

PARISH PROFILE

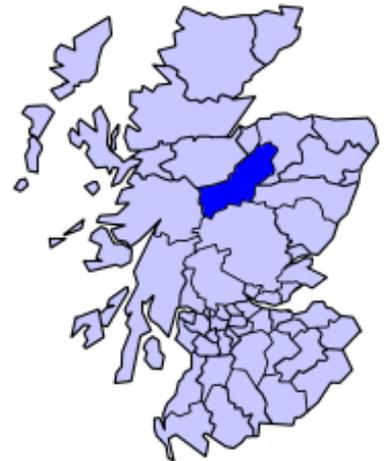
Alvie and Insh linked with Rothiemurchus and Aviemore

Introduction

Our two congregations sit alongside each other in the Badenoch and Strathspey area of the Cairngorms National Park and enjoy excellent co-operation.

Although closely connected, the Parishes are quite distinct in setting, congregation, church life and the challenges faced. This presents a varied, interesting and challenging ministerial experience.

Both congregations enjoy a variety of traditional and contemporary worship with shared leading and believe the Word of God to be vital and significant in our lives. We are a praying people who try to live under the guidance of God's Holy Spirit.



Badenoch and Strathspey

During our time without a minister, we have been supported by an interim moderator or visiting minister on a bi-monthly basis, allowing us to have communion regularly. Other services have been led by the congregations, with worship and teaching undertaken by gifted members of the congregation, predominantly from Alvie and Insh, who have also taken responsibility for many of the services in Aviemore. Seeing people grow and develop their skills in this area has been an encouragement during this period, and we would hope to see congregational involvement continue.

The congregations of both parishes seek an evangelical minister to join us, working alongside our established teams, encouraging development of the work already under way and thus supporting growth in God's Kingdom in this area. It is vital that the candidate for the role believes in the centrality of the person of Christ and knows the reality of a relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

Tourism and the outdoor industry is extremely important to the local area and this shapes the congregations, with many visiting individuals and groups, informing the opportunities for outreach and witness.

Inter-Parish Relationship

During the time of the previous incumbent, the congregations developed a balance of ministerial resources which were strongly focused on Rothiemurchus and Aviemore. The Alvie and Insh Parish has been largely self sufficient and both sessions are agreed that the large majority of the minister's energies would be directed towards the work in Aviemore. It is anticipated that the ratio of active involvement would be in the region or 80:20 in favour of Aviemore.

A practical example of this relationship is that on a Sunday, the minister has normally led the service and worship at Rothiemurchus and Aviemore while the congregation of Alvie and Insh have been responsible for leading their service. The minister has normally led Communion in Alvie and Insh on a bi-monthly basis.

Joint Parish / Ecumenical Activities

Members of both parishes co-operate closely and participate and support many areas of inter-church Christian witness.

- Aviemore Community Café
- Bible Studies
- Messy Church
- Alpha Courses (periodic)
- Foodbank.

A summer mission for children and young people has run for the last three summers in Aviemore in conjunction with SU Scotland, supported by both churches.

Weekly Bible study and prayer meetings are held throughout the area, usually in members' homes – these activities are open to people from any church/ congregation or non-church background which helps us to think beyond the confines of the Church of Scotland.

Local Issues across the Linkage

Environmental, ecological and land management issues are hot topics for the area as are Wind Farm developments and housing developments. The new village development, An Camas Mor, on the outskirts of Aviemore, has been contested and debated locally and nationally. National Park status increased property prices and there are a large proportion of holiday homes leading to a shortage of affordable housing for local residents.

The parishes suffer from social problems with the presence of alcoholism, substance abuse, loneliness, relationship issues and low income /poverty, with some more apparent in the town of Aviemore. The dramatic fluctuations in population, and transient nature of much of the employment has, in part, led to a fragmented sense of community.

A recent review of healthcare in the Badenoch and Strathspey area will move provision from outwith the parish to a new community hospital in Aviemore in 2019/20, bringing the opportunity to serve those from beyond the area and work alongside other local ministers and church pastors.

These shape the opportunities the church has to bring God's love and care.

Accommodation



A large modern four bedroom centrally heated family home is provided in a residential estate on the north side of Aviemore.

The manse was built in 1999. It is a timber framed one and a half storey detached property with ample parking at the front and side. It sits in a large plot with a garage. The garden requires low maintenance and is covered with grass and lock block paving.

Downstairs has a large entrance reception hall area, Dining/Kitchen, Utility Room, Study, Lounge, En-Suite Bedroom and separate WC. The stairway upstairs leads up from the Hall to a large upstairs landing. The upstairs has a Master Bedroom with En-Suite, a further two double/twin bedrooms and a family bathroom. The property benefits from full oil fired central heating. The property continues to be well maintained and exterior painting and a replacement of the garden shed are scheduled 2018/19.

The address is The Manse, 8 Dalfaber Park, Aviemore, Inverness-Shire, PH 22 1QF

The linkage offers:

- Kirk Sessions that are supportive of the individual and family.
- Environments of lay participation that will support the minister in practical service and share the load of ministry responsibilities
- Fellowships that are open to change and innovation and welcome the exploration and new expressions of faith in worship, mission and service with a strong emphasis on intergenerational worship.
- Healthy involvement from the members and the congregations, welcoming support in leadership and developing a vision for the future in our witness in the community.
- A good working and living environment with spacious manse, good schools and easy access to outdoor activities.

ROTHIEMURCHUS & AVIEMORE PARISH

Aviemore

The local economy has a high dependency on tourism that is reflected in the employment profile and variable demographics.

Although the parish extends beyond Aviemore the town is the primary centre of population. Aviemore has established itself as the premier Scottish outdoor pursuits centre. The village of Aviemore is growing and currently has a static population of around 4000 but as an all-year-round tourist resort the population can exceed 20,000 during peak periods.

The village is home to many hotels, guesthouses, self-catering accommodation and a large conference centre. It's accessibility on the national transport network Railway, bus and easy road access adds to its accessibility and growing popularity.

The Macdonald Resort located in the centre of Aviemore includes several hotels and lodges, and extensive conference facilities that bring many visitors to the village for business as well as leisure. The largest crowd puller in the town calendar is Thunder in the Glen, a motorcycle convention in its 21st year of operation. It takes place on the August bank holiday weekend and draws in excess of 10,000 visitors to the area including 2,500 motorcyclists from around the world.

The Aviemore Primary School, Community Centre and Early Learning Centre was opened in 2012 and has become a focal point in the town. It houses a school (with approx 250 pupils), gym, library, Service Point, Nursery and community facilities. The new Aviemore Community Hospital should be completed and operational by 2021 and will contribute further to establishing Aviemore as a central hub in Badenoch and Strathspey.

Improvements to the A9 main trunk road have led to an increase in residents that commute to Inverness (30 miles).

There is a major 1500 home development approved and scheduled for construction at "An Camas Mor". This is situated within the parish boundary and will have a significant effect on the work within the linked charge.

Employment levels are high, predominantly within tourism industries but with a significant number of roles in construction and public services. Farms and estates form a strong rural community. Income rates are generally low and a significant portion of the population work in seasonal businesses.

Rothiemurchus & Aviemore Parish Church Building



St. Andrew's Church Aviemore, was built in 1902 and sits in the centre of the village adjoining the main road. The condition of the property is good and the main church sanctuary was refurbished in 2013 and seats around 160 people.

The church hall is in the process of refurbishment and is a multi-purpose space used by many groups and organisations within the church life and community.

A large walk in cupboard has been converted to the Foodbank storage and distribution centre.

Rothiemurchus & Aviemore Church Life

<http://www.standrews-aviemore.org.uk/>

St Andrews has adopted a Unitary Constitution and a Team Ministry framework put in place to encourage greater lay participation in the running of the church and its activities.

Team Configuration



Membership

Membership sits at 66 and with 30 adherents

Church Services

A weekly service takes place on Sunday mornings at 11:15. Since the position became vacant the numbers attending have declined but there remains a core of regular attendees. Due to the nature of the tourist industry congregational numbers vary greatly. The regular attendance for services is around 30 and can be in excess of 100 during peak holiday periods.

Elders and the congregation participate in worship through reading, prayers and preaching. A praise band was formed and full use is made of the church audio-visual systems. Visitors and the congregation meet for tea and coffee after every service.

Children's Ministry

Children's Ministry is active in two groups; Pathfinders and Explorers. A regular number of children attend and some parents also attend church. The children's groups lead and participate in services on a regular basis.

The children support the Blythwood Orphanage Project in Hyderabad, India, and Crossreach fundraising, through the collection of loose change in small 'welly boots' at the front door of the Church.

Pastoral Care

The team undertake visits to those in particular need or those that are at a stage in life when they are vulnerable and in need of support.

Church newsletter

This is produced several times a year, with contributions from members of the congregation and details of some of the community activities and groups.

Ladies Bible Study

A group of ladies of various ages meet bi-weekly to explore a biblical theme and share and support each one another. Different members host the group and they also meet for a celebratory meal twice a year.



Foodbank

This is part of the Trussell Trust's national initiative. Demand for the Foodbank support continues to grow in Aviemore, and the surrounding area, with the Church at the forefront of this practical support for those in need. Volunteers come from the local Churches and from the local communities.



Community Café



The café was started in 2011 to provide a welcoming venue for all to enjoy refreshments, a light lunch and friendship. It is an inter-church and community supported project that draws in residents and visitors of all ages and backgrounds. The work of the café has driven improvements to the church kitchen and hall facilities.

Church Hall

The Church Hall is used by both the church family and the local community and provides Christian service to the community. The following groups and organisations make use of the Church facilities.

- Richmond Fellowship
- First Aid Training
- SWI (Woman's Institute)
- Aviemore Art Group
- Carer's Support Group
- Brownies and Guides
- Let's get on With it (Long Term Conditions support group)

Aviemore and Rothiemurchus Church Issues

Lack of resources – As the congregation has depleted the ability to support a broad range of ministries and activities has become more challenging.

Leadership & Guidance – Although there is a healthy involvement from the members and the congregation would welcome support in leadership and developing a vision for the future.

Social challenges - Aviemore suffers from social problems common to most towns with the presence of alcoholism, substance abuse, loneliness, relationship issues and poverty.

Community - The dramatic fluctuations in population has, in part, led to a fragmented sense of community not seen in surrounding villages.

Aviemore and Rothiemurchus Expectations

It is important to the congregation that St Andrews maintains and develops its role as a spiritual home, showing and practicing the love of Jesus at the centre of the community.

Projected growth and development of the area along with the opportunity to minister to and serve tourists and seasonal employees presents some interesting ministry challenges that would benefit from new approaches and innovation.

The congregation wants to grow and reach out within the community and would benefit from a Minister committed to growth and with leadership skills and the ability to motivate.

Alvie and Insh Parish

Geography.



The Parish covers some of the most stunning landscapes in Scotland. The area (well over 150 sq. miles) is sparsely populated with just over 700 people. Much of the land area is forestry or part of a privately owned estate, with hills and rivers limiting habitation. The majority of the population is within the village of Kincaig, some five miles south of Aviemore and a number of hamlets: Feshiebridge, Dalnavert, Speybank, Lynwilg, Ardgael to name a few. It is an outdoor enthusiast's playground, with access to river, mountain, trails and even air, with the Cairngorm Gliding Club within the Parish.

Community.

Within Kincaig there is a good community spirit, with a number of regular activities and community events through the year. A number of the congregation are involved in these events. The local community hall is well used by a variety of groups. The loss of the village shop in recent months has been sorely felt and there is keen interest in what will happen next. The "Suie" pub is a locus for informal music events and post club relaxation. The quality of life and the accessibility to the outdoors would be high on people's reasons for living in the area and many would say their spiritual needs are met in the outdoors.

Education in the area.

Wild Willows Playgroup uses the church halls every day during term time and has around 16 attendees. Alvie Primary School (pictured) has around 55 pupils and secondary age pupils attend Kingussie High School (c400 pupils). Members of the church contribute to the life of the schools in different ways – being on the Parent Council, supporting as parent helpers, or running SU Groups. Three of our members serve in a chaplaincy capacity.



Working in the area.

The parish has several small businesses, three outdoor centres, pubs, hotels, guest houses, B & B establishments and a high proportion of holiday homes. There is a high level of employment, with a diverse mix of types of work and professions. The outdoor industries and the high level of tourism points to seven day working for many, seasonal work or irregular working patterns. Many are self-employed, employed by small firms, or in education and healthcare. There is also a significant retired population.

Housing.

Housing is mixed, with a large number of estate owned properties outwith the village. In the village, there are a small number of Victorian buildings which were built at the same time as the railway turned the river crossing at Boat of Insh into the village of Kincaig. Further phases of building in the 1950's, 1980's and early 2000's have increased the population. There is a high proportion of holiday homes in the area. Affordable housing of a good quality is limited.

Services and transport.

Health services, shopping, access to the recently upgraded A9 and mainline railway is all located in Aviemore or Kingussie. There is limited bus transport. Inverness is about 38 miles away. Community hospital provision is currently in Kingussie, but the plan is for a new Community Hospital and health centre hub to be constructed in Aviemore in the next three years.

Profile of ministry in the Parish.

While we will inevitably focus on formal organised events in this section, there is much which is invested by members of the congregation in local community initiatives, pastoral work and personal friendships that bless others as part of their Christian witness. It is not primarily about what we "do" but who we "are" to those in the parish as we seek to make Jesus' name known.

Session and Constitution.



In 2012 we moved to having a unitary constitution and there are currently six elders on the Kirk Session. Within the unitary constitution we have a number of workstreams. Prayer; Youth and Children's work; Worship; Mission and Outreach; Discipleship; Pastoral Care; Crosscurrents (magazine). Each workstream has at least one elder as member of each group.



All workstreams are active, with the youth work and worship workstreams particularly so. We want our children and young people to be integrated and equipped in the faith, and believe it is important that we learn and worship together. Training on inter-generational worship has recently been undertaken with those involved in leading worship.

Formal worship times.



We meet at 9:30am on a Sunday morning, at Insh Church (right), which is over the River Spey from the village or at the Church Hall which has recently been refurbished, and is in the centre of the village adjacent to the Cairngorms Christian Centre. We have a mix of all age gatherings in the church hall and services where after all meeting together for a time of intergenerational worship the children and young people go on to JAM, Fusion or Fresh.

In our services we value:

- inclusion of all ages and stages of faith,
- interaction and engagement during the teaching
- worshipping both with great hymns and contemporary worship songs
- opportunities to share, reflect and pray together
- application of the teaching to our personal and collective walk witness

The all age services have been led by young people and their leaders. Many of our young people participate in Free Church Camps, SU Holidays and Soul Survivor to encourage their faith.



Communion would often be shared on the fourth Sunday of the every second month and has been led by interim moderators or visiting ministers. Worship and teaching has been undertaken by members of the congregation throughout the period of the extended vacancy, which has been a real blessing, allowing members of the congregation to develop their gifts. When the minister leads Communion we would value them remaining with us after the service, rather than leaving to take another service, and also taking the opportunity to get to know younger members of their congregation as part of their groups. There are a variety of mid week events, including Bible Studies, Times of Prayer, Alpha Courses, and youth events. Pastoral work is shared by the congregation, and overseen by one of the elders.

Involvement in our community

Members of the congregation are involved in many aspects of community. Examples would include the four monthly Crosscurrents magazine, a mix of local interest and Christian witness, which goes to every home in the parish, and is much appreciated. Our members are involved in the local schools and support Community Café, based in Aviemore. The church is also supportive of a number of community initiatives, including "Creative Kinraig" and were instrumental in the construction of four amenity homes in the village, which are now operated by Albyn Housing. Historically the church has had significant involvement in the development and management of the Cairngorms Christian Centre, although it is a separate entity, resources are shared.



Part of a bigger family.

The church has an interest God’s wider mission. There is a range of experience within the membership serving in this country and abroad. We have particular windows into the work of CrossReach and SU Scotland. Wider afield, Kiwoko Hospital in Uganda (photo left) has been visited by a number of the congregation and we support two nurses there; two of our members are Missionaries in Kurdistan, who regularly visit and encourage us; practical support of work in Nepal through the Hefvenstein family (via World Mission) and Marion Burrows-Smith; Susie Reid, working with New Destiny in Brazil. Others in the congregation who have served abroad keep our eyes open to the work of other organisations. These are all supported practically, financially and in prayer.

Looking at some numbers.

Our Sunday Morning service has approximately 40-60 attending of whom around 10-15 are 16 or under. It can be boosted to over 100 when visiting groups arrive from the Cairngorm Christian Centre, or Alltnacriche. The ages span from 3 – 90 years, with a dip in the 20 – 40 age range with the majority of the congregation in the 40-70 age band. A number of young people have recently left to further their studies in cities around Scotland. They are still in our thoughts and prayers, and contact is maintained. There are around ten weddings held each year, half of which are led by ministers from out-with the parish. Between five and eight funerals a year are held in Kincaig churches. We are encouraged by a high level of committed giving, much of which is covered by gift aid.



Easter morning lochside service

Our People and our Journey.



We benefit from a broad range of Christian experience and church background. It is a small fellowship, with a communicant roll of 62 members (Sept 2017) around 20 adherents. The majority of members are actively involved in the life of the church and our collective desire is to worship God and serve Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit. These numbers have fallen slightly in recent months due to a number of deaths and some others leaving the area. We have gifted musicians, innovative worship leaders and teachers. Many others are involved in the background doing unseen work. During this period of vacancy we have been working together to maintain the witness in our local community.

We recognise the value of a minister across Alvie and Insh's linkage with Rothiemurchus and Aviemore. There will have been gaps and missed opportunities during this last period. The congregation understand that the population size and complexity of the Rothiemurchus and Aviemore Parish will require the significant focus of any ministerial resource. Our desire is for an evangelical minister who has a clear sense of call who will further enable our congregation to continue to grow in their gifts, building on what has been learned during our time without a minister.



Christmas Watchnight Service

Additional Information.

If you have any questions, feel free to speak with our Interim Moderator, or the Chair of the Nominating Committee.

For further information regarding the church and the local area.

- www.standrews-aviemore.org.uk
- <https://www.visitaviemore.com/>
- <http://cairngorms.co.uk/>
- <https://visitcairngorms.com/>
- http://cos.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/statistics_for_mission/parish_profiles/362122.pdf

- www.alvieandinsh.org
- www.visitkinraig.com
- www.cairngormschristiancentre.co.uk
- www.alltnacriche.org.uk
- http://cos.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/statistics_for_mission/parish_profiles/362111.pdf

Contact details:

Interim Moderator

Rev Catherine Buchan

cbuchan@churchofscotland.org.uk

01540 673238

Chair of the nominating committee

Neil MacIver

Clerk to the nominating committee

Mary Stewart

maryes@btinternet.com



Summary Table

	Area	Alvie and Insh Parish	Rothiemurchus & Aviemore
1	Membership / Adherents	62/20	66/ 30
2	Service Time	09:30am; 1hr 10mins to 1hr 15mins long	11:15am (1 hour)
3	Service Attendance	40-60, can be over 100 in summer months	25 static up to 100 in holiday periods
4	Current Service format	First Sunday of month – All together service in church hall Other term time Sundays – First half of service attended by all, intergenerational worship, then split into age streams. During school holidays – all together services,	Most Sundays we follow a traditional praise/prayer sandwich format and children split out prior to the sermon. We have a Family service once a month.
5	Adult Groups	Bible Studies (Kingussie, Kinraig, Aviemore) Prayer Meeting (Ladies, weekly) Alpha (periodic)	Ladies Bible Study Alpha (periodic)
6	Children and Young People's Groups	JAM (Pre school to Primary 6) FUSION (Primary 7 to Secondary 3) FRESH (Secondary 4 and above)	Pathfinders - 3-7 years old Explorers - 8-11 years old Messy Church – Families with children up to P7
7	Weddings	8	6
8	Funerals	11	10
9	Property	Alvie Church (not in active use) Inch Church (used for Sunday worship) Church Hall, in Kinraig, recently refurbished and used for all together services at least once a month, and for children and young people's programme on a regular Sunday.	Aviemore Church – refurbished 2013 Adjoining hall – Ongoing refurbishment 4 Bedroom Manse
10	Schools	Alvie Primary (55), Kingussie High School (420)	Aviemore Primary (250), Kingussie High School (420), Grantown High School (332) – outwith parish, but some young people attend
11	Financial Information	https://www.oscr.org.uk/about-charities/search-the-register/charity-details?number=SC000043	http://www.movingiton.com/Church/2017 Final Accounts.pdf
12	Population	715 (2011)	3711 (2011) now estimated to be in excess of 4000
13	Area (mile sq)	150	124