

GENERAL SYNOD

February 2017

QUESTIONS

of which notice has been given under Standing Orders 112–116.

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SEXUALITY

The Revd Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q1 Can the House of Bishops inform us what progress has been made by individual dioceses to continue with the shared conversations in the context of their own diocesan family?

The Bishop of Oxford to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A I know from conversations with fellow bishops that the shared conversations have continued in different ways in different dioceses. Some dioceses took part in the conversations some time ago, others more recently. There is a sense in which over the last few months some will have been waiting for the bishops' response and the General Synod debate before knowing how to take them forward; and whether or not to do so following a similar style and direction.

Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q2 Para 152 of the Pilling Report (GS 1929) reported statistics supplied in 2012 by the Office of National Statistics regarding the prevalence of homosexuality which were described as the ‘most recent British data’. Are these statistics still the most recent, reliable and accurate data available? If they have been superseded by more recent data, which is regarded as equally reliable and accurate by the House of Bishops, what are those equivalent statistics, and what is their source?

The Bishop of Willesden to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The latest data on sexual identity in England are from the Public Health England report: “**Producing modelled estimates of the size of the lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) population of England**”, published January 2017.

This systematic review, based on 15 relevant national surveys representing the general adult population of England, estimated that 2.5% of people identified as LGB or ‘other’. Applying this to the census-based mid-2014 population estimate suggests that there are 1,358,848 people identifying as LGB or ‘other’ in England.

These figures should be used with caution. 2.5% is likely to be an underestimate as it is derived from general social surveys that did not have the specific aim of enumerating the LGB population. Assuming those responding ‘prefer not to say’, ‘don’t know’ or gave no answer (ranging from 0-10% for individual surveys) were all LGB – which is unlikely – gives an upper limit for the estimate of 5.9%.

The Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q3 Can the House give some examples of its learning (referred to in GS 2055) from having paid careful attention in the Shared Conversations to the experiences of LGBTI clergy and laity?

The Bishop of Willesden to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A As Synod is aware, the Shared Conversations were conducted under the St Michael’s House protocols which entail strict confidentiality, so I cannot give individual examples. The facilitation team for the Conversations gave the House an anonymised summary of every one of the regional conversations which we studied with great care.

We were strongly impressed by the courage of those who made themselves vulnerable to each other in the process – those whose lives and beliefs made them feel vulnerable within the church and those whose beliefs made them feel uneasy in contemporary society.

Among the ways the feedback shaped our thinking was that the conversations demonstrated relatively little appetite for changing the Church's teaching on marriage, but a considerable agreement that the tone in which we have conducted debate so far was unhelpful and wounding. Both points, of course, are at the heart of our report to Synod.

Canon Jennifer Humphreys (Bath & Wells) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q4 Re Paragraph 60 of the House of Bishops' Report GS 2055, will the "listening and learning with other churches in and beyond the Anglican Communion" include not only Primates, but also laity, clergy, and bishops from as wide a range of cultures and traditions as possible?

The Bishop of Norwich to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A "Listening to and learning with" other churches should be an integral part of discipleship for all who would know the mind of Christ; in the words of the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, only "the whole Church knows the whole Truth." The whole Church includes all the faithful, in all their cultural diversity.

The Revd Christopher Newlands (Blackburn) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q5 In a recent statement to the press, the Bishop of Blackburn made the comment that "The Church of England has a zero tolerance policy on homophobia." Is there a definition of what "The Church of England" considers to constitute homophobic behaviour?

The Bishop of Norwich to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A I refer the questioner to paragraphs 174-192 of the *Report of the House of Bishops Working Group on Human Sexuality* (GS 1929 – the Pilling report) – that is, the chapter entitled "Homophobia".

Mr Clive Scowen (London) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q6 Under what canonical provision is it possible for the House of Bishops or the General Synod to give "maximum freedom" to the clergy to bless (or give the appearance of blessing) as holy that which the Scriptures and the official teaching of the Church of England regard as sin?

The Bishop of Norwich to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A Para 22 of GS 2055 refers to 'interpreting the existing law and guidance to permit maximum freedom within it, without changes to the law or doctrine of the Church.' Thus the phrase 'maximum freedom' has to be viewed in the context both of the current canonical provision as a whole (the parameters of which are set out in Annex 1 to GS 2055) and the Church's teaching on marriage.

The Revd Canon Dr Judith Maltby (Universities & TElS) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q7 Given that:

- the recent report by the House of Bishops (GS 2055) states ‘The Church of England affirms ... that marriage is in its nature a union permanent and lifelong, for better for worse, till death them do part, of one man with one woman (para 18, citing Canon B.30.1); and
- the House of Bishops feel that the new teaching document on marriage and relationships should ‘Reaffirm our current doctrine of marriage as between one man and one woman, faithfully, for life’ (para 34);

when will Synod hear of plans to withdraw the advice to clergy on re-marriage after divorce in Church (Annex 1 to GS 1449), and to abolish the faculty system under Canon C 4.5, which permits the ordination and consecration of individuals who, being married, have a former spouse(s) still living, and/or are married to someone with a former spouse(s) still living?

The Bishop of Norwich to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The House has no plans to take either step.

The Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q8 In the course of its preparation of a new teaching document on Marriage and Relationships, will the House of Bishops undertake an exploration of the ethics, effectiveness and safeguarding risks of the practice of so-called ‘Reparative Therapy’?

The Bishop of Norwich to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A It would be a mistake to expect a teaching document, which ought to deal mainly in matters of doctrine and ethics, to cover every topic related to human relationships, but as the scope of the document has not yet been discussed beyond general terms, and the group who will be tasked with drafting it has not yet been nominated, I think the question is simply premature.

Mr Anthony Archer (St Albans) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q9 In the light of *Marriage and Same Sex Relationships after the Shared Conversations* (GS 2055), and bearing in mind paragraph 57 of that report where it is stated that ‘The Church’s participation in the mission of God requires constant and prayerful attention both to the truth of Jesus Christ as revealed in the Holy Scriptures and to what is happening in the particular culture in which we live’; what recent research has been undertaken on attitudes amongst young people (particularly students) to the Church of England, given its stance on sexuality?

The Bishop of Ely to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The Church of England has not commissioned any specific research in this area. However, we are committed to hearing the voice of children and young people to inform and shape the church's mission and ministry, including our work in education. This year we published a report *Rooted in the Church* following research to identify some of the factors which root young people in the Church of England as they grow in their Christian faith. One of the key findings was that young people value church communities which welcome them and offer a safe space for asking questions.

Mrs Andrea Minichiello Williams (Chichester) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q10 Can the Chair of the House please outline the process on the issue of human sexuality up to the end of the July Group of Sessions of General Synod?

Mrs Andrea Minichiello Williams (Chichester) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q11 How much time will it take to complete the further work on human sexuality that needs to be undertaken, as referred to in their report (paragraphs 23 and 26), and when will the House be able to report to General Synod?

The Bishop of Willesden to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A With permission, I should like to answer Mrs Minichiello Williams' two questions together.

Para 23 of GS 2055 sets out a number of steps that the House is minded to take in the light of Wednesday's group work and the 'take note' debate. We judged it helpful to set these out.

But we do want to listen to members of the other two Houses on Wednesday, and have deliberately not sought to define further, or prescribe a timescale for, what happens next.

Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q12 Given the Church of England's current codes and practices towards LGBT members, particularly those who seek to be employed by Church institutions, what evidence is there to refute the charge that the Church of England is "institutionally homophobic"?

The Bishop of Norwich to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The Church of England comprises many hundreds of employers. LGBT applicants and colleagues should be treated equally by Church employers. They, as with all other employees, should be welcomed and their difference valued and included in their work life. That said, it would unrealistic to suggest this will be something that Church employers

have always got right in terms of tone and action. I am able to explain more specifically the situation within the National Church Institutions (NCIs). As employers they have tried to take proactive steps to ensure inclusion of LGBT colleagues. Their Chief Officers have sought to provide public and meaningful reassurance that employees are equally valued and important. Their employer values also state respect for difference and the value of diversity. They have recognised publicly that the wider institutional debate on human sexuality is particularly difficult for LGBT colleagues. They have reiterated the support that is in place through networks, equality advisers and HR. Staff have also been reminded of the NCIs employer commitment to protect employees. This is stated in their Dignity at Work Policy and also in the guidance that was provided to Synod members about working with staff.

Miss Deborah Buggs (London) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q13 Paragraph 63 of GS 2055 says “the House of Bishops has affirmed that stable, faithful homosexual relationships can ‘embody crucial social virtues’ of fidelity and mutuality.”

This phrase is taken from a response to the Government’s consultation on civil marriage (paras 9 and 14) at <https://www.churchofengland.org/media/1475149/s-s%20marriage.pdf>

Are responses to this sort of consultation normally seen as being authoritative statements beyond their original context? If so, what is the nature of the review and approval process for responses to consultations?

The Bishop of Willesden to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The line in question was signed off by the House of Bishops and the Archbishops Council at the time of the Government consultation, so it can fairly be said to represent the mind of those bodies. It was also repeated in the HoB guidance on same sex marriage, which reinforces its standing as the collective view of the Bishops.

Once submitted, there is no process for reviewing responses to consultations unless or until similar questions arise again.

The statement as it stands is not particularly contentious. Faithfulness and mutuality are not virtues unique to heterosexual marriage. But unpacking the question of how those virtues are best embedded in social practices and institutions is a subject on which Christians (including bishops) will have a variety of views, so the sentence should not be pushed to carry more weight than it can bear.

The Revd Canon Priscilla White (Birmingham) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q14 In view of the apparent erasure of people identifying as BTQIA from the recent report GS 2055 *Marriage and Same-Sex Relationships after the Shared Conversations*, what work is being undertaken to examine the issues facing these groups who seem often to have been ignored or bypassed in the process thus far?

The Bishop of Norwich to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A References to LGBTQIA (and similar formulations) refer to an alliance of people united in the challenge they wish to pose to what may be termed “conventional” sexual categorisations but, as most people who so identify would surely agree, having specific characteristics in each case. The questions which each group poses to Christian theology and ethics are similarly distinctive.

The House deliberately avoided referring to LGBTI, or any other extended acronym, because we were only too acutely aware that we had only touched on the L and the G.

I think the House was right to avoid treating diverse groups as if they were all one category, even though we recognised that they have interests in common. The question does demonstrate that there remain many issues concerning human sexuality that could keep us busy for some time to come.

The Revd Christopher Newlands (Blackburn) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q15 In the Report of the House of Bishops on *Marriage and Same-Sex Relationships after the Shared Conversations* there is no reference to the situation for bisexual, transgender and intersex people, and their eligibility for services of blessings and marriage in Church of England churches. Will the House of Bishops be issuing a further statement to clarify their position?

The Bishop of Norwich to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A My answer to a previous question explained why the House had not extended its deliberations to include bisexual, transgender or intersex issues.

It would not be helpful to address all these three categories as if they were identical. But the proposed new teaching document on marriage should help clarify that aspect of the question and there is, in any case, no restriction on clergy offering informal prayers for relationships involving B, T or I people.

Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q16 In the debate concerning human sexuality in the Church of England there is an ongoing debate as to whether being lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender is a first- or second-order issue in relation to salvation. What is the teaching of the House of Bishops on this matter?

The Bishop of Norwich to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The teaching of the House of Bishops is that sexual orientation has no bearing upon a person's salvation. All of us, however, may resist God's will for our salvation with choices that lead away from the path of life. Sometimes Christians disagree deeply about whether or not this is true of particular choices. The Faith and Order Commission's report *Communion and Disagreement*, circulated as GS Misc 1139 in July last year, presents a useful analysis of the issues here. In particular, it proposes a more nuanced typology than that of 'first- or second-order issue', and notes that one of the characteristic features of truly serious disagreement in Church life is lack of consensus about the type of disagreement that is at stake.

Mr Clive Scowen (London) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q17 What was the financial cost to the Church of England of each phase of the Shared Conversations, and has any assessment been made of whether the benefits of those exercises were proportionate to the money expended?

The Bishop of Willesden to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The full cost of the Shared Conversations between September 2014 and August 2016 was £384,525. The majority of this cost (about £370,000) was for the costs of running the Regional Shared Conversations in the dioceses. The additional administration costs of the Shared Conversations at the July 2016 General Synod came to £14,572.

Of these costs, £300,000 were covered by the Church Commissioners. The remaining costs were met by the Dioceses either through direct charges for regional conversations or through the usual Synod Admin Fee.

The organisers of the Shared Conversations have collected anonymised feedback from participants on an on-going basis. The feedback has generally been very positive. As yet, it is too early to assess the long-term benefits of the Shared Conversations exercise.

The Revd Canon Giles Goddard (Southwark) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q18 The seventh bullet point in paragraph 34 of GS 2055 reads: *Explore the distinction that has opened up between the state's conception of "equal marriage" and the Church's doctrine of Holy Matrimony, and consider the implications of this.* Why are the words equal marriage bracketed by inverted commas while Holy Matrimony is given capital letters?

The Bishop of Willesden to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A "Holy Matrimony" is a phrase used in the liturgy and formularies of the Church of England, including the Book of Common Prayer and the Canons, with varying conventions regarding initial capitals, including initial capitals for both words, as in paragraph 34 of GS 2055. "Equal marriage" is a phrase used by some people in the contemporary context to describe the situation brought about by legislation such as the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013. The use of inverted commas is intended to convey that this terminology is contested and would not necessarily be used by all.

The Revd Canon Dr Judith Maltby (Universities & TEs) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q19 Given the recent growth in the number of assurances required of ordination candidates on matters such as the Five Guiding Principles and the House of Bishops' Guidelines on Human Sexuality, what plans are being developed to require candidates to affirm the credal doctrine of the Trinity, defined in Article 8 of the 39 Articles, that 'the whole Three Persons are co-eternal and co-equal'?

The Bishop of Norwich to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The Declaration of Assent made by all ordained ministers in the Church of England at their ordination and each time they take up a new appointment thereafter requires them to declare their belief in 'the faith which is revealed in the Holy Scriptures and set forth in the catholic creeds and to which the historic formularies of the Church of England bear witness'. Besides the explicit mention of the 'catholic creeds' in this context, the 'historic formularies of the Church of England' include the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion.

The Revd Mark Lucas (Peterborough) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q20 The report from the House of Bishops on Marriage and Same Sex Relationships (GS 2055) endorses the Church's traditional teaching on marriage – one man, one woman for life – yet does not mention the 1998 Lambeth Resolution 1:10 which upholds that same teaching on behalf of the Anglican Communion. What plans does the House of Bishops have for publicly endorsing Resolution 1:10 to diminish the threat of fracture within the Communion in general and especially the Global South which represents the vast majority of worldwide Anglicans?

The Bishop of Norwich to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A GS 2055 gives an overview of the process in which the House of Bishops has been engaged since the last sessions of Synod and outlines a number of areas for further work. It does not include a survey of relevant texts and statements, such as may be found in the *Report of the House of Bishops Working Group on Human Sexuality* (GS 1929), generally known as the Pilling report. Paragraph 101 of that report identifies Resolution 1:10 of the 1998 Lambeth Conference as one of “three key statements which define the current position of the Church of England about human sexuality” (see also paragraph 106).

Mr Anthony Archer (St Albans) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:

Q21 In the context of the Renewal and Reform agenda and the urgent task facing the Church of England in fostering a 50% increase in vocations by 2020, what plans exist for Ministry Division to monitor the effects on recruitment of potential ordinands not being sponsored through their inability to provide assurances in accordance with *Issues in Human Sexuality*?

The Bishop of Oxford to reply as Chair of the Ministry Council:

A I agree wholeheartedly with the note of urgency in the question about the need to increase the number and widen the range and diversity of candidates for ministry. Ministry Division staff do not monitor the individual outcomes of discernment processes in a diocese. However, through their regular interaction with Directors of Ordinands (DDOs) they are aware of the issues which DDOs face in their work and can note general trends.

The Revd Andrew Foreshow-Cain (London) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:

Q22 Given the detail available on Candidates' Sponsoring forms, how many candidates in Civil Partnerships have there been in the last two years and what percentage have assented to the House of Bishops' *Issues in Human Sexuality*? Is the Chair aware of how many potential candidates have refused to do so and withdrawn from or been denied consideration?

The Bishop of Oxford to reply as Chair of the Ministry Council:

A In 2015 seven candidates from a total number of 581 indicated on their registration form that they were in a civil partnership. In 2016 the same number from a total of 591 candidates indicated this. 100% of candidates attending Bishops' Advisory Panels (BAPs) in 2015 and 2016 had a note in their sponsoring papers to confirm that the Director of Ordinands had discussed *Issues in Human Sexuality* with the candidate and the candidate was content to live within the guidelines contained in the report. Since this discussion is held solely in the dioceses, the Ministry Division has no information about those candidates who in the context of a discussion in the diocese have refused to agree. Nor am I aware of how many candidates have been in that situation.

Mr David Lamming (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich) to ask the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

Q23 What representations has the Mission and Public Affairs Council made to the Government in respect of the oath of allegiance to British values for all holders of public office that the Communities Secretary, Sajid Javid, is reportedly considering (Sunday Times, 18 December 2016) in response to a report by Dame Louise Casey, in particular having regard to her answer in Parliament on 9 January 2017 to the Communities and Local Government Committee that 'religious conservatism' can be 'anti-equalities', with the implications of this for anyone holding and expressing a traditional view of marriage?

The Bishop of St Albans to reply as Vice-Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

A There have been no Government proposals, nor has a consultation been issued on the subject of an oath of allegiance. Accordingly, no representations have been made by the Council to the Government.

Mr Jeremy Harris (Chester) to ask the Chair of the National Society Council:

Q24 During a Parliamentary hearing on 9 January 2017, Dame Louise Casey, the Government's "integration tsar", indicated that "it is not OK" for church schools to be "anti-gay marriage" (she referred to "Catholic schools"). What position will Church of England schools take on so-called same-sex marriage?

The Bishop of Ely to reply as Chair of the National Society Council:

A All pupils are entitled to good quality sex and relationships education (SRE) which enables them to understand the world in which they live, form their own views and make decisions about relationships. The Church of England teaches that marriage is the lifelong union of one man and one woman. SRE will explain the Church's teaching on

marriage as well as the legislation that has made it possible for same sex couples to marry in England and Wales. *Valuing All God's Children* sets out this legal framework and offers helpful guidance demonstrating that it is possible to engage with a range of sincerely held views in a way that is consistent with the Christian ethos of love and welcome and avoids any suggestion of being dismissive of people or other views, particularly emphasising the need to stand against homophobia wherever and whenever it is to be found.

The Revd Bertrand Olivier (London) to ask the Chair of the National Society Council:

Q25 Given the fact that, according to a 2012 Stonewall report, more than half of LGBT pupils have experienced homophobic bullying in their schools, is the National Society Council aware of Stonewall's recent initiative that is freely available to 500 faith schools to help them tackle homophobia, biphobia and transphobia (HBT), and what is it doing to encourage full participation?

The Bishop of Ely to reply as Chair of the National Society Council:

A In May 2014, following the Archbishop of Canterbury's public commitment to eradicating homophobic stereotyping and bullying in our schools, The Church of England Education Office published a guidance document *Valuing All God's Children*. The guidance has proved to be an excellent resource for all schools and is widely viewed as having made a significant contribution to work in this important area. Stonewall are very impressed with our resource, recognise its effectiveness and have agreed to use part of the grant they received from the Department for Education to fund our own development of it to include material on transphobic bullying. This newly updated guidance, in addition to materials and programmes offered by organisations such as Stonewall and Barnardo's, will provide schools with a variety of resources to use as appropriate for their own context.

The Revd Andrew Foreshew-Cain (London) to ask the Chair of the Council for Christian Unity:

Q26 The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Norway has recently approved (30 January 2017) the marriage of same-sex couples in its churches. What 'consequences' does the CCU believe there will be for our relationship with that Church within the community of Churches that have signed the Porvoo Agreement?

Dr Rachel Jepson to reply as Vice-Chair of the Council for Christian Unity:

A The Porvoo Agreement, signed in 1996, which enabled the Porvoo Communion of Churches to come into being, was a landmark in the history of ecumenism, and we continue to value the unique relationship that the Church of England has with other European churches through it.

As a communion of churches who belong to two different global communions – the Anglican Communion and the Lutheran World Federation – its difference in character from such a global communion needs to be understood. Member churches will continue to differ on a wide range of subjects, and to benefit from the many bonds between them.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Mr Keith Cawdron (Liverpool) to ask the Chair of the Finance Committee:

Q27 Please provide a report showing the following information:

- (i) The funding provided for each Diocese in 2016-17 for ministry support under the "Darlow" formula;
- (ii) The funding provided for each Diocese in 2016-17 under the programme of Strategic Development Funding;
- (iii) The funding allocated to each diocese in 2017-18 and 2018-19 under the programme of Support for Lower Income Communities, showing transitional funding separately;
- (iv) The funding allocated to each Diocese in 2017-18 and 2018-19 for restructuring funding;
- (v) The funding so far promised to each diocese for each year from 2017-18 onwards under Strategic Development Funding;
- (vi) The funding so far awarded to each Diocese for capacity building under Strategic Development Funding; and
- (vii) The agreed allocation to date of the £6m of Strategic Development Funding set aside for non-diocesan purposes and the £1.3m set aside for research, additional data capacity, and the dissemination of learning.

Canon John Spence to reply as Chair of the Finance Committee:

A I have arranged for a report with this information to be put on the noticeboard. It is available by email on request to lynette.bonner@churchofengland.org. The Strategic Investment Board will consider how information around grants can best be provided on a regular basis.

MINISTRY COUNCIL

Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:

Q28 What evidence is there to suggest that theological colleges understand how to change communication of our Christian faith so that its meaning becomes clearer to the majority of the population who question its relevance to their lives, and how are teaching methods changing to accommodate that understanding?

The Bishop of Oxford to reply as Chair of the Ministry Council:

A Mission, evangelism and the capacity of ordinands as passionate communicators of the Christian faith are at the heart of the curriculum in Theological Education Institutions (TEIs). Mission modules within the Durham Common Awards emphasise understanding the culture where the Church is situated, in apologetics, defending the faith and creative ways of communicating faith. Modules require students to put that communication into practice and to reflect on learning gained from their experience in contexts. The growth of context based training enables deep engagement in those contexts and gives them tools to develop their skills and practice. Many TEIs give students opportunities to share their faith through corporate mission activities, including in conjunction with the current Evangelism Task Group initiative for ordinands to work with bishops in evangelism. All TEIs have in their curriculum attention to preaching which includes a focus on clarity of communication and the message being proclaimed.

The Revd Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:

Q29 When recent Government legislation was introduced to compel employers with annual pay bills in excess of £3 million to pay a substantial levy to participate in a new apprenticeship scheme, what steps were taken to advise the Government that this presented a significant challenge to the Church at a time of acute financial pressure, and that the Church is a stipendiary and not a salaried body?

The Bishop of Oxford to reply as Chair of the Ministry Council:

A Staff from the NCIs have been working with the Department of Education to develop options for apprenticeships which enable the Church to more than recover the levy taken through the stipend payment process and to achieve a net financial benefit. Representations were made by the Second Church Estates Commissioner to the Secretary of State and other ministers that as office holders rather than employees clergy should be exempt from the levy. These were not accepted as under National Insurance Contributions legislation the Church Commissioners have an employer liability which makes the stipends of priests subject to the levy. Therefore a constructive approach has been taken to gain maximum benefit from the apprenticeship scheme for the national church and dioceses. It is recognised that it has significant potential, including for the Church to support the purpose of increasing skills and opportunities, particularly among young people seeking qualifications and good employment options.

Ms Christina Baron (Bath & Wells) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:

Q30 In the light of paper HC(17)1 on Clergy Wellbeing (due to be considered at the meeting of the House of Clergy earlier today), can the Council please supply figures for the breakdown of clergy marriages, by age, sex and clerical role?

The Bishop of Oxford to reply as Chair of the Ministry Council:

A The Ministry Division does not collect or hold this information. Anonymised returns are regularly received from diocesan bishops with information about the breakdown of clergy marriages in their dioceses for the purposes of national monitoring and the development of policy in the House of Bishops. In view of the confidential and sensitive nature of this information, it is not available outside the House.

The Ven Jackie Searle (Gloucester) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:

Q31 In the last five years how many stipendiary clergy have been granted early retirement on the grounds of ill health? Is there any evidence that this number is increasing?

The Bishop of Oxford to reply as Chair of the Ministry Council:

A The annual figures for stipendiary clergy retirement on grounds of ill health from 2012 to 2016 are available on the noticeboard. There is no evident pattern of increase over this period.

REMUNERATION AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE COMMITTEE

Mr Timothy Hind (Bath & Wells) to ask the Chair of the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee:

Q32 Given that clergy wellbeing is not merely the province of the House of Clergy, and that there appears to be a number of institutions within Church House with some responsibility for it, which institution, and which division within it, holds overall responsibility for clergy wellbeing in the NCIs?

The Ven Dr Michael Gilbertson to reply to reply on behalf of the Chair of the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee:

A Wellbeing is multifaceted. The experience and perception of one's physical, mental and emotional health, personal and professional relationships, sense of vocation, financial security, and of networks and institutional structures all contribute to a sense of wellbeing. Those facets are often interrelated and call for a holistic approach to improving wellbeing.

Just as wellbeing is multifaceted and interrelated, so is the response of the NCIs' divisions and departments. For example, the *Living Ministry Project*, longitudinal research into clergy wellbeing and ministerial outcomes, has involved collaboration between Clergy HR, Ministry Division and Research and Statistics.

RACSC keeps Terms of Service under review in the context of Renewal and Reform, drawing from expertise and insight across the NCIs, diocesan officers, the wider Church and others currently engaging in this space. We welcome the House of Clergy's work as an opportunity to explore how this may be developed in the future.

MISSION AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL

Mrs Enid Barron (London) to ask the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

Q33 Following the resolution on the EU Referendum which was passed by Synod on 8 July 2016, which dioceses have identified champions to assess what more the Church could do to bring communities together?

The Bishop of St Albans to reply as Vice-Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

A There is no obligation on dioceses to inform MPA about things like this. The person appointed as champion in the Diocese of Chelmsford has discussed the role with MPA staff and is thinking creatively about how he can make a worthwhile difference in divided communities. But as yet, there does not seem to be a critical mass of diocesan appointments which would enable common approaches and shared learning to develop. That may come as the nature of the post-Brexit landscape becomes clearer.

It is important to remember that the church's ministry of reconciliation in local communities goes on day by day, often under the radar, through the faithful discipleship of numerous laity as well as parish clergy, chaplains and others. The appointment of champions is only one element in this.

Mrs Enid Barron (London) to ask the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

Q34 Following the resolution on the EU Referendum which was passed by Synod on 8 July 2016, what action has been taken by dioceses and by the national church to investigate the divisions in society underlying the referendum vote and to take steps to work with civil institutions to address them with the aim of building a generous and forward-looking society?

The Bishop of St Albans to reply as Vice-Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

A A number of MPA staff are involved in post-Brexit initiatives with and within dioceses. The document, *Hatebusters and Neighbourlovers*, issued in July, lists organisations, campaigns and actions by dioceses in which active steps are being taken to address divisions within communities post-Brexit. The Mission Theology Advisory Group has done some in-depth research in Thurrock and Lincolnshire to identify particular issues for Churches arising from Brexit and some resources for more focussed social engagement at local level will be forthcoming. The blog, *Reimagining Europe*, hosts an ongoing conversation about a Brexit for the common good.

Mr Andrew Presland (Peterborough) to ask the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

Q35 What consideration, if any, has the Council given to deciding from a Christian perspective whether the use of representative democracy (such as through Members of Parliament or councillors) is preferable in principle to the use of direct democracy (exercised through referenda) to make important national or local decisions?

The Bishop of St Albans to reply as Vice-Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

A The Council has not given any consideration to this question. Given the wide variety of forms which both representative and direct democracy take around the world, I am not sure that it is possible to generalise about the two approaches. Many of us remember the controversies surrounding proportional representation in this country, which suggested that different forms of representative democracy have different strengths and weaknesses – and the example of the Swiss system involving frequent referenda is a very different thing to the occasional use of direct democracy in the UK. In all systems, the devil is in the detail – and that is as near to a theological statement on the issue as I think it would be wise to go on such a general question.

The Revd Charles Read (Norwich) to ask the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

Q36 To what extent has the Mission and Public Affairs Division been able to respond to the many issues raised by the acts of the new President of the United States of America since his inauguration and the British Government's response to them?

The Bishop of St Albans to reply as Vice-Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

A MPA's approach is not to attempt a running commentary on current affairs but to support the church in its efforts to serve the common good. So, for example, our work on the refugee crisis – which includes

supporting the bishops when they lobby ministers, and resourcing dioceses and parishes to welcome refugees into their communities – long predates recent changes to US policy and expresses our position on that issue very clearly. MPA’s engagement with some of the moral issues of the day was commended recently for “basing its ethical conclusions on a rigorous engagement with the evidence.” By continuing to model that evidence-based approach to ethical and social issues, the Church can offer an example and encouragement to all those who confront the potentially corrupting pressures of politics – not least those who bear the burdens and face the temptations of high office.

The Very Revd Dr Frances Ward (Deans) to ask the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

Q37 How have the Church of England and the Anglican Communion responded to Pope Francis’ encyclical *Laudato Si* of May 2015, and what further response is planned to enable a global ecumenical response to address the very serious environmental issues the world now acutely faces, and which are increasingly borne by the poorest communities of the world?

The Bishop of St Albans to reply as Vice-Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

A *Laudato Si* immediately preceded the Paris Climate Summit. Our involvement included pilgrims walking from London to Paris, two Bishops leading events in Paris and Germany, and the Second Lambeth Declaration signed by faith leaders, and also Synod members.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Ecumenical Patriarch and the Pope initiated a day of prayer to begin Creationtide, for which we produced new liturgical resources.

Dioceses are supporting green energy, managing churchyard trees and enhancing biodiversity. The EWG received briefings on the science of climate change and is working with the St Paul’s Institute on an event for faith communities, politicians, and the water industry on the importance of churches in the management of water. One member briefed civil servants of the Department of Business, Energy and Business Strategy.

Note the fringe presentations on the Transition Pathway Initiative, the Church’s new investment research tool, and launching a tree initiative for London’s churches.

The Revd Canon Catherine Grylls (Birmingham) to ask the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

Q38 Given that the first anniversary of the excellent A Rocha initiative, EcoChurch, has just occurred on 5 February, and given that the House of Bishops launched Eco Dioceses in September of last year, how many Dioceses/Cathedrals/ Churches have signed up for EcoChurch and how many bronze/silver/gold awards have been made to date?

The Bishop of St Albans to reply as Vice-Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

A Nine Cathedrals – Guildford, Portsmouth, Salisbury, Peel (Isle of Man), Bradford, St Paul’s, Coventry, Chelmsford and Leicester – have signed up as eco-churches.

488 churches have signed up, of which 62% are Anglican.

Five Dioceses have registered, with two more in the pipeline, and others having conversations which we hope will lead to them joining the EcoDiocese movement.

There have been 65 awards. These start with Bronze and progress to Silver and Gold as churches do more – so the number of awards in each category is changing over time.

5 Feb 2017 was the first Anniversary of Eco Church with many churches celebrating with Green Communion.

The Revd Dr Sean Doherty (London) to ask the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

Q39 What steps is the Church of England taking nationally to tackle modern day slavery?

The Bishop of St Albans to reply as Vice-Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

A Last September the Mission and Public Affairs Council recruited two new members of staff (Project Officer and Communications Officer) to head up the Clewer Initiative against Modern Day Slavery. This is a 3 year fixed term project, externally funded, set up to help dioceses in building new relationships between the Church, statutory and non-statutory agencies to develop a community-wide response to a modern-day evil. At a grass roots level it will help the Church detect instances of modern day slavery and to provide support to its victims. It will do this by providing bespoke training and mentoring that uses a community development methodology. This project, based on work trialled in the Diocese of Derby, has grown out of the collaborative work undertaken over the last few years between the Bishop of Derby and the Mission and Public Affairs Division as a result of the Modern Day Slavery Act (2015).

The Revd Jonathan MacNeaney (Chelmsford) to ask the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council

Q40 The Ministry of Justice states that in 2016 there were 119 self-inflicted deaths in UK prisons, the highest number since records began in 1978. It also reported a record high of 37,784 self-harm incidents and 25,049 assault incidents. Have additional resources been secured to strengthen the Church's ministry to prison inmates and officers?

The Bishop of St Albans to reply as Vice-Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

A Our prisons are in a serious situation. Self-inflicted deaths are up 32%, and assaults on staff up 40%, while self-harm incidents have risen by almost a quarter. Serious assaults on staff have trebled since 2012. The work of Chaplains is vital, the more so as the number of other staff has fallen in recent years. The Bishop to Prisons (The Bishop of Rochester) is working with the Chaplain-General to provide support for Church of England Chaplains.

Many chaplaincies are well supported by local churches and Christian charities. The Bishop to Prisons is one of the sponsors of a new national initiative called Prison Hope, strengthening the links between chaplaincy, local churches and Christian and wider community organisations. There are major resources there which can strengthen the work of prison-employed chaplains, and I commend the Prison Hope website.

BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Mrs Anne Martin (Guildford) to ask the Chair of the Business Committee:

Q41 Will the Business Committee review the organisation and scheduling of General Synod fringe meetings and flyers in the light of the delayed sending out of flyers for this session of General Synod?

The Revd Canon Sue Booy to reply as Chair of the Business Committee:

A The Business Committee carries out an annual review of General Synod Policies and Procedures at its March meeting. The Fringe and Displays Policy will be considered as part of this annual review at its next meeting.

DIOCESES COMMISSION

Mr Andrew Williams (Coventry) to ask the Chair of the Dioceses Commission:

Q42 Following on from the creation of the Diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales in 2014, are there any plans for future mergers of dioceses, and is there an optimum size that the Commission believes that a diocese should be?

Professor Michael Clarke to reply as Chair of the Dioceses Commission:

A The Commission currently has no plans for any further reorganisation schemes for the amalgamation of dioceses.

In our consideration of such matters we are resistant to 'a one size fits all' approach, believing that account has to be taken of what would best serve the mission of God's Church in a given pastoral context. In this regard members of the Commission have had a preliminary meeting with the Director of the Renewal and Reform programme. We stand ready to play such part as may be appropriate in the implementation of the Renewal and Reform agenda.

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS

The Ven Andy Piggott (Bath & Wells) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q43 Whilst very grateful for the short-term (CSA) loan funding which is being made available from the National Church, Bath & Wells DBF nevertheless remains short of liquid funds for longer term projects in pursuit of the diocesan vision and strategic priorities. Since loan funding is a relatively cheap source of finance compared with the sale of income yielding investments, will the Church Commissioners make long-term loan funding available to DBFs, thus saving a considerable amount of admin time for hard pressed Diocesan Secretaries and Finance Officers as well as the fees payable to commercial institutions?

Sir Andreas Whittam Smith to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:

A The Church Commissioners' legal powers mean that any loans they make must be on commercial terms.

The Commissioners' Assets Committee has a long standing policy of seeking to reduce its loan exposure over time on asset allocation grounds. This is in part as loans are inflexible assets: the lender has little, if any, control over the timing and extent of investments and disinvestments.

The Committee confirmed it did not wish to make longer term loan finance available to dioceses earlier this month when it reviewed its formal process for time-limited overdrafts on the clergy stipends accounts. Dioceses needing funds for longer term projects in pursuit of their vision and strategic priorities are encouraged to apply for strategic development grant funding: £24 million is available for such projects in 2017.

Mr Nigel Bacon (Lincoln) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q44 When determining the suitability of particular properties for use as see houses, what documented standards on matters such as number and size of public and private rooms, office space, capacity for providing hospitality, chapel, etc. does the Bishops and Cathedrals Committee utilise in the interests of achieving reasonable consistency between dioceses and will the Commissioners please publish these?

Mr Nigel Bacon (Lincoln) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q45 When, and by whom, were the standards referred to in question 44 approved?

Mr Andrew Mackie to answer as Third Church Estates Commissioner:

A With the Chair's permission, I will answer Questions 44 and 45 together.

There have been numerous discussions and documents over several decades, including guidelines agreed by the Commissioners and House of Bishops in 2005. We utilise all this accumulated knowledge in assessing suitability. The financial climate is also relevant and has changed very sharply: in the 2005-07 triennium we spent nearly £15.7m on see houses, excluding Lambeth Palace, but in 2017-19 we will operate under an £8.5m cap set by the Archbishops' Spending Plans Task Group.

There will of course never be complete consistency or uniformity but, as Synod knows, we seek suitable office and domestic accommodation, cost effectiveness and suitable hospitality space. Often there are other aspirations.

Many factors combine to make a house suitable and it is not helpful to debate them in isolation or to attempt to publish a definitive statement. Instead, the Commissioners balance all the factors and make an overall judgement.

PENSIONS BOARD

The Revd Canon Giles Goddard (Southwark) to ask the Chair of the Pensions Board:

Q46 How are the National Investing Bodies planning to promote the work of the Transition Pathway Initiative, which is an initiative developed with the Environment Agency Pension Fund, and represents a wider coalition beyond the CofE, working with Lord Stern's Team at the LSE, to hold energy and mining companies to account with regard to their management competency and performance to meet the target of 2 degrees set by COP 2 in Paris in December 2015?

Dr Jonathan Spencer to reply as Chair of the Church of England Pensions Board:

A In January 2017 the National Investing Bodies have launched, along with other investors with £2 trillion of funds under management and the support of the UN, the Transition Pathway Initiative (TPI). TPI independently assesses companies in key carbon intensive sectors (not just energy and extractives) on management quality and future projected carbon performance.

TPI assessments will provide the basis for the NIBs' engagement of the largest companies in each sector. We will encourage companies to reach level 4 of the TPI management quality assessment and to adopt 2 degrees aligned business plans. At a minimum we expect companies to adopt, by 2020, business plans aligned with the Paris Nationally Determined Contributions to global emissions reduction.

The TPI is a transparent annual assessment the results of which will be made public.

Mr Bradley Smith (Chichester) to ask the Chair of the Pensions Board:

Q47 As is well known, the Pension's Board's only nursing home and specialist dementia care units are due to close by 31 March 2017. On what basis does the Board consider that this decision, made without consultation either with those affected by the planned closure or with the Church, is an acceptable and responsible way for a Church organisation to act?

Dr Jonathan Spencer to reply as Chair of the Pensions Board:

A Given the situation we faced, it would have been completely irresponsible not to close Manorstead Nursing Home.

In running a nursing home, our primary responsibility is to keep the people in our care safe. On both legal and moral grounds, their safety must outweigh any other concerns.

Because of increasing difficulties in recruiting and retaining qualified nursing and care staff, we could no longer guarantee the long-term safety of our residents, and therefore we had to act. We could not wait for the staffing situation to decline still further, and risk a serious incident.

The Revd Stephen Trott (Peterborough) to ask the Chair of the Pensions Board:

Q48 Why is the Pensions Board unable to secure staff for Manorstead Nursing Home, although private nursing homes in the area are able to do so, and to take in the residents from Manorstead? What consultations were undertaken and what advice did the Board seek externally before taking the decision to close Manorstead?

Dr Jonathan Spencer to reply as Chair of the Pensions Board:

A We have had a loyal and committed staff at Manorstead Nursing Home. But as our qualified nurses and carers retired and left, we struggled – despite offering good pay rates – to replace them with others wanting regular employment. We know that we aren't alone in this. It reflects a wider issue about the number of people in the nursing/care professions. Most of our residents are choosing to move to other parts of the country, so are not being taken in by local homes.

There was no consultation prior to the decision being made. With the long-term safety of residents at risk, we had no alternative but to close the home. As the trustees of an independent charity, it was our legal duty, and ours alone, to keep the residents of the home safe, and therefore to act if we did not believe that we could continue to do that.

Mrs Rosemary Lyon (Blackburn) to ask the Chair of the Pensions Board:

Q49 What provision is the Pensions Board now making for those clergy and their dependents currently resident in their excellent retirement homes for when they need nursing or dementia care now that these facilities at Manorstead are to be closed; and who will pay for it?

Dr Jonathan Spencer to reply as Chair of the Pensions Board:

A The Pensions Board has never directly provided, or funded, such care for the vast majority of retired clergy who might need it. With only 33 beds, and over 14,000 retired clergy, Manorstead has only ever been available for a tiny fraction of them. All other clergy needing nursing or care (including those moving from Pensions Board accommodation) have had to source and fund it for themselves.

Now that Manorstead Nursing Home is closing, the Pensions Board will no longer provide any nursing care. Where needed, residents in its supported housing schemes will continue to be able to buy in care services provided by others. Retired clergy who need nursing care in future will all need to make their own provision, as has always been the case for the majority of our customers.

CENTRAL READERS COUNCIL

Mrs Anne Foreman (Exeter) to ask the Chair of the Central Readers Council:

Q50 Amongst the Diocesan Wardens of Readers, how many are

- a) Clergy;
- b) Lay; and
- c) Is there any Diocese that does not currently have a Warden of Readers?

Miss Rosemary Walters to reply on behalf of the Chair of the Central Readers Council:

A There are 29 Diocesan Wardens of Readers who are clergy and 11 who are lay. Four dioceses do not currently have a Warden. (Please note: several dioceses have two Wardens and therefore the total number of Wardens exceeds the total number of dioceses).

Mrs Anne Foreman (Exeter) to ask the Chair of the Central Readers Council:

Q51 How many people are currently training for Authorised lay Ministry (Reader training)

- a) in the Province of Canterbury
- b) in the Province of York

and what is their profile by

- c) age (under forty/over forty)
- d) gender

Miss Rosemary Walters to reply on behalf of the Chair of the Central Readers Council:

A The Central Readers Council does not hold this information. The responsibility for selection and the care of candidates in training and for their information lies with the diocese in which they are selected.

ETHICAL INVESTMENT ADVISORY GROUP

Mrs Katherine Alldread (Derby) to ask the Chair of the Ethical Investment Advisory Group:

Q52 In light of the new American President's stated intent to reintroduce torture of US detainees amongst other declarations and orders that are profoundly at odds with core Christian values, what are the Ethical Investment Advisory Group's rules regarding torture and what action would be taken should the President's stated intent to reintroduce torture be implemented? Has the EIAG reviewed the nature of Church investments in the United States and can an assurance be given that the Church will divest from areas that support the new administration's policies where they undermine core Christian values of justice, peace and the flourishing of God's creation?

The Bishop of Manchester to reply as Deputy Chair of the Ethical Investment Advisory Group:

A The EIAG has not to date specifically reviewed the issue of torture although any company providing instruments of torture would fall foul of the Statement of Ethical Investment Policy recommended by the EIAG and adopted by the National Investing Bodies (NIBs) in 2014. This states that companies in which the NIBs invest should demonstrate conscientiousness with regard to human rights.

ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL

Mrs Carolyn Graham (Guildford) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q53 What is the diversity of the pool from which members of the peer review panels described in GS Misc 1150 will be drawn, in terms of numbers of male/female/BAME clergy and male/female/BAME laity?

Canon John Spence to reply on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

A We are keen to achieve diversity in all its aspects in the peer review pool membership and also to include as wide as possible diocesan representation. All dioceses were invited to nominate individuals with the necessary competence and capacity which gave us the core panel membership, supplemented by centrally nominated individuals.

Peer review is a new process which must be owned by the dioceses. We will continue to reach out to ensure that the pool comprises a mix of individuals with a spread of experience and background so that all groups and all dioceses feel part of the process.

The fifty-six peer reviewers include three BAME clergy (two male, one female) and one female BAME member of the laity. Significant efforts were taken to identify BAME peer reviewers at the start of the process and further efforts will be taken in due course when seeking to appoint new reviewers.

A full breakdown has been placed on the notice board.

Mrs Carolyn Graham (Guildford) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q54 What is being done to ensure the pool from which members of the peer review panels described in GS Misc 1150 will be drawn come from a variety of theological positions?

Canon John Spence to reply on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

A The pool was formed primarily from nominations from dioceses, yielding a good range of people with the right skills and experience, but no particular steps were taken to determine the theological positions of peer reviewers before their appointment by the Archbishops' Council.

Mr Keith Cawdron (Liverpool) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q55 Will the Council publish to Synod members the impact report on the use of distributed central funds referred to in paragraph 6 of GS Misc 1150?

Canon John Spence to reply on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

A The impact report is envisaged as a report to the Archbishops' Council and Commissioners' Board of Governors as the trustee bodies overseeing the distribution of funds. When they consider the first impact report in mid-2018 they will decide how best to communicate the findings across the wider Church.

We are, however, committed to sharing the results from individual initiatives to promote sharing of best practice and a spirit of learning. In particular we are looking to hold a symposium in due course where participants can not only hear the impact of a range of diverse initiatives, but also the lessons that were learned as they developed.

Mr David Lamming (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q56 The Bishop of Peterborough, in his recent Visitation Charge to Peterborough Cathedral, concluded with "Reflections for the House of Bishops and the National Church Institutions" that included this paragraph:

"I urge the Archbishops' Council, the Church Commissioners, and the House of Bishops, to look at whether the current Cathedrals Measure is adequate, and to consider revising it. The Peterborough situation has convinced me that the high degree of independence currently enjoyed by Cathedrals poses serious risks to the reputation of the whole Church, and thus to our effectiveness in mission. A closer working relationship of Cathedrals with their Bishop and Diocese would be of benefit to all, both practically and spiritually." (para 30)

In response, a spokesperson for the Church Commissioners, in a formal statement published by the Church of England media centre, (<https://www.churchofengland.org/media-centre/news/2017/01/statement-on-visitation-charge-to-peterborough-cathedral.aspx>) said:

"The Commissioners and the Archbishops' Council will consider carefully Bishop Donald's reflections concerning the governance of cathedrals under the Cathedrals Measure. Any considerations would include consultation with the House of Bishops, dioceses and other cathedrals prior to deciding whether to bring forward any proposals for change."

Will the Archbishops' Council please indicate their timetable for considering Bishop Donald's reflections and the indicated consultation with the House of Bishops, dioceses and cathedrals?

The Archbishop of Canterbury to reply as President of the Archbishops' Council:

A The Archbishops' Council has not met since Bishop Donald's Visitation Charge was published and has therefore not yet had the opportunity to consider the matters raised in the Charge.

I am sure it will wish to consult the Church Commissioners, House of Bishops, Deans, Chapters and Dioceses as part of the process of developing any response to Bishop Donald's Charge.

Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q57 Given the importance of correct data submitted on a timely basis, has consideration been given to requiring those charged with compiling and submitting Annual Returns of Parish Statistics to presenting the Returns to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting? And if so, what is the answer?

Mrs Mary Chapman to reply on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

A There is no such requirement: adding another layer of bureaucracy might prove counterproductive. However, we strongly encourage churches to make use of relevant information to help them plan their mission and ministry. Information is readily available directly to all churches that make use of the online parish returns system (through which over 80% of churches submit their returns), and through other resources for parishes regularly produced and circulated by the Research and Statistics Unit.

Significant improvements in timeliness have taken place in recent years – almost 6,000 Statistics for Mission returns were submitted online in January 2017, up from around 3,500 two years ago – which is a testament to the efforts and increased engagement with parish information of those in churches and diocesan offices. The increased availability of such information will improve its usefulness, accuracy, and timeliness, and we encourage churches to consider presenting this information at their APCM.

HOUSE OF BISHOPS

The Revd Andrew Yates (Truro) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q58 Given the excellent liturgical resources that have been developed to mark Creationtide, alongside our Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Protestant brothers and sisters, how does the House of Bishops intend to promote Creationtide amongst dioceses and congregations?

The Bishop of Hereford to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A Many of the texts in the Environment Task Group's resource list are drawn from the widely used volume *New Patterns for Worship* (2002), and from *Common Worship: Times and Seasons* (2006), which was at its publication commended for use by the House of Bishops. Both include overt models for services with Creation as a theme. In 2014 the Liturgical Commission expressed its renewed support for such services. The other resources, drawn together by the Task Group, are examples of good practice, and are intended to show how dioceses and congregations might be able to include thanksgiving and prayer for Creation in their own liturgical lives and particular circumstances, and in partnership with our ecumenical partners, especially in the period between 1 September and 4 October.

Mr Andrew Williams (Coventry) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q59 In the light of the increase in people being diagnosed with coeliac disease, has the House brought forward any good practice recommendations for the handling of gluten free communion wafers, particularly with regard to preventing cross-contamination when used at the same time as standard communion wafers or bread?

The Bishop of Hereford to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The Legal Advisory Commission in 2014 noted that canonically permissible 'gluten-free' wafers are made of wheat but processed in such a way that the gluten content is greatly diminished. Subsequently the document highlights the potential effects of even a small quantity of gluten for some with coeliac disease, and makes provision for those who cannot therefore receive even a wafer of this type, namely that Communion can be received in one kind if necessity dictates. The Canons indicate the bread for Communion should be brought to the table 'in a paten or convenient box'; appropriate steps can be taken to ensure separate storage and handling of both types of bread.

Ms Christina Baron(Bath & Wells) to ask the House of Bishops:

Q60 In the light of the paper (HC(17)1) on Clergy Wellbeing to be considered by the House of Clergy, has consideration been given to whether there are any opportunities to develop the role of Bishops' Visitors in that connection?

The Bishop of Ludlow to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A As the paper (HC(17)1) on Clergy Wellbeing indicates, these matters are still at an early stage and without firm proposals. The paper recommends the establishment of a working group to enable specific proposals to be brought forward at a future date. For 25 years the Bishops' Visitors network has worked to the specific remit of providing a role of accompaniment to clergy spouses following the fracture of their marriage. It has not as such had a role in relation to the clergy themselves.

Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q61 In the light of the increasing number of moral issues presented by modern life which are not covered by biblical teaching, would the House of Bishops consider preparing a paper on the principles of defining right from wrong, the extent to which we can rely on 'let our conscience be our guide' and how the Church can move away from its close public association with a sense of personal guilt which so often obscures its message of unconditional love?

The Bishop of Coventry to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A According to the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion of the Church of England, 'Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation'. Its teaching is relevant to every person in every age, and is 'a light unto my paths' (Ps. 119.105) in every situation where there is a choice between right and wrong. The House of Bishops has no plans at present to issue a comprehensive report on general principles of theological ethics but remains committed to the responsibility of preaching the good news of God's unconditional love, and of fostering consciences formed by that gospel and by divine teaching.

Mr Samuel Margrave (Coventry) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q62 While the rest of us were recovering from our previous day's Christmas lunch in front of the television, on 26 December 2016 the National Secular Society launched what they call a major new report titled *Rethinking religion and belief in public life: a manifesto for change*. Cheery recommendations include the disestablishment of the Church of England and an end to faith schools.

Could the House of Bishops tell this Synod if it has had time to consider this report, and maybe respond with some of the omitted benefits of the established Church in England, and the important benefit to the tax payer and communities from the work we do?

The Bishop of Coventry to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The House of Bishops has not felt it necessary to consider this report formally, not least because we constantly make the case for the Church of England, and for the Christian faith in this country, in numerous contexts. We do so by drawing attention to the practical contributions made by Christians to the common good, the historical embeddedness of the Christian faith in valued institutions of the nation and emphasising – especially through Church of England Schools in their many forms – that we seek the good of all, especially the most vulnerable, and that the Church of England is not one of those bodies that seeks only the welfare of its own members or exists only for those who agree with it.

Mr Jeremy Harris (Chester) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q63 In this 500th anniversary of the Reformation, what steps will be taken to restore the central place of the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion in the Church of England?

The Bishop of Coventry to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A GS 2044 outlines three significant opportunities for the Church of England presented by the Reformation anniversary. The first two of these concern relations between Churches, and the third reflection on “the continuing significance of the theological themes of the Reformation, with the good news of Jesus Christ being at the centre of that”. Attention to the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion (referred to in GS 2044) as one of the historic formularies of the Church of England will be a proper part of how we respond to these opportunities.

Dr Chris Angus (Carlisle) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q64 The Church of England Director of Communications, writing in *The Times*, criticised the lack of originality of BBC religious television programmes at Christmas. Given that the BBC has recently abolished the post of Head of Religion & Ethics, what representations has the Church made to attempt to ensure that religion is better reflected and understood by broadcasters at a time when, in world affairs, it has large and growing influence?

The Bishop of Chelmsford to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A A number of meetings with the BBC are taking place at various levels. The Director of Communications is to meet with commissioning editors at the BBC and others, whilst other meetings are due to take place with BBC Management in the near future involving both bishops and the communications office.

The Revd Canon David Banting (Chelmsford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q65 Has the House of Bishops discussed how Diocesan Bishops are responding to PCCs of conservative evangelical churches who request, on grounds of their theological convictions, that arrangements be made for them under the House of Bishops' Declaration on the Ministry of Bishops and Priests, with particular reference to the Bishop of Maidstone's ministry, and, if so, with what outcome?

The Bishop of Chelmsford to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The House has not discussed this matter.

The Revd Canon David Banting (Chelmsford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q66 Who or what is in place to monitor how the Five Principles 'held together in tension' are working in practice across the dioceses to ensure mutual flourishing, with particular reference to the formation of Mission & Ministry Units (or equivalent) and the processes and outcomes of clergy appointments?

The Bishop of Chelmsford to answer on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A While the House itself has overall collective responsibility for the outworking of the Five Principles, it is for individual diocesan bishops as to how they inform pastoral practice in their dioceses. I see no reason why those Principles need not be wholly consonant with the formation of Mission & Ministry Units, or reflected in the processes for clergy appointments.

The Revd Canon Priscilla White (Birmingham) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q67 In the wake of President Trump's Executive Order restricting immigration from seven named Muslim majority countries

(a) What action is being taken by the national Church to make representations to Her Majesty's Government about a Christian understanding of welcome for refugees and aliens; and

(b) What recommendations will it be making for individual action by Christians and local church communities?

The Bishop of St Albans to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A Bishops have frequently set out in the House of Lords the importance of welcoming the stranger, and the practical implications for welcoming refugees, reinforcing the message of the Synod's motion in 2015. The Bishop of Durham has been, since its inception, co-chair of the National Refugee Welcome Board.

Guidance is issued from time to time by MPA and is on the website: most recently, advice on supporting those seeking asylum. We work closely with ecumenical partners and other groups.

The Community Sponsorship scheme was launched at Lambeth Palace, and much groundwork is taking place with the Home Office and with local church communities, so many of which have expressed a real determination to step up and welcome refugees. Many churches, too, are working closely with local authorities to welcome and support those resettled in our country under the Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme.

Mr Samuel Margrave (Coventry) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q68 Since our witness to minorities, the vulnerable and the persecuted is significant in showing the world the value we place on all God's people, has consideration been given to the justification for the current situation in which the Equality Act 2010 does not apply to all clergy office holders in the Church of England?

The Bishop of Newcastle to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A Clergy office holders are not employees and do not work under any form of contract. They are not, therefore, generally covered by the provisions of the Equality Act that are concerned with equality in the workplace. However, stipendiary assistant curates and the incumbents of Crown benefices are within the Act as – unlike incumbents generally and priests in charge – they come within the Act's definitions of office holders. Bishops are not office holders for the purposes of the Act. The position of other senior office holders is a complicated one. The Guidance to Good Practice approved by the House of Bishops' Standing Committee therefore recommends treating all clergy appointments, for practical purposes, as if they were subject to the Act.

The Revd Charles Read (Norwich) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q69 What mechanism exists for the House of Bishops or the General Synod to express its unease with statements or actions made by bishops in other provinces of the Anglican Communion?

The Archbishop of Canterbury to reply as Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The House of Bishops and the General Synod have the same range of means for expressing their views with regard to statements or actions in other provinces of the Anglican Communion as they have with regard to any matter not covered by the ecclesiastical law of the Church of England. In addition, members of the House of Bishops attend meetings of the Lambeth Conference, and the Appointments Committee of the General Synod recommends to the Archbishops appointments to the Anglican Consultative Council.

SECRETARY GENERAL

Mr Michael Todd (Truro) to ask the Secretary General:

Q70 Recent changes to legislation have given greater freedom to charities to invest in 'social investments'. Since questions have been raised as to the extent to which these new powers extend to Church institutions, can the Legal Office be invited to consider the position in that respect and issue some general guidance to dioceses and others?

Mr William Nye to reply as Secretary General:

A Yes, general guidance will be issued in due course.

The Revd Preb Stephen Lynas (Bath & Wells) to ask the Secretary General:

Q71 In 2019, the centenary of the Church of England Assembly (Powers) Act (usually known as the Enabling Act) will occur. The Act brought into being the current arrangements whereby this Synod can pass measures which have the force and effect of an Act of Parliament, thus providing the foundation of the formal polity by which the Church of England now legislates, with bishops, clergy and laity working together. What plans are there for marking this significant milestone by way of a Service of Thanksgiving, or by the production of academic or (relatively) popular materials, in order to enable a wider appreciation of the role of everyone in Church governance?

Mr William Nye to reply as Secretary General:

A At present there are no plans to mark this centenary.

Mr Andrew Presland (Peterborough) to ask the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

Q72 Despite all the resources that have recently been put into enabling the national Church to develop its media platforms, there currently appears to be no publication devoted to giving an understandable summary of the business carried at each Group of Sessions that Synod members could circulate within their diocese, such as to deanery synod and PCC members – e.g. 'Business Done' is likely to be too brief for most readers, and *In Focus* – although useful – reports only a few items of Synod business, alongside other news. Is this the result of a deliberate policy of encouraging each Synod member to express themselves in their own words, or might consideration be given to such a document being produced for future Groups of Sessions?

Mr William Nye to reply as Secretary General:

A We will give further consideration to how best Synod proceedings can be communicated to the wider Church.

CLERK TO THE SYNOD

Mrs Anne Martin (Guildford) to ask the Clerk to the Synod:

Q73 Is there any reason why prices for meals and audio equipment cannot be sent out with the initial booking material so that Synod groups can sort and consult on pricing for each meeting and therefore have information ready for returning prepared flyers?

Dr Jacqui Philips to reply as Clerk to the Synod:

A The Synod Office is not responsible for setting the prices for meals and audio equipment at London Synods. These costings are set by external suppliers and are reviewed at the beginning of the calendar year. The prices were not available when the fringe meetings booking period opened. Staff did not want to delay the fringe application process for applicants, and therefore opted to open up the bookings at the pre-arranged time. As soon as prices were known, these were circulated to meeting applicants.