

## 1. Present (attendance record at Appendix 1)

Father Emmanuel Kabinga CP, Deacon Rev David Collins; Chair: Alan Hodgson; Deputy Chair: Lucilla Solly; Eileen Carew, Frank McDonald, Cecilia Port (secretary). (Note: membership is 2 clergy ex-officio members, plus a minimum of 6 other members; *quorum* is two-thirds of all voting members, which includes *ex-officio* members.

## 2. Opening prayer & Welcome

Fr Emmanuel & Alan Hodgson

## 3. Parish Council & Elections 2024

**3.1** PC minutes 16/11/23 passed. PC constitution: members to read and circulate suggestions for March meeting, then agree changes unanimously and update **AP23-23**. (Action Points, AP, summary at Appendix2).

**3.2 PC elections 2024:** Alan Hodgson elected as Chair, proposed FM, seconded EC. Lucilla Solly elected as Deputy Chair, proposed FM, seconded EC. Alan and Lucilla took over as Chair and Deputy on the retirement of Frank Balloch at annual open Parish Meeting, 19 October 2023. CP continues as appointed secretary to PC. Since January 2023, two new PC members joined, Eileen Carew and Cath Manley; Susan Collins, Frank Balloch and Cath Manley have resigned during the year. The PC now has 5 non clergy members, although 6 is stipulated in the current constitution. Recruitment will be urgently promoted.

## 4. Faith Development (FD) & Liturgy

**4.1** Notes/comments: average Sunday mass attendance continues at last year's levels of around 70 (8.30 & 10.30 masses combined), about 30% fewer than pre-Covid numbers. The Passionists acquired Minsteracres in 1949 making 2024 the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year. This reason for celebration could be linked to our 2024 priorities and also aid our mission of "being a Community, not just a crowd". Incorporating some faith development opportunities into certain parish social events might encourage wider participation compared to the conventional format of faith talks during lent and advent, where attendance has diminished in recent times for a myriad of reasons.

**4.2 FD Priorities:** instigate a Passionist Companions group (the non-professed sharing of Passionist Charism, to reflect on and deepen faith in God) through: 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration event as part of other social events and some faith discussion meetings every 2-3 months.

**4.3 FD & Liturgy Priorities:** explaining key aspects of the mass & eucharist (via homily, newsletter); greater congregation participation in singing by inviting hymn choice suggestions appropriate to the liturgy (could include favourite hymns poll **AP23-1**); use of apposite quotes from St Paul of the Cross and Blessed Dominic Barbieri to underpin our faith (homily, newsletter)

**4.4 Churches Together:** EC represents our parish and asks that parishioners be reminded of events at end of mass announcements and encouraged to attend. It includes the Riding Mill churches and St Elizabeth's. Next event 21 Jan, 3pm Methodist chapel

**4.5 Heavenfield Partnership, DC:** There are infrequent meetings because St Elizabeth's is not a diocesan owned church therefore not involved in ancillary support, other than sacrament preparation activities co-ordinated by the partnership.

## 5. Justice & Peace Group (Jim Darlington, Frank Balloch, Eileen Carew)

**5.1** Priority "Live Simply" CAFOD campaign and links to *Laudato Si* encyclical: Frank Balloch's draft paper (appended) had been circulated to the PC and the consensus was to focus on the small steps at present. EC will feedback to J&P group to discuss promoting this to parish **AP23-9**.

**5.2** Priority "The Big Lent Walk: 200km in 40 days" to promote at a coffee morning followed by a walk around Minsteracres, at 3 different levels/distances.

**5.3** Priority Parish charity focus on Zambia: FrE is visiting his home country in April and will be able to scope out a suitable recipient charity via his local Passionist colleagues as a successor to our Indian charity **AP23-7**.

**5.4** Ongoing J&P initiatives: Asylum seekers/refugee annual collection opens this Sunday and money collected at after mass coffee will also be included for month of February. Gift Aid to be encouraged. There will be a frugal lunch on 5 April, with Fred de Lazaro (Camille's brother) as speaker.

## **6. Social Committee** (Chair, Sheila Longo, FM link)

Events planned for the first few months of 2024: Burns' Night, Friday 26 January; Parish lunches, February, March, May and June; Zambian dinner 13 April?, Pie & Peas Quiz, date to be decided, quizmaster AH; family barbecue in June, could be linked to liturgical feast; The PC added a potential event, a 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration/gala dinner in autumn 2024

## **7. Parish Finance (FM & AH)**

**7.1** Priorities arising from Church Inspection Report November 2023 (Minnie Fraser), published a day prior to meeting: urgent and major items identified in and around the church should be taken to next week's Minsteracres board meeting to expedite agreement to actions. Minnie has informed us that grant aid from the National Churches Trust, only available via the diocese, is a possibility, but closing date is 29 February, therefore FrE will ensure this is on the agenda, flagged as an urgent priority **AP23-19**. Minnie can assist with the grant process. The MRC budget for major drive repairs is soon to be approved and the parish likely to be asked for a contribution. Church tiling renovation quotes are currently being sought by Frank Balloch on behalf of PC and he will be advised that this might also be incorporated into a grant application (secretary to inform him and send report), **AP23-18**.

**7.2** **AP6** fire-proof cabinet essential for protection/storage of important parish documents: FM has quotes of circa £1000 to buy and install. He will circulate to PC members for approval and make purchase as soon as possible using current account funds.

**7.3** **AP23-17** DC has quotes for a digital hymn music player, which could be used in absence of organist to continue to support congregational hymn singing **AP23-1**. The PC agreed to go ahead with this purchase once DC had circulated quotes for approval, if possible using current account funds.

**7.4** **AP23-21** AH confirmed that monies from Easter and Christmas collections (excluding regular SOs) had been paid into parish account. These have in the past been given to the Minsteracres Community and this could be done, but in future it should be publicised at the time of the collections as this has not happened recently and some parishioners are not necessarily aware of this tradition.

## **8. Communications**

**8.1** **AP21-4** Frank Balloch has recently circulated the Parish census form via email with paper copies also available in church and this has been promoted in the newsletter. Within the next few months, we will have a clearer idea of actual parishioner numbers.

**8.2** The parish website, which was set up in 2019, needs some updating and Kevin Manley who uploads PC documents, will be asked to make some changes. Some suggestions will be circulated by the secretary and this item added to March agenda if necessary.

**8.3** **AP23-22** Frank Balloch has agreed to continue as Parish Newsletter editor for the time being.

## 9. Recruitment to Parish Groups

AH will speak after both masses on 28 January to encourage new members to join the Parish Council, Justice & Peace group and Social committee in particular.

## 10. AOB

MRC community, Tina and Pavan Martin: visa renewals due August. We expect 2 Passionist priests who have been proposed by the Passionist Provincial to join the community in the next 2 months.

## 11. PC Agenda, Dates & Times of Next Meetings

**11.1** Agenda: key areas are Faith Development & Liturgy, Communications, Finance & Maintenance, PC sub-groups

**11.2 2024 meetings: Proposed time & dates:** Next annual PC review brought forward to daytime Saturday 16 or 23 November 2024. Ordinary PC meetings will be every other month in 2024: 21 March 2-4pm, 7-9pm 16 May, 18 July, 19 September. The annual Open Parish meeting will be moved to January 2025 to follow the PC annual review in November 2024.

## Final Prayer

Fr Emmanuel closed the away day meeting with a prayer.

Cecilia Port  
Secretary to Parish Council

## APPENDIX 1

Attendance	FrE	DC	AH	LS	EC	FM	CP	Observers
20/1/24	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
21/3/24								
16/5/24								
18/7/24								
19/9/24								
16or23/11/24								

## APPENDIX 2

### Appendix 2.1 Action points completed since last meeting

Origin	Number/owner/s	Notes	Action
22/9/22	AP22-12 FrE, DC	FD: church organ: as no details of organist's absence plan available, backup plan will be implemented, AP23-17 below	completed
16/11/23	AP23-22 AH	Comms: Frank Balloch agreed to continue as newsletter editor for time being	completed

## Appendix 2.2 Live Action Points

Origin	Number/owner/s	Notes	Action
7/11/19	AP6 FM	Maintenance: obtain quotes for fireproof cabinet for document security to include delivery to Parish room	purchase asap, by March
18/11/21	AP21-34 Frank Balloch on behalf of PC	Comms: parish census 2023 started Jan 2024, using old database method as new Office 365 not suitable for purpose; also see AP23-2	started Jan 2024
21/1/23	AP23-1 DC, FrE	FD, Liturgy Group: favourite hymns parishioner suggestion action in consultation with Camille via newsletter	newsletter
16/2/23	AP23-2 Frank Balloch on behalf of PC	FD: children's liturgy questions to be added to parish census AP21-34 above (absent ?)	see progress under AP21-34
16/2/23	AP23-3 DC	FD: parish pilgrimage to Rome, May 2024, response on accommodation at Passionist HQ awaited	ongoing
16/3/23	AP23-7 FrE & J&P group	J&P group: Fr E to propose charity initiative in Zambia for parish; group to notify Indian Passionists & Fr Jenish	await report from J&P meeting
16/3/23	AP23-8 FM	FM meetings (2/year) with MRC re church repair & maintenance priorities, procedures & timelines; church quinquennial report published Jan 2024	ongoing
20/4/23	AP23-9 J&P group	J&P group Live Simply initiative: FB circulated draft paper, December; PC recommended promoting simple steps initially	J&P to action
27/7/23	AP23-17 DC	FD: action derived from AP22-12: quote obtained for digital hymn player for use in absence of organist which DC will circulate to PC for approval and purchase asap	March 2024
16/2/23	AP23-18 FM	Repairs: church floor tiling restorative polishing, quotes sought for job completion & potential grant aid sought at AP23-19	ongoing
21/9/23	AP23-19 AH, FM	Maintenance: consult Minnie Fraser, diocesan conservator specialists in relation to proposed MRC major grant application inc. church: urgent item for MRC board with 29/2/24 deadline for grant via diocese	ongoing
16/11/23	AP23-20 FM	Repairs to N drive; urgent request to MRC to fill potholes, move dangerous side stones; check timescale for full repairs	November
16/11/23	AP23-21 AH	Finance: tasks to Richard Bridges & Finance sub-group, re Parish financial balance required for each PC meeting; check interest beneficiary on diocese parish Gift Aid account; investigate lack of onward payments to community from parish contributions to MRC	Finance group to report back to AH
16/11/23	AP23-23 All PC members	Review of PC constitution	March 2024

## Justice & Peace Draft paper, December 2023, Frank Balloch

LiveSimply	Action Plan - Small Steps	Tick
<b>LIVE.....</b>		
1. ...simply	1.1 Have a monthly "unplugged" day - no Phone, TV, Radio	
	1.2 Make time for silence in your day	
	1.3 Have a meat-free day every week	
2. ...sustainably	2.1 Share lifts	
	2.2 Reduce energy use	
	2.3 Compost	
3. ...in solidarity	3.1 Join in with Cafod campaigns	
	3.2 Support Family Fast Days	
<b>LiveSimply</b>	<b>Action Plan - Giant Steps</b>	
<b>LIVE.....</b>		
4. ...simply	4.1 Collect pledges from parishioners to Live Simply	
	4.2 Buy no new clothes for 12 months	
	4.3 Don't use your car for one day a week	
	4.4 Pray daily for God's creation, people and the planet	
5. ...sustainably	5.1 Conduct an energy audit/act on findings	
	5.2 Develop a wildlife or vegetable patch	
	5.3 Join parish scheme to complete individual scorecards	
	5.4 Volunteer for Peace or Walled Gardens	
6. ...in solidarity	6.1 Switch to an ethical bank	
	6.2 Obtain energy from a renewable source	
	6.3 Reflect upon Laudato Si as a parish	