

End of Grant Report for The Paristamen Charity from Cairn Movement

31 May 2022

Revitalising Learning Communities to create Christian hope in a post-Covid Scotland

Over the last 20+ years the Church in Scotland has been experiencing significant decline and an aging demographic. There is an increasing awareness within the Church of the need to share the faith with those who are no longer part of the Christian community. Cairn's Learning Community programme is designed to help equip and resource the Church in redesigning Church life around a discipleship and missional paradigm. It creates a community of churches that are going through this 2-year process together, allowing mutual learning and ongoing support.

The Trustees and team at the Cairn Movement would want to take this opportunity to thank the Trustees of the Paristamen Charity for the support and encouragement in pursuing our development project this year. Your interest and supportive engagement throughout the project have been much appreciated.

A year of challenge and growth

We set of on this project to develop our Learning Community experience so that many local churches in Scotland would be enabled to become centres of hope and transformation within their communities. We believe that the project is on course to deliver this outcome.

What we didn't know at the beginning of this process of was what a huge task we had set ourselves. Our desire to hone, refine and digitize our Learn Communities to make them accessible to as many churches in Scotland as possible, has proven to be a much larger project than we had anticipated. We have delivered Learning Communities in person for many years in person, but the skill set to move to an online e-learning forum has been a real stretch. This, despite bringing in external expert help in this area. We have been grateful to Forge America and their "Teachable" team who have given hours of time to support this process. As has Gill Wilson and her team at ButteredHost.com.

Our internal team lead, Faith Brennan, has done an incredible job helping us to marshal the task of creating a refined content, getting it recorded and then wrapping around the various elements that add quality to the learning experience. Special mention must be made of Berdien Ringland our Executive Director who has ensured that this mammoth task has been coordinated and completed. All of our video editing work was done by Lewis Catto, who we believe has produced an excellent professional level in all that has been done. Then of course come the presenters who have learned the delights of setting up record studios in their homes to allow them to record hours and hours of material.

We are delighted to be able to report that the material is now available and can be accessed here - <https://cairnmovement.com/courses/learning-community-1-building-a-discipling-culture/> This will give you access to all the resources that have been produced, which you are welcome to use in whatever way is most helpful to you.

Piloting the material – in-person and online

One of the things that we have been keen to do is to pilot the material before we launch it in this form. We have been able to do that now both in-person and online. The in-person event was held in Belfast on the 20-21 May 2022 and had 6 churches present with 35 participants. They were able to

access four of the video sessions and the feedback from them is that they were “really helpful” and “allowed us to address the issues and apply them in our own church context”. We have also been able to trial the videos in an online Learning Community over 4 evenings in March-April 2022. This had 3 churches from the Irvine and Kilmarnock area present with 18 participants. More of the video content was used and the comments were that the material is of “excellent quality” and was “down to earth and easily applied”. We have also had the material reviewed by the minister and members of Slateford Longstone Church of Scotland in Edinburgh during the early months of 2022.

Launching the E-Learning suite

We are now gearing up for the launch of the E-Learning Suite. We intend to offer the material in two ways. The first is simply as a stand-alone resource for any church to use at any time and in any way. This will allow churches all over Scotland to connect with this resource and use it in a way that works best for them in their context. The second way is through a coached cohort process. This will be a yearlong process with a group of churches working through the material one Learning Community every 3 months. The local folks will be able to watch and use the material at times that suit them, but then each quarter they will come together to share their learning experience with other churches from across Scotland. The leaders of these churches will also be offered a monthly coaching call from an experienced practitioner who will help them apply the learning in their context.

During 2022, we are looking at 10 churches using the stand-alone resource, and a further 10 churches joining the coached cohort approach. This will allow us to hit our anticipated impact assessment of 20 churches running the programme, impacting 50 people within the church and each of those impacting 3 friends, family, and neighbours.

How the grant was spent

We have run over budget for the whole project due to the level of working being greater than we anticipated. The key costs were as follows. We have sourced the additional funding from other grant awarding bodies.

<i>Description</i>	<i>Cost</i>
Freelance fees for work on e-learning materials and preparation	£2,100
Website hosting and support	£3,500
Internal staff time on e-learning materials	£5,180
Video costs	£50
Total	£10,830

Thank you

This project is something that we have sought to develop for a number of years. The pandemic allowed us to have the time and capacity as a team to be able to progress the project. But the reality is that we simply would not have been able to achieve this without the support of the Paristamen Trust. We do pray that the impact that we both desire to see of the church offering hope in a post-pandemic Scotland will be achieved. We believe it will and we look forward to being able to share some of these stories of hope with you in the future.

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