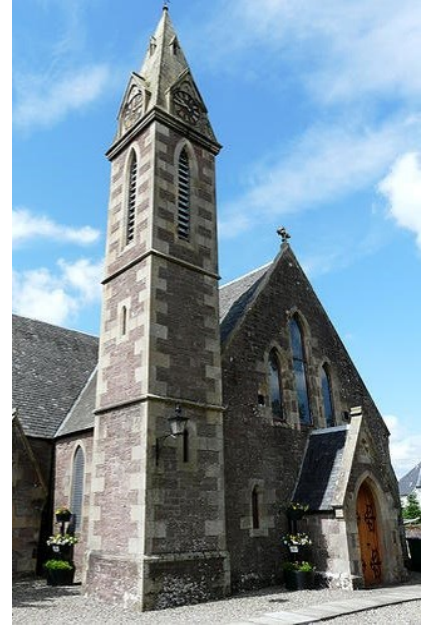


**Parishes Profile for Ardoch linked with Blackford
in the Church of Scotland Presbytery of Perth
Our vacancy is for a 0.7 F.T.E. minister (unrestricted)**



To develop the growth of Christ's Kingdom in the linked parishes of Ardoch and Blackford through the active commitment of the church community.

This vision will be achieved by the church community through :

Gathering regularly to worship, to learn about and to share the good news of God's love

Reaching out to families, young people, the elderly and the housebound

Providing a distinctive Christian voice within our communities

Working together in parish activities and with other local groups

Stewarding and using all our resources effectively

We are therefore looking for a minister who:

Will lead, teach, encourage and pastor us

Will build on the potential and strengths of our people

Is ready to be part of two lively rural communities

Can see the exciting potential of a 70% ministry and the other opportunities that it opens up

Believes with us that they are called to ministry with us

As part of the Perth Presbytery Plan, the charge has become a 70% ministry appointment on an unrestricted call. Both Sessions and congregations are aware of the increased responsibility placed on us by a 70% ministry. With the post vacant since April 2014, members have embraced, and very much appreciated, the part time leadership from the Locum Minister and stepped into various roles and responsibilities within worship, ministry and pastoral duties.

We are keen for this pattern to continue under the leadership of our next minister and we look forward to working together in a supportive partnership of our two congregations and our next minister.

Ardoch linked with Blackford Parishes Profile



The linked parishes of Ardoch and Blackford are located halfway between Perth and Stirling. They are made up of the villages of Greenloaning, Braco, Blackford and other outlying communities. The church buildings in Braco and Blackford are approximately 6 miles apart. Both parishes contain farming communities and continue to move from a rural based economy with local businesses towards an increased commuter population. In the 2011 Census, the Ardoch Parish (Greenloaning and Braco) had a population of 1,156. Blackford Parish, which includes the west end of Auchterarder around the Gleneagles Hotel, had a population of 1,628.

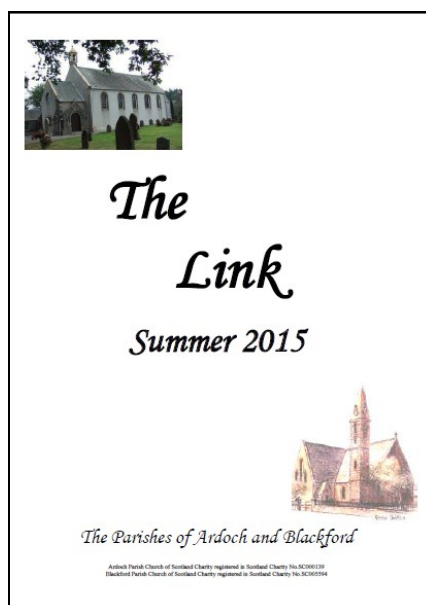
Ardoch linked with Blackford is a successful linkage of over 30 years standing. Both congregations are enthusiastic, active and supportive of each other, congregationally and socially. The joint parishes' newsletter, *The Link*, is produced quarterly and there is a well established range of shared ideas, talents and ministry.

Sunday Worship

The congregations both meet for approximately one hour each Sunday alternating annually between 10:00am and 11:30am. Joint services are held throughout July and August and on two other occasions throughout the year; one joint service in August 2015 marked the 200th anniversary of the founding of the village of Braco.

Each congregation uses CH4 as well as other hymnbooks, printed sheets or projection as appropriate. Members are involved in readings, children's talks, choir and other aspects of collective worship. Communion is currently celebrated in May and November in each parish plus the Maundy Thursday service which is part of a joint pattern of Holy Week services that includes an 8:00am Easter Morning service in Blackford's ruined "old kirk" overlooking the village.

As the only church within each parish, the minister takes the lead in the Acts of Remembrance at both the parish War Memorials each November.



Ardoch linked with Blackford Parishes Profile



Children and Young People

Ardoch has a weekly Sunday Club during term time and a regular Hot Chocolate Youth Group for P7's to S2's. There is usually a Holiday Club for part of the summer holidays.

The Minister is the Chaplain at Braco and Greenloaning Primary Schools who visit the church for their end of term services.

Blackford also has a growing Sunday School for primary aged children. Our Holiday Club runs in the first week of the summer holidays with many secondary pupils assisting the adult team. We have also been able to offer programmes on some of the school INSET days.

The youth group meets monthly and for activities such as the Christian Aid car wash.

Blackford Primary School holds a monthly assembly and its end of term services in the church.



Church Groups

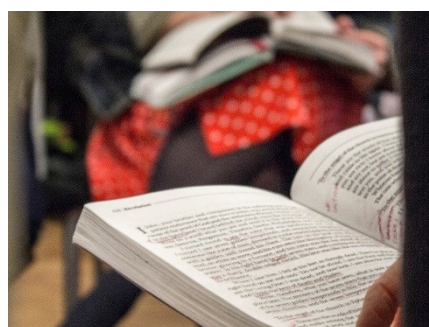
The Guild has been active in Ardoch Parish for 75 years and currently has just under 30 members. They meet monthly, and members are involved in many other aspects of the work of the church.

The Church Choir leads worship each Sunday and the associated Singing Group performs a wider range of music.

The Scottish Country Dance Class meets weekly as a way of having a sociable and pleasant evening whilst enjoying a little physical and mental exercise.

Blackford's Choir was re-established about four years ago and rehearses midweek to lead the hymns each Sunday and to make occasional additional contributions to services.

The Bible Study Group meets weekly in a local home and attracts around 10 people from our church and other local congregations.



Families

Ardoch has been running Messy Church for over two years. This enjoys good support from the congregation and welcomes families from the area, some with little church connection. The themes generally follow the church year and Easter Messy Church, held on Palm Sunday, saw the children and parents following the Easter story. They each made an Easter Garden, decorated biscuits and enjoyed a variety of craft activities.

Blackford's Holiday Club includes a Family Night (often a bonfire in the local woods) and the end of week Family Service. These events are supported better than most family events in Blackford Gala, but don't transfer into a regular church involvement.

New residents to the village are visited by an elder and given details of the church and local groups. Some children of the village are brought for baptism.



Ardoch linked with Blackford Parishes Profile



History

The Parish of Ardoch was created in 1857 with the name coming from the nearby Roman fort of which there is still significant evidence.

The former Braco United Free Church was built the following year at the time of the disruption which was fairly general throughout Scotland. The Clock Tower is still standing at the entrance to the old graveyard.

Blackford became a united congregation in 1950 when the UF Church closed. The building, also on Moray Street is now a private dwelling.

As well as the two spires, the skyline of Blackford is shaped by the old kirk on the hill which is surrounded by the village cemetery. Like much of the sizeable community at the time, the church was destroyed by Jacobite forces in 1716 following the nearby Battle of Sheriffmuir. The village values it a lot more now.



Events

Ardoch has a busy calendar of events throughout the year which raise funds and bring the church and community together. This includes the Duck Race, Whist Drives, Afternoon Tea with music, Potluck Suppers and Bake Off. Our events are supported by many in the villages and help to provide a place for fellowship and fun together.

Blackford's year is also characterised by regular events such as the Burns Supper, Holy Week Services, Gala Week Service, Strawberry Tea, Christmas Social etc. We can often call upon other groups within the community such as members of the Strathearn Pipe Band to support these events.

From March to October a well-drilled team run the monthly church coffee mornings in the Blackford Bowling Club to accommodate all those who wish to attend. This regular sugar kick needs to be part of a calorie controlled diet.



Outreach

Ardoch Outreach Team organises monthly lunches in the church hall over the winter months. Christmas boxes are delivered to over 30 people in the village by the Outreach Team and some of the team are involved in regular visiting of housebound members.

The Braco 200 Cream Tea hosted by the church was a successful and enjoyable afternoon with many dressed up in the style of 1815.

Christmas and Easter cards are delivered to the community with greetings and dates of services. These messages and images are also on banners and posters around the church.

The Bible Study used Christianity Explored material at its launch and recently studied "Life on the Frontline." The involvement of the community in services such as Gala Week, Christmas Eve or Handbell Ringing, brings our relationships from the community into the church.



Ardoch linked with Blackford Parishes Profile



Community Groups

Church members are very active leaders in many of these Community groups.

- Amateur Dramatic Club
- Ardoch Development Trust
- Ardoch Garden Club
- Ardoch in Bloom
- Braco & Greenloaning Community Council
- Braco Art Class
- Braco Bowling Club
- Braco Show
- Braco Strings
- Greenloaning Burns Club
- Parent and Toddler
- Pins and Needles
- SWRI
- WRVS
- Blackford Bells
- Blackford Bowling Club
- Blackford Community Council
- Blackford Fiddlers
- Blackford Gala
- Blackford Highland Games
- Blackford Historical Society
- Blackford is Brighter
- Blackford PS Parent Council
- Blackford Sings
- Campaign to Open Blackford Railway station Again (COBRA)
- Flower Show
- Mothers and Toddlers
- SWRI



Wider Church

We support Edith's Home in Uganda, Christian Aid with a special church collection and a house to house collection throughout the parish, and we collect stamps for World Mission projects. The Sunday Club and Messy Church learned about Mary Slessor and sent in postcards, and along with the Hot Chocolate Club, have raised money to Twin our Toilets.

Blackford Church takes an active part in Christian Aid Week through a house to house collection by members and others. This year the Youth Club kicked off the week with a car wash. We collect Christmas gifts to be dispersed by charities in Perth.

Both churches take the lead in helping our communities fill shoeboxes for the annual Blythswood Appeal with donated supplies and knitted goods.



Areas for Improvement

Both Sessions have been completing a Local Church Review ahead of a Presbytery visit; they have identified the following areas for improvement.

Ardoch

1. Mission and Outreach – to reach more young people and new residents
2. Worship – to encourage younger people to take part
3. Stewardship – to increase our congregational giving

Blackford

1. To explore and develop practical ways of supporting a part time minister
2. To encourage higher attendance at services
3. To encourage younger people to attend church regularly
4. To explore ways of developing Sunday School type activities at different times in the week



Ardoch linked with Blackford Parishes Profile



Finance

Taken collectively, over the past two years income and expenditure virtually balanced. Donations and recovered tax continue to be the largest source of income. Investment income, one quarter of total income, enabled the redecoration of the church, sanctuary and vestibule as well as the replacement of lighting in these areas. Fund raising activities are an important source of income.

The Blackford church finances are satisfactory in that they more or less break even each year. This is achieved by congregational giving and considerable support from the local community through the Events mentioned earlier, which are organised by the Church's Ways and Means Group.

A new boiler was bought and paid for during 2014.

Financial data for [Ardoch](#) and [Blackford](#) can be found on www.oscr.gov.uk



Leadership and Structure

Both churches have a Quod Omnia constitution. Ardoch has 175 members and Blackford has 110 members.

There are 16 Elders at Ardoch including the Session Clerk and Depute Session Clerk assisted by 6 church members who help out with the Sunday duties. Most Elders have a geographical district within the parish and some have other responsibilities such as Presbytery Elder.

The following Management Teams are made up of Elders and congregational members and report regularly to the Session: Communication, Stewardship & Fundraising, Property, Investment, Youth Work, Outreach & Visiting.

There are currently 14 Elders including the Session Clerk and Depute Session Clerk. Most Elders have a geographical district within the parish and some have other responsibilities such as Presbytery Elder.



Property

Ardoch Church and Church Hall are in good condition and the kitchen was completely refurbished four years ago. The Vestry is suitable for small meetings.

The Clock Tower which is all that remains of the United Free Church is maintained by the church and the local Community Council.

In 2009 Blackford celebrated the 150th Anniversary of the current church building which consists of the main sanctuary, hall, kitchen, minister's room and two toilets. A new, oil-fired central heating boiler was installed in autumn 2014.

We recently removed pews from the second transept of the church which has improved flexibility for ministry with all ages.

We also have spacious attractive grounds which are well used by Holiday Clubs and other groups.



Ardoch linked with Blackford Parishes Profile



The Manse

The Manse, built in 1964, is situated in Braco approximately 500m from Ardoch Parish Church.

On the ground floor there is a large lounge, study, dining room, kitchen and cloakroom toilet. On the upper floor there is a family bathroom and four good size bedrooms, one of which is en-suite.

The house has recently been completely re-decorated. A new central heating boiler has been installed.

There is an integral garage and spacious driveway. There is a medium sized garden.

Living in the area

This is a busy rural community as can be seen from the list of community groups. Being in Lowland Perthshire we are within easy reach of the benefits and opportunities for business and leisure in both the Central Belt and the Highlands.

Crieff is 10 miles to the north of Braco, Dunblane is 8 miles to the south and Auchterarder is 10 miles to the east. Each of these small market towns have essential services for both local residents and visitors.

Dunblane is also a significant point on the Scotrail network providing frequent connections to Glasgow, Edinburgh, Perth and the north. We can also catch the London Sleeper here or at Gleneagles.

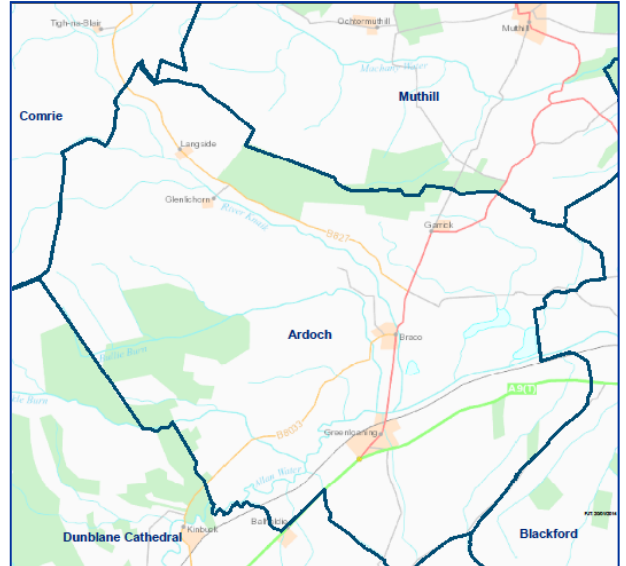
The cities of Perth (25 miles) and Stirling (14 miles) have all the retail, sporting, entertainment and commercial services that you might expect. There is a large variety of sports activities to choose from and leisure facilities to enjoy from local authority to a world class hotel. There is an excellent choice of universities within easy reach.

Residents can find themselves being treated in Crieff Cottage Hospital and Minor Injuries Unit, Perth Royal Infirmary or Forth Valley Royal Hospital in Larbert with some of Tayside NHS services only being provided in Dundee.

Braco Primary School, within easy walking distance of the manse, has around 80 pupils including the nursery and most move on to secondary education at Crieff High School where the roll is 600. Several independent schools are also within striking distance of Braco.



Ardoch linked with Blackford Parishes Profile



In seeking applications, we do not depart from the traditional and normative view of the Church of Scotland regarding same sex relationships.

Enquiries about the charge and the vacancy can be made to the Interim Moderator or the Clerk of the Nominating Committee. Applications are made by submitting a CV to the Clerk.

Contact details

Ardoch Parish Church

Feddal Road, Braco, Dunblane, FK15 9QE

www.ardochparishchurch.org

Scottish Charity No.SC000139

Locum Minister and Interim Moderator:

Rev. Iain F. Paton

Tel No: 01764 682234

Email : iain.f.paton@btinternet.com

Blackford Parish Church

Moray Street, Blackford, Auchterarder, PH4 1PY

www.blackfordparishchurch.org

Scottish Charity No.SC005594

Clerk of the Nominating Committee

Mrs Pearl Meldrum

Tel No: 01786 880396

Email : pearl@pearlmeldrumtraining.co.uk

Statistics for Mission are available for [Ardoch](#) and [Blackford](#) from the Church of Scotland website.

