

The General Synod has given its overwhelming backing to work by parishes and dioceses to support the resettlement of vulnerable Syrian refugees, in a debate focusing on the humanitarian response to the migrant crisis.

Members of the General Synod approved a motion welcoming the scale of aid provided by the Government for those suffering as a result of the conflict in Syria but called for significantly more Syrian refugees to be allowed to resettle in this country than the Government's target of 20,000 over five years.

The Synod urged parishes and dioceses to work in partnership with local authorities and other community organisations to provide practical help for the resettlement of vulnerable refugees and to pray for all those seeking both to address the causes as well as the symptoms of the crisis.

Synod members called upon the Government to work with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to ensure that vulnerability to religiously motivated persecution is taken into account when determining who is received into Britain.

The motion also called upon the Government to work with international partners in Europe and elsewhere to help establish safe and legal routes to places of safety, including this country, for refugees who are vulnerable and at severe risk.

Members of the General Synod further voted to call upon the Government to take a 'fair and proportionate' share of refugees now within the European Union, particularly those with family already legally resident in the UK.

Moving the motion, Paul Butler, Bishop of Durham, spoke of work already under way by Anglicans to help vulnerable refugees both in Britain and in Europe. He added that it was 'hard to imagine' a list of British values which did not include the word 'hospitality' - which stands 'close to the heart of the Christian gospel'.

"Many in the churches believe that, if we put our backs into working with others to create the capacity, we can make 20,000 a number that can be comfortably exceeded," he said.

"After all, it is not money that will do most to enable people driven from Syria to make new lives. It is practical care from a community, inviting them in, suggesting in many practical ways the possibility of hope and the promise of safety."

You can read [Bishop Paul's speech](#) in full and [watch the entire debate](#).