



Annual Report

For the Annual General Meeting
28th November 2015



**The Annual General Meeting of
Anglican Cursillo in the Diocese of Oxford
will be held at 12.30am on
Saturday 28th November 2015
at St Helen's Church Centre, Abingdon**

Agenda

1. The meeting will open with Prayer
2. Apologies for Absence
3. Minutes of the previous AGM held on 15th November 2014
4. Matters arising from the minutes
5. The Annual Report
6. Treasurer's Report
7. Accounts for the year ended 31st August 2015 and adoption of accounts
8. Appointment of the Independent Examiner
9. Instalment of Diocesan Lay Director
10. Instalment of Diocesan Spiritual Director
11. Secretariat Elections and Affirmation of mid-year Appointment
 - a. Vacancy for Secretary
 - b. Vacancy for Treasurer
 - c. Vacancy for Servant Community Team Representative (Pre-Cursillo)
 - d. Affirmation of Elizabeth Taylor's Appointment
12. Any other business (to be notified to the Lay Director at least 7 days before the meeting.)

If you are unable to attend, please send your apologies to the
Lay Director, Peter Watsham.

Lay.Director@OxfordCursillo.co.uk or 01296 641268

Lay Director's Report

The year since our last AGM has seen continued growth, change and consolidation – and some disappointment.

Growth ... Given that Cursillo is not principally a membership club, but rather “a way of building strong Christian discipleship in local churches”, it's not easy to measure growth. We can count numbers attending weekends and Ultreyas and hear of some Cursillistas' personal journeys of witness at these, but we don't have statistics about the growth of discipleship which results from such attendance. So I can tell you that we had fewer weekend guests and Utreya attendees in the last year, but with no measure of outcome. We don't know how many or how often people are involved in Group Reunion nor is the evidence of growth which is shared at these meetings consolidated centrally. But I have been privileged to hear about much apostolic action that has kept people too busy to attend Ultreyas, about Oxford Cursillistas meeting with DDOs to test their calling, and about four who have recently started training for ordained ministry - some have written in Oxon Fourth about the part Cursillo has played. Following the Cursillo way has surely produced growth and fruit in abundance,

Change and Consolidation ... Ellen Turtle became our Secretary at the 2012 AGM and has managed the Secretariat, Annual reporting and Charity Commission communications very efficiently. In particular, she guided us through the update of our constitution which turned out not to be at all straight forward. In July she received the excellent news that, after a successful BAP, she had been selected for training to ordained ministry. In the light of this and the commencement of training in September, Ellen had to stand down four months before completing her three year term. We look forward to the appointment of a new Secretary at the AGM; meanwhile Caraline Hedges very kindly took over the collation of this Annual Report.

Ann Moss took over as Treasurer at the last AGM and kept our financial affairs in good order, but she found that circumstances beyond her control prevented her from properly fulfilling all that the role of Treasurer requires. She therefore decided to step down, but continues to act as our booking secretary and to look after our responsibilities in respect of music licensing, insurance and the safeguarding of vulnerable adults. As former Treasurer,

Gilly Robinson agreed to act as Treasurer pending a new appointment being made at the AGM.

Teresa Carter reaches the successful completion of her three year Secretariat appointment as Pre-Cursillo Rep leaving us with another vacancy to fill at the AGM.

Alison Shaw and Caraline Hedges have both successfully completed their first year as Weekend and Fourth Day Reps respectively and have established excellent foundations for carrying us forward in these areas. Alison had a great deal to do in preparing for our change of weekend venue, moving back to Cold Ash after five years at Douai Abbey. She can take enormous credit for a very smooth transition and well run Oxford #16 weekend in May, as both Weekend Rep and Palanca Gofor on the team.

After his appointment as Communications Rep at last year's AGM, Nick Hance was very pleased to pass this responsibility over to Elizabeth Taylor, in the light of her greater experience and expertise to handle the quite considerable IT aspects of the role.

In the light of a new appointment within Oxford Anglican Cursillo (see below), Kevin Beer sought to give up his role as Web Servant, having managed our online presence superbly for many years. Hilary Derbyshire, who created our web site and has extensive web skills and experience (as well as a strong commitment to the Cursillo way), has taken on the role.

As our magazine editor for five years, Barbara McGarry has produced nine very professional editions, but asked if she might retire after publishing the Spring 2015 copy. Libby Hawkness-Smith very kindly took on the role, for at least one edition, and has produced our latest magazine – Oxon Fourth 20.

Last, but not least, two changes at the top take effect at the AGM. In the light of Bishop John's retirement last year, Charles Miller very graciously volunteered to stay in post as our Diocesan Spiritual Director for a fourth year, but this comes to an end at the AGM. His wise counsel and depth of spiritual resource have kept us firmly rooted in Christ, our shepherd and our King. Bishop Colin was very pleased to appoint Kevin Beer as Charles' successor. Kevin's long standing commitment to Cursillo and past experience as our Diocesan Lay Director will be a source of great strength

for the next three years so long as his next appointment doesn't take him away from the Oxford Diocese.

I too have come to the end of my term as Diocesan Lay Director and Bishop Colin was again very pleased to endorse the Secretariat's unanimous recommendation and appoint Pauline Stanton-Saringer to succeed me at the AGM.

To all of those named above, to the other members of Secretariat and of our extended Servant Community, especially Sarah Smith, palanca organiser, and Victoria Mort, prayer diary organiser, and to many others who have served on the Oxford #16 weekend team, given action talks, organised and hosted Ultreyas and played music at Clausura and at Ultreyas, I say a huge thank you on behalf of us all.

I look back on this year of change as one of consolidation, confident that we have the resources, human and spiritual, needed to produce more growth and fruit in abundance.

... and some Disappointment? It was, of course, very disappointing that the Oxford #17 weekend couldn't go ahead in October because there just weren't enough applications. Stu Vaughan had recruited and started to train an excellent team and Alison Shaw, with help from Elizabeth Taylor, had put time and effort into many preparations and it must have felt like a great anti-climax to everyone involved. However in the last couple of weeks before we decided to postpone, it felt increasingly that we were struggling against insurmountable obstacles, perhaps against the will of God! With the benefit of hindsight, I'm certain that Oxford #17 will go ahead stronger and on much firmer foundations in April.

However we have to ask ourselves why there were too few applications in order to make sure that we don't repeat any mistakes we may have made.

- Was it simply God's plan that the weekend should happen in April and not October? We must take care not to rely on this as an excuse for our own inaction?

- Were those of us who have been part of the movement for a long time, losing our enthusiasm or feeling it is time for a newer generation to step up?
- Were newer Cursillistas, longing for others to experience what they had received on a Cursillo weekend, just lacking in confidence to 'evangelise'?
- Were we all just assuming that we didn't need to do anything because **'they'** would take care of it, whoever **'they'** may be? Perhaps this is our natural British attitude to evangelisation in general?

What we must always have in mind is that people only come to Cursillo through a sponsor and for a very good reason. A Cursillo weekend isn't just like any other Christian course or retreat. If someone decides to apply without knowing anyone who has attended before, they will have very little idea of what to expect nor of whether it is likely to fulfil the purpose they have in mind. So the reality is that people only end up applying to attend a Cursillo weekend because a Cursillista has prayed about it and recommended it as being appropriate for the person at their particular stage in the spiritual journey. That is, applications only come because, with God's guidance, people have been found by Cursillistas – that's you and me, and yes, God does require us to play our part!

So, for all that has been ... **THANKS!** and for all that will be ... **YES!**

Christ is still counting on us, and we on him. May God bless all that we do in his name in the coming year.

Peter Watsham, Diocesan Lay Director

Spiritual Directors Report

The health of an organization or community is in no small degree measured by its capacity to evolve and renew itself. In the case of Oxford Diocesan Cursillo that shows itself in our capacity to recruit pilgrims for our weekends, staff the weekend teams, and raise leaders for the Secretariat and Servant Community. As in so many other spheres in our age of labour-saving devices when no one has much time to spare (!), this is a challenge for us. But it is a challenge that we are meeting!

As Spiritual Director over the past four years, the issue of clergy 'staffing' has been a constant low-grade headache. Certainly the weekend ministry is a time-consuming one, highly scripted in a way that requires study and preparation both intellectually and spiritually. Clergy will often ask: "Is that a good use of my time?" The answer to that question comes when a priest sees the impact of the Cursillo method in the lives of individuals and congregations. So, in large measure our challenge is to help them see that. I can't say that I have had much success with that, and so I have taken comfort and consolation in Jesus's likening the Kingdom to the seed growing secretly at night. In fact, that remains with me as the abiding image of Cursillo itself.

The risk in that is that people think of it as something secretive. We know that some pilgrims find that aura as off-putting as it is unnecessary. I think our attempts to de-mystify the Cursillo weekend experience have been helpful. It remains the case, though, that the best way to introduce Cursillo is individually and personally, and that holds true for both laity and clergy. My hope is that my successor will find time and creative ways to do that with the many clergy in our Diocese who would value the energizing impact of Cursillo in the congregation.

We of course pray for a new Bishop of Oxford whose support for Cursillo arises out of actual experience. The next diocesan Spiritual Director may well have to help finesse that in a way I did not have to owing to Bp John's prior experience of, and strong commitment to, Cursillo. We must support the next diocesan Spiritual Director in that.

Although Bp John has left his post, it is appropriate to acknowledge as my tenure ends how helpful it was to know that he would always do whatever he could for the Cursillo movement. During this time of vacancy-in-see it is equally appropriate to see how supportive Bp Colin Fletcher has been—for the same reason: a first-hand experience of the way the Cursillo experience and ‘method’ touches lives.

Going forward, the Secretariat will have to judge carefully how to involve the diocesan Spiritual Director. Stipendiary clergy are hard-pressed when it comes to meetings---the time they take, the e-mails and attachments they produce and require--, and the church must always keep to the fore the particular grace and charisms for which the church has a priestly office at all. Cursillo will thrive best when the Cursillo community draws on exactly those graces and charisms from the clergy who are committed to it.

An able ‘crop’ of clergy are now working in the movement as SAs on weekends and at Ultreyas. There is a potentially enriching mix of retired and active clergy, and one task in future is to help them get to know one another and to ‘bond’ in a shared sense of the Christian way as Cursillo teaches it and forms Christians in it. I look forward to sharing in that as time and energy allow in future, and offer thanks for the shared work and witness with so many, especially Peter Watsham, over the past four years.

Respectfully,

The Revd Dr Charles Miller, Diocesan Spiritual Director

Accounts

Detailed accounts are available separately and show that our expenditure has exceeded our income for the year so that we have total funds of £12,441 as at 31st August 2015, compared with £13,025 at 31st August 2014. Costs of weekends have increased and donations following weekends have decreased. There has been a small decrease in planned giving (standing orders) which average £150 per month. Donations not attached to particular weekends include one of £1,500.

Our income consists entirely of gifts for weekends, monthly standing orders and collections at Ultreyas, with sundry other donations. Standing orders are very helpful in forward budgeting.

Bank details for standing orders or 'faster payments' are:

Account name: Anglican Cursillo in Oxford Diocese

TSB Princes Risborough Branch, sort code 30-96-86

Account number 00560745

Please also remember that if you are a taxpayer you are eligible to make a gift aid declaration so that we can claim back an extra 25p for every £1 donated. Please ask for a Gift Aid form.

Many thanks to all those who have given during the past year and to Ann Moss for her work as Treasurer during the year.

Gilly Robinson, Acting Treasurer

Fourth Day Report

I took over from Janet Proudman this year and have really enjoyed the role so far. There have been 7 Ultreyas this year, at Shinfield, Beaconsfield, Bedgrove, Oxford DCH, Hurley, Old Marston and Abingdon. Most were on Saturdays but we did have one summer evening Ultreya. All have been well attended with potential new Cursillistas invited along. Over the past year it has been a priority to get new Cursillistas to give Action Talks and this has worked really well. It would be great if more areas would volunteer to host Ultreyas so we could have 9 or 10 next year, one a month apart from April and October when we have the weekend.

In September after the Old Marston Ultreya we had a meeting to see how other Cursillistas can get involved in supporting the Secretariat with Cursillo activities. There were 5 ladies who joined the 4th Day Group and two ideas came out of the meeting. These were a need to support new Cursillistas just after their weekend, perhaps by a phone call to touch base and to find out if they are in Group Reunion (with a view to helping them find one if not) and an interest in holding a Day of Deeper Understanding as there hasn't been one for a long time. I am hoping to get some assistance in getting parishes to host Ultreyas and in publicising upcoming ones but this hasn't happened just yet.

I have had several requests from people wishing to join reunion groups and did not have any luck in helping them. This highlighted the need to have a survey of Group Reunion activity which I'm sure is very healthy but it would be great to know where and when these groups are meeting so we can support new Cursillistas in their 4th Day. I would like to do this early in 2016.

I look forward to developing the role in the coming year and to seeing many of our Oxford Cursillistas at the 4th Day activities. Ultreya!

Caraline Hedges, 4th Day Representative

Pre-Cursillo Report

I have been sending and giving out Cursillo information to people I have come in contact with, or who have contacted me about Cursillo.

I have been going out to different places and different events in the diocese and wherever I have been, I try to talk to people about the Cursillo movement and try to get it into parishes where it does not currently operate.

I am grateful to Ann Moss who is looking after applications and bookings and doing an excellent job. And also to Sarah Smith who is doing an excellent job organising and managing Palanca.

I hope to see many of you at the AGM on 28th November at St Helen's Abingdon.

Teresa Carter, Pre-Cursillo Representative

Team: Ann Moss (Bookings Secretary), Sarah Smith (Palanca)

BACC Report

Very unfortunately, since being appointed as BACC Rep at last year's AGM, I have been unable to attend any of the three national events, but Oxford has been represented at all of them and I am grateful to others for the following reports. In addition, Ali Askew is a member of the BACC standing committee.

The BACC full council meeting was held on 22nd November 2014 in Sandbach. Hugh Burgess, National Spiritual Director, led a session which explored what Cursillo is, popular misconceptions and how it might make more impact on local churches across the UK. What emerged was that one of the focuses of Cursillo at national level is to encourage the adoption of the Cursillo way of Group Reunion (with a focus on prayer, study and action) as widely as possible in all parishes and thus to try to get away, to an extent,

from the assumption that Cursillo is just about going on a weekend. The emphasis was on Cursillo as a 'way', a method, not a membership organisation. We were asked to take away and act on a paper about insurance cover.

The BACC AGM and a pre-meeting study session took place on 9th May 2015 in Edinburgh. In the study session, Hugh Burgess focused on Grace and our response to it. Using the Prodigal Son story and in particular the role of the older brother, he highlighted the contrast between responding to God out of a sense of duty, obeying the rules, ticking the boxes, and a response which grows out of love of God. Hugh also reminded us of his challenge to spread the Cursillo way of meeting in small groups to every church in the land. At the AGM, in addition to the usual reports, we received information about safeguarding vulnerable adults and weekend guests from other Christian denominations and dioceses.

Hundreds of Cursillistas (including three from Oxford) arrived at Blackburn Cathedral for the Ultreya GB 2015 on Saturday 5th September. Photographs and videos of the event can be found at <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/s54tv1ovzflxs7v/AACbBrCOLiemjqIW9746-JBma?dl=0>. Links to the President's speech and to the sermon given by the Rt Rev'd Geoff Pearson - Bishop of Lancaster, are at <http://www.anglicancursillo.co.uk/information-for-diocese.php>. York Diocese was commissioned to host Ultreya GB 2016 and we look forward to this highlight in the Cursillo calendar next September.

Sarah Jane Ebanja, BACC Representative

Weekends Report

My first year as Weekend Rep has been made more interesting by the move back to Cold Ash. This has entailed changing a great deal of paperwork in the Manuals and other places. Initially I had to familiarise myself with OneDrive which was quite a learning curve for me! I was rather spoilt for the weekend in April as Peter was Lay Rector and did a lot of his own paperwork

for the Team. Serving on the Team for that weekend was an ideal opportunity to see how everything would work in the future, and it was lovely being back at Cold Ash and to see the improvements they have made.

At the Ultreya in September it was encouraging to have some interest from Cursillistas in helping on the weekend team, mainly on the actual weekend. Elizabeth Taylor has very kindly helped with some of the paperwork and I am grateful for her IT expertise.

It was very disappointing that we had to postpone Oxford 17 but hopefully this will mean a full house in April and people signing up well in advance so we don't live with the uncertainty we experienced before the October weekend.

Alison Shaw, Weekend Representative

Communications Report

My involvement with Oxford Cursillo got off to a slow start. I was booked in for Oxford #15 but was unable to attend due to a family emergency. I succeeded in going to Oxford #16 and on my application form admitted to having had a career in IT. (I am now retired). Peter Watsham soon came knocking and, after a two month wait on his part, I became Communications Rep. My function is to lead our communications work supported by a very able team.

Hilary Derbyshire looks after our website and related matters.

Libby Hawkness-Smith edits and compiles Oxon Fourth.

Victoria Mort looks after the Prayer Diary.

My personal tasks are to keep all our publications up to date, print them as necessary, and email and post these and other communications on behalf of Secretariat members as required. Also to look after our register of Cursillistas and the mailing lists.

I ask your patience as I learn the role.

Elizabeth Taylor, Communications Representative

ANGLICAN CURSILLO IN THE DIOCESE OF OXFORD
Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at St Helen's Church
Centre, Abingdon on 15 November 2014

Present: Peter Watsham (Lay Director), Charles Miller (Spiritual Director), Ellen Turtle (Secretary), Gilly Robinson (Treasurer), Janet Proudman (4th Day representative), and 28 other Oxford Cursillistas.

1. The meeting was chaired by Peter Watsham and began at 11.40am with prayers led by Charles Miller.
2. Apologies were received from Teresa Carter, Pre-Cursillo representative, and 33 other Oxford Cursillistas.
3. The minutes of the previous AGM on 9th November 2013 were unanimously agreed.
4. There were no matters arising from the minutes.
5. The Annual Report for the year ending 31 August 2014 had been sent to all members. Peter Watsham said he wanted to look both forwards and backwards from this point. Looking backwards, there were many people to say thank you to, such as those who had: given action talks; played the piano; acted as SA's; organised Ultreya's and Reunions; served on team or led weekends; to name a few. Lots of people had given lots of little bits of time, and big bits of time, to keep us going and keep us vibrant. In particular there are people who have served on the Secretariat and are now stepping down for different reasons. Gilly, our treasurer, has served her 3-year term and more in other roles previously. People also leave because of increasing pressures elsewhere, e.g. interregnums, which has caused Janet to resign her post. Likewise Stu who joined the Secretariat last year but, due to a job change, cannot continue. Our thanks go to all of them, as well as a card. We also thank Douai Abbey, where almost all of us have been either for our own weekend or as team. It's a great place with so many riches to thank them for.

Another person missing today is +John who has been a great support and encouragement to us. He's also inspired us to consider a venue which can take more guests on each weekend, which has encouraged

our return to Cold Ash.

Looking forward, we want to be a catalyst for apostolic action, and we've had apologies from people for that very reason. If there was no-one here for that reason it would be great, but we do also need people to help the movement so that we can support and feed others to work in their own parishes and communities. We need a good balance between Cursillo and our 'real mission' at work or in our parishes, getting food for our journeys. +John has also said of Cursillo, 'some people don't know what they're missing, so tell them'; so we each need to find our own balance between our own mission, nurturing, and spreading Cursillo as a tool. Peter noted that he was probably the only one who has found himself released from Parish ministry in order to focus on Cursillo in his role as Diocesan Lay Director.

6. Treasurer's report: Gilly Robinson noted that the financial report was for the year ending 2014, not 2013 as in the Agenda. Talking through the accounts, Gilly noted that giving had changed but this was partly due to there having been two guest weekends rather than the Deepening Discipleship day as in 2013. There had also been some further donations for Oxford #14, of around £400, which came in after the financial year end. Costs for #15 were higher than for #14 due to a greater number of guests. Other things to note were that Gift aid had changed and so we've been resubmitting paperwork to ensure we can continue to receive this; interest received is down due to the low rates at present, and Secretariat expenses continue to be low. The miscellaneous expense was some crosses, which Gilly was uncertain which weekend they were for. Finally Gilly noted that our account has moved to TSB as part of the changes with the LloydsTSB group.
7. Adoption of the accounts was proposed by Alison Askew, seconded by Val Bradley and unanimously agreed.
8. Independent examiner: Mr Soutter, who has fulfilled this role for the past 3 years, is moving house and would therefore prefer to step down although he has offered to continue if we cannot find anyone else. In the absence of any other suggestions, Gilly suggested that she might ask someone from within her firm, Williams & West, and as she would be stepping down as Treasurer there would be no conflict of interest. This

was proposed by Mike Austell, seconded by Charles Miller, and unanimously agreed. (Action: Gilly Robinson & new Treasurer).

9. Elections and Servant Community vacancies:

- a. For the role of Treasurer, one nomination had been received for Ann Moss, proposed by Barbara Earl and seconded by Dorothy Donald. No other nominations were made and Ann's election was unanimously approved.
- b. Peter noted that we had four 'Reps' vacancies on the Secretariat; nominations would be to the Secretariat and the Secretariat members would then agree the allocation of roles depending on the skills of the membership. It was also hoped that the Reps, and the Weekend and 4th Day reps in particular, would build teams around themselves to help spread the load. Nominations for two people had already been received: Alison Shaw, proposed by Janet Proudman and seconded by Ellen Turtle; and Nick Hance, proposed by Stephanie Keates and seconded by Charles Smith. Both elections were approved and it was agreed that Alison and Nick would fill the roles of Weekend Rep and Communications Rep respectively.
- c. This left two remaining 'Reps' vacancies: BACC and 4th Day. Peter noted that our thanks were due to Alison Askew for stepping in as Acting BACC Rep and for her work on the BACC Council, as well as to Mary. It was very much hoped that Mary would be well enough to receive our thanks in person at a future meeting.
Val asked for more information about the remaining roles and Peter summarised the general work attached to each role. Following this, Caraline Hedges offered to stand as 4th Day Rep, proposed by Ann Moss and seconded by Charles Smith; and Sarah Jane Ebanja offered to stand for BACC Rep, proposed by Janet Proudman and seconded by Val Bradley. These elections were approved unanimously. Val Bradley also offered to join the 4th Day team to support the Rep.

10. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

The meeting closed at 12.20pm.