

St Aelred's Parish Pastoral Council

Minutes of the Meeting held on

WEDNESDAY 4th MARCH 2026

Welcome and opening prayer: From Fr Gerard.

Apologies for Absence: Dominika Praga Maria Coyle

Attending: Fr Gerard, Deacon David, Frances Elliot, Maria Kumar, Becki Hailey, Rhonda Recchia, Chika Ejiofor, Tim Bird, Bernadette Broderick, Beth Fennerty, Lorraine Ashton

Welcome and Opening Prayer: from Fr. Gerard

Minutes from last Meeting:

Minutes were approved.

Matters Arising from last meeting:

No outstanding matters.

Notification of any other business:

Refurbishment of Toilets.

Stations of the Cross 13th March.

Safeguarding Update:

F.E.

Frances gave update on additions being made to the checks currently being made, this will now involve some new roles not currently requiring a DBS now being subject to some checks. She is currently compiling list of parish groups involved for a centralised list and preparing a basic form to be completed. A Code of Conduct Form is also being prepared.

News from Groups:

CAFOD

B.F.

CAFOD REPORT FOR ST AELRED'S PPC MEETING 11th FEBRUARY

FUNDRAISING In 2025 we raised £3,319 in total (compared with £2313 in 2024) - fantastic generosity from the parish.

☒ LENT £2015.73

Lent FF £1,027 78% Gift Aided

Lent boxes £667.74 23% Gift Aided

Chocolate raffle £190

Parish lunch raffle £120

☒ HARVEST £903.83

Harvest FF £879.08 80% Gift Aided

Produce sale £24.75

☒ REQUIEM MASS MUSIC £400

THE CAFOD LIVE SIMPLY AWARD

The Parish signed up to achieve the Live Simply Award. We had a meeting with guest speaker from Cafod to explain about the process.

We have produced two bulletins explaining what is happening already in the parish and sharing ideas for living more sustainably. Adults and children came up with lots of great ideas.

A third bulletin is planned for the beginning of Lent which will focus on growing. It is hoped that more people will get involved in the parish garden. A gardening weekend is planned for March 21/22 March. The Flower group are asking people to bring flowers from their gardens for the altar.

LENT 2026

FF day Friday 27th February. Talk at Mass weekend 21/22 February focusing on a part of Zimbabwe with too little rain and parts of South Sudan and Bangladesh with too much rain. Envelopes will be given out 21/22 February and collected the next weekend. Lent boxes will also be available from Ash Wednesday for those who want them. There will be a chocolate raffle again.

SVP

T.B.

Report to Parish Council from St. Aelred's SVP Conference February 2026

1. The Conference continues to support a number of beneficiaries through home visits, visits to residents in care homes, telephone contact and financial assistance where necessary. The need for support to families is increasing, and there has been a small reduction in the numbers of visits to elderly people in their own homes. This trend is also being experienced by other Conferences. A small number of visits have been made to patients in the District Hospital.

2. Our Advent appeal was very successful. Following a lectern talk from Jane O'Gara, five individuals came forward to offer their services to the Conference. Four people have completed the necessary safeguarding checks, and are and are now receiving the SVP specific training on safeguarding. They will then be able to undertake visits to beneficiaries.

3. The Advent appeal was also very successful in financial terms. The generous response from the parish realised donations of more than £2,500 – and some £1,700 of that was gift-aided. Many thanks to Fr. Gerard for stressing the importance of Gift Aid. This is a wonderful result for the Conference and represents an increase of some 20% over last year's total.

4. The SVP national office has decided to change the arrangements for Safeguarding checks for all Conferences. In response to ongoing challenges, and to ensure that new members are welcomed into conferences without unnecessary delay, the Board of Trustees agreed to bring DBS processing in- house for a trial period of 12 months. The Board's decision was subsequently ratified by National Council. During the pilot, DBS applications will be processed directly by the SVP rather than through Diocesan and Parish Safeguarding

Representatives. I should like to thank the parish safeguarding co-ordinators for their support, both personally and on behalf of other conference members, for all their assistance over the years in navigating the safeguarding process.

5. The conference has hosted tea and coffee after a weekday Mass on a number of occasions. These events have proved popular and it is hoped to hold them more regularly in future.

CHOIRS / SACRAMENTAL PREP:

B.H.

Continuing to encourage children e.g. Sitting in front row, children to choose hymns.

Jo Boyce will be singing on 9th May at St Mary's.

Reconciliation Sessions – one to go.

First Holy Communion – Sessions to begin shortly.

REFLECTIVE DAYS:

B.B.

Bernadette expressed her thanks to Dominika for taking the lead.

Work continuing on Live simply and Cross for Holy Week.

Stations of the Cross for Children on Good Friday.

Retreat in Daily Life sessions will be from 21st April to 1st May, names and sign-ups needed.

YOUTH GROUP:

M.C.

Youth group has not run since summer as I have not had capacity. Confirmation classes went well. We did discussions, games and lectio divina. 2 of our older young people came to be involved with the second session, and that seemed to work well. We have some very thoughtful, prayerful children in the parish. I'm open to ideas about re-establishing an offer for the young people going forward._

SOCIAL COMMITTEE:

R.R

A brief committee meeting was held on 4th Feb and some suggested events and dates were discussed. Due to the hall closure for the toilet refurbishment dates have been put on hold till work completed.

Dates can be confirmed for the **Christmas Fayre Saturday 28th November** and **Christmas Lunch Wednesday 9th December** as work will be completed.

OPEN MEETING HELD IN SEPTEMBER:

Pippa's input to this was greatly appreciated. Aiding and encouraging people with disabilities ie. Readers being able to read from their bench rather than have to make their way to the Lectern. Could possibly ask Pippa to look at annual open meeting to reflect updates on progress.

TOILETS REFURBISHMENT

Work will begin on 23rd March and expected to take 8-10 weeks. It is appreciated that this seems a long time, but the amount of work needed to ensure "access for all" and meet the requirements of the grants which we received paying for this work, is necessary and will benefit all our parishioners.

The problem of a location for Children's Liturgy is being looked into, possibly splitting into 2 groups one is Sacristy and one in Lady Chapel or hiring a Portakabin being considered. B.H. to come back to Fr. Gerard as soon as possible with hire cost.

NB: Following a talk with the builders the hall may be used for Sunday Refreshments and Children's Liturgy during the build period. GK

HALL USERS COMMUNICATION:

Particularly during this necessary disruption we hope that all the users of the hall will show patience and understanding and appreciate that these improvements will benefit ALL our parish in the long term.

DRUGS:

We have been made aware that the car park outside the Church appears to have been used to sell Cannabis. The Police have been informed and we are all asked to be vigilant. ***Keys have also gone missing to the memorial garden and Memorial Book. When returned these will only be available via the parish clergy until we are on top of the ongoing crime issues.***

PARISH ADMINISTRATOR;

Krista has been appointed as Parish Administrator, and we look forward to her starting her new role very shortly.

CHURCH RE-DECORATION:

The inside of the Church and some outside electrical work made possible through a bequest, will start on **18th May 2026** it will be done during the week and not effect Mass at the weekend. Help in clearing the church would be appreciated on 17th.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS 13TH MARCH:

Bernadette and Beth have kindly agreed to lead this.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will Be held on **TUESDAY 9TH JUNE @ 6:45** Becki Hailey has kindly offered to chair.