feel known, supported and able to care for one another.”

A useful way to begin: *“We hope to strengthen or develop [something], so that [something changes].”*



TALK TOGETHER

What is one change you hope to see in your congregation over the next five years?

If your Vivid Vision Day is still ahead, note areas that may need attention now. Revisit them after the day so the final plan reflects what the congregation discerned.

Turning the Outcome into Action

Year 1

- Listen and research.
- Review existing work.
- Take one realistic first step.

Year 2

- Build on what Year 1 taught you.
- Extend what worked.
- Adjust what did not.

Years 3–5

- Describe the longer-term development you hope will follow.
- Stay directional. Detail can wait.

Give each action its own bullet point. Planning nothing new in a year is fine while you wait for people, decisions or resources.



Talk together:

what could be one realistic Year 1 action for pastoral care?

What Will Progress Look Like?



What might we see happening?



What might people experience differently?



What could we count or record?



What feedback could we gather?

PASTORAL CARE EXAMPLE

Signs of progress

- Contact happens consistently.
- Requests for support get a timely response.
- Volunteers feel trained and confident.
- People say they feel known and supported.

Mix things you can count with changes people describe in their own words.

Responsibility, Resources and Challenges



Governance

The Kirk Session keeps oversight. It may delegate to a committee or working group. Note roles for the minister, safeguarding coordinator or health and safety coordinator.



Cross-cutting areas

Tick finance, communications, property or staffing where the work touches them. Describe briefly what you will need: people, skills, money, buildings, equipment, Presbytery support.



Challenges: the honesty box

What might limit or delay the work? Where are you already stretched? What depends on a decision, appointment or resource not yet in place? Naming it helps Presbytery help you.



Status

Mark each action Not Started, In Progress or Complete. You update this at every annual review.

Bringing the Sections Together

PAGES 2–6

Worship and Teaching

Pastoral Care and Fellowship

Youth and Children

Local Mission and Outreach

Wider Mission



PAGE 7

One joined-up picture

- Carries every finance, communications, property and staffing point onto one page.
- Shows where different plans depend on the same people, money or buildings.
- Helps the Session judge whether the whole plan is achievable.

Page 8: use it for a stand-alone project in finance, communications, property or staffing. Copy the page for each extra project.

What Happens Next?

For each mission area

- ✓ Begin with the desired outcome.
- ✓ Identify realistic actions across the five years.
- ✓ Describe the signs of progress.
- ✓ Name who takes responsibility.
- ✓ Consider resources and challenges.
- ✓ Record the current status.

Practical points

- Share the drafting. Different people can prepare sections.
- Appoint one person to bring the material together.
- Check the full draft against your Vivid Vision Day. If the day is still ahead, keep the draft open for review.
- Submit to Presbytery for feedback and support, adjust, then formally adopt.

*Aim for a plan that is clear, honest and achievable,
rooted in your calling and open to where God leads.*

God's Mission, Not Ours

“The Church does not have a mission. God has a mission, and the Church is invited to share in it.”

- The first question is not “What should we do?” It is “Where is God already at work?”
- Vision is received before it is built. Listen first, then plan.
- Plans are faithful responses, not corporate targets. An honest plan beats a polished plan.
- The community, those who have drifted away, and the Spirit all have things to say.

Discerning the Vision, Building the Plan

1

Preparation

The Session commits, prays, agrees the timeline and decides who to hear from.

1–2 weeks

2

Listening widely

Three streams: congregation, those who have drifted, and the community.

3–4 weeks

3

Discerning the vision

Gather what was heard, find the themes, draft the five-year vision.

1–2 weeks

4

Building the plan

Work through each Action Plan area with the same five questions.

2–3 weeks

5

Draft, test, submit

Share with the congregation, revise, approve, submit.

1–2 weeks

Roughly eight to thirteen weeks in total. A guide, not a prescription. Slow down where you need to.

Three Voices, Three Streams



The gathered congregation

An adapted Vivid Vision session, open to everyone. Personal invitations to occasional attenders, not just the regulars.



Those who have drifted away

Five to ten one-to-one conversations over coffee. A learning exercise, not a recruitment one. Listen. Do not defend.



Voices from the community

Headteachers, group leaders, councillors, neighbours. Twenty focused minutes each. Ask what the community needs.

The Action Plan will only be as good as the listening behind it.

Meet Your Congregational Facilitators

A Facilitator is

- Available to your Kirk Session by phone, email or in person.
- Willing to attend a Session meeting, especially at the start.
- On hand to help you plan who to listen to and how.
- An outside view on your draft vision and draft plan.
- Your route to Committee and Presbytery support.

A Facilitator is not

- A writer. The Action Plan belongs to the Kirk Session.
- An inspector. They walk alongside you, not over you.
- A substitute for the minister or Session Clerk. Leadership of this work stays where it belongs.

The Timeline

June 2026	Template approved. Kirk Sessions encouraged to begin considering their Action Plan.
Aug–Sep 2026	Information sessions and guidance on vision building.
Sep–Nov 2026	Kirk Sessions discern and complete a draft Action Plan.
By 30 Nov 2026	Draft plans submitted. Comments returned within six weeks.
Jan–Feb 2027	Final adjustments. Formal adoption by the Kirk Session.
14 Feb 2027	Action Plan submitted to Presbytery in the Attestation Process.
March 2027	Committee reports to Presbytery on submission of Action Plans.

The two dates in dark blue are your deadlines.

YOU ARE NOT DOING THIS ALONE

Support Available, and What Follows

Support from the Committee

- Your named Congregational Facilitator, throughout.
- Written comments on every draft submitted by 30 November 2026.
- Three documents: the Template, the Completion Guide and the Vision Guide.
- A conversation at any point. Do not wait for something to stall.

After the plan is approved

- Review the plan every year, ahead of Presbytery's annual attestation.
- Update the status of each item.
- Adjust where the situation has changed. The plan is a living document.
- Re-evaluate every five years, in line with the Presbytery Mission Plan.

The Presbytery would rather receive an honest plan that names its limits than a polished plan that papers over them.

Questions and Answers



Ask us anything

Where we do not know the answer, we will say so and come back to you.

Take This Back to Your Kirk Session

At your next Session meeting

- ✓ Share what you heard today and start the conversation.
- ✓ Test the five-stage process and timeline against your context.
- ✓ Agree who leads each stage.
- ✓ Name the missing voices in your parish.
- ✓ Plan how you will use your Facilitators.

Use the three documents



The Template

The form you submit. Read it early. Do not start filling it in before Stage 4.



The Completion Guide

Page-by-page reference with examples. Use it as you fill things in.



The Vision Guide

Your working document through discernment. The one you will return to most.

This work is important and belongs to God. Walk it carefully, prayerfully and honestly.

“Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”

PHILIPPIANS 1:6