

# Education in Wales

## A Briefing Note for Welsh Assembly Candidates

**The Churches in Wales have been providing schools for Welsh children for 200 years. In 2011 as we elect a new government for a new Wales, the Churches are committed to this work and invite every member of the Senedd to support our work, putting faith in education in Wales.**

**There are more than 250 schools with a religious character in Wales, provided by the Church in Wales and the Roman Catholic Church, serving some 50,000 pupils; 1 in 8 of the school places in our country.**

**Church schools are inclusive by nature, welcoming children from families of all faiths and none, but recognising that faith is something that shapes the lives of people across the world.**

**There are Church schools in every unitary authority, offering choice and diversity to the people of Wales who have always been pioneers in the field of education.**

*Providing schools for centuries; committed to the children, young people and teachers of Wales today.*

## 7,000

- We support the careers of 7,000 teaching professionals (teachers and support staff) and nurture teachers and school leaders for the future
- We appoint Foundation Governors who are a bridge between schools and their local community

## Partnership

- The Churches work in partnership with local and national government and other partners including Estyn, to provide the best possible setting for children to learn and to flourish in every aspect of their education
- Church schools include the same curriculum as Community Schools, seeking to provide broad and varied learning and the highest achievement and attainment for pupils

## Investment

- Investment in Church schools is a key part of the 21st Century Schools programme, with Dioceses working closely with local authority partners and the Welsh Assembly Government to provide a high quality learning environment for our children

## 75%

- Welsh clergy see schools as a priority; data shows that 75% of clergy visit their local schools each week, providing pastoral care and support for staff, pupils and families
- Church schools are committed to celebrating the rich heritage of faith, language and culture in our nation

## Community

- Church schools provide a natural point of community focus, whether in the inner city or rural villages, supported by a network of parishes and clergy across Wales

# Places of Worship in Wales

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### Some facts about Places of Worship

**1,408**

The Church in Wales operates 1,408 places of Worship in Wales (there are estimated to be in excess of 4,000 places of worship in Wales)

**985**

The Church in Wales cares for 985 Listed churches and cathedrals (there are just over 1600 Listed Places of Worship in Wales)

**42,000**

Around 42,000 people worship each week in Church in Wales churches

**15,000**

There are over 15,000 sessions of community activity taking place in Wales each week in Church in Wales buildings

**£70 million**

We estimate around £70 million is needed over the next 5 years to repair and maintain our Listed church buildings

**2 million**

They are visited by over 2 million people each year

### Places of Worship matter because:

- They are the focus of spiritual life for communities
- They are the focus for key life events
- They are a vital part of our nation's heritage, often the oldest building in a community
- They are cared for by local volunteers – local people responsible for nationally important places
- They are often the last remaining community building
- They tell the story of the lives of the people of Wales
- They are repositories of great art – an art gallery in every community
- Congregations are involved in outreach and social care supporting the work of the statutory providers

### You can help by:

- Continuing support through grant schemes administered by Cadw, WAG e.g Community Facilities Activities Programme, National Lottery etc
- Encouraging innovative partnerships – we welcome use of this national network for the benefit of society
- Encouraging use of church buildings for community events, meetings etc
- Supporting policies that help regenerate places of worship as key community and heritage assets
- Encouraging closer working relationships with government at all levels to help deliver local priorities
- Supporting policies which encourage and give confidence to volunteers
- Developing greater awareness among sponsoring bodies of the value of places of worship and recognition of this in grant giving
- Supporting the continuation of tax incentives that help churches and voluntary bodies such as Gift Aid, Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme etc

# Church Burial Grounds in Wales

## A Briefing Note for Welsh Assembly Candidates

### Facts about the Church in Wales and its Burial grounds

**1,000**

The Church in Wales operates over 1,000 burial grounds across Wales

### Controlled

The Church in Wales is the only burial authority in Wales whose burial fees are controlled by the Welsh Assembly Government

### Maintained

Churchyards are maintained by each local congregation with no formal state aid

### Community

Church in Wales burial grounds are available to all in the community regardless of membership or belief; they are public burial grounds

**10 years**

In ten years, two thirds of the Church in Wales burial grounds will have no more space for new burials

**£16 million**

We have identified £16 million of works to burial grounds including paths and walls with £3.6m held in reserves to meet these costs

### Church in Wales Churchyards matter because:

- They are a last resting place within communities which can be especially important in rural areas
- They record the lives of the people of Wales
- They are vital signposts to the past
- The land around the church indicates the area known in Welsh as the 'llan'
- They are vital green spaces often contributing significantly to bio-diversity
- They can be vital public spaces which offer solace and peace
- They are the setting to Listed Buildings and mark the character of Conservation Areas

### You can help by:

- Encouraging Local Authorities and Community Councils to work with and support congregations caring for burial grounds
- Ensuring legislation supports those caring for burial grounds
- Supporting policies which encourage and give confidence to volunteers
- Developing greater awareness among sponsoring bodies of the value of churchyards and places of worship with recognition of this in grant giving
- Protecting existing grants and support for burial grounds and monuments
- Urging a Government Commission that could look at the provision of burial space across Wales to ensure a coordinated approach that ensures a last resting places in or near communities