

## GENERAL SYNOD

### February 2009 Group of Sessions

### Report by the Business Committee

#### *Introduction and overview of the Agenda*

1. The Agenda for the February Synod includes a heavy programme of legislative business, the most substantial item of which is First Consideration of the draft legislation to allow the consecration of women to the episcopate.
2. Another distinguishing feature of the Agenda is the large number of (five) Diocesan Synod Motions and (three) Private Members' Motions, which encompass a wide range of subjects, many of which reflect the Church's engagement with public policy issues. In addition, the Agenda includes a presentation on the international financial crisis and the recession and a debate which will consider the challenge and opportunities of this for the Church.
3. There will be a further debate on the Anglican Covenant, in response to the request to the churches of the Anglican Communion to consider aspects of the Covenant process and the direction of the developing draft text.
4. The Business Committee has also scheduled a Take Note debate, resourced by the Mission and Public Affairs Council, which brings Synod up to date with the inter faith 'Presence and Engagement' process, following on from the last Synod debate in July 2005.
5. The Synod will be addressed on its first day by Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor, the Archbishop of Westminster, and his address, together with an introduction by the Archbishop of Canterbury, will provide an opportunity for the Synod to reflect on relations between the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church. This will lead into the debate (requested by Synod) on the report by the Second Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission on *Church as Communion*.
6. The Synod will also receive a Presidential Address by the Archbishop of Canterbury, which will include a reflection on the recent Lambeth Conference.
7. In relation to Private Members' Motions, the Business Committee has scheduled the three motions which have attracted over 100 signatures (which successive Business Committees have treated as the suitable threshold for Private Members' Motions being considered for debate). These are (in order of the number of signatures): the motions from Ms Vasantha Gnanadoss, on the Membership of Organizations which Contradict the Duty to Promote Race Equality; Mr Martin Dales, on Church Water Bills; and Mr Paul Eddy, on the Uniqueness of Christ in Multi-Faith Britain.
8. Diocesan Synod Motions are normally considered in the order in which they are received. However, the Business Committee has decided that the Southwark DSM on the Episcopal Ministry Act of Synod (which is first in the list) and the motion from Rochester on the Ordination of Women to the Episcopate (which is fourth in the list)

should not be debated while the legislative process on women bishops continues. The motion from Winchester on Solar Energy (which is third in the list) has been held back pending reconsideration and possible withdrawal by the Diocesan Synod.

9. The Bradford DSM on Episcopal and Senior Church Posts (which is fifth in the list) has been parked by the Committee for the moment while the new Dioceses Commission, recently established at the initiative of the Synod, is having its initial meetings to consider the first phase of its programme of work. Similarly, the seventh motion in the list, from London, on the Clergy Discipline Measure 2003, has been parked by the Committee given that the Clergy Discipline Commission is currently reviewing the operation of the Clergy Discipline Measure.
10. Given the substantial number of Diocesan Synod Motions awaiting debate, the Business Committee has given priority to as many DSMs as possible being debated at the February Synod. These are, in order of receipt, the motions from: Chester, on the Voice of the Church in Public Life; Newcastle and Winchester, on Human Trafficking; Southwell and Nottingham, on Justice and Asylum Seekers; Leicester and Peterborough, on the Future of Church of England Retreat Houses, and from Worcester, on Climate Change and the Church's Property Transactions. In addition, the DSM from the Peterborough Diocesan Synod, on Eucharistic Worship for Young People, is listed as contingency business.
11. In relation to the motion on Human Trafficking, the Dioceses of Newcastle and Winchester have passed motions in identical terms, and the Diocese in Europe has produced a similar motion (though not specifically addressed to the General Synod). The three dioceses have planned a presentation (as a preface to the debate on the Newcastle DSM), which reflects their interests and concerns, and have produced a joint background paper. In relation to the motion on Diocesan Retreat Houses, which has been passed by the Dioceses of Leicester and Peterborough in identical terms, the two dioceses have worked together on a single background paper, which will resource the debate on the Leicester DSM.
12. A financial comment has been prepared by the Finance Division on items of Synod business which have significant financial implications, and this will be circulated in a Notice Paper.
13. The forecast of business (annexed to this report) provides a forward look to future Groups of Sessions. The inclusion of items within the forecast provides no guarantee that an item will be scheduled for debate and the forecast is no more than an indication of the future programme of Synod business.

*Venue and timing of the February Synod*

14. The February Group of Sessions will take place **in Church House, Westminster from 3 p.m. on Monday 9 February to 1 p.m. on Friday 13 February.**

*Security*

15. Members are asked to wear their Church House passes at all times and to study the security notice which will be circulated in a Notice Paper.

### *Worship*

16. A service of **Holy Communion** will take place **in the Assembly Hall at 9.30 a.m. on Wednesday 11 February**. An act of worship will take place at the commencement of the morning sittings at 9.30 am on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Outline information about services in the Church House Chapel is given in the Agenda (GS 1711).

### *Order of Business*

17. The business each day will follow the order set out in the daily list given in the Agenda, except where it is necessary to modify this. Every effort will be made to give the Synod the longest possible notice of any variations which it is proposed to make in the timetable, and to keep such changes to a minimum. Members are, however, reminded that if at any time within the Group of Sessions an unexpected gap opens in the Synod's Agenda, business earlier in the Agenda which has not been reached or completed within the period allotted can be called by the Chair, unless other provision has already been made for it.
18. If there is no such outstanding business and an unexpected gap opens in the Synod Agenda, then unless the adjournment is carried, the Peterborough DSM on Eucharistic Worship for Young People will be taken. If the contingency business has been completed, the Chair of the Business Committee will seek a variation in the order of business to advance an item appearing later in the Agenda. Members are reminded that the rubric 'not later than' in the Agenda does not prevent an item coming on significantly earlier than the time stated, depending on the progress of the preceding business.

### *Private Members' Motions*

19. Private Members' Motions are contained in Special Agenda III. Notice of any new Private Members' Motions will be published in a Notice Paper, and the motions will be available at the February Group of Sessions for signature by members (to indicate their support for a debate on them) but only if they are received no later than **5.30 p.m. on Monday 9 February**.

### *Requests for debates/amendments to motions*

20. The Business Committee has agreed that, in order to allow time for preparation, the deadline for the receipt of amendments to the draft Vacancies in Suffragan Sees and Other Ecclesiastical Offices Measure (GS 1692A) and the draft Crown Benefices (Parish Representatives) Measure (GS 1693A) (see items 504 and 505 in Special Agenda I) should be brought forward to **Tuesday 3 February**. All the deadlines are set out together in the First Notice Paper.

### *Details of Agenda*

#### Introductions, welcomes, progress of legislation (Monday, 9 February)

21. There will be the usual introductions of new members and other formal announcements.

Report by the Business Committee (GS 1712)

22. This will provide the customary opportunity for members to raise points about content and shape of the Agenda for this Group of Sessions, or about the Synod's business generally.

Dates of Synod meetings in 2011 and 2012

23. In February last year, the Synod agreed the following dates for 2010:

**2010:** 8-12 February, 9-13 July and 22-24 November (inauguration of the new Synod)

24. The Synod is now invited to agree the following dates for Groups of Sessions in 2011 and 2012:

**2011** 7-11 February; 8-12 July; 14-16 November (contingency)

**2012** 6-10 February; 6-10 July; 19-21 November (contingency).

These dates avoid both Lent and, it is hoped, school half-term holidays.

Appointment of the Chair of the Appointments Committee

25. The Synod is invited to approve the re-appointment of Prebendary David Houlding as Chair of the Appointments Committee for five years, from 1 March 2009 to 28 February 2013. This appointment is being proposed by the Archbishops, after consultation with the Appointments Committee and the Archbishops' Council.

Address by the Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor

26. The Presidents have invited His Eminence the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster to address the Synod. The Archbishop of Canterbury will introduce the Cardinal and the work of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission, and this will be followed by the Cardinal's address. This will then lead into the debate on the ARCIC report on *Church as Communion*. It should be noted that Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor was Co-Chair of ARCIC at the time that the report was prepared.

*Church as Communion: An Agreed Statement by the Second Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission (ARCIC II)* (GS 1713)

27. The Bishop of Guildford (Chair of the Council for Christian Unity) will introduce this debate, which provides an opportunity to reflect on matters which lie at the heart of Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue and relations between our two churches. Debates on this report and on the ARCIC reports on *Life in Christ* and *Mary: Grace and Hope in Christ* were requested by the Synod in February 2008, and it will be seen that those debates are included in the forecast of future Synod business. This will be the first major item of business at this Group of Sessions, and it is hoped that it will provide the kind of reflective resource that was welcomed when the Synod debated the Anglican-Orthodox report *The Church of the Triune God* on the first evening of the York Synod in July 2008.

## Questions

28. Under SO 105, members may address Questions to the Chairmen of the three Houses of Synod, the Secretary General, the Clerk to the Synod, the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council, the Chairman of any body answerable to the Synod through the Archbishops' Council (including Boards and Councils), the Church Commissioners, and the Chairman of any Church of England body on which the Synod is represented. **Anyone wishing to ask a question must give notice of it to reach the Clerk to the Synod by 5.30 p.m. on Wednesday 28 January 2009.** The Questions Notice Paper will be distributed at the beginning of the Group of Sessions. Given the expected level of interest it is likely that questions about the implications of the financial and economic situation for the finances of the Church of England will be taken together at the beginning of the hour and a half provisionally allocated for Questions.
29. Members are entitled to ask up to two questions. 'Omnibus' questions are not in order. If a member wishes to query several points, each should be the subject of a separate question. Detailed information, tables of figures, etc are better dealt with in a written answer, and **members are urged to be selective in matters which they raise orally at Question Time**, including any supplementaries, which must be framed as a question and should be kept brief. **Members should indicate clearly when submitting a question whether it is for oral or written answer.**

## *Legislative Business*

### *Women in the Episcopate*

30. At the July Group of Sessions the Synod resolved that special arrangements should be made for those who, as a matter of theological conviction, will not be able to receive the ministry of women as bishops or priests, those arrangements to be within the existing structures of the Church of England and contained in a statutory national code of practice to which all concerned would be required to have regard. The Synod went on to instruct the Women Bishop's Legislative Drafting Group to complete its work on the basis described in the motion, so that the Business Committee could include First Consideration of the draft legislation required to admit women to the episcopate in the agenda for this Group of Sessions.
31. The Drafting Group has proceeded accordingly, preparing a draft Measure, draft Amending Canon and illustrative draft Code of Practice, in consultation with the House of Bishops. The draft Measure and draft Amending Canon will therefore be introduced into the Synod at this Group of Sessions for First Consideration, by the Steering Committee which has been appointed to be responsible for it. (The illustrative draft Code of Practice will not be subject to any legislative processes at this point because it cannot formally be made by the House of Bishops or approved by the Synod unless and until the Measure passes into law: it is intended, however, that the illustrative draft Code should be considered by the Revision Committee alongside the draft legislation.)
32. It will not be possible to move amendments to the draft legislation at this Group of Sessions: as required by Standing Orders, the motions for debate will simply invite the Synod to agree that the draft Measure and draft Amending Canon be referred for consideration by a Revision Committee. Members who wish to propose amendments to the draft Measure or Amending Canon, or make comments on the illustrative draft Code

of Practice, should send them to the Clerk in the way described on page 18 of the Agenda.

*Other legislative business*

33. As regards other legislative business (details of all of which are set out in Special Agenda I), the Synod will be asked to give Final Approval to draft Amending Canon No 28 (which relaxes the requirements of Canon B 44 in relation to Anglican services in an LEP) in the amended form in which it has been approved by the House of Bishops. (The report from the Chairman of the House (GS 1642Z) describes its consideration of the draft Amending Canon). Also returning to the Synod are the draft Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure (for Final Approval) and the two draft Measures relating to Crown appointments (for Revision).
34. There are also several items of new draft legislation. The Ecclesiastical Fees (Amendment) Measure, introduced for First Consideration, will put in place a framework which will allow effect to be given to those recommendations of the review of parochial fees (approved by the Synod in July) which require legislative change. Finally, two sets of changes to the Rules of the Funded Pension Scheme will be laid before the Synod for approval.

Review of Constitutions (Tuesday, 10 February)

35. Under Standing Order 199, the constitution of bodies answerable to the Synod through the Archbishops' Council must be determined by the Council after consultation with the General Synod, and at least once in every quinquennium the Council must review the constitution of all these bodies and report to the Synod thereon. The Archbishops' Council is now undertaking its quinquennial review, with a view to changes coming into effect following the inauguration of the new Synod in November 2010.
36. The report of the review (GS Misc 1714), which has been undertaken by a working group appointed by the Council and chaired by Dr Christina Baxter, puts forward some substantial proposals. The Council has agreed that these should form the basis for a process of consultation, consisting of: a presentation to the February Synod (with an opportunity for questions) and an opportunity for comments to be submitted by 30 April, following which the group will conclude its work and submit its final recommendations to the Archbishops' Council. The Council will then report to the Synod and there will be a Take Note debate in the July Synod, before the Council takes a final decision in the autumn. Any consequential Standing Orders changes would come to the Synod for approval in February 2010, so that new arrangements could come into operation at the beginning of the next Synod, elected in autumn 2010.

37. Legislative Business

See paragraphs 33 and 34 above.

Presidential Address

38. The Archbishop of Canterbury will give a Presidential Address, which will include a reflection on the recent Lambeth Conference.

Private Member's Motion: Ms Vasantha Gnanadoss: Membership of Organizations which Contradict the Duty to Promote Race Equality

39. This motion requests the House of Bishops to formulate and implement a policy for the Church of England under which clergy, ordinands and such employed lay persons as have duties that require them to speak on behalf of the Church should not be a member of an organization whose constitution, aims, objectives or pronouncements contradict the duty to promote race equality. Background papers from Ms Gnanadoss (GS Misc 903A) and from the Secretary General (GS Misc 903B) are being circulated.

The International Financial Crisis and the Recession

40. The Archbishops' Council and the House of Bishops both concluded that the Synod Agenda should provide the opportunity for some input and reflection on the financial crisis and the recession. This will be in two parts.
41. On the Tuesday afternoon, Mr Andreas Whittam Smith (First Church Estates Commissioner) will facilitate presentations from and engage in dialogue with Lord Griffiths of Forestfach and the Rt Revd Peter Selby. This will be an opportunity for the Synod to hear about and to discuss with the two speakers the reasons for the crisis and its wider implications.
42. Brian Griffiths has been Vice Chairman, Goldman Sachs International since 1991 and a member of the Board since 2007. He is also a Director of Times Newspapers. Following a number of academic appointments, including as Professor of Banking and International Finance at City University, he was a Director of the Bank of England and from 1984 to 1990, Head of Mrs Thatcher's Policy Unit at No 10. He is the author of a number of books including *Monetarism in the United Kingdom* and *Morality and the Market Place*. He has since 1997 been Chairman of the Lambeth Fund.
43. Peter Selby was, until 2007, Bishop of Worcester and a member of the Church Commissioners' Assets Committee. He is currently President of the National Council for Independent Monitoring Boards, which monitor fairness and respect for those in custody. As a member of the Doctrine Commission he contributed to its 2003 report *Being Human*, which included a chapter on money as part of the Christian understanding of personhood. His writings include *Grace and Mortgage: the Language of Faith and the Debt of the World*.
44. Then, on the Thursday afternoon, there will be a debate, resourced by a paper from the Mission and Public Affairs Division (GS 1719) and introduced by the Archbishop of York, which will examine the challenges and opportunities for the Church's mission and ministry in communities presented by the international financial crisis and recession.
45. Time has not been allocated in this Group of Sessions for discussion of the implications of recent developments for the Church's finances, though there will be the usual opportunity to ask questions to the Archbishops' Council, the Church Commissioners and the Pensions Board. The Synod will be spending more time on the financial business of the Church in July. It will also be noted that the forecast of future Synod business includes a debate on Christian Stewardship for July 2009.

### Chester Diocesan Synod Motion: Voice of the Church in Public

46. This motion was listed as contingency business in July and background papers from the Chester Diocese and the Mission and Public Affairs Division were circulated. The papers have now been slightly revised and are now circulated as GS Misc 898 (revised) and GS Misc 898A (revised). The motion is wide-ranging in its concern about the role of the Church in civic society, and asks the Divisions of the Archbishops' Council to report to the Synod (by July 2010) on their work to foster clearer understanding of the Christian faith among the institutions and organizations of society, and to reinforce the claims of the Church to take its place in public life.

### Holy Communion (Wednesday, 11 February)

47. A service of Holy Communion will be celebrated at 9.30 am in the Assembly Hall. The Archbishop of Canterbury will preside.

### Women Bishops Legislation: First Consideration

48. Please see paragraphs 30 to 32 above.

### Private Member's Motion: Mr Martin Dales: Church Water Bills

49. This motion expresses concern about the effect on many parishes of sudden, and very large rises in water charges for churches, and asks the Government to remind OFWAT of its obligations to ensure that the water companies adhere to the guidance given by the Secretary of State for the Environment in 2000 not to treat all non-household customers (including places of worship) as if they were businesses. A background paper from Mr Dales (GS Misc 904A) and a note from the Secretary General (GS Misc 904B) are being circulated.

### Private Member's Motion from Mr Paul Eddy: The Uniqueness of Christ in Multi-Faith Britain

50. This motion invites the Synod to ask the House of Bishops to report to the Synod on their understanding of the uniqueness of Christ in multi-faith society, and to offer examples of good practice in sharing the gospel of salvation through Christ alone with people of other faiths and of none. A background paper from Mr Eddy (GS Misc 905A) and a note from the Secretary General (GS Misc 905B) are being circulated.

### 43rd Report of the Standing Orders Committee

51. The 43rd Report of the Standing Orders Committee (GS 1699) deals with various amendments to the Standing Orders and was scheduled for debate in July but not reached because of lack of time. The report proposes changes to the Standing Orders relating to the Crown Nominations Commission (following on from Synod's consideration of matters relating to Crown Appointments in February 2008), some clarifications to the financial Standing Orders and some adjustments in relation to the deadlines for amendments and following motions.

### Newcastle/Winchester Diocesan Synod Motion: Human Trafficking

52. This motion, which has been passed in identical terms by the Newcastle and Winchester Diocesan Synods, urges the Church of England to deplore the continuing evil of human trafficking, to support the work of those who seek to end human trafficking and to rescue those trapped in it, and to support the implementation of the UK Action Plan on Tackling Human Trafficking, particularly in relation to the 2012 Olympics. The Diocese in Europe Diocesan Synod has also passed a similar motion, though this is not specifically addressed to the General Synod.
53. The Dioceses of Newcastle, Winchester and Europe will be making a joint presentation to the General Synod as a preface to the debate on the motion from the Newcastle Diocese; they are also circulating a joint background paper (GS Misc 906A). The presentation will include an invited speaker from the United Kingdom Human Trafficking Centre. A background paper from the Mission and Public Affairs Division (GS Misc 906B) is also being circulated.

### Draft Anglican Covenant (Thursday, 12 February)

54. All the churches of the Anglican Communion were asked last March to respond to the following three questions by the end of March 2009 (since brought forward to 9 March):
- (1) Is the province able to give an “in principle” commitment to the Covenant process at this time (without committing itself to the details of any text?)
  - (2) Is it possible to give some indication of any Synodical process which would have to be undertaken to adopt the Covenant in the fullness of time?
  - (3) In considering the St Andrew’s draft for an Anglican Covenant, are there any elements which would need extensive change in order to make the process of Synodical adoption viable?
55. On behalf of the House of Bishops, the Bishop of Rochester will move a Take Note motion on a report from the House to which is attached a draft Church of England response to these three questions (GS 1716). The answers to questions one and two draw respectively on earlier Synod motions and on provisions in the Synod’s Constitution and Standing Orders. The answer to question three builds on discussions at the Lambeth Conference and reflects input from the Faith and Order Advisory Group, the House of Bishops’ Theological Group, and the House of Bishops. The draft response welcomes the direction of travel of the Covenant while flagging up a number of points which still require attention.

### Inter Faith/Presence and Engagement

56. The Synod debated the Presence and Engagement programme in July 2005 and set up the Presence and Engagement Task Group, chaired by Bishop David James, to take forward its recommendations. It asked the Mission and Public Affairs Council to report back before the end of the quinquennium. This debate provides the Synod with an opportunity to take note of what has been achieved so far and the work that is proposed for the second phase of the Presence and Engagement programme. A report by the Mission and Public Affairs Council is being circulated (GS 1720).

57. Leicester/Peterborough Diocesan Synod Motions: Future of Church of England Retreat Houses

This motion invites the Archbishops' Council to review and make recommendations for the future sustainability of the Church of England retreat houses, and encourages the National Church Institutions and other church bodies to make full use of these resources. The motion from the Leicester Diocese will be debated, but a member from the Peterborough Diocese (which has passed a motion in identical terms) will seek to speak in the debate. A joint background paper from the Leicester and Peterborough Dioceses (GS Misc 907A) and a note from the Secretary General (GS Misc 907B) are being circulated.

Southwell and Nottingham Diocesan Synod Motion: Justice and Asylum Seekers  
(Friday, 13 February)

58. This motion invites the Synod to call on the Government to ensure that the treatment of asylum seekers is just and compassionate, and in particular to consider conferring a right to work on all asylum seekers, and to declare an amnesty for 'legacy cases' that predate the Government's New Asylum Model; and also to find a practical and humane remedy to the situation of 'refused' asylum seekers who are unable to return to their country of origin because of personal safety, health or family reasons. Background papers from the Southwell and Nottingham Dioceses (GS Misc 908A) and the Mission and Public Affairs Division (GS Misc 908B) are being circulated.

Worcester Diocesan Synod Motion: Climate Change and the Church's Property Transactions

59. The motion calls on the Archbishops' Council to conduct an urgent review of the Endowments and Glebe Measure and other relevant church legislation, with a view to bringing forward any necessary amendments to enable diocesan bodies and PCCs to dispose of land, which give weight to environmental as well as financial considerations, particularly in respect of cutting carbon emissions. A background paper from the Worcester Diocese (GS Misc 909A) and a note from the Secretary General (GS Misc 909B) are being circulated.

Prorogation

60. After farewells to the Bishop of Carlisle, the Bishop of Peterborough and the Dean of the Arches, the Synod will be prorogued by the Archbishop of Canterbury no later than 1 p.m.

*Contingency Business*

61. The contingency business for this Synod is the Peterborough Diocesan Synod Motion on Eucharistic Worship for Young People. The Synod carried a motion from the Durham Diocesan Synod in February 2008 asking the House of Bishops to commission the preparation of Eucharistic prayers for use on occasion when a significant number of children are present, or when it is otherwise pastorally appropriate to meet the needs of children present. This work is being progressed by the Liturgical Commission. The Peterborough motion invites the Synod to go further and commission materials for Eucharistic worship when a significant number of young people are present. Background

papers from the Peterborough Diocese (GS Misc 911A) and from the Liturgical Commission (GS Misc 911B) are being circulated.

### **The work of the Business Committee**

62. The Committee has considered correspondence received from Synod members. There was relatively little correspondence following the July Synod; what there was focused on aspects of the two women bishops debates, the handling of debates on the Archbishops' Council's annual report and budget, disability issues and access to the public gallery and concourse.
63. The Committee has considered ways of further enhancing the presentation and handling of Synod's business, and is arranging for motions and amendments to be displayed on screen for several of the items at the February Synod. Members' comments on the usefulness of this trial arrangement will be welcomed.
64. The Committee has also given some thought as to whether existing or new Private Members' Motions might usefully be available for signing electronically between Groups of Sessions and will be glad to receive members' comments on this possibility. If agreed, the change would require an amendment to the Synod's Standing Orders. New arrangements would need to be put in place so that Private Members' Motions and the lists of signatures were kept continually updated on the General Synod section of the Church of England website.
65. At its September 2008 meeting, the Business Committee reviewed certain aspects of Question Time, which had been the subject of some dissatisfaction over the recent years. The Committee agreed that, **with effect from the July 2009 Group of Sessions, all submitted questions will be presumed to be for written answer unless an oral answer is specifically requested.**
66. In November 2008 the third Question Time under SO 109A was held. In 2006 the Committee had indicated that three 'virtual' Question Times would be held on an experimental basis and that the position would be reviewed thereafter. The number of Questions submitted was 27 from 17 members in 2006, 44 from 27 members in 2007 and 32 from 22 members in 2008. The average of 22 members represents less than 5% of the Synod's membership. The average number of Questions asked in February during the last three years has been 84, whereas 81 Questions were asked in 2005. The holding of a 'virtual' Question Time has thus had no discernible effect on the number of Questions asked at the following February's Group of Sessions. At a 'virtual' Question Time there is no opportunity to ask a supplementary Question, and this may be one reason for the lower level of participation.
67. The holding of a Question Time involves the use of a significant amount of staff time, both in the administration of the process and in the drafting of Answers. The element of accountability which even a virtual Question Time without supplementary Questions involves needs to be weighed against the opportunity cost in terms of staff time. Having reviewed the Questions asked and the Answers given over the last three years, and in the light of the relatively low level of participation, the Committee has concluded that the benefits of such a Question Time are not sufficiently great to justify the use of staff time involved.

68. Members are reminded that if information is desired, the first step should always be to ask the responsible staff member. If a member is unsure to whom a question should be directed, the Clerk to the Synod stands ready to assist.
69. The Committee is pleased to receive comments from members on any aspect of the life and work of the Synod, and particularly any suggestions as to how its business management and procedures could be enhanced. Members should write to the Clerk to the Synod who will see that correspondence is circulated to the Committee.

On behalf of the Business Committee

Kay Garlick

December 2008

## **Membership of the Business Committee**

The Revd Prebendary Kay Garlick (Hereford) - *Chair*

*Elected by the House of Bishops*

The Rt Revd Trevor Willmott, Bishop of Basingstoke

*Elected by the House of Clergy*

The Ven Alan Hawker, Archdeacon of Malmesbury (Bristol) - *Vice-Chair*

The Revd Sue Booy (Oxford)

The Ven Alistair Magowan, Archdeacon of Dorset (Salisbury)

*Elected by the House of Laity*

Mrs Sue Johns (Norwich)

Mr Gerry O'Brien (Rochester)

Mrs Rosalind O'Dowd (London)

*Two members of the Archbishops' Council*

Professor John Craven (Appointed)

The Revd Canon Glyn Webster (Appointed)

The Secretary to the Committee is David Williams  
and the Assistant Secretary is Alastair Callcutt

## **Forecast of future General Synod business**

One or more Private Members' Motions and Diocesan Synod Motions are customarily included in each Group of Sessions.

The forecast of business provides a forward look to the Groups of Sessions in July 2009 and 2010. There are always considerable uncertainties when looking ahead in this way, so this should not be read as more than a broad indication of the business expected to come to the Synod before the end of the present quinquennium.

### **July 2009**

#### *Legislative business*

Vacancies in Suffragan Sees and Other Ecclesiastical Offices Measure – Final Drafting and Final Approval  
Crown Benefices (Parish Representatives) Measure – Final Drafting and Final Approval  
Ecclesiastical Fees (Amendment) Measure – Revision Stage  
Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Regulations  
Church Representation Rules (Amendment) Resolution 2009  
Clergy Representation Rules (Amendment) Resolution 2009  
Usual Fees Orders

#### *Liturgical business*

Additional Weekday Lectionary and Amendments to Calendar, Lectionaries and Collects

### **July 2009, February 2010 or July 2010**

#### *Reports*

Good Childhood Project: Report by the Children's Society  
Children's Strategy and Youth Strategy: progress report on strategies endorsed by General Synod in November 2002 & July 2003  
Mission-Shaped Church: follow-up: report by MPA, following debate in GS in February 2004  
The Human Genome - Report by MPA, following GS debate in February 2006  
Faithful Cities - Urban Life and Faith  
Christian Stewardship  
Ethical Investment: report from Ethical Investment Advisory Group  
The Church and people with learning disabilities  
Review of clergy retirement housing  
Report from CCU on relationship between the Church of England and the Lutheran Council of Great Britain  
National Diversity Monitoring report  
Europe: report by Mission and Public Affairs Council – sequel to debate in Synod in July 2004  
ARCIC report on Mary: *Grace and Hope in Christ*  
ARCIC report on *Life in Christ*