

Kirk sales will raise millions

The cash-strapped Church of Scotland is to raise funds of more than £21million from the current sell-off of more than 100 redundant properties.

Of the 109 properties listed for sale on the Church's website 73 are already "under offer" which, if all asking prices are realised, would see the Kirk bring in more than £14 million.

Another 36 properties ranging from cathedral-style churches, grand manses and halls to tiny village kirks are still available with the potential to realise an additional £7 million.

Despite the huge cash injection, the church has warned that the proceeds cannot be used to plug its £7.7million national budget deficit, as most of the money will revert to local congregations rather than go into a central pot.

Among the properties currently under offer is the official Edinburgh residence traditionally used by the [Moderator](#) of the General Assembly during their year in office, with an asking price over £890,000.

The Church purchased the "truly exquisite" 2 Rothesay Terrace property for use as the official residence for the Moderator in 1998.

The Church of Scotland said the sale of the [property](#) had attracted significant interest among prospective buyers and

multiple viewings but declined to say how many offers had been submitted.

Other properties currently for sale include Avoch Parish Church, a small B-Listed Gothic revival style kirk with its own bell tower around 12 miles from Inverness, at offers over £40,000, and the unique 18th century Kirkpatrick-Juxta Parish Church in Beattock, Dumfries and Galloway, for offers over £110,000.

The sales are part of a major restructuring exercise that has led to some of Scotland's best-loved churches disposed of over the last five years to release equity tied up in a portfolio that at one time numbered more than 5,000 properties.

Crippled by soaring costs, falling congregations and dwindling ministers the Church set in motion a range of far-reaching reforms in 2019 to recalibrate its dire financial position and stimulate the rebirth of community worship to make it "lean and fit for the 21st century".

In 2021 the Church had 283,600 members, down by over one million from a peak of 1.3 million in the late 1950s. They say that having in excess of 1,000 churches for the number of people now attending is "untenable and unsustainable".

A Church of Scotland spokesman said: "Reducing the number of buildings we own has been one part of a raft of radical reforms being undertaken by the Church in recent years aimed at ensuring we are lean and fit for mission in the 21st century and have well equipped spaces in the right places.

"In the majority of cases, the money that is received from the sale of church buildings is returned to local congregations or held centrally for their benefit and therefore does not reduce the national Church's budget deficit.

"It is through a range of reforms that we aim to reduce the significant deficits that the national Church has been

carrying.”



Church of Scotland Moderator's official residence 2 Rothesay Terrace for sale