

ST AIDAN'S PARISH AGM 6th July 2025

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I would like to warmly welcome you all to our AGM, my name is John Hannacher and I am chair of the parish council and would like to share some highlights from the parish ministries and then Sue Finch will talk about parish finances.

The Parish Council meets quarterly and the minutes are posted on the Parish website as are the minutes of this meeting. Most photographs and names of those on the Parish council are posted on the wall in the Narthex.

I would also like to welcome Eileen Williams our safeguarding Rep who joined the Council in December and Jim Jenkins who will be replacing Finbarr O'Donoghue on Maintenance issues. Our thanks to Finbarr for his support.

Let me now read the reports from the other parish ministries. There has been a lot going on.

Formation

Our First Holy Communion mass took place for 17 children on Saturday 10th May with classes for next year due to start in September.

Confirmations are scheduled for Saturday 9th May 2026 with classes beginning in September. This year the curriculum will embrace technology through the Sycamore programme using the Hallow App, currently we have with 35 candidates

Brian Gallagher who has been a mainstay Catechist of the Confirmation classes will be stepping down but has agreed to remain part of the team to train the new Catechists taking over. On behalf of the parish, thank you Brian for your commitment over the years.

Baptismal preparation also continues with Julie Stewart and thanks to her and all our dedicated catechists for carrying out this important work.

Social & Cultural - (Deirdre Lay)

Social and Cultural is a key part of parish life with regular Sunday coffee mornings and monthly parish lunches.

We had a very successful volunteers social on the 14th July last year. Volunteers from both parishes were invited and we catered for a total of 83 people and our next volunteer social will be on 20th July.

We celebrated the Feast of St Aidan with a Walk followed by a BBQ on Sunday 8th September raising £384.77 with 80 attendees. It will be held on 31st August this year.

A parish quiz was held in Latimer on 6th May and raised over £1000 with 90 participants and we plan to repeat it in May next year.

We also plan to hold a Christmas Draw this year.

We would welcome new volunteers for both coffee and the parish lunch.

Ecumenical - (Vivianne Gattoc)

We continue to participate in ecumenical activities in the local area and Fr. Roy now also attends the regular meeting of the Churches Together group with Vivianne Gattoc, where activities are planned

These include the World Day of Prayer on 7th March, the Good Friday Walk of witness, participation in the LC Village Day on 21st June and a picnic lunch which took place at Westwood Park on Sunday 29th June. Details of these events can be found in our Newsletter

Liturgy - (Vince Smith)

The Liturgy Group enhances our worship through music, readers, altar servers, Eucharistic Ministers and other.

The choir have been working hard and I'm sure we have all heard the positive effect of regular rehearsals, singing workshops and 2 new singers who have recently joined. We now also have 3 musical accompanists.

A review is to be held to see if we can improve the acoustics for congregational singing affected by the ceiling tiles at the time of the church refurbishment.

The new Lectionary was successfully introduced at Advent after training sessions for all Readers.

We continue to Stream weekend masses for those who cannot attend in person.

There is currently a shortage of readers on Saturday evenings and would welcome anyone is interested in joining.

Youth

Several young people from St Aidan's and Our Lady's attended the FLAME youth event in Wembley in March and found it inspiring.

Youth masses have been re-introduced in March and June of this year with good support

The Diocese has approved the employment of a Youth leader to be shared among St Aidan's, Our Lady's, IHM & St Columba's, working 20 hours per week and will be jointly financed. Deacon David is leading the development and recruitment for this role.

Maintenance – (Jim Jenkins)

Since last year's AGM a number of maintenance tasks have been completed including:-

- A Health & Safety audit was undertaken on 24th February with no major issues identified.

- Removal of 2 pine trees deemed to be dangerous, from the grounds at front of the church.
- Replacement and upgrading of lights in the church and in the hall
- Repair of major leak in the hall.

You will see the noticeboard listing those whose ashes are in the memorial garden is now in place and we are going to re-look at replacement of areas of damaged tarmac near the hall and entrance.

I would like to acknowledge Deirdre's help throughout the year with all maintenance issues

Pastoral Area (Peter Kirk)

Regular meetings within the enlarged Pastoral Area continue, with St Aidan's represented by Father Roy, Joanna Hale and Peter Kirk.

The objective of the Pastoral Area Council, under our clergy's guidance, is for parishes to collaborate as closely as possible and to share in best practices.

One focus this year will be a review of the Emmaus Talks, some hosted by St Aidan's and the regular Pastoral Area Services booklet which is issued at Easter and Christmas.

There is also consideration of a parish pilgrimage, probably in October, to St Peter's Church Marlow as part of the Jubilee Year celebrations.

Safeguarding (Eileen Williams)

The Parish Safeguarding Representative (PSR) helps to facilitate the safer recruitment of those working with vulnerable people, including the DBS disclosure process, as well as acting as a point of contact for concerns to be shared, and a link between the Diocese and the Parish.

All PSR's in the diocese are encouraged to attend online and in person courses and in November Eileen attended a full day of training on Domestic Abuse and on Spiritual and Ritual abuse.

Father Roy is of course ultimately responsible for Safeguarding in his Parish.

Currently there are around thirty people in the parish who have had their DBS application processed with rechecks taking place every three years.

The Diocese has implemented a Safeguarding Communication Plan and is encouraging us to consider ways that we can support their communication of the Church's Safeguarding Message.

Safeguarding has been promoted in the Parish this year by highlighting:

Safeguarding Sunday and Adult Safeguarding Week in November, by a talk and short film at all the Masses and in the weekly Newsletter, by highlighting International Day of Prayer for Victims of Trafficking in February and the National Day of Prayer for Victims of Abuse in May.

Finally, in March Eileen attended the Flame Event at Wembley Arena to ensure the safeguarding of five young people from St Aidan's, and with other Safeguarding DBS checked volunteers and eight more young people from Our Lady's, St Columba's and The Immaculate Heart of Mary.

She was assisted on that occasion by Suzette Harris whom we are all very pleased to welcome as the new Parish Safeguarding Representative partner and who will allow for an even greater profiling of Safeguarding in the parish in the future.

Conclusion

A word of thanks to those people who regularly donate food to the Chiltern Foodbank. Almost 300kgs of Food were donated by St Aidan's parishioners in the past year.

Cytiva, a large local pharmaceutical company has approached us about using our car park for staff weekdays when it's not in use. Although it has been a slow start, this could provide a good source of income for the church.

On behalf of the Parish Council, I would like to thank everyone who gives their time to support the parish. We always welcome more parishioners to get involved.

I would like to conclude with a thank you to Fr. Roy for his stewardship of the parish, Deacon David Curtis, fellow parish council members and Deborah Rogers our parish secretary.

John Hannacher 6th July 2025