

ECO-CONGREGATION SCOTLAND

THE PEER MENTOR'S ROLE in the awards application process



Preamble

When a church registers as an eco-congregation, Eco-congregation Scotland will assign it a peer mentor to advise it and help it develop from registration to gaining a first award.

Normally, the peer mentor will be associated with a church that holds an eco-congregation award and will reside in the newly registered church's geographic area. If this is not possible (eg, a church is the first in its area to seek eco-congregation status), someone from further afield will work with the church in a manner that the church and the peer mentor shall agree.

Role and purpose

To advise and encourage (but not to instruct or over-rule) a congregation as it develops from registration to applying for its initial award

Person specification

Familiar with environmental issues and Eco-congregation Scotland's aims and processes

Good listener, communicator and motivator

Analytical, imaginative problem-solver; outcomes-focussed

Normally, associated with a congregation holding an Eco-congregation Scotland award

How appointed

Nominated to Eco-congregation Scotland as a potential peer mentor by his/her church

Assigned by Eco-congregation Scotland to a newly registered eco-congregation

Normally, a peer mentor will work with one church at a time, unless s/he accepts a greater workload

Principal tasks

To help the congregation's eco-team analyse its strengths, weaknesses and opportunities

To comment upon the church's programme and help the eco-team develop and implement it

To advise the eco-team on establishing a profile within its own church, and on working with its organisational structure and with other organisations in the community

To keep the eco-team focussed, address any lack of confidence and move them forward

To encourage the eco-team to prepare its first award application, normally within two years of registration, and to help it identify an effective approach to doing so

Modus operandi

Visit the church at the start of the mentoring arrangement to meet the eco-team and discuss the peer mentor's role and the church's task

Thereafter, visit the church occasionally, normally not more than once or twice per annum

If geography makes personal visits impracticable, peer mentors and mentored churches are encouraged to establish effective working relationships by any mutually supportive means

Maintain regular contact with one of the eco-team by telephone, email or letter

Attend the assessment visit as the congregation's accredited adviser. As such, alert assessors and congregation members if any matter is overlooked or not presented to best advantage

Costs

The role is voluntary and unpaid

Peer mentors are expected to meet their own communications costs

Peer mentors may claim travelling expenses for visits to the mentored church if desired