

Lay Directors Report for AGM 17th May 2025

Thank you all for coming today and thank you also for all the work that you are doing for Christ in your churches and communities.

Over the past year our focus has been on rebuilding the strength of our servant community. We have tried to provide monthly opportunities to meet, for study, prayer and encouragement.

There have been three diocesan Ultreyas over the past year as well as the National Ultreya in Sheffield last September. A group of us attended and the newly made Lichfield banner had its first outing! This year's National Ultreya is on 6th September in Durham. Tony and I will be attending and would encourage you all to think about coming along. Durham is a fabulous place to spend a weekend and the National Ultreya is a great experience.

Cursillo #65 was held at Foxhill in October. The LR Kate Ingelby worked very hard preparing her team for the weekend but unfortunately was not able to be on staff herself in the end due to contracting Covid the week before. Beth Roberts stepped up to lead the weekend and I filled in the OLR slot as best I could. The weekend was an overall success and it was particularly pleasing to see the chapel at Foxhill so full for the closing eucharist. In all we welcomed 5 new cursillistas from the Chester Diocese and 2 from the Lichfield Diocese. The team has been assembled for Cursillo #66 and Beth will be the 'official' LR this time around in October, again at Foxhill.

The November Ultreya at St Martin's, Poynton was a marvellous event with a visit from Bishop Sam who was very engaged with our programme and gave a relevant and thoughtful sermon during the eucharist. We were also blessed to have Rev. Swires-Hennessy, a very accomplished musician, to play the organ for us.

At the beginning of December, a very small (select!) group attended an Advent Quiet Day at St Paul's Macclesfield, led by Veronica. We had a thoughtful and productive day which set us on the right path for advent.

Our February Ultreya was hosted by the team at St Michael and All Angel's, Runcorn. Veronica gave us a very interesting talk on Icon painting and showed us some impressive pieces that she had painted herself on various retreats and courses. She is currently back in Lesvos at the moment attending another Icon painting course so I can't wait to see what she produces this time!

At the beginning of April we held a 'Cursillo Revisited' day at Foxhill. Despite some confusion on numbers and where to send the application forms to, 26 people managed to attend the day. The organising team of Nick and Sue Hutt, Tony, myself and Fiona put together a programme which revisited the 3 main staples of Cursillo Christian life; Prayer, Study and Apostolic Action. We also added a session on Self-Care to highlight the importance of looking after oneself to enable us to be able to serve effectively. The day was deemed a success and we plan to do something similar next year towards the end of February.

Lichfield have made great strides towards restarting Cursillo in the Diocese and now have a standing committee tasked with planning the way forward. This is likely to be a long term project and as such Chester and Lichfield will continue to work together

for the foreseeable future. Lichfield hosted 2 events over the past year. One was a cream tea last June which gave people a taste of what to expect from a weekend and as a result of that we welcomed April and Jen on Cursillo #65. The other was a 'Spa Day for the Soul' in January which was well attended by people from 3 different diocese and even got a mention in BACC pages! (see the noticeboard!)

Looking to the future!

I'm confident that we are well on our way to rebuilding the 4th Day community following the glitch caused by the pandemic. However, we can't continue that positive direction unless some of you are prepared to take on roles on the secretariat. We have managed this past year without a Secretary, mainly by other members of the secretariat taking a share in the tasks that needed to be done. Unfortunately, our BACC rep has had to stand down and our communications officer has come to the end of her term, which means that there are now 3 vacancies on the secretariat. None of these roles are onerous, just a few hours work a month and could be shared by more than one person. I sincerely plead with you to search your hearts and consider whether you could take on one of these roles because if we can't find replacements then we will need to consider whether we can continue to run Cursillo in this diocese.

Once again, I would like to thank the secretariat and the rest of the team for their support and commitment., Sue & Nick Hutt, Denise, Vicki, Veronica, Carol and Julie; Ruth, Sue C, Janette, Joan, Sue L, Anne and Tony.
Ultreya!

Treasurer's Report – Available on request.

Safeguarding Report: Chester Cursillo 2025 AGM.

I know of no Safeguarding issues that have arisen in the past year. But the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser should be consulted whenever a Safeguarding concern of any kind arises. Safeguarding means we are keeping others and ourselves in a safe environment, as each one of us is vulnerable at some stage in our lives.

All Secretariat members should complete the Basic Safeguarding Awareness and Foundation Safeguarding Diocesan On-line Training.

Also, all members of staff on each weekend are now required to complete the Basic Safeguarding Awareness level training.

But I would encourage anyone to complete these, as we never know when a safeguarding issue might arise.

Janette Webster

Weekend Coordinator's Report submitted by Veronica Hydon

After various email exchanges before and after a Zoom meeting held between Carol, Julie and me on Friday 28 March, we agreed on the final wording of the template for

the Staff Invitation Letters for Weekend #66 and these have now been sent out to the Staff Team by the lovely Carol on our behalf.

In the end, 26 people signed up for the Cursillo Revisited Retreat Day but on the day sadly one person was unwell so couldn't come, so in the end we were a total of 25 for lunch which as you know had been the limit we were given by Foxhill. The staff were extremely patient and accommodating of our last-minute tweaks to numbers and unforeseen dietary requirements, so all was well on the day (which really was a very creative and refreshing event altogether, so huge thanks to the planners and leaders of the sessions, including Fiona)...

As yet, no completed application forms have been received by me in terms of participants on Weekend #66... Please encourage possible participants in your congregations!

A room at Foxhill has been booked for Saturday 26th February 2026, to hold a Lenten Quiet Day for Cursillistas. 30 places will be available.

Foxhill has also been booked for Cursillo #67 in October 2026

Communications Officer: Report May 2025

There are currently 150 Cursillistas on the email list.

Monthly Palanca letters were sent out on behalf of Denise Harding

Monthly prayer letters were sent out on behalf of Sue Lewis

A Summer newsletter and a Winter newsletter were sent out on behalf of Sue Lewis

The email address for the Communications officer was changed, and that is mostly working although some people are still using the old address.

Contact details from the Excel spreadsheet of current Cursillistas is being transferred to the email contact list, so that there is a single contact list.

Fourth Day Officer: Report 2024/2025

There are five Fourth Day Communities in Chester Cursillo:

CREWE : Lay Rector, Anne Marshall

NANTWICH: Lay Rector, Sue Hutt

STOCKPORT: Lay Rectors, Ruth & Ian Arthur

MACCLESFIELD & BOLLINGTON: Lay Rector, Bev Nixon

NORTH CHESHIRE & WIRRAL: Lay Rectors, Joan Clare, Beryl Smith

LICHFIELD: 2 Fourth Day Communities

We swung into action to provide Palanca for Weekend #65 at Foxhill, which was a pleasure to do; such an opportunity to help fellow Christians to 'know Christ better' as it says on our Group Reunion cards. It was also a pleasure to see the Chapel at Foxhill so full of Fourth Day Community Cursillistas, both old and new, from Chester Diocese and from Lichfield.

Three of the participants from Nantwich, Isobel Burnley [Acton and Worleston] Anna Burton and Lynne Hurst, have returned to their Group Reunions feeling they better understand the context of Group Reunion. Jan and Rob Anderson, who were new to Cursillo have joined Group Reunions and are full of enthusiasm.

Following feedback from #65 the Secretariat and Weekend Lay Rector have considered how the contact details for the local Participants and reach the relevant lay Rector quickly after the Weekend, after four days, to help organise them into a Group Reunion if the Participants wish to do so.

Rev Tony Rablen has offered to hold a Lay Rectors' Communion at Sue Hutt's house in Nantwich with also gives us an opportunity to get together as Lay Rectors and offer each other support. We hope to do this on Thursday July 3rd over lunchtime.

Each of us are Chester's Fourth Day Community and it takes the joint enthusiasm and effort of all us to grow God's Christian community here.

Please could you help by:

- Praying
- Staying aware of opportunities to 'flag up' the existence of Cursillo in our Diocese. Sharing your ideas and thoughts with others and your Lay Rectors.
- Making it known in your Church- talk about your recent Cursillo experiences; write an article for your Parish magazine, Newsletter or blog! How about a display in Church about Cursillo? All these provide opportunity to talk to others about Cursillo. But most powerfully, pray that God shows you who would benefit from Cursillo in your own Parish.
- Group Reunion- is the heart of the Fourth day Community. If your numbers are low or you are not in a good transport area or very mobile, consider holding a Group reunion online, on Zoom? I organise a hybrid Book Group of people in the room and others on a screen! Odd but this hybrid method seems to work! Might it work for Group Reunion?

If necessary be creative about how you meet up. Some used to meet up in car in a supermarket car park. Where could you meet if people are short of time or can't get together easily? We've met in Church itself sometimes...jolly chilly at St Mary's, Nantwich, but a good way of 'flagging up' the existence of Cursillo because you can explain what you're doing. Be open and welcoming though. Explain that if they're interested they'd be very welcome to join in this confidential faith-sharing under the headings of Prayer/ Study/Action. It's not actually necessary to go a Weekend to be a Group Reunion, though it is a delight. *And of course -BE JOYFUL IN THE LORD-ULTREYA!*

Sue Hutt [Fourth Day Organiser] 16/05/2025