

Cold Kirby Village Consultation Evening

Monday 19 October 2026 · 6.30pm · Cold Kirby Village Hall

Questions & Answers

Introduction

Saint Michael's Church is an important part of Cold Kirby's history and landscape. Following its closure for regular worship, The Saint Aelred's Pilgrim Trail Society (TSAPTS) is exploring whether the building could be given a sustainable future as Saint Michael's Lodge.

Our current proposal is to develop low-cost accommodation with 12 beds, primarily for walkers, horse riders and cyclists travelling along the Saint Aelred's Pilgrim Trail (SAPT).

The questions and answers below record the issues asked by Cold Kirby residents at the first consultation meeting held on 19th October 2026.

RESIDENTS QUESTIONS.

Q1. Will there be a warden at the proposed lodge? How will the Lodge be operated to minimise the risk of noise and/or antisocial behaviour?

The precise arrangements for managing the Lodge have not yet been decided. As part of the feasibility study, we are examining the most appropriate and financially sustainable way to provide day-to-day management and support for guests.

Whatever arrangement is adopted, TSAPTS itself will retain appropriate oversight and accountability, regardless of whether the day-to-day management of the Lodge is undertaken by a warden, a contractor, or any other arrangement. TSAPTS in turn will insist on clear contractual terms for those responsible for managing the Lodge and delivering its services. These will define their responsibilities, the standards of service expected, and the arrangements for dealing with concerns or incidents.

The expectations placed on guests will also be made clear, including respect for local residents, the village, and its surroundings. Our aim is to establish a Lodge that is welcoming to pilgrims and other appropriate visitors, while being responsibly managed and considerate of the community in which it sits.

Q2. How would horses be accommodated?

The Saint Aelred Pilgrim Trail is a trail for walkers, cyclists and equestrians. Ideally we would like to be able to accommodate horses in close proximity to Saint Michael's Lodge. We don't have an identified site currently. Options might be i) to include a facility to stable horses within the project looking at car parking space which we hope we might pursue with CKVH ii) seek arrangements with local landowners or others in and around the village with stabling facilities who might be able to help accommodate horses. We would like to find a solution in Cold Kirby for equestrians to be able to use Saint Michael's Lodge but if we can't then we may have to leave this out of the project.

Q3. What is the role of the Church and Church Commissioners?

Saint Michael's Church is now closed. Whilst closed the Diocese of York have the responsibility for disposing of it (ie marketing it for sale). But the Diocese of York effectively only act as an 'agent' for the sale because the Church, legally, belongs to the Church Commissioners. TSAPTS keeps in

regular contact with both the Diocese of York and the Church Commissioners but it is the Commissioners who will ultimately decide who any acquirer of Saint Michael's will be. As part of their considerations the Church Commissioners must undertake their own statutory consultation with residents and other interested parties.

Q4. What scope is there in this project for including improvements to the Village Hall?

In this current feasibility study the only identified area where we have indicated specific collaboration with the Village Hall is on the issue of vehicle parking in the village. At a more general level, TSAPTS does want to work in partnership with the Village Hall Committee to explore how the Lodge and Village Hall might be used together for events and residential weekends.

For example, these might include:

- **Pilgrimage weekends**, bringing walkers and others to experience Saint Aelred's Pilgrim Trail and the surrounding countryside.
- **One-day events and gatherings**, making use of the Village Hall alongside the Lodge accommodation where appropriate.
- **Wellbeing retreats**, including yoga, meditation and quiet retreats.
- **Walking and wellbeing weekends**, combining guided walks, time in the countryside and opportunities for reflection.
- **Church and heritage events**, helping visitors discover Saint Michael's history and the distinctive character of Cold Kirby.

If we find during this feasibility study that these type of events are likely to play a significant part in the operation and business of Saint Michael's Lodge then of course we will seek to understand what issues in terms of improvements this might mean for the village hall. We do have to be careful about including any significant improvements for the village hall within an NLHF bid which seeks funding for a separate project. Of course if there is any agreement to make the village hall available for the types of event mentioned above – then the proper 'going rate' should be built into the business planning of the Saint Michael's Lodge project.

Q5. Why are you coming to seek views now, when you've been working on this project for a long time?

TSAPTS has been working on this project for almost 18 months. TSAPTS strongly believes that Saint Michael's church needs a sustainable future. The status quo is not an option. TSAPTS only received notification that the NLHF would support this feasibility study 6 weeks ago at the beginning of September. For many reasons, projects such as Saint Michael's which may need large sums of money to be invested in them, are unlikely to proceed unless they have NLHF support. It would have been wrong to promote this proposal without there being that support in place for this first phase.

Q6. Can other groups/charities make proposals for Saint Michael's?

Yes they can. Other groups have been able to put offers in to buy the building and make proposals since the church went up for sale over a year ago. As we understand it, anyone who has a convincing case for purchasing and funding the changes can do the same now. We know there was

at least one bid made to buy and adapt the church to make it into an Arts Centre. Our bid was chosen as the preferred bidder by the Diocese of York and the Church Commissioners.

Q7. Will the Lodge attract lots of cars into Cold Kirby?

The Lodge is intended for people travelling on foot, horseback and bicycle, rather than as a destination designed to attract car-borne visitors. Nevertheless, some guests may need to travel to the area by car. The eventual Saint Michael's Lodge Operating Plan will address guest arrivals and departures, parking, deliveries, and emergency access.

Q8. What about car parking for guests using the Lodge?

As noted in Q7. The Lodge is intended primarily for people travelling on foot. However, we can see that there is very little opportunity for car parking in the village and that when people do park cars along the road or at the green this can very easily cause traffic problems, especially for farm vehicles and machinery. So we want to explore possible solutions, for example a new parking area, which the Lodge and Village Hall together could benefit from. Any ideas or suggestions from people in the community would be very welcome.

Q9. What if the Village Hall car park does not go ahead?

We would need to consider other practical options as part of the feasibility work. The Lodge must have workable transport and access arrangements. If suitable arrangements cannot be established, that would need to be reflected in our assessment of the scheme.

Q10. Will there be noise, disturbance or problems for residents?

We recognise that residents will be concerned about noise, privacy, deliveries, rubbish and the general effect of visitors on village life. The operating arrangements and contractual requirements made with those managing the Lodge together with the expectations placed on guests, will address guest behaviour, noise, waste, security, and the handling of complaints, with the aim of minimising disturbance to residents and protecting the character of the village and churchyard.

Q11. Will large parties of people be allowed to stay at the lodge?

The Lodge is intended primarily for pilgrims, walkers, horse riders, cyclists, and other appropriate visitors to the North York Moors. It is not intended to operate as a party venue. Booking arrangements and guest conditions will be designed to support this purpose and to reduce the risk of unruly behaviour or disturbance to residents and the churchyard.

Q12. Will graves be disturbed by the proposed conversion?

We recognise that the churchyard is a place of great importance to families and to the village. Respect for graves and for those buried there must be a fundamental consideration.

TSAPTS starts from the position that no graves should be disturbed or moved in any way as part of this project. However, we cannot yet give an absolute assurance that no disturbance would be necessary, because understanding the current condition of the building as well as designing the Saint Michael's Lodge building have not been finalised. Our aim would be to properly protect graves and memorial stones that are close to where any eventual building work might have to take

place. Any proposal that might affect graves would require careful investigation and the appropriate permissions before work could proceed and we would keep all residents fully informed of this.

Q13. Will families still be able to visit graves?

TSAPTS again starts from the position that families will be able to visit graves. Clearly once any building work commences, for safety reasons it may not be possible to visit graves for a period of time where work is in progress. The continuing significance of the churchyard and the needs of families must be taken seriously. Access arrangements would need to be considered as the proposals develop, so that people visiting graves can do so respectfully and without unnecessary difficulty.

Q14. Will families be able to use the church for significant 'life events' ie weddings?

TSAPTS will give this consideration but an immediate issue would appear to be that providing sufficient space for such an event to take place inside the building is likely to have a major impact on the ability to fit in at least 12 bed spaces in the church to make a viable business model. The ability to hold a church wedding in the building is already lost with the closure of the church for public worship.

Q15. How will utilities be brought into the church?

The church currently only has an electrical supply and will need a water supply and sewerage connection. Part of the feasibility study is to have these utilities surveyed and that will also include detailing the best route into the church building. We would not want to disturb the churchyard if at all possible. Utilities could enter via the existing path and there are numerous examples of churches using existing pathways as a route for utility services.

Q16. What if construction traffic prevents farmers or residents from getting through?

Maintaining access is essential. A traffic management plan would need to be agreed with the local planning and highway authorities, to meet the needs of residents, agricultural operations and emergency services, and how any temporary restrictions or deliveries would be coordinated. The detailed arrangements would need to be agreed with the relevant parties before work begins.

Q17. Will the Lodge need ongoing subsidies?

This is one of the important questions the business planning must answer in our feasibility study. We need to understand likely demand, operating costs, staffing and maintenance requirements, income and the risks involved. The NLHF will require a viable and sustainable business model and plan if they are to entertain funding a full scale capital re-purposing project. If we cannot be confident that we have a good business model that will deliver a surplus each year which can then be re-invested to maintain the upkeep and repair of the building, then we are unlikely to get NLHF support. A sustainable future would require a credible plan for running the Lodge, not simply raising money to convert the building. The NLHF will not give ongoing subsidies.

Q18. Can residents suggest alternative uses for the church?

Yes. We want to hear ideas as well as concerns. The Lodge is the proposal we are currently exploring, but residents may identify other opportunities, constraints or local needs that we should understand. TSAPTS is not able to just take up any alternative proposal even if it has a lot of local backing. Any other proposal must sit with TSAPTS aims and objectives otherwise a different charitable organisation would have to take up leading the project. No alternative use for Saint Michael's was mentioned at the meeting when residents were asked.

Q19. What if the village strongly opposes the proposal?

TSAPTS takes the views of Cold Kirby residents seriously, and the level of local support will be an important consideration as the project develops. We recognise that residents may have differing views, and we want to understand the reasons for both support and concern. The NLHF also expects projects to demonstrate meaningful local engagement and support. The feedback received through this consultation will help inform our assessment of the proposal and the decisions that follow. TSAPTS believes that simply leaving the building unused is not an option, eventually the building will be sold to an organisation offering a proposal which the Church Commissioners can support. If, over time, there is no forthcoming proposal then the building will be left to decay. TSAPTS believes that a decision about the future of Saint Michael's should not be 'kicked down the road' for future residents/generations to deal with, there is a responsibility to deal with the future of the church now.

Q20. What happens after this meeting?

The views expressed at the meeting of 19 October will now help inform the next stage of our work. The project team will continue with the surveys, design, accessibility, planning and business investigations needed to assess feasibility. Residents will be kept informed of progress by further consultation evenings, information and updates on the web site www.saintaelredspilgrimtrail.com local village WhatsApp groups, the SAPT quarterly newsletter and copies of the notes of consultation meetings.

Thank you for taking part and helping us explore the future of Saint Michael's.

20 October 2026.