

## ECO-CONGREGATION SCOTLAND

### APPEALS AGAINST AWARD ASSESSMENT DECISIONS



A church which believes that its award application has been assessed improperly may appeal to the Board of Eco-congregation Scotland. An appeal may be lodged on procedural grounds only, not against the assessors' judgment. The following procedure shall govern appeals.

1. A church wishing to appeal must submit a written *Intention to appeal* to the Board of Eco-congregation Scotland within one calendar month of the date of Eco-congregation Scotland's letter communicating the assessors' decision on its award application.
2. The appellant church must lodge its *Intention to appeal* and all further papers relating to the appeal over the signature of one of its senior officer-bearers, normally the Minister, or the Session Clerk or equivalent.
3. Within one calendar month of the date of its *Intention to appeal*, the appellant church must submit a written *Statement of appeal* to the Board of Eco-congregation Scotland, specifying the fault it finds with the handling of its application.
4. Immediately upon receipt of the *Statement of appeal*, the Board of Eco-congregation Scotland shall send it to the assessors who assessed the appellant church's application, and shall invite each of them to comment in writing, or to state in writing that they do not wish to comment. The Board of Eco-congregation Scotland shall require the assessors' written response within one calendar month of the date of the *Statement of appeal*.
5. Within one calendar month of the date of the *Statement of appeal*, the Board of Eco-congregation Scotland shall appoint an Appeals Panel consisting of three of its members, one of whom it shall nominate as Chair. At least one member of the Appeals Panel must have experience of acting as an Eco-congregation Scotland assessor.
6. The Appeals Panel shall meet to consider the appeal within two calendar months of the date of the appellant church's *Statement of appeal*. It shall review all papers pertinent to the appeal, including the appellant church's award application, its *Statement of appeal*, the assessors' completed assessment forms and subsequent comments, and any other papers it deems relevant. It shall invite the appellant church to send up to three representatives to its meeting to present evidence and to answer questions. The appellant church's case shall not be prejudiced if it declines that invitation.

7. The Appeals Panel shall normally reach its decision at a single meeting. It shall *either* uphold the appeal, *or* reject it; no other decision shall be available.
8. If the appeal is upheld, the Appeals Panel may *either* overturn the original decision and make the award outright, *or* visit the appellant church and conduct a re-assessment based upon the original application; no additional documentation shall be admitted. If the latter course is adopted, there shall be no appeal against the Appeal Panel's assessment decision. No other options are available.
9. If the appeal is rejected, the original decision upon the award application shall stand.
10. Decisions of the Appeals Panel shall be final and shall be conveyed in writing to the appellant church and the original assessors within one calendar month of the Appeal Panel's meeting.

