

# Guidance for Buildings Categorised B in Presbytery Mission Plans

*This advice covers churches, halls and other non-domestic ecclesiastical buildings and supersedes previous advice given prior to 2021.*

Building is categorised B in Presbytery approved Mission Plan and where applicable, the Basis for Adjustment has been agreed and the adjustment has provided for what happens to buildings. (See section 10.2 and 10.3 of the PRESBYTERY MISSION PLAN ACT 2021).

Is the building part of an adjusted congregation within the approved Mission Plan?

Yes

No

Building is subject to an adjustment within the PMP

Building is not subject to an adjustment within the PMP but the congregation / Kirk Session has voted in support of the disposal.

Building is not subject to an adjustment within the PMP and the congregation / Kirk Session did not vote for disposal (process ends here)

Extracts (from Presbytery and where applicable congregation) sent by Presbytery to General Trustees confirming building(s) for disposal and anticipated timescales.

*Presbytery should continue to reflect on and update the GTs on anticipated dates for disposal of buildings through the Annual Review Process*

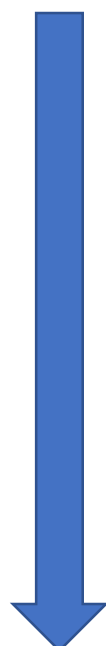
**All Presbytery and Congregation Approvals are in Place**

**General Trustees**

Sanctuary Development Officer (Formerly CARTA);

GT Liaison with Presbytery / Congregations and GT Board approval. Allow approximately 6 weeks.

Congregations are urged to start collating an inventory as soon as the building disposal has been determined locally. The Sanctuary Development Officer will contact the congregations where disposals are imminent.



On receipt of an extract relating to a building, the GTs will make contact with Presbytery / congregation seeking further information;

- Clarity on anticipated disposal date
- Anticipated building closure date
- Building duty holders
- Details of any lease agreements in the building
- Details of any telecommunications infrastructure in the building

Any building categorised B in the plan must continue to have routine maintenance carried out. This includes any fabric repairs required to keep the building wind and watertight and safe. It also includes mandatory maintenance and testing of M&E equipment (e.g. EICRs or emergency lighting testing). Building improvements or wholesale component replacement is not appropriate in most instances. For further advice please contact your Presbytery Building Officer. The responsibility for maintaining the building sits with the Kirk Session.

The GTs will notify **COSIS** of information on closure and disposal dates.

GTs will give instruction to **Law Department** to market building as well as providing this information. The Law Department will liaise with the Congregation from this point.

Where possible, the building should continue to be used as normal until an **offer has been accepted by the Law Department**. Routine (weekly or by-weekly) services should continue as should routine bookings of hall space, with support from Presbytery.

There are many variables effecting the duration of the marketing and conveyancing of a church property. To assist with planning, the congregation should allow a period of 6 – 9 months for the disposal of the property however it could take longer than this.

If the congregation can no longer demonstrate occupation of the building through recorded routine usage, then the building will be deemed unoccupied. The congregation must notify COSIS. See attached guidance from COSIS.

Once an offer has been received the building should be vacated. Although section 2 of the document is superseded by the above process, the rest of the guidance contained in THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND GENERAL TRUSTEES DISPOSAL OF REDUNDANT CHURCHES is still a useful reference.

Note buildings that are unoccupied must comply with the insurance policy's *Unoccupied Buildings* requirements to maintain cover. In addition, there may be implications for the insurance premium and water rate charges for buildings unoccupied for an extended period. The responsibility for the management of a category B building sits with the Kirk Session (note this may be of an adjusted charge).