



PARISH PROFILE



Introduction

Stepps Parish Church and Garthamlock, Ruchazie & Craigend Parish Church are two recently linked congregations within the North East of Glasgow.

Whilst our congregations have separate services, we have embraced our linkage, fully supporting one another on this journey and working together to build positive relationships. The communities each parish serves are diverse, nonetheless we have enjoyed holding joint services for special occasions and have a common goal in spreading God's word.

We are looking to welcome a minister who is willing to guide and support us in our spiritual journey to enhance our connection with the local communities. The diversity within the parishes would suit someone with both traditional and more liberal views.

In return, we offer encouraging, friendly and open congregations who will surround the successful candidate with love and commitment to continue God's work within both church communities.

For more information on both parishes please visit our websites, where you can view our Parish profiles and find out the history of both churches.

If you are interested in becoming our new minister, application should be made to the Clerk to the Nominating Committee, Ms Isabella Gallacher, email busyisi881@gmail.com. This should include your CV; a personal statement giving your reasons for applying and names of two referees who will only be contacted if the application is being taken further.

[GRaC Facebook Page](#)

[Garthamlock, Ruchazie and Craigend Parish Church - YouTube](#)

[GRaC Community Garden](#)

[Stepps Parish Church Facebook page](#)

[Stepps Parish Church YouTube channel](#)

[Stepps Parish Church website This hosts our monthly newsletters](#)

[Stepps Boys' Brigade Facebook page](#)

[statistical information on Stepps.](#)

History

Garthamlock, Ruchazie and Craigend Parish Church

Garthamlock, Ruchazie & Craigend East Parish Church was founded in 1955 as part of the Church of Scotland's extension scheme to build new church buildings in the new housing schemes being built in the post-war drive for better houses.

Over the years Garthamlock as an area has seen significant change, with new housing and schools. During the regeneration of the area we remained very much part of the community. In the last few years as Community Facilities (or buildings) have closed we have seen an increase in use for community-based organisations.

Stepps Parish Church

On the current site of Stepps Parish Church, there has been a worshipping congregation since 1900, and therefore Stepps Parish Church is celebrating it's 125-year anniversary later this year.

The congregation are currently planning a series of community events to celebrate and are working in tandem with Garthamlock, Ruchazie and Craigend who are celebrating 70 years of their worshipping community this year.



Members of the Sunday Club telling the nativity story

Worshipping Community

Garthamlock, Ruchazie and Craigend Parish Church

Our Communion Role currently consists of 40 members which includes 5 housebound and approx. 10 adherents. At present we have no formal Sunday School but are looking to re-establish our Sunday Smart Kids Group which previously ran well and had quite a number of children. We use screens are also used for projected liturgies and to enhance the sermon with images, videos etc.. In general, the congregation is very adaptable when it comes to worship and open to new ideas and approaches.

We hold special services on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Day, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

Worship at GRaC is relaxed and informal. Services take place at 11:30am every Sunday with an average attendance of 20 and we have communion on the First Sunday of every month.





Worshiping Community (Cont.)

Stepps Parish Church



The communion role currently consists of 162 members and approximately 20 adherents/ friends of Stepps Parish Church. On average there are 30 to 45 attendees at Sunday morning services held at 10am, increasing to 75 at Special Services.

There is a Sunday Club which has 6 members ranging from 4-13 years and three leaders. Sunday Club are regular contributors to services through prayers for peace, leading activities on less formal worship Sundays and creatively contribute at Christmas, Easter and other times.

There has been approximately 9 adults since Covid-19 that have started worshipping regularly, that did not previously and have become actively involved in congregational life. All member admissions have been through transfers from other congregations rather than a result of courses exploring the Christian faith. Communion is held on the first Sunday in March, June, September and December as part of the main service.

On occasions all age worship will be held when there is no formal reflection and worship is activities based. Regular worship generally follows the revised common lectionary, and praise is led by a pipe organ, digital piano and occasionally a small choir. There is a regular paid organist/ pianist supporting worship alongside occasional contributions from others in the congregation. Musical resources are primarily CH4 with use of Mission Praise. There are currently no evening services.

There were no weddings or baptisms in 2024, 6 funerals were held and a wedding vow renewal is booked in 2025.

Joint worship with our ecumenical partners at St Joseph's occurs each Remembrance and Advent as well as joint services with our linked church.

Governance Structures

Garthamlock, Ruchazie and Craigend Parish Church

We operate under a Unitary Constitution and at present we have a Kirk Session of 7 members with a variety of skills and professions represented, including maintenance, I.T. and finance. The session is enthusiastic about serving the congregation and supporting the ministry of the church.



(Stepps Previous Session Clerk welcoming the new Session Clerk in January 2025)

Stepps Parish Church

The Kirk Session moved to a unitary constitution in April 2024 following a congregational vote, resulting in the dissolution of the Congregational Board.

There are 11 elders - 7 female and 4 males with the newest male elder being admitted in October 2024. Elders range from approximately 50 to 80 years old with the majority being in their 50s and 60s. It is now a custom that session clerks serve a term of 5 years, with the current session clerk taking on the role in January 2025. Kirk Session sub-committees have not yet been actively formed though individual elders lead on particular aspects. E.g. children and young people, communication with members and community etc.

One elder supports the work of both Glasgow Presbytery and previously the national church in addition to the bona Fida Presbytery elder. The session clerk attended the 2025 General Assembly.



Community Profile of the Congregations



Garthamlock, Ruchazie and Craigend Parish Church

The communities of Garthamlock, Ruchazie and Craigend are part of the Greater Easterhouse area on the east side of Glasgow and historically were historically Urban Priority Area. However, the last 20 years has seen a great deal of regeneration in the area, with Glasgow Fort shopping centre bringing jobs and a great volume of new housing being built in Garthamlock, both for private and housing association ownership. As a result many new families have moved into the area. Craigend and Ruchazie have seen less regeneration of housing stock, although the last 20 years has seen the building of two new primary schools, a new nursery school and a new care home in the area.

A regular bus service provides easy access to Glasgow city centre via bus numbers 38, 19 and X19.

We have 5 Schools within our area (2 Primaries, an ASL Secondary, an ASL Primary and nursery) and 2 Nursery's. Since our previous ministry team retired, we don't have the same weekly contact with the schools but do still have excellent relations with them. They attend the church at various times throughout the year to visit and use our Community Garden. Our Ministry team are welcome to visit the Schools; this Chaplaincy was previously exercised through the deacon. We plan to restart our Annual Community Carol service with the local schools. At this Service we are joined by St. Rose of Lima Primary School and the local Priest in a joined celebration.

There are two care home and a retirement housing complex within our Parish. These are Craigend Care House, Mossvale Care home and Coxtan Gardens. A monthly service is held within Mossvale Care home by one of our elders and we hope to build on the relationships with both homes to provide pastoral care for the residents. We have a lunch Group every 2nd Monday where a few residents from the care homes come to the church for Lunch and some light entertainment.

We also work and support a lot of organizations that use our building, such as Gamblers Anonymous, Tae Kwon Do, Karate, North East Recovery Community, We Are With you, Stage stars Theatre Arts, Carly Corrigan Dance Group, Slimming World and a Brazilian Church - Assembleia De Deus America Garden.



Community Profile of the Congregations (Cont)

Garthamlock, Ruchazie and Craigend Parish Church

Come & Sing Group

Come & Sing is held twice monthly on the 2nd and 4th Monday of each month. Residents from 2 local care homes, Mossvale Care Home in Craigend, and Burlington Court Care Home in Cranhill, pay a visit to the Church between 1:00pm and 2:30pm and enjoy a light lunch of tea/coffee, sandwiches and cake. Music is played on the audio system, and the visitors enjoy a change of scenery and a wee blether. Sometimes we have a singer in the group, and we enjoy a wee sing song and sometimes a wee bit of dancing. It's always a fun time and well received by both the care home residents and the staff who accompany them. The group is led by one of our Elders, Moira and she is assisted by Lynne and others from our congregation and by Angela who is a member of St Dominics R.C. Church. It's a great way to build our Ecumenical relations and serve the elderly residents in our community.

Care Home Service – Mossvale Care Home

Moira, who is also trained in leading worship, conducts a service on the last Wednesday of each month in Mossvale Care Home. The service lasts for around ½ hour and includes a prayer, a hymn, a reading and then some more choruses from a selection of favourite hymns that the residents know and love from childhood days. It's always nice when there are actions as it's fun and inclusive and provides some light exercise for the residents. All residents are welcome to attend the service regardless of their ability. Some are very elderly and in need of personal care but can participate fully in all aspects of the service whilst there are some who suffer from varied degrees of dementia but are still able to enjoy the songs and time of fellowship. The time spent with the residents is very rewarding and builds good relationships between the Church and residents. Communion has been offered to residents in past services when a Minister has been able to attend and it is hoped that this can continue with the appointment of a new Minister.

Community Profile of the Congregations (Cont)

Stepps Parish Church

The parish of Stepps covers about 2.5 square miles and has an expanding population of approximately 7,700. It lies mostly within North Lanarkshire on the north-eastern outskirts of Glasgow with a small section within the boundaries of Glasgow City. The area consists of Stepps Village, Cardowan, Steppshill, Crowwood Grange, Frankfield Loch, and Millerston. Most homes within the parish are privately owned homes as well as a smaller number of social rented houses.

Stepps serves as a commuter town for Glasgow and has a railway station on the Falkirk – Glasgow Line, providing a quick commute to central Glasgow, and by the A80 road. It has easy access to the M80 motorway which connects Stepps to Glasgow and. Additionally, there is a main bus service to Glasgow.

There are bowling, tennis, and hockey clubs and a children's play park. Stepps has a private health and leisure facility and a hotel with a restaurant and function rooms. There are a variety of smaller shops including a pharmacy, newsagent, florist, and a supermarket, as well as medical and dental surgeries. There is a monthly food market held locally. Seven Lochs Wetland Park lies to the south of the parish boundary providing easy access to nature areas and encompasses nearby Hogganfield Loch.

Stepps Primary School was established in 1905 and rebuilt in 2009 with a library and cultural centre. Previously there were pastoral links and occasional input to school assemblies by the minister. There has been a change of head teacher since and we are looking to grow and nurture our relationship with school. The local secondary is Chryston High School, approximately two miles away and there is a chaplaincy team of local ministers supporting the school. There are 3 nursery schools within the parish.

Chestnut Café

The Cafe runs on a Thursday plays a significant role in the life of Stepps and Cardowan. As well as offering teas and a selection of coffees, fruit loaf, cakes etc. We offer sandwiches, toasties and soup for lunch on a donation basis. We enjoy fellowship and social inter-action within the local community, giving local residents an opportunity to meet up in a more social setting. Recently we celebrated VE Day with an 40s themed Day with music and dancing with many of the guests making an effort to dress up in appropriate clothing for the era, raising £420 for Erskine Hospital. We have previously raised money for Encephalitis, Sanitary products for Gazza and our next donation will be for Prostate Cancer.

Christian Education / Pastoral Care

Garthamlock, Ruchazie and Craigend Parish Church

The Girls' Brigade meet every Wednesday within our Church. The 99th Glasgow Company, current numbers about 40 girls (aged 5-18) who meet to enjoy physical, educational, spiritual and service-based activities as well as fun and friendship.

We are looking to re-establish our Smart Kids (Sunday School) and Messy Church Activities.



Stepps Parish Church

Sunday Club meet during term time, being actively involved in the first part of the service each week, such as leading prayers. Roots resources are used to plan sessions. At times, Saturday evening games nights are held for Sunday Club attendees and their friends.

The Boys' Brigade is active and led by experienced officers. They reaped the rewards of persevering in providing online and outdoor activities throughout COVID and have a steadily increasing membership.

In 2024 pastoral worker led a series of advent reflections, she has now retired. The church has previously been open as a reflective space on Thursdays to coincide with the opening times of the Chestnut café.

Elders visit members and friends in their district, highlighting to the minister those needing more pastoral input. Other pastoral concerns are raised through the session clerk. Members now resident in care homes continue to be visited by their friends from within the congregation. There are no care homes within the parish.

Ecumenical context

Even before our linkage both churches had strong relations as we joined each other for various events, we also have good relations with other churches. During the Presbytery planning process, we worked with St Enoch's Hogganfield, St Andrew's and St Paul's with Glasgow Presbytery's Cluster 2. This has resulted in congregations having closer relationships than previously.

Millerston United Free Church lies just outside our parish boundaries. A joint Easter service at Hogganfield Loch is held annually as well as some members supporting social events.

St Joseph's, the local Roman Catholic church, is located approximately half a mile from Stepps Parish Church. There are good relations between the churches having jointly held a Messy Church 6-8 weekly together prior to COVID. There continues to be joint services at Remembrance and Advent.



World Church

Both churches have strong ties with LHM 360, with a member of Stepps previously serving on the board and Claire Herbert serving as our interim moderator (Stepps) for two years. We support through regular food donations as well as Harvest donations and Christmas appeals.

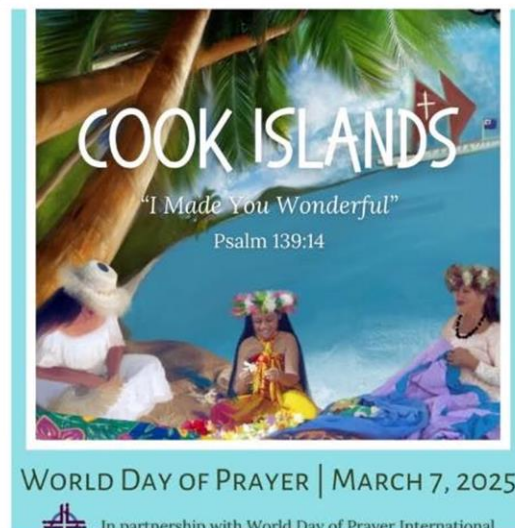
We also support Ruchazie Pantry for specific appeals.

We support the work of Christian Aid, holding an Elder led Christian Aid service during Christian Aid week, raising funds both then and at Harvest each year.

We strive to be a Fairtrade church, championed by a passionate member at Stepps. This included hearing in person from some Malawian farmers involved in producing fairtrade Kilombero rice. We acknowledge this has slipped recently and something, that as a congregation we need to re-focus on.

At Stepps church we do not currently have an overseas mission partner, though previously supported a missionary family, working in Mozambique. Some individuals have links with overseas missionaries, and we remain prayerful for the work of Reverend Muriel Pearson in Tiberias, who was previously based in the neighbouring parish of Cranhill.

Within GRaC we have funds available to use for an overseas mission trip to build relations with a church in the Czech Republic, we received the funds a number of years ago but it was put on hold due to Covid. This is something we would like to revisit and explore with a new minister and both churches.



Twinning

In 2012, Garthamlock, Ruchazie and Craigend Parish Church signed a covenant agreement with Greenbank Parish Church on the Southside of Glasgow. We committed to join with fellow partners in Christ in the hope that by sharing as God leads us, we will learn from one another and respond more effectively and lovingly to his call to discipleship. Our twinning had been successful, and we met regularly for joint activities and Prayer Shawl ministry, however the Covid years affected our ability to retain the fellowship that once existed. It is not known whether this covenant agreement is lifelong and may be something that a new Minister could explore when in post.



Stewardship and Finance

Both churches accounts can be viewed at OSCR- Stepps Parish Church and OSCR | Garthamlock, Ruchazie and Craigend Parish Church . This year's Giving to Grow contribution has increased significantly to £37,039 for Stepps and £21,924 for GRaC.

Stepps has previously engaged with national stewardship campaigns, including some of the narrative of generosity series. This is an aspect we recognise needs revisiting in the coming year and we are keen to explore how our buildings can be managed in a sustainable manner.

Grac has funds sitting with the General Trustees following the sale of Ruchazie Church and Manse, we are looking to carry out some upgrades within our building and make our building self-sustainable.

Staffing

Garthamlock, Ruchazie and Craigend Parish Church

Within GRaC we have been allocated 50% minister (shared with Stepps) and 0.5 for an MDS, Youth Worker, etc. We are currently preparing a job description and adverts to fill this position. We are seeking a part-time Deacon.

Stepps Parish Church

Stepps Parish Church has no employed staff. We have a self-employed organist. There is administrative support, access to printing and photocopying within the church halls office.

Church officer duties are shared on a weekly basis by a team of 6 members of the congregation. They are supported by a welcome team on Sundays.

Church Buildings

The church halls at Stepps are co-located within the same grounds as the church, consisting of a large hall, small hall, session room and backstage area. The halls are well used by the community throughout the week with regular lets, managed by an elder. Groups using the halls include:

Boys' Brigade and Brownies

Children's golf and table tennis

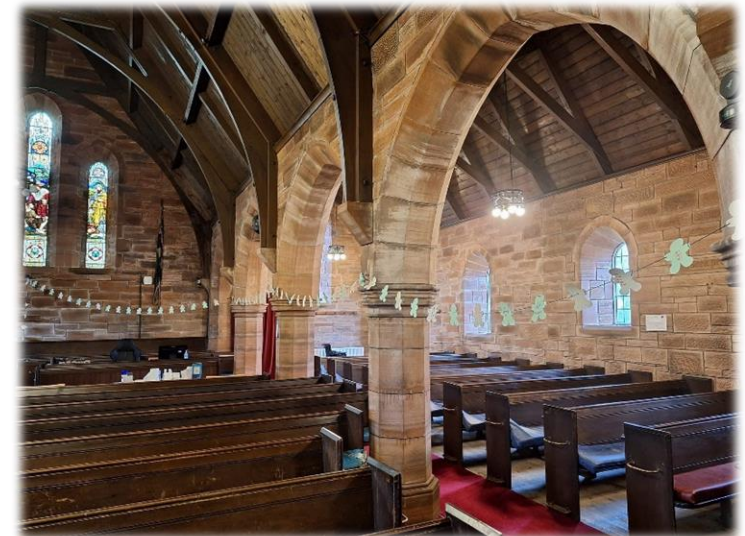
Dance classes and Tae-kwon-do

Line dancing as part of Chestnut cafe

Slimming world

And many children's parties.

The halls have also been the venue for several community events organised directly by the church or organisations with a strong church presence. The latest was a play and discussion on the impact of pancreatic cancer in September 2024.



Church Buildings (Cont)

We have a tremendous asset in our church building at GRaC which occupies a central location in the community and is a multifunctional church building which was built in 2009. Our Building consists of a Large Hall (seats 120), small hall (seats 80, but can be split into two rooms), a small room (seats 20), general office, kitchen and large foyer area. The excellent facilities have led to the building being used by several community groups (see above).

We have an AV system that can be used throughout the church or separately in each room with two large projector screens in the main hall, an LCD in the small hall and LCD in the Foyer area. Sound can be piped throughout the church. We can set up the halls in a variety of ways and regularly use YouTube, DVD clips, and electronic music.

Events can be recorded or broadcast online both in audio and video formats.



Community Garden

Garthamlock & Craigend Community Garden was created at the end of February 2021 with funding from the Scottish Government's Community Climate Asset Fund and Garthamlock and Craigend Parish Church. The project provides a community and educational garden within an urban setting. The garden provides facilities for food growing, horticulture activities and nature areas / trails. The garden is used and maintained by church members and local residents and has been visited and used for planting projects by the pupils from St Rose of Lima Primary school, Tower View Nursery and members of the 56th Scouts Group.

The garden has several raised beds in order to grow fruits and vegetables. It also boasts a polytunnel to enhance our plant, fruit and vegetable growth by creating a microclimate with a higher temperature to assist with germination and growth out of season. We have an orchard containing apple, plum, cherry and pear trees, and blueberry, blackcurrant and raspberry bushes. The Community Garden is fully accessible and wheelchair friendly and can be accessed via the church corridor or via an external gate when the church is closed. Our Facebook page currently has 125 followers which includes local residents, Councillors and MSP's and other Community groups and organisations. In the last 4 years we have grown and distributed lots of produce to our members and community groups in addition to the fruit from our orchard, including tomatoes, lettuce, beans, strawberries, courgettes, broccoli, corn, potatoes, beetroot and rhubarb. The Community Garden offers potential for growth in the Church's involvement and relations with our local community and promotes our visions for the future as sustainable and valuable resource.

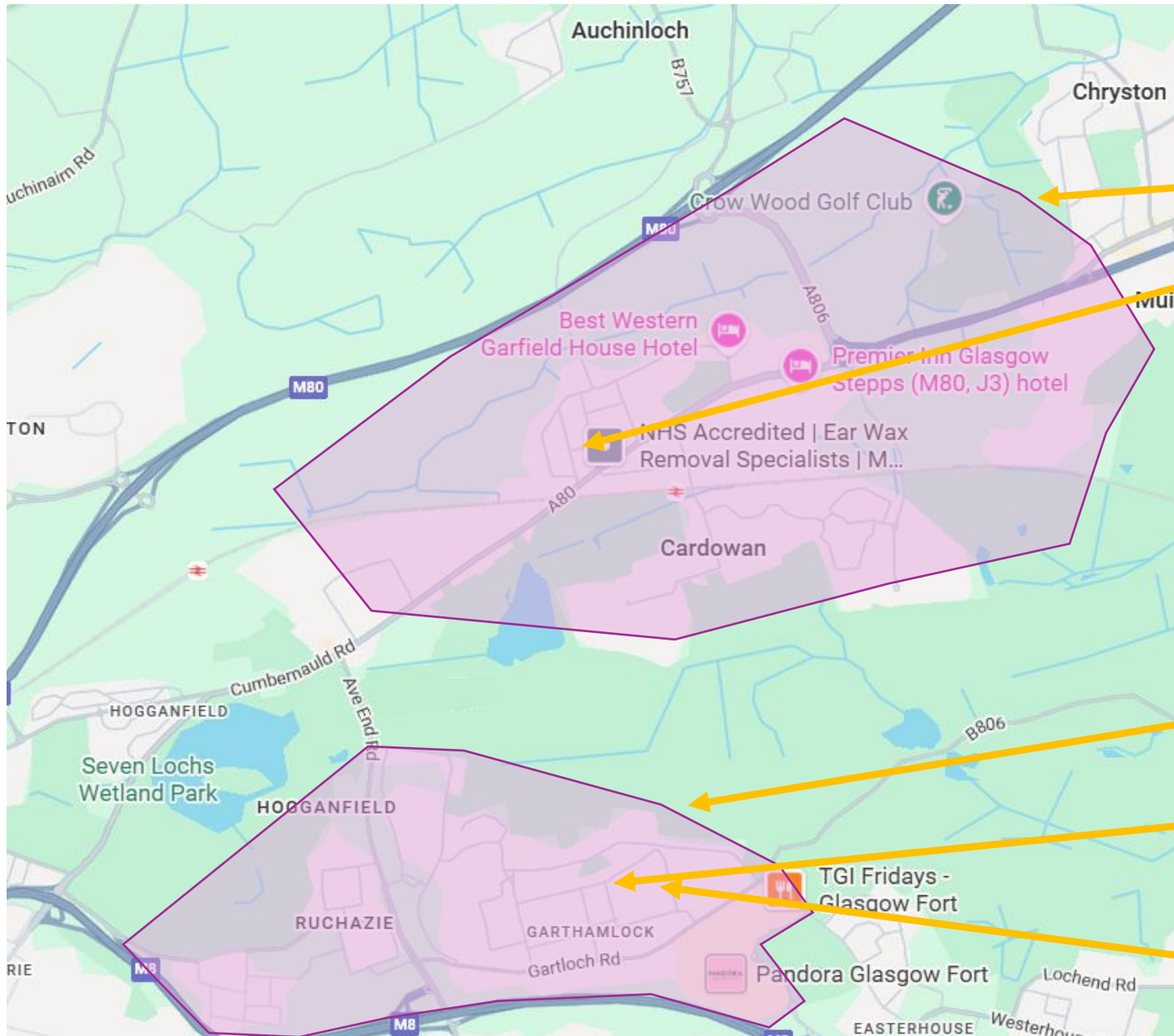


The Manse

We have a great asset in our manse which was built in 2008 as part of the new housing within the area. The Manse is a 4 bedroom detached property with a family bathroom, downstairs toilet, Dining Room, Living room and study area. The master bedroom has an en-suite shower room. The Manse is 5 minutes' walk from the Church, local Shops, Glasgow fort and is within a few minutes commute of the Baillieston Interchange (M9, M8, M74, etc.). (Glasgow fort offers a cinema, places to eat, shops) It is in a quiet cul-de-sac within the housing estate. The Primary and secondary schools within 2miles



The Parishes



Stepps Parish

Stepps Parish Church

Garthamlock, Ruchazie and Craigend Parish

Garthamlock, Ruchazie and Craigend Parish Church

Manse

Vision statement

Both Churches previously adhered to a 5-year mission action plan up to the point of Glasgow Presbytery's planning process, measuring its progress towards goals annually as a congregation and with Glasgow Presbytery support.

GraC was due a quinquennial visit in 2024 but this was delayed due to the union and linkage. Stepps is due a quinquennial visit in 2025, with both Churches learning and growing with the linkage we intend to use this time to reflect and re-define how best to meet the 5 Marks of Mission.

Both congregations have embraced their linkage, holding joint services for the World Day of Prayer, open-air Easter day service at Hogganfield Loch, and regular joint Kirk Session meetings. There are good working relationships with other cluster congregations.

Both congregations often describe themselves as 'our wee church family', who work collaboratively to undertake what needs done when required. We have adapted to various worship leader preferences. Several members of the churches have attended some form of worship training offered by Glasgow Presbytery and lead worship on an occasional basis. We need a nurturing, supportive and enthusiastic leader to unleash the potential within the worshipping congregation and meet the missional challenges of our communities. We need an enthusiastic team player who will lead but also allow others to take responsibility, be flexible, adaptable and build on our links with the schools. They should also be forward thinking and outward looking, encouraging people to grasp our vision of reaching out to our communities.



Community links at the Chestnut Café.



Contact Details

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“To share the love of Jesus with each other and in our community, and to have an open door extending a welcome to all around.”