Report of Proceedings 2014

General Synod
July Group of Sessions

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Officers of the General Synod

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THE CHAIR The Archbishop of York (The Most Revd and Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu) took the Chair at 3.00 pm

The Revd Canon Dr Rosemarie Mallett (Southwark) led the Synod in an act of worship.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS

The Chair: Members of Synod, in a moment I am going to read out the names of the new members of the Synod. Please would they stand in their places when I mention their names and remain standing and then we can greet them all with applause at the end.

The new members are: the Rt Revd Peter Hancock (Bishop of Bath and Wells), replacing the Rt Revd Peter Price; the Rt Revd Nick Baines (not new to the Synod but in his new role as Bishop of Leeds); the Rt Revd Robert Atwell (Bishop of Exeter), replacing the Rt Revd Michael Langrish; the Rt Revd Nigel Stock (Bishop of the Armed Forces), in succession to the Rt Revd Stephen Venner, who had not taken up his place on the Synod; the Revd Mark Gilbert (Chichester), replacing the Rt Revd Richard Jackson; the Revd Brian Llewellyn (Europe), replacing the Ven. Jonathan Lloyd; the Revd Nigel Irons (Lichfield), replacing the Revd Canon Wealands Bell; Revd Jane Nattrass (York), replacing the Ven. Paul Ferguson; Mrs Judith Ayers (Exeter) replacing Mr Charles Hodgeson; Mr Geoffrey Shuttleworth (Birmingham), replacing Mr Robert Holgate; the Ven. Jonathan Chaffey QHC, replacing the Ven. Ray Pentland. May we greet them all, please. (Applause)

The Chair: I am now going to read out the names of the Bishops who are attending this group of sessions because the diocesan see is vacant. I remind members that these Bishops have the right to speak, but they do not vote, and do not form part of the quorum for the House of Bishops. Again, please, would they stand in their places when I mention their names and remain standing so that we can greet them with applause together.

The Bishops attending for this group of sessions are: the Suffragan Bishop in Europe (the Rt Revd David Hamid) for the diocese in Europe, the Bishop of Dorking (the Rt Revd Ian Brackley) for the diocese of Guildford and the Bishop of Ludlow (the Rt Revd Alistair Magowan) for the diocese of Hereford. May we please greet them all? (Applause)

WELCOME TO ANGLICAN AND ECUMENICAL GUESTS

The Chair: We come to welcome the Anglican and ecumenical guests. They are sitting on my left in that corner. May they also stand and remain standing and please then we shall greet them.

The Baptist Union, the Revd Professor Paul Fiddes,
Black-led Churches, Bishop Dr Joe Aldred,
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Church of Scotland, the Very Revd David Arnott
Methodist Church, the Revd Dr Roger Walton,
Moravian Church, the Revd Jan Mullin,
Orthodox Churches, the Very Revd Archimandrite Vassilios Papavassiliou,
Roman Catholic Church, vacant,
United Reformed Church, the Revd Graham Maskery,
Council of Oriental Orthodox Churches, His Grace Bishop Angaelos.

We have received apologies from Revd Professor Paul Fiddes, Reverend Archimandrite Vassilios Papavassiliou and Fr Robert Byrne (resigned as ecumenical representative for the Roman Catholic Church following his appointment as Auxiliary Bishop in the Birmingham Archdiocese), and also apologies from His Grace Bishop Angaelos.

You may be few in number but we hope you are going to keep up the ecumenical end. In addition to our nine-ecumenical representatives who are with us at each group of sessions in July, we always have some additional Anglican and ecumenical guests and like the nine ecumenical representatives, they attend on one occasion only and will not have speaking rights. I am going to ask them to stand and invite you to greet each one of them in turn when I have introduced them.

On this occasion we welcome the Rt Revd Kevin Pearson, Bishop of Argyll & the Isles in the Scottish Episcopal Church. Welcome.

Bishop Kevin was enthroned in the Cathedral of the Isles on 16 April 2011. His Diocese of Argyll & the Isles covers the mainland of Argyll and stretches from the northern tip of Lewis to the Mull of Kintyre, encompassing the Hebrides, Skye, Mull and Iona. It also covers Bute, Arran and Cumbrae. Wow! That is some doing.

Immediately before his consecration to the Episcopate, he was the Rector of St Michael and All Saints Church and Canon of St Mary’s Cathedral in Edinburgh. He was also Dean of Edinburgh until 2010. Previously, Bishop Kevin has worked in University Chaplaincy in Leeds and Edinburgh and was the Provincial Director of Ordinands for the Scottish Episcopal Church.

We welcome you, Sir.

We also welcome Dr Irmgard Schwaetzer, Präses of the Synod of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD).

Präses Schwaetzer took up her position in November 2013, having been a member of the EKD Synod since 2009. As the Präses of the EKD Synod, she is the head of the governing body of EKD and ex officio member of the EKD council. The office of the Präses is traditionally held by a lay person. The Präses represents the work of the Synod at large within the church and German society. She is also a member of the EKD steering committees for the reform process of the EKD and for European matters.

Besides Dr Schwaetzer’s work for the Synod, she is much involved in public discussion on sustainability and gender justice. From 1987 to 1991 she was Minister
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Dr Schwaetzer is accompanied by the Revd Karsten Wolkenhauer, who is the Personal Assistant to the Präses and the Präsidium of the EKD Synod. He studied theology and psychology in Berlin and graduated at Heidelberg University. After a decade in business and consulting service and after a year as an auxiliary preacher and counsellor in Berlin, he was appointed to his present position in 2013.

May we greet them both, please. (Applause)

The Chair: I now invite the Präses of the Synod of the Evangelical Church in Germany to come to the rostrum to greet the Synod.

Dr Ingard Schwaetzer (Präsident of the Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland (EKD) Synod): Your Graces, members of the Synod of the Church of England, dear brothers and sisters in Christ, it is an honour for me to attend this General Synod of the Church of England and to convey to you today the cordial greetings of the attending ecumenical guests and the Evangelical Church in Germany.

I bring the cordial greetings of the Council of the EKD, of the plenary church conference as well as of the Presidium of the Synod. These are the three bodies that act partly together, partly side-by-side to one another, but always to the best of the Church of Germany. Most particularly heartfelt greetings are sent by the Chairman of the Council, Nikolaus Schneider. His announcement last week to step down as Chairman in November has very much affected us all and has been met with the greatest possible respectful public response. I also bring the cordial greetings of Bishop Fredrich Weber, the co-Chairman of the Meissen Commission.

Ten years ago, Reverend Colin Penfold compared the good relations which bind us in the Meissen Commission with the famous Magdeburg hemispheres of the physician Otto von Guericke, which, when all oxygen is sucked from them, become inseparable such that no 16 teams of horses can rip them asunder. This image is now, for these many years, emblematic of our good co-operation and for the very spirit in which our exchanges occur.

Unfortunately, this is not quite the image we have of the Evangelical Church in Germany and its membership - for we are not inseparable. Every ten years now, and this is the fifth such occasion, we review our approaches to joint membership. First evaluations of a fifth poll undertaken to test responses provide for interesting insights, which we need to consider at the Synod this fall. Some results of the study are filling us with quite optimistic expectations. Those who feel very connected to the Church continue to be involved to a high degree and with great commitment. There is great interest in liturgical forms and well-designed worships. Especially *diakonia* is perceived by the vast majority of the German population as a very positive aspect of the service of the Church.

However, some of the results are downright alarming. For instance, we seem to be losing touch with young people and ever more people view the church with ambivalence. The number of those openly rejecting the church is rising, as is at the
same time the number of those to whom the church is indeed important and who devote themselves accordingly. The soundings also show that, for example, people hold the clergy and local parishes/congregations to be the single most important personages at local level, not the Bishops - but probably this is a purely German phenomenon! In addition, for the EKD in Germany a particularly positive factor is women's ordination and, as you know, also the ordination as a bishop.

I am also delighted to be here because our solid partnership indicates that we can learn from one another. Our Synod this fall in Dresden will consider how, in future, the Lutherans, members of the United Churches and Reformed Protestants can cooperate even more closely, both theologically and organisationally. This brings together in dialogue the sum of several hundreds of years of distinct manifestations of faithfulness. Surmounting this dialogue is the question, how the word of God can be proclaimed in our modern society so that people will accept it.

We are watching with great interest how you respond to the challenges of addressing questions of tradition and modernity for yourselves and your Church on such impending decisions as, for example, women in the Episcopate. I feel confident that we can learn much from each other on the many questions ahead on which we will surely succeed to be a Church in and for the 21st century. We are well embarked on this joint journey.

I thank you for this opportunity to share in this mutual deepening of our relations and I am happy to extend to you an invitation to join us at our Synod in Dresden in November this year. There we will commemorate the Fall of the Wall 25 years ago. The opening service of worship will be held in Dresden's 'Kreuzkirche', a central spot for manifestations of resistance against political dictatorship, and the closing service takes place at the 'Frauenkirche', such a particularly important place in terms of relations between our two peoples.

For our two Churches I wish for many more good steps on the prophetic path into the future and I feel confident and reassured that the joint labours of the Meissen Commission will yield many a rich harvest. I thank you very much.

The Chair: Dr Schwaetzer, we thank you very much and I am sure we will take up your offer through different offices for people to attend your own Synod. Thank you very much.

PROGRESS OF MEASURES AND STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

The Chair: I am required to report to the Synod that the Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure has received Royal Assent. All the provisions of the Measure came into force on 19 May 2014, except sections 2, 7 and 12, paragraphs 7 and 9 and sub-paragraphs (4), (5) and (12) of paragraph 19 of Schedule 2. These provisions will all come into force at a later date.

The Legal Officers (Annual Fees) Order 2014 and the Parochial Fees and Scheduled Matters Amending Order 2014 have both been laid before Parliament and will come into force on 1 January 2015.
The Legal Officers (Annual Fees) (Amendment) Order 2014 has been laid before Parliament and came into force on 20 April 2014.

For the convenience of members, the matters I have reported will be set out in a Notice Paper. That concludes these two items.

THE CHAIR Mr Geoffrey Tattersall (Manchester) took the Chair at 3.31 pm.

REPORT BY THE BUSINESS COMMITTEE (GS 1949)

The Chair: Synod, we move to Item 4 on our agenda, this is the Report of the Business Committee for which members of Synod will need GS 1949. This is, as Synod will appreciate, the usual opportunity for members to make brief points about the adequacy or otherwise, as they see it, of this agenda and about other matters addressed in the Report by the Business Committee. Amendments to the motion are not in order nor are further motions arising out of the Report, so members need to confine themselves to the issue on the place of the item on the agenda and should not get into the substance of the subject.

I call, first of all, the Revd Canon Sue Booys, Chairman of the Business Committee. She may speak for up to ten minutes.

The Revd Canon Susan Booys (Oxford): I beg to note that Synod do take note of this Report. I think I want to start by saying welcome to the ‘new look’ General Synod! I hope you appreciate our impressive new backdrop. It is the visual output of a really significant amount of work by Synod staff.

You will not be surprised, friends, when I say that we have a busy few days before us. Our time together is framed by the complex set of decisions that could allow women to be consecrated as bishops. This is one of those moments when we are conscious of our responsibility in helping to shape the future of our Church. The agenda has been prepared according to the careful procedure laid down by Standing Orders for Article 7 and 8 legislation so that, over the next three days, if Synod decides, we can have the Final Approval Debate for Women in the Episcopate on Monday.

You will have observed that on Sunday afternoon the agenda offers alternative scenarios which will not become clear until after the House of Bishops has concluded its Article 7 consideration and the Convocations and the House of Laity have had the opportunity to claim reference. We will notify you on Saturday if these meetings have to take place and the details of practical arrangements.

On Saturday afternoon, Synod will welcome the Revd Jim Wallis, who has accepted the invitation of the Archbishop of York to speak to us. I know members will want to join me in thanking Mr Wallis for breaking into a holiday and taking time to spend with us.

The Business and Mission and Public Affairs Committees were keen to make the most of this opportunity, so we have scheduled group work, followed by a debate on the Common Good on Saturday afternoon, immediately after Mr Wallis’ address.
Discussions with Synod members have informed the Business Committee’s commitment to including purposeful and focused group work at Synod around a variety of subjects. We hope Saturday afternoon will contribute to the process of building good relationships between members as we work together listening and sharing experience before engaging in formal debate. We all learn differently and, as anyone who has ever attended a Lent Group knows, it is more important to share issues and feelings with respect than to stick to an outline for discussion slavishly. However, I need your help so that we can give proper time to the debate. We have only been able to schedule 15 minutes each way for your walk to the discussion groups, so please do not dilly-dally! I shall look forward to seeing you here for a prompt 5 o’clock start to the debate.

Towards the end of a Quinquennium there is always a build-up of legislative work, and this one is no exception. Shortly, we shall give First Consideration to our safeguarding legislation. As last year, representatives of survivor groups will be present as our visitors in the gallery. Please offer them a warm and sensitive welcome.

Other legislative business includes Synodical government and representation, ecclesiastical property and pensions. On Monday morning the new Bishop to the Armed Forces, the Rt Revd Nigel Stock, will make a presentation to introduce an important outward-looking debate on the Armed Forces Covenant and Community Covenants.

In this combination of significant legislative business and substantial outward-focused debate, it has been a challenge to find space for Diocesan Synod and Private Members’ Motions. The Guildford Diocesan Motion on the Magna Carta is scheduled for Monday and the Bradford DSM on the Spare Room Subsidy as contingency business. The Business Committee was asked by the new Diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales to postpone consideration of the Wakefield DSM until a later Group of sessions. We shall return to Mr Hobbs’ Private Member’s Motion on Vesture on Saturday. However, I know that members will be wondering about the scheduling of Mrs Williams’ and Mr Ward’s Private Members’ Motions. The Business Committee felt that it would not be helpful to take these items of business at this group of sessions. In fact, in our discussions we wondered if these debates should be deferred whilst the carefully facilitated listening process led by the House of Bishops takes place, and I look forward to hearing your views in the debate or should you choose to speak to me around Synod.

In its annex our Business Committee Report seeks to share and take forward the discussions we have begun about Synod under four main themes: worship; working together; communication and taking our leadership of the Church seriously. We hope that you will take some time to talk to us about these proposals and help to frame the way we work as a Synod now and in the future. You can do this by speaking in this debate, by attending the Business Committee fringe reception, by talking to any member of the Committee, or by emailing the Clerk.

Our main challenge and opportunity when we meet as General Synod is to integrate prayer and worship with our business in a way that is distinctively Christian. This is the moment to offer our heartfelt thanks to the Chaplain. At his request a worship
room has been set aside in Derwent for Holy Communion in the morning and Night Prayer has been introduced each evening. Derwent will also be the home for the time being of the Continuous Praying Presence. These innovations would not be possible without the significant time of volunteers who will be alongside us to undergird Synod with prayer.

I have a real sense of the Church in parishes, dioceses and our cathedrals holding us in prayer as we meet today. When the business before us is crucial and life-changing it is good to feel supported by the prayers of the Church, but I hope that engaging the whole Church in prayer for the Synod is something that will grow and grow. For whilst we never know the outcome of the business before us, we are strengthened by knowing that we are united in the love and service of Christ, held by God's love for us and linked in prayer with our families, friends and congregations across the country.

I have discovered in the past year that clairvoyance is one of the characteristics expected of the Chair of the Business Committee. I have lost count of the number of times I have failed to answer your questions about the November dates for Synod, and I still cannot tell you! If we give final approval to Women in the Episcopate, it will pass to Parliament whose consideration will have to be concluded before we can enact the Canon, and so the final decision about a November Synod depends on that continuing process. So please, friends, continue to save the date but do not buy the tickets!

I do not need to be clairvoyant to know how much I and everyone else here owes to the hard work of our staff. I would love to name names but I shall be running out of time. Suffice it to say that I know I speak on behalf of all of us when I say thank you to the staff for your hard work, for your willingness to help and especially for your patience with the Chair of the Business Committee. Thank you.

The Chair: The matter is now open for debate.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

The Revd Professor Richard Burridge (University of London): I am very grateful to Canon Booys and all the hard work the Business Committee put into this agenda and it is a thankless debate where we either talk about what is on it or what is not on it. In three minutes I want to try to link Group Work, Christian Initiation, Armed Forces Covenant, Women Bishops and what else is missing.

It will not be a surprise, members of Synod, that I want to talk about the importance of theology within our agenda. Hopefully, tomorrow we will be able to resolve finally the question about university theologians' representation on Synod, but those with longer memories will remember that very often on a Sunday afternoon we were given a theological presentation, particularly there will be those of us who remember Barnabas Lindars, and his blessed memory, of about 40 minutes on John's Gospel, during which you could catch up on your sleep after a good Sunday lunch, or who can forget Tony Thiselton threatening to take his clothes off if he was not listened to.
Those theological sessions appear to have disappeared. There may have been good reasons for doing that in the suggestions I have made, but I want to ask where is theology in our agenda because we seem to be doing theology on the hoof. This is something that came out quite strongly in the pre-Synod meeting of the Representatives from the Diocese of London. It arose particularly with regard to the group work. I am very much looking forward to Jim Wallis’ presentation, and I have no doubt there will be substantial theology in that, but when we saw the group work discussion about reactions to photo sheets, a number of the London reps said they would rather not go than even do that. I am aware of previous group sessions, for instance, just a couple I was involved with, where prior to the Lambeth Conference, we did Bible study on John’s Gospel or when, with the assistance of Paula Gooder and Tony Thiselton, we were studying the whole of 1 Corinthians in one session.

It is a real shame to me that, given that there is some substantial theology in the Mission and Public Affairs document GS 1956 and its annex, that there is not the opportunity to do real theological reflection in the group work; I hope we will seize that. Equally, in the discussion about Christian Initiation, it is all about accessible language but there are enormous theological and spiritual implications about what is baptism, what does it effect, what is its relation to conversion, what about sin, what about the devil, what about the rejection of the devil. These are really important theological concepts which need to be grasped, not just about whether it is accessible.

In the Armed Forces Covenant paper, paragraph 4, Malcolm Round has done a stunning summary of the just war tradition, but again it is just referred to in passing, it is not explicit, nor recognition of the fact there are other views held by many of us in the church who, even if we are pacifists, still wish to care for veterans. Within Women Bishops, we have done a lot of theology about gender but we could do with some more theology about what it means to live together with those we disagree for the sake of the gospel. Please do not let us just do theology on the hoof; it needs to be in the agenda.

We have no less than eight presentations in the course of this Synod. I expect we will get some theology from Jim Wallis and I imagine that the Bishop to the Armed Forces will also give us some on the Armed Forces; I am not necessarily convinced about all of the others. Please can we find ways of doing it in the future agenda: good theology is good for you.

Canon Timothy Allen (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich): Chair, it seems to me that one of the most important objectives that the Business Committee has set itself is to establish what are called New Ways of Doing Synod. So low has the reputation of General Synod fallen within the wider church as a consequence of our lamentable handling of women bishops’ legislation that such new ways are essential if we are to regain respect. I am sure that the Business Committee is wise to take as the first of its four broad themes to this end the issue of “Integrating worship and prayer in the life of the Synod”.

On page 16 of the report, the Chair of the Business Committee lists eight imaginative new ways in which Synod’s prayer and worship can be improved, but, of course, prayer and worship have always played a major part in Synod’s proceedings. There
has always been at York the magnificently grand Eucharist, which we shall enjoy on Sunday in the Minster. There has always been daily morning and evening services of the Word. In York there has long been daily early morning Holy Communion before breakfast here in this Central Hall. In recent years, when Synod’s communal life has been split so bitterly by fierce disagreement on the place of women in the episcopate, very large numbers of Synod members have daily come in the early morning quietly to share the Eucharist in this Central Hall where later in the day we would be noisily debating women bishops and other divisive issues.

I hope it is not too fanciful to believe that this coming together to worship and share Communion in front of a temporary altar there, in the place that will shortly serve for what sometimes seems, if I may say so, to be a field of battle or a Roman arena, is something that helps us better to understand and sympathise with those with whom we disagree.

For this reason, Chair, it is a pity that the Business Committee has decided that the early morning Holy Communion should no longer be celebrated here in our debating chamber, on the battlefield as it were, instead this Eucharist, a key part of the Synod’s day, will be held in a rather anonymous, relatively meaningless, room in Derwent College, which as I discovered in visiting this afternoon is nearly 400 paces from here. I do hope this will be only a short-term temporary displacement and that the Business Committee will very soon manage to establish its planned Continuing Praying Presence, including I trust the Sisters from Bishopthorpe who I was very pleased to meet when I went to visit Derwent College, and bring that and the early morning Holy Communion back into this hall. Thank you, Chair.

Mrs Mary Durlacher (Chelmsford): My question incorporates something of Professor Burridge’s focus, which is to do with theology. I welcome the Business Committee looking at how we should do Synod and be Synod better, and particularly in the introduction “Integrating Worship and Prayer in the life of Synod”, page 15, and it quotes Acts 2:42, which begins, I am sure you all know it, “The early church devoted themselves to the Apostles’ teaching”. That comes first in the list, so I am surprised not to find in this list more focus on teaching because, as the Apostle Paul said, “be transformed by the renewing of your mind”.

What I would like to ask the Business Committee and the Chair is if space could be made, as we think of how to bring in topical subjects and discuss them in a more informal and immediate manner, to find time to discuss the question of stopping assemblies in non-faith schools. I think the Bishop of Oxford came up with a very surprising comment, which as a foundation governor I am alarmed at, intimating that they are a relic of the forties and urging that they be replaced by a time of spiritual reflection with elements of Christianity. As this comes on the back of the National Association of Governors to abolish school assemblies, could we make time to discuss that before the passage of time gives it a veneer of acceptance? Thank you.

The Revd Dr Patrick Richmond (Norwich): Thank you for calling me, Chair. It is my first time speaking in a business debate but I feel that I should have the backing of the Archbishops because, at their behest, in November 2013 we passed a motion that in the light of the priority of evangelism and making new disciples, we called upon every diocesan and deanery synod and every PCC to spend the bulk of one
meeting annually and some part of every meeting focusing on sharing experiences and initiatives for making new disciples. I am delighted that our distinguished ecumenical guest has already mentioned the elephant in the room, of the need to gain and retain children and young people if we are to have a future.

So when we look at our agenda, I wonder whether it is meant to provide us with the opportunity to lead by example. Is our agenda modelling the change that we want to see? Are we walking the walk? Are we telling people to do as we do and not just as we say? I am not quite sure as to the answer to this question. There are things on our agenda, such as baptism and such as even the attire of a minister, that may have an evangelistic aspect to them. I picked up this new term “intentionality”. Is there an intentionality about our agenda? Are we trying to create a new culture because I am informed by some management gurus who have experience of the church, like Keith Elford, that if one wants to create a future for an organisation, and the Church of England is some sort of an organisation, then the culture and the vision are more important than the structure. I hope, as I look at the future agendas and what they might hold, there might be an intentionality, an intentionality that puts the gaining and retaining of young people, that puts evangelism, on our agenda and colours our discussions so that we have a real vision and purpose. Thank you.

Mr Tom Sutcliffe (Southwark): Looking at the agenda and Sue Booys’ comments on it, I hope we all recognise that the Church Assembly and General Synod came about because of a growing sense that Parliament was no longer the appropriate forum for the settlement of various seemingly more specialised church matters. I do think we are in danger of regarding our General Synod meetings as a form of religious observance, which they are not. It is one thing to ask for God’s help and count on his presence; it is another to fill the agenda with interesting addresses and social encounters and discussions which might be appropriate for the Ethical Society in Conway Hall Red Lion Square, and which may well make us feel good and provide enjoyment but which obscure the fundamental reason why it is worth all that money to bring us here together. The General Synod meets to do a job. It is an elected body and like all such is imperfectly representative but it does not need to be treated as if it is in urgent need of enlightenment, though we no doubt as sinful individuals all are.

I am very happy that more of us may be talking to each other as a result of facilitating conversations, but God has been facilitating such conversations forever. The truth is that we should not need to spend extra money and take extra time to learn to listen and to learn to ask questions and hear answers to those questions.

I am not criticising Archbishop John Sentamu’s invitation to Jim Wallis as I am always glad to hear people who have the same birthday as me! I am not suggesting this is not something that we should be grateful to be able to do but I do not believe it should be part of Synod business. Maybe we should not always have sermons from the Archbishops on York Sunday; nor do I think that group work usefully adds to the kind of awareness of our differences as thinking individuals of which we are all too well aware. Are there not enough pressing matters to deal with in our business and, if not, why waste the money of being here so long? I am very worried that the gay issue has been kicked into the long grass as it has.
The Synod is not the life of the Church, that is at the grass roots, Synod membership has become largely clerical and semi-clerical. There are very few real laity around anymore, people not connected semi-professionally by being married to a priest or being a Reader or working for the Church. Who can blame the real laity for not being drawn to want to devote so much time to so much displaced and dysfunctional religiosity?

The Synod should be about debates and legislation and nothing else. It is not about worshiping and praying together except in the sense that any Christian meeting should be held with a consciousness of the Lord presiding. Meetings cost money. The Synod programme should not be filled with presentations and pseudo-educational elements and sermons about how we should individually follow our Christian calling.

I shall not be standing again after 25 years next year. The new generation will probably not notice what is missing because they have never experienced it, but a lot of rethinking - Not me, I did not mean missing me! They are very lucky! A lot of rethinking is needed and the whole economy of consultation must be considered more carefully. Perhaps we do need to put the clock back a bit and reintroduce old ways, such as having a proper elected Standing Committee for the General Synod in order to go forward more effectively.

*Mrs Mary Judkins (Leeds)*: Mary Judkins, Leeds, also known as West Yorkshire and The Dales. At Easter, the Prime Minister David Cameron pledged to raise awareness of the persecution of Christians around the world, demanding freedom of religion as an absolute right. Both Archbishops have spoken in individual capacities, the Archbishop in Nigeria recently expressed his personal pain and condolence at the ongoing terrorism, but this July members of General Synod said nothing. There is no formal debate, no focus groups on the subject of our brothers and sisters suffering untold atrocities in other countries. Have you heard Baroness Cox say, “I cannot do everything but I must not do nothing”?

We surely must need to be a voice for the voiceless, but how sad that many of us are more interested in football or cycling or socialising than in the persecuted Church. Canon Andrew White said last Tuesday that Iraq is in the worst position it has ever been; no mass in their second city. So how can we not debate it, but that is what has been decided.

Surely as part of the Body of Christ we need to raise awareness of persecution and what better place to do that than here in York. Would it not be brilliant if the press talked about our love and concern for our persecuted sisters and brothers rather than what happens under the duvet or women in the episcopacy? And we would gain the respect from the wider world.

In a study day last Saturday in Truro about the persecuted church, we were challenged with a question from a Muslim scholar: “Are you the Church of Jesus Christ or of Pontius Pilate?” A hard question, and I am challenging the Business Committee with that too.
It is probably not possible to have an emergency debate on the persecuted church on Sunday afternoon, although it is of national and international importance, so I urge you to show your support for this important subject that we need to debate by your applause. Imagine the headlines: good news for the world from the Church of England!

*Mr Tim Hind (Bath & Wells):* Twenty years ago I was working for an insurance company in the pensions field and wondering why I was working for a pensions company when the white fields are out there for harvest, what was God wanting me to do? I was very relieved when I joined General Synod and one of the first things that came about was for me to have an opportunity to serve on the Pensions Board; God answering prayer I thought.

My life moved on, I moved into process. Funnily enough, since I have been on Archbishops’ Council I have found that process has been one of the most important things that the church needs to pay attention to. I want to add my voice to others today. I dare not speak on behalf of the whole House of Laity, that gets people into trouble - but I would love to do that - to say thank you, Business Committee, for the way in which this particular weekend has been constructed so carefully and thoughtfully and that we have an opportunity for perhaps coming to a conclusion in certain big, great matters.

If I did have a slight criticism of the Business Committee and the way in which it has constructed the weekend, it would be the way in which the papers have been sent out electronically. For those of us that have opted for electronic papers, you can do it in all sorts of ways, you can download it as a zip file and you can put it onto your laptop, but I find that my preferred way of doing it is to load them into Kindle app on the iPad, which is an absolutely wonderful tool. Unfortunately, when I tried to look at some of the things, I found that two of them were called newbook.book, one was called GS 000 when it obviously had another number associated with it, and one was actually written by Colin Podmore. Perhaps Synod office could look at the way in which the electronic information held within some of these documents is held so that when we try to access the information that we have carefully downloaded it is possible to access it. Thank you.

*Dr Edmund Marshall (St Albans):* I wish to share with Synod three good reasons for hoping that we shall have a group of sessions in November this year, 2014. First, I earnestly hope that the final stage of the legislation for enabling women bishops will be ready to be taken by November. But if it is not, that is not a sufficiently good reason for us not to meet in November. There is plenty of other business before General Synod and the list on page 12 of this Report shows what there is for us to do during two, three or four days in November.

I have a particular interest in one of the items on that list, namely the revision stage of the Church of England Naming of Diocese Measure for which I am Chair of the Revision Committee. The measure was referred to the Revision Committee last February and there was then the general hope that we would be able to bring the Committee’s report to Synod here at York in this Group of sessions, but unforeseen circumstances have prevented that from happening, we have had to find a new chair of the Steering Committee of the draft Measure. Happily, that has now happened
and the Committee hopes to meet during September. That would enable the revision stage on that draft Measure to be taken in November. If the failure to hold any sessions of Synod in November were to push that revision stage into February, it would have taken a full 12 months for the Revision Committee’s work to be completed, which for a comparatively short and concise draft Measure would look bad.

In the list on page 12 there is a more significant item of business listed for consideration in November, namely the report from the Joint Implementation Commission on the Anglican Methodist Covenant. When in Synod last November I asked a question about this report, my good friend the Bishop of Peterborough, as Chairman of the Council for Christian Unity, was able to say that the Council will sponsor a debate on the Covenant based on the JIC Report in the General Synod in July 2014, but, as Synod can see, such a debate does not appear on the list before us.

I hope, and this is my third good reason, that there will be the opportunity in November for such a debate to be held then. Thank you.

The Revd Preb. Stephen Lynas (Bath & Wells): Referring to paragraphs 67 and 69 of the Business Committee report on the agenda, I want to speak a little bit about this backdrop which we have staring us in the face today. Those of you with good memories may remember the old backdrop. It was brown, it was fusty, it kind of felt like the 1970s. Now, suddenly, we have this wonderful, new bright shining thing which I hope reflects the wider world who may be watching us on a webcast, or any TV news coverage that we may happen to get on Monday, that this is a Church of the 21st century and not one of the 1970s. I think I want to echo what the Chair of the Business Committee has said about the people who have done the work to make this possible. I was invited to join the Business Committee and some others in the consultation earlier this year when models of this were produced and I thought it was fantastic. But before the Business Committee pat themselves too much on the back, they do need to remember that there are some oddly critical comments kicking about in the Twitter-sphere. I do not want this to be thought of as a reflection on my own theology, Chair, but I am slightly worried about the Cross. It kind of glows rather luminously, and it seems to me it may have come in from a Dr Who set and it may start pulsing at some point and come out and hit us all. The Business Committee have tried to encourage the use of Twitter and all that electronic stuff in order to help Synod's message get out to a wider world, but they do need to be careful of what they wish for because they might get it. Jeremy Fletcher has already tweeted that the backdrop reminds him of the flight deck of the USS Enterprise – oh, yes, it does! Equally, the Chair of the Business Committee, Canon Sue Booys in addressing the Synod has attracted a tweet from somebody I have not heard of, so I will not mention any names, but the tweet says, “Good to see Victoria Wood speaking at Synod but she is not as funny as she used to be.” If we are going to engage with the wider world in this way, we have to be prepared for people to take the mickey out of us in an affectionate way and also possibly to be rude about us in the future. But I want to say to the Business Committee: jolly good, keep it up, and, on a more serious note, I sense that the atmosphere of prayer is much more evident in the Synod now than it was when I joined seven or eight years ago. I do not mind going to Derwent to say my prayers because I do not find this a helpful place to worship. So let us see how it
goes, and let us not grumble about it until it is over and when we do grumble it, let us just tweet about it instead of moaning too much.

*The Revd Christopher Hobbs (London):* Just a further question about this lovely backdrop: Will it be stored somewhere and brought back next year, the same one? I just would like to know. Thank you.

*The Chair:* I see no one else standing and, therefore, I call Sue Booys to reply to the debate.

*The Revd Sue Booys (Oxford):* Five minutes. Well, that does not give me any time to be as funny as Victoria Wood, so I am really grateful for that. I am going to just say something about the Cross. Apparently - I am not sure how this is going to be received - it can be switched off! I would say thank you to Stephen Lynam for his comments. We never expect to get anything right first time, or second time or even third time, so keep the comments coming because we aim to get it better next time. If you come and look at the backdrop you will find it is a lot flimsier than it might appear, and I am told that it would be more expensive to store it than it would be to keep it in its entirety, but it will be kept under review.

It leads me to talk about aspects of cost that have come up in a couple of other questions. The cost of having an additional Synod is quite significant and the decision about having another Synod is not, in fact, in the hands of the Business Committee. I do not know whether he thinks it would be a matter for joint celebration or he would be glad to have the time off, but Simon Butler whispered to me that it is his 50th birthday in November so, if we are here, perhaps you will remember to congratulate him.

Tim Hind, we will look into Kindle. I think that is all I need to say about that.

I do think it has been really interesting for me to hear the huge variety in this debate. That just proves to me how jolly difficult this job is. There is such a variety of opinion. Richard Burridge, I do not remember Tony Thiselton threatening to take his clothes off but I shall certainly always remember you telling the story. It seems to me that new ways of doing Synod can actually mean recovering older ways of doing Synod and that is something that we shall pay attention to. Keeping a balance between our theology and our business is something that we do genuinely try to do on the Business Committee. With regards to Mrs Durlacher’s specific question about Assemblies, we would happily schedule such a debate if somebody asked us to.

Patrick Richmond, the Common Good is the third Quinquennium priority that we have considered in three separate Synods in succession, so I think that does demonstrate that we are doing what you ask.

Mary Judkins, I really welcome that you are holding Synod to account for the way that we think about our brothers and sisters in the persecuted church. It is not again in the Business Committee’s gift to have an emergency debate, but I can tell you that the Bishop of the Episcopal Church in Sudan, Bishop Ismael Gabriel, will be with us on Saturday afternoon during Jim Wallis’s speech and I trust that you will take the opportunity to find ways of offering your support when we know that he is with us.
Tom Sutcliffe, I think I have said, we keep our finances under consideration. Could I say that the gay issue is most specifically not kicked in the long grass, but the subject of serious leadership by the House of Bishops. I apologise if I have missed anyone out but I think I must be at five minutes.

The Chair: So Item 4 is before the Synod.

The motion

‘That the Synod do take note of this Report.’

was carried on a show of hands.

I am asked to remind members of Synod that the Chair of the Business Committee has requested comments and feedback on the annex to the Report of the Business Committee and that they be sent to her via the Clerk.

That concludes this item of business and we move to Items 5, 6 and 7, appointments to The Archbishops’ Council. You will see from the fourth Notice Paper that Item 8 is not to be moved. So I call upon, first of all, the Archbishop of York to move Item 5 relating to Mrs Mary Chapman.

APPOINTMENTS TO THE ARCHBISHOPS’ COUNCIL (GS 1950)

The Archbishop of York (The Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu): Thank you, Chair. In moving Item 5 on the agenda I would like to make some general remarks that will shorten what I have to say when we come to Items 6 and 7. I shall also explain why, in the event, I shall not be moving Item 8.

When Synod approved the National Institutions Measure in 1998 they decided that the Archbishops’ Council should have up to 19 members. Three of us, the Archbishops and the First Estates Commissioner are members by virtue of our office. Ten other places are filled by elections from within each of the three Houses of the Synod. In addition, there are up to six places which the Archbishops can fill by way of appointment. Our invitations have to be endorsed by the Synod since all Council members are members of the Synod. There is, I am pleased to report, no time limits on the period of time for which the Archbishops, the First Estates Commissioner, the Prolocutors and Chair and Vice-Chair of the House of Laity may serve on The Archbishops’ Council, though the Prolocutors and the officers of the House of Laity do, of course, have to submit themselves to re-election every five years. For the unelected members there is a ten year maximum period of continuous service; in other words, two five-year terms. Similarly, the term of office when appointed member cannot be more than five years in the first instance with a maximum of ten years' continuous service if further appointment periods are agreed.

The terms of office of the three appointed members of The Archbishops’ Council end on 31 December so that the Archbishop of Canterbury and I had to decide early this year whether we should advertise for a replacement or propose a further period of appointment in each case. The decision that we took was strongly influenced not
only by the quality of the three existing members and the contribution that they are making to the work of the Council but also by the fact that at the end of the year there will be fresh elections for the ten places where the choice rests with the members of this General Synod. All past experience suggests that at the beginning of each Quinquennium there is a tighter turnover among the elected membership of The Archbishops’ Council, if only because there are nearly always some members who have decided to step down from the Synod.

Against this background it is very helpful to be able to time the turnover among the appointed members with a view to maintaining some continuity and collective memory across the transition. As with other bodies where members have to exercise their powers of trustee, it is good practice to try and manage changes of membership in a phased way. For that reason, the Archbishop of Canterbury and I are proposing that two of the existing members of the Council should serve on until the end of 2016. They are out of the new Synod who have been elected; and the other, who chairs the Council’s Audit Committee, until the end of 2017.

We had initially intended to bring to you today a new name to fill the place vacated by Professor John Craven some while ago. The vacancy was advertised and a shortlist of candidates was prepared. But, in the event, the Archbishop of Canterbury and I concluded that we wanted to take a little longer and look again at the present balance of skills and experience within the Council before bringing a proposal to you. I shall not, therefore, be moving Item 8 on the agenda.

So the first motion before you is to give Mrs Mary Chapman, currently the chair of the Council’s Audit Committee, a further three years on the Council. Following a career in marketing, Mary was Chief Executive of the Investors in People and of the Chartered Management Institute. She has held a number of non-executive roles, including Director of the Royal Mint, Commissioner of the National Lottery, the Chair of the Institute for Customer Service, and a member of the Council of Brunel University. She has made a very significant contribution to The Archbishops’ Council since she joined it in 2010. Chair, I, therefore, beg to move Item 5 that the appointment of Mrs Mary Chapman for a term ending on 31 December 2017 be approved.

The Chair: This matter is now open for debate, but I see no one standing. Archbishop, I presume you do not want to reply? So we move straight to the vote.

The motion

‘That the appointment of Mrs Mary Chapman for a term ending on 31 December 2017 be approved.’

was carried on a show of hands.

We move to Item 6, Archbishop, relating to Mr Philip Fletcher.

The Archbishop of York (The Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu): Chair, I beg to move Item 6, that the appointment of Mr Philip Fletcher for a term ending 31 December 2016 be approved. Following a long senior career in Whitehall, Philip...
became a Receiver of the Metropolitan Police and subsequently Director General and then Chair of the Office of Water Services. He is also a member of the Qualifications and Examinations Regulator. Philip has been a Reader in the Southwark Diocese for many years and took on a major responsibility within The Archbishops’ Council three years ago when he succeeded Dr Philip Giddings as Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council. It is particularly important that we secure an orderly succession for the Mission and Public Affairs Council under the life of the new Synod and, to that end, Philip has accepted the invitation that the Archbishop of Canterbury and I have extended to him to remain on The Archbishops’ Council until the end of 2016. I, therefore, commend his appointment to the Synod.

The Chair: Again, this matter is open for debate, but I see no one standing so I will put the matter straight to the vote.

The motion

“That the appointment of Mr Philip Fletcher for a term ending on 31 December 2016 be approved.’

was carried on a show of hands.

We move to Item 7, Archbishop, relating to the Revd Dr Rosalyn Murphy.

The Archbishop of York (The Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu): Chair, I beg to move Item 7 relating to the appointment of the Revd Dr Rosalyn Murphy for a term ending 31 December 2016 be approved. The presence on the Archbishops’ Council of the holder of my office and of the Prolocutor for the province of York shows that the Archbishops’ Council is not solely the preserve of the province of Canterbury. At the moment, one of our two bishops, the Bishop of Sheffield, is also from the North but Ros Murphy’s membership of The Archbishops’ Council since 2010 has been an important addition to the voice of the North on The Archbishops’ Council. Ros has ensured that when concerning national issues of policy and resources we never lose sight of the impact that those decisions may have in challenging urban parishes of the kind where she ministers. Her strong academic background, her passion for mission and experience of Anglicanism in North America before she came to this country have already enriched our deliberations. I, therefore, commend her for a further term of office until the end of December 2016.

The Chair: Again, this matter is open for debate. I see no one standing, so I will put the matter to the vote.

The motion

“That the appointment of the Revd Dr Rosalyn Murphy for a term ending on 31 December 2016 be approved.’

was carried on a show of hands.

That concludes these items of business.
THE CHAIR Canon Ann Turner (Europe) took the Chair at 4.22 pm.

DRAFT BISHOPS AND PRIESTS (CONSECRATION AND ORDINATION OF WOMEN) MEASURE (GS 1925B) AND DRAFT AMENDING CANON NO. 33 (GS 1926B): REPORT BY THE BUSINESS COMMITTEE ON THE ARTICLE 8 REFERENCE (GS 1951)

The Chair: Good afternoon, Synod. We now come to Item 501. We come to the first item of business in this group of sessions relating to the draft legislation to allow women to be consecrated to the episcopate. Its focus is the report of the Business Committee on the reference of the draft legislation to the dioceses under Article 8 of the Synod’s Constitution. Members will accordingly need that report which is GS 1951. The form of the debate is very straightforward being a ‘take note’ debate on the report. I would remind members that they should confine their comments to matters addressed in the Report under debate. I shall be ready to call them to order if they do not do so. I now call on the Chair of the Business Committee, the Revd Canon Sue Booys, to move Item 501. You may speak for up to ten minutes.

The Revd Canon Susan Booys (Oxford): I beg to move that the Synod do take note of this Report and I do not think I will be taking as much as five minutes of your time. The Business Committee Report, GS 1951, outlines the results of the Article 8 reference to the dioceses on the draft Bishops and Priests (Consecration and Ordination of Women) Measure and draft Amending Canon No. 33.

Our debate on this Report is the first step in what is potentially quite a complicated sequence at this group of sessions before we get to Monday. So as well as offering a few comments on the diocesan reference, I would like to say something about that sequence.

I want to begin by acknowledging the very large amount of work that this exercise has entailed for the dioceses. This is particularly due to the fact that Synod voted in February to shorten the reference period from the usual six months to three months in order to expedite this process. I realise that this put considerable pressure on diocesan synods to meet and to organise the votes. Nevertheless, all save the Diocese in Europe was able to do so by the deadline of midnight on 22 May, albeit in Manchester’s case by only a few hours!

Given all these pressures, the Business Committee is hugely appreciative of the effort that was made by dioceses to turn this around in such a short period and particularly to the staff of diocesan offices, to those who oversaw the circulation of the relevant material, to those who planned synod timetables and agendas and to those who contributed to debates in all the diocesan synods. This kind of exercise does not happen without considerable preparation and care. Our debate today is not the moment for airing wider issues that will be more properly for other discussions over the next few days. I simply want to summarise briefly the information that is given in the Report.

First, it is notable, as the table in Annex A shows, that all 43 dioceses that voted did so in favour of the motion,
"That this Synod approve the proposals embodied in the draft Bishops and Priests (Consecration and Ordination of Women) Measure and draft Amending Canon No. 33."

Secondly, a total of 3,799 people voted and 114 abstained. Of those who voted, 91% voted in favour and 9% against. Not counting abstentions, the level of support was 96% amongst the Bishops, 92% in diocesan houses of laity and 90% in diocesan houses of clergy. If you add in the number of abstentions, the breakdown in the dioceses is as follows: 88% in favour across all three Houses; 9% against, and 3% of members abstaining. It is perhaps worth comparing this with the votes on the Article 8 reference on the previous Women in the Episcopate legislation on which my predecessor the Venerable Julian Henderson, now the Bishop of Blackburn, reported back to Synod in February 2012. On that occasion, 42 of the 44 dioceses voted in favour of the legislation and two against. Back then, looking at the individual numbers of votes, Julian noted that just over three-quarters of diocesan synod members voted in favour and just under one quarter did not. It is for you to draw your own conclusion from that change in numbers, Synod. The role of the Chair of the Business Committee is simply to try and facilitate an orderly process.

In conclusion, let me say a little bit about what happens next. Assuming that you are content to take note of our Report, we shall move immediately to the final drafting stage, when I shall hand over to the Bishop of Rochester, as Chair of the Steering Committee. Given the nature of that Report, I doubt whether this will detain us for very long. The business will then stand committed to the House of Bishops under Article 7. They are due to meet - lucky them - at breakfast time tomorrow and it is for them to decide whether the Measure and Amending Canon be submitted to the Synod in the form they will take after final drafting and for final approval. At the same time, they will deal with the Article 7 reference to the Act of Synod which Synod considered in February which proposes to rescind the 1993 Act of Synod. Immediately after that, the Clerk to the Synod will consult the relevant officers of the House of Laity and the Convocations to see whether they are going to claim Article 7 references. If they do, as I have said in another place, those references will take place after lunch on Sunday and, if not, we have scheduled other business for that time.

Then we come to Monday when, all being well, we will come to the final approval debate for legislation and if the votes are in favour, the final approval of the Act of Synod. For the avoidance of doubt, I should make it clear that it is only the draft measure that requires the two-thirds majorities in each House. Sometimes Amending Canons also require that level of support, but I am assured that on this occasion it does not, and so I have pleasure in commending our Report to the Synod and look forward to hearing any responses you may have.

The Chair: Synod, this item is now open for debate.

Mrs Margaret Condick (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich): Thank you, Chair. St Edmundsbury & Ipswich was the first diocese where no-one voted against this legislation. We had a 100% majority. Along with three other dioceses on 1 March we began the process; a wonderful start! Since then, as we all know, other dioceses
have voted either 100% or overwhelmingly, giving a complete endorsement of this package.

Our vote at diocesan synods reflected the views I hear at deanery synods and locally. People say things like, “When on earth are you going to get this done? Why is it taking so long? What’s the problem?” It is incomprehensible to most people. Someone I know and respect from an evangelical church said to me after the November 2012 debate, “Oh, that was rubbish what happened then.” He and others are completely switched off the General Synod by the whole process. That vote brought us into disrepute. The wider Church and the whole country are beginning to treat us with contempt. We have not so far reflected the views back home. I have had, for instance, people say to me, “Can our next bishop be a woman?” Answer: “No, because even if we pass this now, the process will not be finished before we in St Edmundsbury & Ipswich appoint, but others will have the chance.” Please listen to the view expressed by your diocesan synod. Please let’s not have to go back to the deaneries and apologise yet again. Let’s vote as our Church members are asking us. Thank you.

Mrs Anneliese Barrell (Exeter): Members of Synod, I believe that the point at which we have all arrived is nothing short of a miracle. To achieve this miracle, we have to give very grateful thanks to both our Archbishops, David Porter, the Bishop of Rochester, the hard-working Steering Committee and not forgetting those in our deaneries, our dioceses and us here.

The vision of a united and trusting Synod seemed impossible to achieve in November 2012, but thanks to the foresight of our Archbishops, and the advent of the facilitative discussion groups, we now talk amicably to each other outside our defined groups. We have learned to trust each other, to talk to each other, not at each other. We listen and try to understand and to prayerfully value the views and beliefs of those with whom we differ and - surprise, surprise - this was echoed throughout the dioceses. Many of us have found that there is much more that we agree about than which we disagree about. We actually smile and speak to each other as we pass in the corridors of Church House or on the campus here at York. What a difference and how welcome. This friendly atmosphere of trust was certainly evident in my own diocesan debate on this Article 8 business. The reference to the dioceses is always a final check on what is being decided at General Synod, and this time the green light shines even more brightly.

Despite having said that, I regret I cannot vote “for” in the final debate. If I do so I will, with my fellow Catholics, be denying our theological convictions and beliefs and make a mockery of all that we have been saying during the past years.

The Measure before us which we have is not entirely acceptable to the Catholic group, but what it represents is an exciting possibility, one that would engender a very harmonious and diverse Church of England. We are extremely grateful for the comments made by the Archbishop of York and his clear recognition of our position that is one of conviction. I do however promise, and so do my fellows, that we will do our very best as the Measure is passed to continue to work in close and prayerful cooperation with all God’s chosen ministers to promote His Kingdom. Thank you.
The Revd Canon Pete Spiers (Liverpool): In Acts, Chapter 15, we hear how when the early Church faced difficulty and division they held a Council in Jerusalem and as a result of that Council they wrote a letter in which they used the following phrase: “It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us”. There was no hint of a two-thirds or simple majority there. So what is the Holy Spirit saying to us about these voting figures in the dioceses? Some would say there is massive support for this current legislation. Others might say that it simply shows that there is Biblical illiteracy alive and well in the Church of England or that the Church of England is intent on furthering divisions within the Church. I hope no-one would say that the current legislation has not been worked out carefully and conscientiously. You will know that I have often spoken about how adversarial Synod seems to be, so when it comes to Monday let’s not forget that we have three choices as to how we should vote: we can vote for; we can vote against; or we can abstain.

Contrary to perceived wisdom, I would like to suggest that abstention is not a wasted vote. People who abstain are those who say, “We recognise that this legislation, if it were to fail, would be catastrophic for the Church of England. We recognise that every single diocesan synod has voted in favour by a huge majority, but we cannot vote for it because in principle we cannot agree with it.”

One of the things most often said by supporters of this legislation is why should we accommodate opponents when they will vote against anyway at the end of it? So abstention by those opposed would demonstrate their appreciation that all the discussions which have been held to bring this back so quickly were not in vain and would also affirm the five guiding principles, which respect everyone’s integrity and conscience, and which I think have been unanimously welcomed.

It may be that there are those who think that there are enough people in favour for a two-thirds majority to be achieved, in which case voting against is actually a wasted vote. It would be great if this legislation could be passed by as few “against” votes as possible. The people who read the letter from the Council of Jerusalem were glad for its encouraging message, so I hope and pray that by the end of Monday this Synod will be able to send out a similar message that will make people glad. Abstention would be, I believe, the best way for opponents to signal that they and we are determined as a Church to walk together into the new and exciting future that God has planned for us.

Mrs Suzanne Leafe (Truro): I am not going to make a big speech. I would just like to draw your attention to something that worries me. In all this talk about flourishing and now a demand that perhaps we should abstain rather than vote against, I would like to draw your attention to the figures in three dioceses - Norwich, Oxford and Guildford - where there was just about the same number of people voting in favour this time as last time, but where the no vote disappeared entirely. They did not move from a no vote to a yes vote or even to an abstention; they just appeared to have disappeared.

If you want us to flourish, please let us come to your diocesan synods and speak our mind. If you want us to flourish, please let us vote no if that is what our theological convictions make us need to do. If you want us to flourish, please do not make us disappear.
Women in the Episcopate: Report on the Article 8 Reference

Friday 11 July

The Chair: After the next two speakers I would welcome a motion to test the mind of Synod on closure.

Canon Timothy Allen (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich): Madam Chair, like my friend Margaret Condick I have a brief and clear message from Suffolk for the General Synod. According to the list on page 3 of the Business Committee Report, there were just four dioceses where there was no objection at all at the diocesan synod to these proposals to allow women to be bishops. St Edmundsbury & Ipswich at Suffolk was one of these. Our sole acting bishop, since both the diocesan and suffragan Sees are sadly vacant, voted yes; 48 of the clergy voted yes; 62 of the laity voted yes; no-one voted against and three people in all abstained. There could not, Madam Chair, be a clearer message from Suffolk to this Synod. For Heaven’s sake, give a resounding “yes” to the present package of allowing women into the Episcopate and giving generous protection for those at either extreme of the Church of England who find it difficult to accept them.

Historically, Suffolk has swung from one pole to the other in terms of churchmanship. In the Middle Ages the county’s marked devotion to the Church led to its being called “Silly Suffolk”, that is “Holy Suffolk”. During and after the Reformation Suffolk became for a time violently Protestant. Witness the iconoclasm led by William Dowsing which smashed so much of the architectural and artistic beauty created in the Medieval period.

Happily, Suffolk is now calmer and really rather normal. In present day Suffolk, manifestations of the spirit of Dowsing are rare and diluted, although I should say that as DAC chair I sometimes catch a glimpse while the DBF Chair would I think affirm that there is all too little residue of the generous devotion of our Medieval ancestors who sacrificially paid for so many wonderful parish churches. However, being normal now, I think the reason Suffolk stands out as one of the only four dioceses where the diocesan synod registered no objection whatsoever is probably because in Suffolk we have had extensive and happy experience of excellent women in leadership positions, headship positions I might say, within the Church. Our cathedral, which celebrates its Centenary this year, flourishes under an inspiring female Dean, Frances Ward. Our bishops have been well served by two female chaplains in succession. Although we no longer have a female Archdeacon, nearly half of our rural deans are women (seven out of 18 to be precise) and very many of our parish priests are women too.

Many of those who have voted yes in the diocesan synod will be disappointed that the timing of our Crown Nominations Commission meetings in September and October will be tantalizingly just too early for Suffolk to secure a women diocesan in place of Bishop Nigel, who was so prematurely plucked from among us to assist at Lambeth. Many will hope that his necessarily male successor as diocesan will commit himself to select one of the excellent senior woman to be his suffragan as Bishop of Dunwich.

That depends, Madam Chair, on the General Synod accepting the clear signal from all the diocesan synods to give overwhelming final approval to the Measure. It would be wonderful if those of us who previously voted no could bring themselves to be
generous enough to abstain so that, following the example of Suffolk, no-one votes against. In that way the Church of England and the Synod can move on to more fruitful work than quarrelling about the role of women. Thank you, Chair.

The Revd Christopher Hobbs (London): Conservative evangelical Christians are asking for what was agreed when women vicars were introduced in the 1990s: provision not to have female clergy over them in accordance with their understanding of the Bible. It was said then that the provision would continue for as long as necessary. If the Church of England is big enough to allow different type of robes or not, different translations of the Bible, different liturgies, different songs, different accompaniments, why is it not big enough to allow to flourish even more some in the Church who hold what the majority of the Christian churches around the world hold; that God has ordained men to be bishops in the Church.

I personally am prepared to say women can be bishops, but I am not prepared to say that holding women cannot be bishops is un-Christian. The legislation before us, in my view, is still unbalanced against the conservatives. If there was any intention of letting Conservative Evangelicals flourish in the Church, surely we would have had a Conservative Evangelical appointed a bishop somewhere in the last 16 years, or even with six or seven appointments this year. There are competent candidates in the Diocese of London, Conservative Evangelicals ---

The Chair: Excuse me, I am going to interrupt you just for a moment and hope that you very quickly bring this speech to reference the Report under consideration.

The Revd Christopher Hobbs (London): Yes. I was wondering whether I would abstain, but I do not think that signals enough that the legislation is unfair concerning the swearing of oaths, regarding the rights of individual clergy rather than whole PCCs, so in the end, with a heavy heart, I will not be voting for it.

The Chair: I see no-one standing and therefore I ask Canon Sue Booys to reply to the debate. You will have up to five minutes.

The Rev Canon Susan Booys: Madam Chair, thank you. I want to begin with an apology to Synod members. No one has picked me up on this, but some of you may be aware this is an apology that would be deemed very rare in my own house. I prepared too far in advance of this meeting! You may have a noticed that my speech actually contained an error, and so I will read to you the correction which appears on the Fifth Notice Paper with regard to the two-thirds majority: “A two-thirds majority in each House of the Synod is required for the Final Approval of both the draft Measure and the draft Amending Canon.” It is the Final Approval of the draft Act of Synod that requires no special majority. As I say, my husband would be highly amused at my preparing too far in advance!

There is a practical outworking of this in terms of Monday afternoon that it is very important that you stay in the Chamber for the entire outworking of the business.

Can I continue, by responding to the debate, to thank Margaret Condick, Anneliese Barrell and Tim Allen for their messages from their dioceses and reflection on those debates, also Anneliese Barrell to share her thanks for all those who were involved
in the conversations that have brought us to this point. Everyone involved in the conversations, as well as of course our Archbishops and David Porter. Pete Spiers, thank you for your comments on voting.

It perhaps worth just commenting that there is a fourth alternative, as it is possible not to press the button. You can abstain by pressing the button but you can fail to press the button and register your vote at all, and that will have the same effect as an abstention.

Christopher Hobbs and Suzy Leafe, I do not want anyone to disappear, but I did reflect as I listened that I chaired the debate in the Oxford Diocese, and it was clear in our diocese that people who had voted no had not disappeared but they had changed their minds, so people are not being spirited away. There was a real change of minds and hearts there. Nevertheless, it is clear to me that we do not want people to disappear. We hope you will stay and we hope that everyone will be here on Monday to vote. Thank you very much indeed.

The Chair: Point of order?

The Revd Professor Richard Burridge (University of London): Could I invite the Chair of the Business Committee just to clarify - it may be that I misheard - that she said not pressing the button would have the same effect as registering your abstention. I understood the point to be there are four things you can do: press the button to say yes; press the button to say no; press the button to have your abstention registered and not to vote at all. Could that be clarified please because Sue said they would have the same effect?

The Revd Canon Susan Booys: I will just take advice, Professor Burridge.

The Chair: The Chair of the Business Committee will clarify that point.

The Revd Canon Susan Booys: I am advised that if you do not press the button you do not formally record any kind of vote at all, so, for example, your name will not appear on any lists, but not pressing the button will have the same effect to the whole vote as abstaining

(Dissension from floor)

A Speaker: If you abstain from pressing the button, it is not registering your vote.

The Chair: Could you please direct your remarks through the Chair.

The Revd Canon Susan Booys: I will just clarify absolutely.

The Chair: All please bear with us for just one moment.

The Revd Canon Susan Booys: (After taking advice) I may have worded that slightly poorly. The two-thirds majority has nothing to do with either abstentions or votes not cast. I see nods. Is everyone happy with that response? (Agreed) Thank you.
The Chair: With that clarification, I now put Item 501 to the vote.

The motion

‘That the Synod do take note of this Report.’

was carried on a show of hands.

LEGISLATIVE BUSINESS

DRAFT BISHOPS AND PRIESTS (CONSECRATION AND ORDINATION OF WOMEN) MEASURE (GS 1925B) AND DRAFT AMENDING CANON NO. 33 (GS 1926B): DRAFT MEASURE AND DRAFT AMENDING CANON FOR FINAL DRAFTING

The Chair: We now move swiftly on to Item 502, the draft Amending Canon No. 33.

For the Final Drafting Stage, members will need the draft Measure GS 1925B, the draft Amending Canon GS 1926B and the Steering Committee’s Report GS 1925-6Z.

This is again a ‘take note’ debate, this time on the Steering Committee’s Report. Members will see from the Report that the Steering Committee is not proposing any amendments to the Measure and is only proposing drafting amendments to the Amending Canon. Those drafting amendments will not be moved but will under Standing Order 59(c) be deemed to have been made if the ‘take note’ motion is passed. I again remind members that they should confine their comments to matters addressed in the Report of the Steering Committee and should not stray into wider matters. I call on the Chair, the Bishop of Rochester, to move Item 502.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of ten minutes.

The Bishop of Rochester (The Rt Revd James Langstaff): Tempting as it might be to speak for ten minutes, I am not going to speak for ten minutes. I do not necessarily make the same promise in regard to Monday! The main item paper you need before you is really the Steering Committee’s Report that has already been referred to GS 1925-6Z and not least the Annex to that Report on page 3.

During some legislative processes, this final drafting stage is an important opportunity for some necessary tidying up of the form in which the legislation is presented and, as has already been hinted at, some Steering Committees go beyond simply technical drafting changes to offer what are known as special amendments. On this occasion, your Steering Committee has been exceedingly restrained. We have no special amendments to bring to you and even the drafting amendments are not about words, but, as you will see from the annex to our report, simply about some clarificatory re-numbering of paragraphs. So it is simply about that sort of clarification, nothing I think which touches upon content or wording at all. I think, therefore, that our Report speaks for itself and I need detain the Synod no longer. I beg to move the Item at 502 that Synod do take note of this report.

The Chair: This item is now open for debate. I see no one standing. I therefore put
Item 502 to the vote.

The motion

‘That the Synod do take note of this Report.’

was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: The motion having been passed, the drafting amendments referred to in the Steering Committee’s Report are deemed to have been made. That completes this item of business. Thank you.

THE CHAIR The Revd Canon Dr Rosemarie Mallett took the Chair at 5.15pm

DRAFT SAFEGUARDING AND CLERGY DISCIPLINE MEASURE (GS 1952) AND DRAFT AMENDING CANON NO.34 (GS 1953)

The Chair: Good afternoon, Synod. We now come to Items 519 and 520, the Draft Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure and Draft Amending Canon No.34, both of which are before Synod for first consideration. Members will need the Draft Measure GS 1952, Draft Amending Canon GS 1953 and the Explanatory Memorandum GS 1952-3X. Members will also wish to note paragraphs 6-9 of the Financial Memorandum in the Eighth Notice Paper.

As the two pieces of draft legislation are parts of a single package of proposals, the Bishop of Durham has indicated that he wishes to speak to both items of business when moving item 519 but will then later on move item 520 formally. I shall therefore allow him to speak for up to 15 minutes when he moves item 519.

Before I call on him to do so, I am asked to say that if anyone finds themselves affected by this afternoon’s debate they are invited to speak to the staff on the Safeguarding Stall on a confidential basis. They will be wearing blue sashes with their names on so that they can be easily identified. Alternatively, you can speak to a safeguarding advisor in your own diocese or call the NSPCC confidential helpline on 0800 389 5344.

Finally, members will wish to know that representatives of survivor groups will be watching the debate from the gallery and will also be hosting a fringe meeting after this debate which will be open to Synod members.

I now call upon the Bishop of Durham to move Item 519 and speak to Item 520 and he may speak for up to 15 minutes.

The Bishop of Durham (The Rt Revd Paul Butler): Thank you, Madam Chair. This week has seen the announcement of a major inquiry into institutional child abuse in our nation. It is not yet a full public inquiry, but Synod will be aware that I have made it clear that we believe that this is really what is required and hope that this will come about in due course.
Today, however, we are specifically concerned with the first consideration of the draft Measure and draft Amending Canon. I want to pay tribute to the ongoing work of survivors in helping us move the Church into being a safer Church. I am pleased that some of those with whom we have engaged are here for this debate. They will tell us that this only part of what is required. They are absolutely right. Sorting out our legislation, which is essential, is no substitute for the ongoing work we have to do in relation to the creation of safe spaces, training, auditing our processes, our theology, simply raising awareness and contributing fully to the national inquiry. What lies before us is only one part of the work in which we have to engage at national, diocesan and parish levels.

The draft Measure and draft Amending Canon are two parts of the one safeguarding legislative package and thank you, Chair, for giving me permission to speak to both in one go.

Both legislative instruments have their origins in the report of the Archbishop’s Commissaries following the visitation to the Diocese of Chichester. That report highlighted how our safeguarding legislation could be improved in certain respects and led to a consultation being undertaken by the Archbishops’ Council. That consultation in turn gave rise to a number of recommendations for legislative change, endorsed by the Archbishops’ Council, which was set out in GS 1941 and which were debated and approved by Synod this February.

Most of the proposals are preventative and protective. Their aim is to prevent or avoid a situation where there might otherwise be a risk of abuse, whether committed by clergy or by lay officers of the Church. Unfortunately, we must recognise that no safeguards can ever be 100% failsafe, abusers are too devious and determined for that to be the case, but we must make every reasonable effort to minimise safeguarding risks for all who come to our Church or take part in Church activities.

Clauses 1 and 2 of the draft Measure are principally concerned with churchwardens and other lay members of parochial church councils. Wardens and PCCs play a vitally important part at local level in the life and mission of our Church and in the implementation of the Church’s safeguarding policies. Protecting all God’s Children and Promoting a Safe Church, which set out the safeguarding policies to the House of Bishops, together make it clear that PCCs share with the incumbent responsibility for implementing safeguarding policies in the parish and for making the local church a place of safety for those who attend or use it. In Clauses 1 and 2 we therefore seek to stop those who are unsuitable from a safeguarding perspective serving as churchwardens or as members of the PCCs by disqualifying them from holding office.

Clause 2 will amend the Church Representation Rules so that no one will be eligible to serve on a PCC, a district church council or any synod if convicted of an offence against children or young persons listed in Schedule 1 to the Children and Young Persons Act 1933. This extends a disqualification that already applies in respect of churchwardens and in both cases will be subject to the bishop being able to waive the disqualification if the bishop judges it appropriate to do so, which I believe would be very rare.
There will also be a new power for the bishop to suspend a churchwarden, a member of a PCC, DCC or Synod, pending criminal proceedings for an offence mentioned in Schedule 1 of the 1933 Act. Any person who appears on a barred list under the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 will also be disqualified from holding office as churchwarden or serving on a PCC, DCC or synod. The draft Amending Canon in paragraphs 5 and 6 will implement similar provisions about disqualification and suspension in relation to lay Readers and licensed lay workers. Paragraph 4 of the draft Amending Canon will introduce by way of a new Canon, C 30, the concept of compulsory risk assessments for clergy who hold preferment. At the moment there is no power for a bishop to direct a priest or deacon to undergo a risk assessment. To protect clergy, this new power will be subject to the President of Tribunals being able to overturn a bishop’s direction where the bishop is plainly wrong.

To achieve consistency across the dioceses and minimum standards of good practice, the House of Bishops will be able to regulate how and by whom risk assessments are carried out. These proposals make no express provision for the removal from office of a cleric who is assessed as presenting a significant risk of harm. We recognise that for some members of Synod the proposed new Canon may not therefore go far enough. However, we need to remember that the purpose of risk assessments is to give the diocese as much information as possible about a priest or deacon who may present a safeguarding risk. Risk assessments try to predict present and future risk. They are based on expert opinion which, of course, is not infallible. Their role is not to make determinative findings about disputed past behaviour. If they did, they would usurp the role of the Disciplinary Tribunal.

We believe that where an assessment concludes there is a significant future safeguarding risk, the appropriate course is for the diocese to consult other bodies as appropriate, for example the local authority designated officer, and consider referring the risk assessment with all other relevant evidence to the secular national Disclosure and Barring Service. The DBS has a specific statutory role to assess whether a person should be entered on a barred list under the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups Act under a statutory five-stage process. If at the end of that statutory procedure a priest or deacon was entered on a barred list it would in due course lead to removal from office under the existing provisions of Section 30 of the CPM.

Clause 3 of the draft Measure will for the first time impose a duty on certain officeholders in the Church to have due regard to the House of Bishops’ safeguarding policies. We have resisted calls to extend the duty to all church workers and volunteers, such as Sunday School teachers and choir leaders. It will be neither necessary nor practicable within the context of the House of Bishops’ safeguarding policies to do so.

Responsibility for implementing the House’s policies at parish level falls on the PCC and the incumbent jointly. If individual workers or helpers do not heed safeguarding policies then it is for the incumbent and PCC to take appropriate action including, if necessary, terminating the individual’s employment or involvement in the relevant activity. This can be done under the existing law.
It is important that all those in ministry, whether ordained or lay, should receive appropriate training in relation to safeguarding. This is not just in the interests of children and vulnerable adults but it is also in the interests of the clergy and laity who serve them.

The draft Amending Canon will therefore amend Canon C 8 so that all ordained clergy with authority to officiate will be obliged to participate in arrangements for safeguarding training approved by the diocesan bishop. Furthermore, Canons E 6 and E 8 will be amended so that a diocesan bishop may not license a lay Reader or license a lay worker unless that person has undergone suitable safeguarding training. The bishop will have to ensure that suitable training continues to be made available after they are licensed.

Canon C 8 will be further amended to prevent clergy from being invited to officiate or allowed to robe when they do not have authority to minister from a diocesan bishop. In the debate in February this was criticised as being too restrictive because it would prevent retired clergy without PTOs from officiating or robing at family weddings and also prevent teaching clergy at theological colleges from officiating or robing in their local parish church.

The answer to these criticisms is this: if you wish to officiate in our Church in whatever capacity then you will have to get permission from a diocesan bishop. That will not impose an unduly harsh requirement but it will be an important part of our safeguarding procedures. All dioceses have safeguarding advisors but there is some divergence in the roles that they take on and who actually provide safeguarding advice. Some differences are justifiable in relation to local circumstances but there is currently no mechanism for the Church to impose any national requirements.

The draft Amending Canon in paragraph 3 will require every diocesan bishop to appoint a safeguarding advisor and, so as to ensure certain national standards are achieved, the House of Bishops will be able to make regulations about who is eligible for appointment and what the safeguarding advisor’s functions are.

Lastly, a small but important part of this legislation is remedial rather than preventative. Clauses 5 and 6 of the draft Measure will amend the Clergy Discipline Measure.

Clause 5 will enable complaints alleging sexual misconduct against a child or vulnerable adult to be made more than one year after the alleged misconduct without first having to obtain permission from the President of Tribunals. This recognises that it can take years for victims of sexual abuse to be able to come forward.

Clause 6 will fill a lacuna so that the bishop, subject to certain conditions, will be able to suspend a cleric, where appropriate, when an application is made to the President of Tribunals for permission to make a complaint out of time. This will apply to all types of alleged misconduct under the CDM, not just sexual abuse.

Members of Synod, we have made far too many mistakes in the past in relation to safeguarding. This package of proposals is before you today as part of how we wish
to do everything reasonably possible to avoid making those mistakes in future. We must not be complacent. We know that to a determined offender such measures will not present an insurmountable barrier. Indeed, we recognise that institutions such as the Church, which often works with the most vulnerable in our society, has special obligations to protect the vulnerable. Therefore, we shall continue to keep our practices and procedures under review, seek to be more vigilant and as a Church endeavour to provide a safe environment. I commend the Measure and Amending Canon to you.

The Chair: The motion is now open for debate. I remind members that under Standing Order 51(b) speeches must be directed to the General Report of the draft Measure rather than to points of details. If members wish to speak to the draft Amending Canon they should seek to do so when we come to Item 520.

The Revd Mark Steadman (Southwark): Thank you, Madam Chair. I welcome this draft legislation and look forward to supporting it, but I do find myself disappointed that it does not go further. In particular, we have not yet managed to place the survivors of safeguarding failures at the centre of processes designed by this legislation. It surely must be right, as Bishop Paul has said, that survivors and potential victims are at the centre of our thinking about systems.

It was good to hear that the voice of survivors has been heard in the writing of the draft Measure and Canon, but the question is now about how their voices are to continue to be heard during the revision stages. It is important that we pay attention to this. Survivors, of course, cannot be determinative in the decisions we make but we must strive to ensure that they are at the centre of our processes. I regret that we have not had the courage to be bolder and more wide-ranging with the powers of suspension in the legislation, both of clergy but particularly of lay officers. The basic trigger for suspension of churchwardens and PCC members remains arrest on certain child-related matters; interestingly, not offences relating to vulnerable adults. Arrest is a high standard. Those employed or volunteering in other professions which work with children and vulnerable adults can, and often are, suspended where there is a concern about their conduct or professionalism.

We need to remember that suspension is a neutral act which allows space for investigation and appropriate decision-making. Under the proposals before us, situations could arise where there is a serious safeguarding concern about a church officer but where it is not possible to suspend them from the body responsible for the safeguarding policy of the parish, and the body responsible for adhering to the very welcome duty that the Measure will impose on a PCC. For these, and for other reasons, I sincerely hope that in revision there will be close examination of the clauses relating to suspension.

The definition of “vulnerable adults” is another difficult matter and the decision to allow for fluidity in amending the definition is very welcome. However, it would be good to see a recognition in the definition that people could be made vulnerable by their context or their situation. It is a difficult area which is evolving, but starting from a wider standpoint might well be helpful.
I also hope that the various regulations that are envisaged as part of this package will be available the next time we debate this legislation. Our debates in other areas are being helped by seeing the whole package and I am sure that this would also help us here, not least as at the moment I have a real concern that the risk assessment proposals in the draft Canon again might lack real bite, but I will avoid commenting on those now.

I also regret that there is no amendment to the legal aid rules to assist the clergy who might become subject to risk assessments or where CDM procedures are being contemplated but not yet begun, or where DBS process is being undertaken. In our care for those who become subject to these processes, it would be good if we could revisit this area to ensure that they receive good, proper and appropriate legal advice.

These are just some of the matters that I hope the revision stage will look at. In encouraging Synod to vote for this measure, I would also encourage us to take this very real opportunity to be even more rigorous in such an important area. This is vital if our legislation and processes are to match our rhetoric and our commitment to ensuring that our churches are as safe as possible.

The Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford): I very much welcome this legislation and I think it is good that it was made clear that this is just legislation. What is really needed as well as legislation is an enormous change in culture so that we are much more aware of the dangers that people are in and the sorts of things that happen in our churches. We think that these are very rare instances but actually we have recently discovered that they are not as rare as that and we need to be constantly vigilant even in the churches where we think everything is fine.

Specifically on the legislation there are a number of areas, which a previous speaker has already said, where we need to go further. One is on the definition of abuse. Yes, of course sexual abuse is very bad, but also physical abuse is bad and emotional abuse is bad. There are parts of the legislation where it implies all forms of abuse are being dealt with and other parts of it where it implies that it is sexual abuse. We need to make it all forms of abuse.

There is the issue of vulnerable adults and people have said, “What about the definition?” and so on. I think it is very simple: the legislation should include all adults because any abuse against any adult is bad. Obviously children and vulnerable adults are particularly vulnerable and we should be looking to safeguard them in particular ways but we should include in this legislation any abuse against any adult.

There is also a very particular point about 16 and 17 year olds. Sexual relations with people above the age of consent, in other words 16 or 17 or older, are allowed provided they are totally consensual. In any situation where there is a position of imbalance of power or where one person is in a position of trust over the other person, then you cannot be sure that there is proper consent. The law as it currently stands is that those in a position of trust in a statutory organisation, teachers and people like that, are already covered, the criminal legislation says that it is illegal, but this needs to apply to clergy and others in the Church who are in a position of trust.
as well. We are not in a statutory organisation, therefore we are not currently covered by that and the safeguarding in the Clergy Discipline Measure should indeed cover them.

Finally, just a relatively small point, people have been talking about the wearing of robes during Divine Service. I think what the draft Measure already includes on that is absolutely right, but there is no reason why it should not be extended further to the wearing of a clerical collar during Divine Service. If somebody comes into a church and they find somebody in a dog collar in that church, they will assume that that person is safe to talk to. There is no reason why, if we are able to prevent people from robing during Divine Service, in the same way we are not able to prevent them from wearing a clerical collar if they do not have permission to officiate. Obviously we cannot prevent them from wearing a clerical collar outside the Divine Service but we can in it. I would commend all those changes which will obviously come up, we hope, in the revision stages.

Mrs Mary Nagel (Chichester): Thank you, Madam Chair. As the Bishop of Durham has clearly pointed out, and as I think we are very well aware, this week has seen a fast-paced changing new cycle regarding institutional child abuse. The Church is in a position of strength regarding these issues as we have uncovered many past cases of abuse and have worked very closely with the police and others to ensure that justice is done.

The archiepiscopal visitation of Chichester prompted many of the wide-ranging changes currently underway in the national Church that are being debated by this Synod. However, we must be careful to get this legislation right and be aware of an emotional victim-led agenda which could spoil our thinking, especially with the use of pressure groups. This week the Carmi Report into the abuse by Terence Banks has been made publicly available. I have spent several hours reading it and it shows how painstakingly detailed the changes we are implementing need to be. There are no quick-wins in safeguarding. We need to take wide-ranging advice, particularly from leading safeguarding professionals in the public authorities and charities, such as the NSPCC.

Of course, we need to listen to survivors but we need to respond by taking advice from many different sources and taking time to get this right. The Church can be a place for healing, not just harm. There are numerous examples of churches that have supported survivors of child sexual abuse and worked in restorative and positive ways, and we are undertaking this type of work in the Diocese of Chichester.

Thank you.

Mrs April Alexander (Southwark): Thank you, Chair. Last Friday on Any Questions David Blunkett opined that the trauma experienced by the survivors of child sex abuse was broadly similar to that experienced by victims of hacking. David Blunkett does not “get it”. I know that he does not “get it” because there is so much evidence in the public domain to prove that this is so.

“I was completely terrified” - a survivor from Jimmy Savile - “I knew my mum wouldn’t believe me, so I bought miniature bottles of gin and took them to my room”. That was when she was 13 and she has been an alcoholic ever since. A child protection
officer this week who investigated the Peter Righton case talked on the radio of “a man in his 40s who crumples in front of your eyes, becomes a seven year old again with all the terrors and all the nightmares he experienced then”.

I suspect that a huge majority of us in this room do not “get it”. The reason is that the huge majority of us will not have experienced child abuse and will not knowingly have met someone who has.

After what the Bishop of Durham has said, I would like to address a small part of the extra work we need to do to achieve a major culture change. After much thought about these issues over the last year or so, it has occurred to me that it is only by meeting survivors that it may be possible really to “get it”. As importantly, it is only by such meetings that a real and living commitment to safeguarding is likely to occur.

The legislation requires that everyone directly involved participates in training but the next requirement is for that training to be excellent. I know work is proceeding on this and when excellent training emerges thought must be given to how we ensure that this is the training that everyone receives. However, training is not nearly enough. In my professional experience, it was long before the turn of this century that those involved in the education of adults ceased to talk about training at all and talked instead of learning. Learning is a vastly more demanding activity both for facilitators and for learners.

I have had the impression over the last few months from my conversations that training is still seen and understood to be something of a death-by-PowerPoint event, but I know that this is not the case for many. It is a conundrum, and a worrying one, that this impression persists. In the context of safeguarding, training will allow participants to learn systems and processes but wholehearted commitment will come from “getting it” and that can be greatly facilitated by learning, which in turn is likely to occur after “meeting survivors”.

I have found that eyes glaze over at any discussion of this sort as if videos and actors did not exist, as if there was not a wealth of material available from victim statements after convictions of a perpetrator, and as if discussion prompts could not be available and role plays could not be set up. Death-by-PowerPoint never disturbed anyone.

I would submit that learning what it really means to safeguard our children and what we are safeguarding them from requires learning which will be painful. We all need to “get it”. Thank you.

Mr Justin Brett (Chichester): My apologies for what is going to be perhaps overly technical to do with the legislation but I think it also goes to general intent, which is why I am raising it now. As I understand it, in the broadest possible terms the general intent of this legislation is that we should not allow people in positions of leadership within the Church who have either been proven to be abusers or where we consider that there is a very considerable risk that they might be such and, most importantly, that there is also the provision within the legislation, however, for a diocesan bishop under very particular circumstances to, nonetheless, employ someone having taken appropriate regard to safeguarding and so on. Now if that is
the intention, I am worried that the legislation as it is in front of us at the moment, the way in which this Bill is written, does not actually produce that intent.

The reason that it concerns me is that it concerns two things which are actually quite different. There is Schedule 1 of the 1933 Act which lists a list of offences. There is also the question of whether or not someone is on a barred list and there are a number of these originating from different places and, historically, different places. It is perfectly possible to be guilty of a Schedule 1 1933 offence and not be on a barred list. Under those circumstances, of course, we are covered. But it is also possible to be on a barred list and not be guilty of a Schedule 1 offence, in fact not to be guilty of any offence at all and still be on a barred list. Yet we have the situation where in the legislation as it is at the moment a bishop can overrule the results of someone being guilty of a Schedule 1 offence when they cannot overrule the result of someone being on a barred list, despite the fact that the only way you could be guilty of a Schedule 1 offence is if you have been convicted in court, whereas you can end up on a barred list with no criminal conviction. What is more, just to make it even more complicated, there are plenty of offences on that Schedule 1 which would automatically lead to you being on a barred list for life.

I think it is going to be necessary to do, actually, some rather more serious legal thinking about how exactly we define this if we are going to start going into specifics of acts, lists and so on and so forth. So I think it is really just a word of caution that I want to say: please, be absolutely certain what you want the legislation to say and then be absolutely certain that the legislation does, in fact, say that because I put it to you that at the moment it does not.

The Ven. Rachel Treweek (London): I just want to reiterate what others have said about strongly supporting this. Just a very quick question, which is under clause 2, we have now brought in for PCCs the same thing as for Synod, which I completely agree with. I just have a pragmatic question, which is how it is going to be enacted? Whose responsibility is it going to be? We are talking about a large number of people. Every PCC in the country and every Synod. I just want to be sure that we do not have something written down which sounds good but which we do not have a mechanism for actually enacting.

The Revd Christopher Hobbs (London): Sorry for speaking at the wrong point last time. I think this might be the right point here. I was abused twice - I never told my parents - once by an adult choir member, and choir members are not addressed in this; PCC members are. That is the same as Rachel. We discussed it in London. That is my problem. These people are only going to self-disclose under this legislation. It ought to say: will be required to have DBS vetting rather than just leave it to self-disclosure.

The Revd David Brooke (Derby): I too support the thrust of this wholeheartedly. The Bishop of Durham will not be surprised by what I am going to mention. Rachel Treweek might be anxious. I am concerned that we may have categories of people who can squeak around the edges of this legislation as it is proposed. For example, in relation to churchwardens it is quite possible to create deputy wardens under scheme and many churches, and some of our creative and progressive churches will have informal positions of deputy warden or create wardens in emeritus. These
people are not covered. Likewise, when we speak of PCCs, synods and district councils there is no reference to team councils, joint councils and group councils created under scheme, and certainly no reference to more informal bodies that some of our, again, progressive churches would create in responding to mission opportunities, leadership teams, elderships and even bodies such as, in our diocese, shared ministry development teams which are under a diocesan scheme. I think I would like to see that we would not have any little places where you can squeak around the edge, and perhaps in relation to diocesan schemes even an obligation on bishops where those schemes exist to put in place appropriate regulations to ensure that members of those bodies are also caught in all of this. The last group I would want to mention are the sub-committees of PCCs. It is, of course, under the Church Representation Rules perfectly valid to create a sub-committee of the PCC which contains members who are not on the PCC. Again, those are people who can squeak around the edges of this, offering their gifts, the devious and the apparently keen, and they find themselves on to one of these bodies without having being caught under any of what we have discussed here. So I do not want anybody squeaking around the edges.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): Thank you for calling me. I would like to thank, by expressing sympathy with, those who are observing in the gallery and to offer apologies for all the harm that they have felt. I think we owe it to them. To reply to April Alexander, I was unfortunate as a youngster to be the victim of abuse and the perpetrator spent time at His Majesty's Pleasure. So that gives you an idea of how long ago it was, but there we are. What I really wanted to do is to thank the Committee on the 1523x, page 5, paragraph 34 for having taken to heart the need that the House of Bishops has to oversee this whole thing. We have got to have a consistent policy across the Church of England and I am standing here to say thank you very much for having heard that comment in Synod earlier on and taking it to heart, because for this to work it has got to be overseen by the House of Bishops so that they all collectively work together. Thank you very much.

Mr David Mills (Carlisle): Thank you for calling me. I speak as a member of the Clergy Discipline Commission, though I am not speaking for them. I speak as a former senior probation officer in the North of England having had responsibility particularly with a team of probation officers in a closed prison for sex offenders over many years. I am also involved in Carlisle in safeguarding. What we have been hearing is heart-breaking for those who have been subject to abuse and I have been working with those who were the perpetrators. Some have described it as the dark side of human behaviour and the dark side of offending, and I briefly want to commend this to the whole of Synod for those who are not involved and have never been and, hopefully, will not be involved in this area of abuse, that you give wholehearted support for this to go forward and be amended as necessary to make it effective, so that when the matters come before the Clergy Discipline Commission they can be dealt with rightly and properly. Please support wholeheartedly.

Mr David Kemp (Canterbury): Two points to make, please. I have been standing at lecterns like this and berating the centre of the Church of England for not getting on with a safeguarding agenda. Having been to a conference on Friday at Church House, I am pleased to say I am more encouraged. The amount of work that is going on in Church House is excellent. The pace has been upped. That is not to be
complacent, but I just want to pay tribute to that work that is going on at the moment and to encourage it. The second point is: try and get this legislation right. Yes, we can deal with clergy and Readers and members of PCCs and even members of PCC sub-committees. I am not quite sure how you deal with the ordinary member of a congregation. Are we going to go so far as to ask for DBSs for every member of the congregation? Not in a church with fuzzy edges you cannot. My question to those leading this legislation is, where are we going to draw the line? We will need to draw a line somewhere, but can we give very careful thought to where we draw that line. Thank you.

The Ven. Dr John Applegate (Manchester): May I apologise for having to make this point. If I had had access quickly enough to Standing Order 18, I would have to have had to interrupt Bishop Paul’s speech and I apologise in this debate for having to do this now. It is, I think, a point of personal explanation. I want to preface this remark in saying that I fully support the work that the Bishop and the Standing Committee have been doing on this. But, I am sorry, Bishop, that you have misunderstood my comments at the February Synod as special pleading for the staff of theological colleges and courses. The point I made was precisely the opposite, in fact criticising bishops who will not license tutors and who, therefore, place them, those who model ministry for those in training, in a very odd position. So let me be clear that I warmly support the legislation. I was attempting to point out some loopholes in the draft that was presented to us then. What I am arguing for is that those of us who teach in theological education institutions are properly included under this legislation and that we do not have the sort of loopholes that might either put us in very odd positions or, actually, allow us to get away with things we ought not to get away with. Thank you.

The Chair: I see no one else standing to speak in this debate and so I now call upon the Bishop of Durham to reply. The Bishop has up to five minutes to speak.

The Bishop of Durham (The Rt Revd Paul Butler): Many thanks to everyone who has stood and spoken, particularly to those who have had the courage to share with Synod the fact that they have been themselves abused.

April Alexander, if I may begin there. Absolutely, lots of people do not get it and the training which is being envisaged includes everything that you mentioned. Please let me assure you of that, because it is about learning. But if I may suggest to you there are rather more members of this Synod who may well have been abused than you suggest. One in four or one in six, depending on your gender, is the likely number. So I think a lot of members of Synod do get it but maybe struggle to own up to it.

Mark Steadman, many thanks for your warm welcome and, indeed to everybody for your warm welcome, and absolutely we must listen to the voice of survivors through the revision process and I and the Chair of the Revision Committee have already had a conversation about how we can ensure that that happens. But one clear way right at the beginning is to say to any survivors here, in view of everybody, please send in your comments in writing to us because we want to hear them, as well as we will arrange ways of meeting and listening with you. Thank you, Mark, for the question around suspension and around where it is not arrest. We will look at that. The issue that you and Hugh Lee raised about the definition of abuse and the
definition of vulnerable adults, we will certainly look at those. The question of the clerical collar, we will look at again, Hugh. That has been discussed but we can certainly look at it again.

You have raised the issue of 16 and 17 year-olds, that is a tricky one, and the question of people in positions of trust, we are trying to persuade the Government that they should change the law on that as well to include those who are not in statutory positions, but maybe we could do something about that in our own legislation here.

Mary Nagel, thank you for your comments about listening to key professionals. We do now have in place a National Safeguarding Panel which has on it leaders of several of the major organisations from police through with survivor organisations, with a number of organisations like Lucy Faithful who are seeking to offer us exactly that kind of advice on all the work that we do. Yes, we are a place of healing as well as hurt, but that can be hard to hear for those who have been hurt by us.

Jeremy, thank you, we will take serious note of your comments about the Schedule 1 of the 1933 Act and the barred list and we will make sure that we get it right, we hope. Rachel Treweek, thank you for your comment on clause 2 and how do we enact in practice. That will be something that we have to look at hard, probably more at a diocesan level than a national level, but we will certainly seek in the House of Bishops to offer guidance about how that should be done. It undoubtedly will require greater vigilance at a local parish level as, indeed, will all the comments that David Brooke made about team councils, group councils, informal bodies and so on. We do have to draw a line somewhere, as David Kemp noted, and one of the places is legally constituted bodies. That is where we have gone at present, which is why I tried to make clear we have not included Sunday School leaders and choir members and so on because they fall under the responsibility of the PCC and incumbent. There is a legal line there already, perhaps we need to think how we help PCCs and incumbents exercise that more fully. There is a question there around self-disclosure and DBS vetting, but the DBS themselves will not allow us to do as widespread vetting as some of us might like. We have to stay inside the law whilst we continue to discuss with them how it might change.

Thank you, John Freeman, for your comments on the way we have listened to you. David Mills, thank you for your comments of support as well. John Applegate, I accept your clarification and perhaps I need to take it to the House of Bishops asking my colleagues why they do not license people in that way. I certainly do. Thank you. So I now formally move Item 519.

_The Chair:_ Item 519 is now put to the vote.

_The motion_

‘That the Measure entitled “Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure” be considered for revision in committee.’

_was carried on a show of hands._
The draft measure is now automatically committed to a Revision Committee. As stated on page 17 of the Agenda, any member of Synod who wishes to submit proposals for amendment should send them in writing to the Clerk of Synod to reach her no later than 5.30 pm on 15 August 2014. We now come to Item 520 and, as the Bishop has previously spoken to this item, I now ask him to move Item 520, the Amending Canon 34 be considered for revision in Committee.

The Bishop of Durham (The Rt Revd Paul Butler): I move Item 520 standing in my name.

The Chair: The motion is now open for debate. I, again, remind members that under Standing Order 51(b) speeches have to be directed specifically to the Amending Canon rather than to points of detail.

The Revd Simon Cawdell (Hereford): Really following on from the previous debate, I too am very grateful for the proposal being brought forward in the draft Measure and the draft Amending Canon, brought in to correct a number of omissions in our legislation which, indeed, are good practice with regards to safeguarding. I hope we will send the package forward with our blessing, but I do wish to raise one or two issues which, in general, may assist the Revision Committee. The first relates to the provision in the draft Amending Canon at clause 2, 3, 6 and 7 to place upon an incumbent responsibility of ensuring that only clergy who are licensed to a diocese in the church or holds a PTO might robe in church. Whilst I agree in principle that this is right and proper, the danger is in the detail and in practical outworking. I give for thought a real and practical pastoral example of a funeral where the family requested an unlicensed member of clergy to give a eulogy on their behalf, such as is not infrequently done by lay people. The incumbent was given to expect that the individual was going to step up from the congregation to do this unrobed. Imagine their surprise, therefore, to arrive some 40 minutes prior to the service to find said colleague robed, stoled and preparing to meet the congregation as they arrived.

Under the new legislation the incumbent might be deemed to have committed an offence by not challenging the individual concerned in unseemly circumstances in front of a bereaved family. There does need to be a provision to place responsibility also not only on the incumbent but on any clergy who are unlicensed or without PTO not to robe to go alongside this, and for that to have real sanctions. Similar questions clearly also surround ecumenical visitors at clause 1.3, for example at family weddings and funerals, where there will need to be very clear supplementary guidance around how we as incumbents can, in fact, check the good standing of fellow clergy, especially in some of the smaller or less well-known denominations with which we may have some partnership, so we can extend invitations in a manner that is appropriate. It is a proper responsibility to place upon incumbents, but to place on clergy a serious duty without such assistance would be onerous indeed and may well limit much positive ecumenical goodwill as people adopt a very and perhaps overly onerous safety first option on this.

Next, speaking here as a team rector, there really needs to be absolute clarity in the final form of the legislation as to the respective roles of incumbents and those with incumbent status, namely team vicars, in this, and I would suggest there probably needs to be a sort of several and joint responsibility in that.
Finally, and perhaps most difficult following the earlier Convocations meetings I hesitantly muse whether this is now the moment to address the proviso to the Code of Canon 1603 - is it? - which deals with the absolute confidentiality of the confessional in ways which may seem now to be less than helpful and, indeed, potentially dangerous in regard to safeguarding issues as it may prevent clergy from disclosing abuse and, indeed, may shortly come into conflict with a legislative amendment to make disclosure mandatory, which I understand that Bishop Paul himself may be about to make in the House of Lords. I hope consideration will be given to these details going forward in what, generally, I think is a very helpful package.

_The Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn):_ I welcome this draft Canon, but I hope the Revision Committee will look very carefully at the question of risk assessments. Firstly, that it will ask itself why is it only, or it appears to me as I read the Canon only, clergy that can be ordered to have a risk assessment? Why is that not extended to Readers, lay workers and others? Secondly, and this is very important, we are concerned about vulnerable children and adults but we must have a concern for the clergy or those on whom risk assessments are done. What happens if the person doing the risk assessment makes a mistake? They are only human, they can do so. There are some, I think, rather vague provisions about the House of Bishops “may make regulations which may say this”, what would happen. But if a bishop receives a risk assessment on a person, on a clergyman or a clergywoman and it says, “This person is a risk,” he cannot appoint them to many posts. There may be something he can appoint them to, but the ministry of that priest, deacon or even bishop is going to be severely limited. We must be sure that there is a proper way of challenging and appealing, whatever language you want to use, a risk assessment where something has gone wrong. I have seen a risk assessment on a priest where the person doing the assessment had misunderstood and misapplied the Church of England’s policies. We must balance those who are vulnerable with those who we are seeking to minister and we do not debar them from ministry just because of a mistake by one frail, human safeguarding officer.

_Canon Dr Jamie Harrison (Durham):_ Madam Chair, thank you. I want to pick up something of what April was talking about in relationship to training, education and learning. Earlier this week I attended as a GP adviser a visit in West Yorkshire to a practice, and it was a Care Quality Commission inspection of a whole team. What struck us was the fact that the training for safeguarding was at Level 3, which is a high level of training, and it applied to GPs, nurses, receptionists and to administrative staff; in other words everybody was involved. It was everybody’s business. Everyone learnt together. We thought that was a rather good thing to do. Maybe we should have thought it was the normal thing to do. In the light of that, I was grateful to see in GS 1953 on the first page the requirement at 2(3)8(1), I think, near the bottom, that: "A minister with authority to officiate in dioceses shall participate in such arrangements as the bishop will set up." In other words, there will be a participation, hopefully, of the sort of learning that Bishop Paul has reassured us about and that April was asking for, proper learning together, learning with those people who can teach us most because they know and they get it, and so do we.

So I was a little puzzled. Being a Reader, I moved on - because in the Church of England we try and be corporate and do the right thing - I moved on to page 4 and
near the bottom of 5(3)(2), it is all very complicated, under paragraph 4, insert number (2): "The bishop shall ensure there would be training provided," but nothing to say that the training would have to be attended. Perhaps it is implicit in this that the requirement would actually happen and people would be trained. But having worked as a GP with GPs for years, I know that anything that they can get out of, they will get out of. They will have an excuse, a reason why on that day they could not possibly come to the training. I just wondered perhaps to be more explicit about the requirement to attend, participate and even learn from training. Also, to learn with others, it is very important that we learn with a wide range of people and it becomes embedded in our culture, a culture of reflective practice of learning together. The same, of course, would apply on page 6 in relation to those who are licensed lay workers, the same wording, “they will be provided with training” but then the paragraph or the sentence stops.

I am not foolish enough to know that training itself or even learning will solve any problems. Hopefully, risk is reduced. Ultimately, the safer we can become, obviously that is our great hope and aspiration. Again, there is nothing here about how frequent the training might be, other than the initial training. I realise each diocese will need to do this as a diocese but it may be good to have some guidance about how frequent the training might be and at what sort of level. We talk about Level 1, 2 and 3 sometimes in our own training systems. Maybe something again highlighting and defining what training, learning and education might look like, to have that excellence in training that April referred to. I am delighted in this shift. It is only the beginning of a shift in culture of learning understanding. I did attend my Reader training a few months ago in the Durham diocese as a Reader to learn about safeguarding. It has been a significant initiative of the Bishop of Jarrow, and yet I understand there were some who found it a little odd that they were asked to come as Readers, others perhaps who did not perhaps fully participate. This is the beginning, but as many of us have said it is a beginning with quite a long way to go. Thank you.

The Bishop of Lichfield (The Rt Revd Jonathan Gledhill): Just a question. I am fully supportive of the legislation. Thank you very much for all that has gone into it. My colleagues would like to be given a bit of help on the length of time that the process takes once a cleric has been suspended. It is my experience that it is a matter of two years, which, of course, can be absolutely devastating not just for the cleric himself but for his family and, in fact, the whole community in the parish. So a little bit of elucidation and help about how we can shorten the legal steps would be welcomed.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

The Revd Preb. Stephen Lynas (Bath & Wells): I have two points to make, Chair. Referring in particular in the report before us to paragraph 33 which refers to paragraph 2(3) of the Amending Canon which is to do with good training and the business that all clergy, which is the bit of diocesan life I am most concerned with, must do some safeguarding training. We in our diocese, and probably others, have been extending this and beating the drum much harder in recent years and we have extended it to PTO clergy and we have extended it to Readers. One of the problems is, of course, that there are people who do not want to do it and it would be
interesting to know why they do not want to do it. But some of the excuses are: "Well, of course, we do not have children in our church", which is a pretty damning thing to say at any time. But, equally, there are excuses which come up which, frankly, rather frighten me because it seems to me that what they are actually saying is they do not want to know, they do not want to face up to this particular aspect of human life. If one reads the daily papers, particularly after recent high profile cases, the impression is given that sex offenders are evil monsters with a wicked glint in their eye and all that stuff. Well, they are not. They are actually somebody's organist or somebody's choirmaster or somebody's parent or, indeed, somebody's vicar. I think it is our unwillingness to face up to that that makes some people reluctant to even go into the room where the training is taking place. The best training I have done on safeguarding was where a detective constable who was involved in public protection work made us think about ourselves and our own attitudes and the way we were brought up and what we think about other people's attitudes and when they offend. Of course, the real thing for clergy and Readers who under this Amending Canon we wish to make training compulsory for, is not just about whether they have children, it is about what happens when a sex offender wants to join their congregation. What are they going to do about that procedurally and how are they going to face up to it spiritually and practically? For all those reasons we have to echo what April said so movingly: We have to help people to get it because, sadly, they do not.

My second point is referring to the financial document, which we are always given on these occasions, and to paragraph 9 which talks about the resources for safeguarding work. This stuff costs money. Dioceses, certainly ours, are finding we have got to find more resource and put it in. I want to pay tribute to the team at Church House who under quite difficult conditions have been given a heck of a lot of extra work to do. They are currently rolling out some national training for senior staff which I attended recently, and I hope we can hear in the reports that come through on this business that the sort of money that has been spoken of as a needed resource at Church House in order to make this possible, practical and professional is actually going to be available. It is a lot of money but it is going to have to be found. Thank you.

*The Revd Canon Andrew Nunn (Southwark):* Thank you. I am speaking as somebody who is completely supportive of all of this and very grateful for the work that has gone into it. But someone who has been a bishop's chaplain and has been at the centre and is now a dean, and I am looking at Section 2 and the requirement for people who are going to robe to have some kind of authorisation. One of the things that clergy love is to try and get as many other clergy out as possible when anything is happening to them. The length of the procession is seen to be a badge of honour, as many of us know. That also applies to the consecrations of bishops when everybody wants their friends to be there. All I would ask is this, which I think is very, very important, that the resources are put there to enable the kind of checks to take place in the amount of time that we sometimes have available, which is very short. So it is whether bishops' offices can turn that around, whether cathedral offices can turn that around and where the extra resources for that come from. They have to come from somewhere. It is a really important task. I would ask what kind of checks will the bishop do to enable me to then be able to extend hospitality and welcome the visiting clergy from other dioceses, from other provinces to enable them
The Revd Dr Rowan Clare Williams (York): Thank you, Chair. I was not intending to make this my maiden speech, but it is. A quick word to the bishops, really, and it is about such arrangements as the bishop of the diocese approves for the provision of training. I was really grateful that my own diocese (my own diocesan is sitting right there) made it mandatory that we should attend safeguarding training. I was less grateful when I got there and it was said, "This has all been about children." Of course, children are hugely important. Of course, the abuse of children is something we must stop and do something about. "What about vulnerable adults?", I said, and the trainer said, "I am not equipped to do that." Nothing else has happened. If the same is true in your diocese, please put on the training. Yes, it will cost but the cost of changing a culture, the cost of making churches safer is one that we must meet. Thank you.

A member: On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

'That the question be now put.'

This motion was put and carried.

Could I now ask the Bishop to come to respond to the debate?

The Bishop of Durham (The Rt Revd Paul Butler): Thank you all again for all your comments.

Simon Cawdell, please do write in with some of those specifics because I cannot address each of them exactly right at the moment. The requirement to place responsibility on the unlicensed clergy not to robe, as well as on to the clergy themselves, that seems a sensible suggestion, if you could send it in. The ecumenical question is going to be difficult, especially for the kind of smaller denominations and we will have to keep working at that, and clarifying incumbent status is something we will look at that.

The question of the 1603 Canon and the Confessional probably should be tackled but I would be wary of seeking to roll that into this particular bit of legislation because it could, actually, upset the whole lot. I think we need to get this and perhaps we will look at it, but we do need to look at that separately.

Risk assessments only on clergy, what about Readers and lay workers? Paul Benfield, yes, thank you, we will look at that. Certainly the question of safeguards for clergy on whom risk assessments are done, that needs to be clearly looked at.

If I could pick up the Bishop of Lichfield at that point about length of time, certainly on risk assessments in the models that we are working on, in answer to Mark Steadman earlier, hopefully some will be available when this comes back for people to look at. There are time limits being built into that process at least. The CDM timescales are, of course, actually outside our remit at this point. It is nice to have people from my own diocese commenting on things.
Jamie Harrison, learning from CQC training at Level 3. Laity are not bound by Canon Law in the way that clergy are and, therefore, we have to do it in other ways. The bit that we do have at our disposal is simply if Readers or lay workers do not undergo training we withdraw their licence, and perhaps we just need to remind them of that and use it more regularly. The whole question of the frequency of training and levels of training, that is being built into the whole package which is being developed.

Stephen Lynas, about people who do not want to do the training, the frightening excuses. Absolutely. Thank you. I think I would challenge anybody to suggest that they do not have any children or any vulnerable adults in their congregation, even if it is only two of them. It is about sex offenders wanting to join the congregation. So we do have to keep working at this helping people understand it and to get the whole issue. I have to say my experience in more than one diocese is that Readers is an area that we have to work hard at.

The whole question of resourcing this, thank you for the encouragement, Stephen, given to the national staff. They are working incredibly hard. Our Lead National Officer, Elizabeth Hall, has, of course, been off sick since last September and so Jill Sandham, who is sat here with me has been acting up for the last few months. Simon Payne has been working. Jacqui Phillips looks after them. There are staff at Lambeth. There are staff at Bishopthorpe. They have gone way, way, way beyond the hours they are supposed to work and they work tirelessly, and I pay enormous tribute to them and thank them publicly for doing so.

I am also pleased to note, as long as you pass it when we come to the budget, that there is increased funding for safeguarding in the budget for the coming year, which will mean we can up our national staffing by two. I have already raised the question that in the light of a national inquiry perhaps we need to find even more.

Andrew Nunn, thank you for your comments. While some people like to have as many people in processions as others, there are others who are suggesting that we have fewer.

At our debate in February, Jamie Harrison raised a question as to whether or not, like GPs, we could have a national list of all clergy that hold a licence or PTO. Certainly we are moving to do that in Durham Diocese, so you can just go to the website and you will immediately get a list of all people. If we could do that in every diocese and create a national list that would be one quick way of doing it, but we will look at others.

Rowan Williams, maiden speeches, thank you for making yours on this subject when you had not planned to do so. Absolutely, mandatory safeguarding training is a really good thing and it must include vulnerable adults and if it does not then it needs to be revisited. I assure you that the national package being worked on does include this and, yes, it does cost money and dioceses have to look at their budgets to make sure they spend enough.

Thank you all for your contributions. I commend the Amended Canon and I move the motion.
The Chair: I now put Item 520 to the vote.

The motion

‘That the Canon entitled “Amending Canon No. 34” be considered for revision in committee.’

was carried on a show of hands.

The item is clearly carried and the draft amending Canon is now committed to the revision stage. As the Bishop has said, if you wish to submit proposals for amendment please send them in writing to the Clerk to the Synod to get there by 15 August. This completes this item of business and we now move to evening prayer led by the Revd Sally Baylis.

The Revd Canon Sally Baylis (Southwell and Nottingham) led the Synod in an act of worship.

THE CHAIR Mr Aiden Hargreaves-Smith (London) took the Chair at 8.30 pm

The Chair: Good evening. Before we move to our next item of business I should like to take this opportunity to extend a very warm welcome to a group of young adult observers who will be with us for the next few days and who are seated in the gallery. It is very good to have you with us and may I invite the Synod to welcome them in a proper way.

QUESTIONS

The Chair: We come now to Item 9, Questions. For this item members will need the yellow A5 booklet containing the text of the questions. For the benefit of members wishing to ask supplementary questions there will once again be roving microphones. Would members who are not close to a microphone please wait for a roving microphone before speaking. May I also remind members that a supplementary question must be strictly relevant to the original question and to the answer given, and it must be a question. This is not an opportunity for members to make speeches. We start with questions to the Pensions Board.

Pensions Board

1. The Ven. Jonathan Smith (St Albans) asked the Chair of the Pensions Board: What is the predicted cost of the CHARM scheme over the next 40 years and what is the likely cost to dioceses going forward year on year?

Dr Jonathan Spencer (Ex-officio) replied: Last year CHARM (including the rental, shared and mortgage schemes) cost a total of £16.5 million, of which CHARM rental accounted for £12.2 million. The £16.5 million was funded from three sources: Retired clergy paid £9.6 million in rental and mortgage payments; dioceses through Vote 5, contributed £3.8 million, and the Pensions Board’s charitable funds contributed a further £3.1 million. Over the next few years, our modelling suggests that the Vote 5 subsidy will need to rise at least in line with inflation, and in the short-term we may need to extend the current arrangement of above inflation
increases, due to a bulge in the numbers of retiring clergy, rising house prices and interest rates returning to more normal levels. However, the longer term picture is necessarily more uncertain, since forecasts of house price inflation, interest rates and the level of clergy demand are all hard to judge. I am afraid that that is the limit of my powers of clairvoyance.

*The Ven. Jonathan Smith*: Given that it is most unusual in the United Kingdom for those administering a pension scheme to also administer a retirement housing scheme, will serious thought be given to detach CHARM so as it may be administered independently by trustees with specific expertise in real estate, surveying and property management?

*Dr Jonathan Spencer*: I think the structural question is for others and not for me, though I would say that we have on the Pensions Board a number of people with relevant skills to housing as well as to pensions, and our Housing Committee has three co-opted members with precisely those skills.

**Ethical Investment Advisory Group**

2. *The Revd Rosalind Rutherford (Winchester)* asked the Chair of the Ethical Investment Advisory Group: Because of the power of market forces, international agreements among governments have not yet shown themselves to be effective in limiting carbon emissions. Given the increasingly urgent action needed on climate change, is the EIAG review of investment policy in this area still on track to be completed by the end of 2014, and when is the report likely to be published?

*The Revd Professor Richard Burridge (University of London)* replied: The Ethical Investment Advisory Group and National Investing Bodies published a briefing paper for Synod members (GS1942B) in February 2014 in advance of the Synod debate on environmental issues. The paper stated, with regard to the timing of the publication of the new ethical investment policy on climate change, that "it is anticipated that the new policy will be published as soon as feasible in 2015." This remains the case. As I said in my speech in the Synod debate in February, the timing of the publication depends not only on the EIAG completing its work (which we hope to do by the end of 2014), but also the trustees of the National Investing Bodies adopting the policy in 2015. The EIAG is hosting a lunchtime fringe meeting tomorrow and will brief Synod members then on the progress of the climate change policy and discuss this excellent review document.

*Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford)*: Is consideration still being given to the ethics of adaptation to the effects of climate change, particularly bearing in mind the first section of question 2 and the ineffectiveness, therefore, of climate change arrangements?

*The Revd Professor Richard Burridge*: I can assure Gavin Oldham, who has fought the case for adaptation very strongly in this area for quite some time, that, despite his presence on the EIAG being sadly missed these days, we are pushing that very strongly. We had recently discussions with Lord Searle where we were looking at mitigation and adaptation, so it is very much still in on our agenda.

*Mr John Ward (London)*: Given the power of market forces did the Church of
England make a profit when it sold its interest in Wonga?

The Revd Professor Richard Burridge: That is not strictly relevant but I would be very happy to answer it if the Chair would permit me.

The Chair: It is not relevant. If you are prepared to answer it, Professor Burridge.

The Revd Professor Richard Burridge: I am very pleased to announce that, as has been put in the papers recently, we have finally managed to sort out the tendrils of the varied pooled fund (25.09) which is included around the weed of Wonga (hence the picture on here), with the support of the Archbishop of Canterbury and we have managed to divest ourselves of the investment in Wonga and deliberately chose not to make a profit on that.

Archbishops’ Council

3. Mr Andrew Pressland (Peterborough) asked the Presidents of the Archbishops’ Council: Has the Archbishops’ Council used any economic methods to evaluate the effectiveness, impact or value for money of any of the grants provided by the Church Commissioners to support the mission of the church, or do they have any plans to do so, using either in-house expertise or commissioned external research?

Canon John Spence (Ex-officio) replied: It is always best practice for grant makers to have clear and objective evaluation criteria. But it should be recognised that economic factors are only one aspect of evaluation.

The Archbishops’ Council are committed to evaluation of the impact of the funds that they distribute. Evaluations have been undertaken or are on-going for a number of recent funding streams. Examples of this include an externally commissioned evaluation of funding to support mission in areas which was undertaken by Charities Evaluation Services (the findings will be published on the Church Growth website http://www.churchgrowthrd.org.uk/ in September).

A requirement to undertake evaluation was also a condition of the grants to support projects focusing on church growth in deprived areas. These evaluations drew on a range of established techniques for evaluating the impact of funds distributed.

The Resourcing the Future Task Force is focussed on advising on the best alignment of resources with the priorities of growth in numbers, spirituality and evangelism. This will require a range of evaluation measures - including economic measures - to be put in place.

4. Dr Philip Giddings (Oxford) asked the Presidents of the Archbishops’ Council: How many persons are employed, directly or indirectly, by each of the National Church Institutions on (a) zero hours contracts or (b) at rates of pay below the living wage; and when is it expected that none will be so?

Canon John Spence (Ex-officio) replied: There are no staff directly employed by the NCIs on a zero hours basis. There are 24 staff in the hospitality area who are employed on a ‘bank’ staff basis. The hospitality area is subject to great volatility
and demand and the use of non exclusive, no obligation contracts is typical in that sector. All staff jointly employed by the NCIs, including the 24 bank staff, are employed at a rate above the living wage. There are 72 staff employed by the Pensions Board and its supported housing schemes who are employed at a rate below the living wage and the Pensions Board will move them on to a living wage on a phased basis beginning in 2015. There are some staff working for our contractors at a rate below the living wage. In that case we have agreed with contractors a basis on which they will move to the living wage, or in one case we are providing additional funds to an existing contractor to enable this to happen. In future, all the contracts will be issued on the basis that staff must be paid at or above the living wage.

Dr Philip Giddings: I thank Canon Spence for that very helpful answer and reported progress. Would he agree that in order to demonstrate our commitment to removing this manifest social justice, as the Archbishop of York has put it, we ought to continue to use our endeavours to eliminate these practices even where it is industry practice?

Canon John Spence: The arrangement with the bank staff works very well and it would have to be said there would be considerable extra expense involved if one was to eliminate that piece. Our staff, I know, are very content with the procedure which enables them to take extra work on from other places when we have no work for them.

5. Mr Geoffrey Hine (Carlisle) asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: The ruling by HMRC that all parishes in a diocese are connected charities as they are controlled by diocesan bishops has made the operation of the Gift Aid Small Donation Scheme more complicated than was intended. It has also effectively barred those churches with paid staff access £2,000 National Insurance contribution relief. Will the Archbishops' Council seek to challenge this ruling by Judicial Review?

Canon John Spence replied: The advice available to The Archbishops' Council is at great variance to that view expressed by the HMRC. The view of the HMRC is that the powers conferred upon diocesan bishops through the PCC (Powers) Measure and the Church Representation Rules is such as to create a connection between dioceses and parishes. The view being received from a leading tax QC backs that of our own lawyers in that there is no such connection. We are currently considering how best to revert to the HMRC on a formal basis. This will either be by judicial review or by appeal to the first tier tax tribunal, and we will come to a conclusion on the best way forward by the autumn.

Mr Geoffrey Hine: Thank you for your answer, Canon Spence. There are two approaches to this question about diocesan bishops' control over PCCs. The first is that of the diocesan bishop, which is: if only if it was so. The second is from the PCC themselves: in his dreams.

The Chair: Could you come to your question, please?

Mr Geoffrey Hine: Yes. Speaking as a member of the National Stewardship Committee I have seen the response to Council's opinion, which is so obtuse and tortured. Would Canon Spence agree that the most robust route to refute this is by
judicial review rather than the tax tribunal route which has been cited; and, could he
give an indication of when in autumn, because the poets describe it as a very long
season, and many of our parishes, particularly in the remote, rural areas where the
Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme will not work properly ---

The Chair: I think Canon Spence has probably heard your question now, thank you.

Canon John Spence: It was very good though, really, thank you. You could have
carried on and you would have been in my dreams at that rate. I have great
sympathy with small parishes. The impact of this is considerable. For those of you
who are unaware, while the HMRC estimates the impact might be about £5 million
per annum, if you take the direct impact plus the cost of administration, plus the
non-receipt of employment allowances because parishes do not try to claim, we
reckon it could be up to £13 million or £14 million. It is, therefore, a very serious
issue. From my view, autumn finishes when the frost begins and so I would very
much hope that we have come to the view of the best way forward by the end of
October at the latest. I would further say to you, it is not for me to pre-judge what our
lawyers think between judicial review and first tier tax tribunal. The latter can work at
a faster rate while the former is more, as you say, robust.

6. **Mr Brian Newey (Oxford)** asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:
What progress has been made by the four Task Groups mentioned in the Chair of
the Finance Committee's note of 23rd April?

Canon John Spence replied: The Task Force headed by Lord Stephen Green has
completed its work. The report is en route to the Archbishops who have requested
that an implementation plan be developed for discussion with the College of Bishops
in September. The other three task forces, that is headed by the Bishop of
Willesden on Simplification; by the Bishop of Sheffield on Resourcing Ministerial
Education; and by myself on Resourcing the Future are on track to report to the
Archbishops in November. Thereafter, it will be up to the Archbishops' Council and
other bodies, including the College of Bishops, to discuss how best to take forward
the emerging programme of change and modernisation.

7. **The Revd Neil Patterson (Hereford)** asked the Presidents of the Archbishops'
Council: Have any changes been made to the Church's promotional website
YourChurchWedding.org as a consequence of the passing of the Marriage (Same
Sex Couples) Act 2013, and if so, what?

Mr Philip Fletcher (Ex-officio) replied: Following the Marriage (Same Sex Couples)
Act 2013 some changes were made to the yourchurchwedding website to reflect the
new legal position. These changes included updating the pages about the legal
aspects of marriage and the page about dedication after a civil ceremony. We also
amended some of the Frequently Asked Questions and corresponding answers to
ensure clarity of information.

Revd Neil Patterson: Is it possible to confirm in addition that the front page of the
website formerly bore the strapline, "All are welcome to marry in the Church of
England" or similar, and this has now been removed?

Mr Philip Fletcher: I cannot confirm that from personal knowledge but I entirely
understand the point being made. I would want to emphasise that while we have properly to reflect the legal position, in the answers that we have given we have gone on trying to make it clear that the Church of England is there for all the people of England.

8. The Revd Rosalind Rutherford (Winchester) asked the Presidents of the Archbishops’ Council: What progress has been made to date in reconstituting and making more effective the "Shrinking the Footprint Group", as requested in the Synod's resolution of February 2014?

Mr Philip Fletcher replied: The former Shrinking the Footprint Steering Group has been a willing participant in its own demise, agreeing that February’s resolution opened the door to more effective work. The Archbishops' Council considered terms of reference for the new environmental Task Group in May and made suggestions for improvements. Revised terms of reference will, I hope, be ratified by the Council before its next meeting. We are well on the way to appointing a senior bishop to lead the work, supported by possibly two suffragans, but I will not be able to announce names until the protocols for appointing lead bishops have been completed. I am, however, very enthusiastic about the names so far proposed. So watch this space.

The Revd Rosalind Rutherford: Well, we will watch the space but, in view of the overwhelming vote in favour of this last February and then the urgency of action in time to have an effective impact and voice in the climate change talks in Lima this December, will this appointment be given real urgency and, ideally, names announced by September, which will be six months after the motion was passed?

Mr Philip Fletcher: I entirely accept that this is urgent business and we need to get a move on with it. Believe me, it has not been just sitting idle and the Mission and Public Affairs Council and its staff in the meanwhile are doing things to ensure that the Church's voice on climate change is being taken forward, along with many other members of Synod who are doing that in their own capacities. But I absolutely accept that we need to get a move on.

The Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): In the lifetime of the Shrinking the Footprint group, did the footprint shrink?

Mr Philip Fletcher: I am speaking speculatively, it may have done but not necessarily for the right reasons. But the good bit is that the Church has been making real progress in monitoring its own footprint, reducing its own contribution to carbon and thereby giving itself more credibility which this new group can build on to give us credibility in political debate and elsewhere. The less good bit is where we are using our churches less, heating them less, leaving them cold because there are not enough things going on in our churches. So the one thing we must not do is say we will use our church buildings less in order to reduce our footprint. Let us use them well and use them efficiently.

9. Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark) asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Has the Council given any consideration to the amount or amounts below which consent will not be required under new clause 4A of the Parochial Church
Councillors (Powers) Measure 1956? If so, is it willing to make this available before the debate in the Revisions Stage of the Draft Church of England (Ecclesiastical Property) Measure? If not, what processes, including for wide consultation, are proposed for such consideration, assuming that the measure is passed?

*The Ven. Christine Hardman (Southwark) replied:* The Council had an initial discussion on the principles of what an Order might contain, but has not yet considered potential threshold levels. Its initial preference was that the threshold would be the greater of a specified figure or a set proportion of the PCC's net assets. But the Council agreed that if the Measure was passed there would be a consultation - particularly with the Inter-Diocesan Finance Forum - before a final decision was taken on the shape of any such Order and the threshold levels within it. Any Order would require the Synod's approval and members will be able to propose amendments to it.

*Mr John Ward (London):* Noting the flexibility of the power that will be in the draft Measure that we are debating tomorrow, will the Council produce a report expressly dealing with the dangers of too much power being vested in PCCs to dispose of property, and will the report note that checks and balances in relation to the holding of property prevents short-termism and reduces US style litigation in relation to property?

*The Ven. Christine Hardman:* I do not know the answer as to the question as to whether a report will be produced. I am not on that revision or steering committee but it is precisely because of the challenges and dangers that you are alluding to that the notion of having a threshold within this measure, which puts a limit on the freedom of PCCs to dispose of property, it is precisely for that reason why this is there.

10. *The Revd Canon Dr Simon Taylor (Derby)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: What is the status of the so-called 'Sheffield formula' for deployment of clergy, and are there any other means by which an equitable share of clergy across the Church of England is enabled?

*The Bishop of Sheffield (The Right Revd Steven Croft) replied:* The Sheffield formula was developed by the person who was Bishop of Sheffield, my predecessor, when I was 13, so you can see how long it has been around. The Sheffield formula remains in use and forms part of the basis for the Darlow grant calculation and for the allocation of title curates. The Resourcing the Future Task Group is including consideration of the Sheffield formula in its work. Increasingly, dioceses are developing deployment strategies for a full range of ministers (lay and ordained) which are based on their mission plans and local circumstances, rather than simply compliance with their Sheffield numbers. There are a number of voluntary links and partnerships between dioceses which can facilitate the encouragement of clergy to move from those who are comparatively well supplied with clergy to those who are less so. The Clergy Appointments Adviser, who interviews 300 clergy per year, places before them opportunities in all parts of the Church of England and advertises these in a Vacancy List on the website.

*The Revd Canon Dr Simon Taylor:* I thank the Bishop of Sheffield for his answer. I
wonder if he thinks either that the market is becoming the system by which clergy allocation is being developed across the Church of England, or whether the Lord is particularly calling Church of England clergy to the South East of England?

_The Chair:_ I am afraid, Dr Taylor, you are asking for an expression of opinion which is out of order. Supplementary, Canon Woods.

_The Revd Canon Martin Wood (Chelmsford):_ Would the Bishop confirm that on the new list there are far more posts that have the numbers that refer to the South East than that have the numbers that refer to Northern dioceses?

_The Bishop of Sheffield:_ That is generally the case, yes.

11. _The Revd Stephen Pratt (Lichfield)_ asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: What progress is the Archbishops' Task Group on Evangelism making on the recommendations following the November 2013 debate on 'Intentional Evangelism' (GS 1917) and are they keeping to the proposed timetable?

_The Archbishop of Canterbury (The Most Revd & Rt Hon Justin Welby)_ replied: GS 1917 asks the Archbishops to establish and convene the Task Group before the end of March, and asks the group to facilitate a season of prayer for evangelism at Pentecost; both these things were done on time. The Group next meets on July 17 to pursue the Synod's other recommendations.

_Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford):_ I am wondering, in specific terms, if you look at the number 2 recommendation from the report on Apologetics, 'Defending and Commending the Christian Faith', would the Archbishop be able to tell us what specific progress has been made in that area?

_The Archbishop of Canterbury:_ Sub-groups have been formed to work on different areas, and Apologetics is included. We are still at the stage of research, of planning out the ground. You need to remember that this Task Group is not there to evangelise England. It is to enable the Church to carry out its work in serving God's call.

_The Revd Stephen Pratt:_ Thank you, your Grace, for your answer. How soon will materials be disseminated down to parishes?

_The Archbishop of Canterbury:_ Could I talk about the weather? I think, realistically, it will be early 2015 before we have materials coming out, the way it is working at the moment. I will know better next week after the next Task Group meeting and I am rather loath to make commitments that I am not sure we can keep. It is looking like early 2015 is a realistic target to start disseminating some material, but I may be wrong.

_House of Bishops._

12. _Mr Thomas Sutcliffe (Southwark)_ asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Will the House of Bishops, under the leadership of the Archbishop of Canterbury, endorse and recommend _Evangelii Gaudium_, Pope Francis's frank and original exhortation on evangelizing in the contemporary world, to all Church of England
members as one of the most hopeful and practical signs in recent decades?

_The Archbishop of Canterbury (The Most Revd & Rt Hon Justin Welby) replied:_ We welcome many of the sentiments expressed in _Evangelii Gaudium_, particularly the central theme of encouraging the Christian faithful to embark upon a new chapter of evangelization joyfully, and it is based on their experience of finding joy in the encounter with Christ. The English Anglican Roman Catholic Committee (English ARCC) is making the shared reception of this remarkable text, which I warmly commend for reading, the major focus of its current work, seeking to discern how it might inspire and inform us together in making Christ known. It was a subject that was discussed at some length in my meeting with the Pope about three or four weeks ago. Whilst the Church of England may not agree with all of the statements contained in this text, for instance the idea that the ordination of women is not something for discussion, it is likely that it will be the source of a fruitful future discussion at the next joint meeting of the House with the Catholic Bishops’ Conference. We look forward very much and relish the journey together in faithfulness, as together we seek to encourage everyone to encounter Christ in the life of our churches and in our outreach into society.

_Mr Thomas Sutcliffe:_ Will the next joint meeting with the Catholic Bishops’ Conference work to develop a joint evangelizing project shared in England between the laity of our two Churches and directed at those in our country who could benefit from a broader less ecclesial kind of evangelizing, such as the Pope commends?

_The Archbishop of Canterbury:_ I do not know the answer to that because it is a long way away. We had it at the beginning of this year and it is every two years. Yes, that is exactly the kind of way in which we are working. There is an awful lot of joint work being done already and I have a personal disposition against enforcing structures on working systems, but I may well be wrong. That is the second time I have said that. I will try and say it again in a minute.

13. _Mr Thomas Sutcliffe (Southwark) asked the Chair of the House of Bishops:_ What steps have been taken or are being contemplated by the House of Bishops to reconcile the Episcopal Church of the USA and the Church of Canada to a wider and more open sharing by member churches of the wider Anglican Communion in a positive and welcoming relationship with the See of Canterbury in its foundational role, that could before too long include the Anglican Church of North America under its newly elected Archbishop?

_The Archbishop of Canterbury replied:_ On March 21 last year, and March 22 for that matter, I held a series of informal meetings with the Primates of the Anglican Communion in Canterbury, during which I conveyed my intention to visit each Primate in their own location before the end of 2014. So far I have met 24 and we are on target, aeroplane schedules permitting, to finish that by mid-November. The relationship with the See of Canterbury is enormously important to all the provinces and the visits have again emphasised the mutuality of relationship amongst the Primates within the Communion. We have much in common as a family of churches and, yet, we retain our local autonomy. What that means in practice is we cannot enforce reconciliation, I cannot and have to be very careful in seeking to do so because it would be felt in many cases as gross interference. Yet we feel the cost of
disagreement, which we feel very, very deeply, where there is division and disagreement within the Communion. Together, we must take the steps necessary to bring about renewed and reconciled relationships and we are seeking to encourage that, particularly in the case you ask about. How this progresses is impossible to foresee, and it will be a matter for further reflection on completion of the series of visits.

14. **The Revd Christopher Hobbs (London)** asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: With the departure of Dr Martin Davie last December, what provision is now made for theological support for the House of Bishops?

*The Bishop of Coventry (The Rt Revd Dr Christopher Cocksworth) replied:* The departure of Dr Martin Davie, who served the House of Bishops with great commitment and enormous expertise over a number of years, was the result of a reorganisation of ecumenical and theological staffing in the Central Secretariat following the resignation of Dr Colin Podmore. A newly configured post of Ecumenical and Theological Secretary was created at a more senior level than Dr Davie's post and reporting to Colin Podmore's successor, Dr Phillips. The post, which has a similar range of responsibilities to that occupied by Dame Mary Tanner some years ago and includes acting as a theological adviser to the House of Bishops, has been filled by the Reverend Dr Jeremy Worthen. In addition, the staff team of the Mission and Public Affairs Division, which also supports the House of Bishops, includes among others the Reverend Dr Malcolm Brown, who is an ethicist, and Dr Anne Richards, our mission theology adviser. I wonder, Chair, whether I might assure the House of the balance that the Faith and Order Commission tries to ensure in its membership. In that connection, with your kindness, if I may say that I was on the point of nominating Reverend Dr John Hughes to the Appointments Committee and the Archbishops and membership of the Commission. As many will know though, Dr Hughes was tragically killed in a car accident on St Peter's Day when returning from an ordination. John has been described in the *Church Times* obituary as, “one of the most outstanding scholar priests of his generation”, which he most definitely was. He was also a deeply committed chaplain of Jesus College, Cambridge. His loss at the age of 35 is an immense loss to the theological life of Church of England. I am sure Synod will join me in sending our deepest condolences to his parents, whose loss is, of course, greater, and also to the Master, Fellows and whole community of Jesus College, Cambridge. He rests now in the arms of the risen Jesus. May he rise in glory (Amen).

15. **The Revd Canon Dr Christopher Sugden (Oxford)** asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Will the House of Bishops please explain what the facilitated conversations recommended by the Pilling Report are meant to achieve?

16. **The Revd Christopher Hobbs (London)** asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Can the House of Bishops give an assurance that the purpose of the facilitated conversations following on from the Pilling Report is not to bring about a change of the theology and practice of the Church of England with regard to same-sex sexual relationships?

*The Bishop of Sheffield (The Rt Revd Steven Croft) replied:* Thank you, Chair. I shall, with permission, answer this and the question from Mr Hobbs together. The
objectives for the conversations both have a focus on mission and are set out in paragraphs 3 and 4 of GS Misc 1083. They are to enable the Church of England to reflect, in the light of scripture, on the implications of the immense cultural change that has taken place in relation to sexuality and to clarify what it means for the Church of England to live with what the Archbishop of Canterbury has called ‘good disagreement’. None of the statements from the College or the House of Bishops over recent months has signalled a change in the Church of England’s teaching and practice or an objective on the part of the House or College of securing such a change. But, as the Archbishops said in February: “The call of the gospel demands that we all listen, speak and act with integrity, self-discipline and grace, acknowledging that as yet our knowledge and understanding are partial.”

The Revd Canon Dr Christopher Sugden: Thank you for your answer, Bishop. What does the House of Bishops mean by ‘good disagreement’? How will they encourage this to be achieved and how will they know if it has been achieved?

The Bishop of Sheffield: Thank you. An alternative phrase that we have used is “to disagree Christianly”, which I think is a phrase of John Hankers from previous discussion and conversations, the kind of disagreement which enables people to live in the maximum degree of grace and charity with one another, with a good understanding of one another, and not dissimilar to the kind of good disagreement we are reflecting on over this weekend in relation to a different issue. How will we know when it has been achieved? I do not expect we will ever get to the point where we have final agreement on what ‘good disagreement’ is. It will be a process and that process will be enriched, we believe, very, very much by these conversations which we are about to begin.

The Revd Professor Richard Burridge (University of London): Given the failure of the Pilling group to engage with Biblical Scholarship, it was noted at the February Synod, in the production of material for the facilitated conversations, what conversations, if any, have taken place in the Biblical Scholars and what use is being made of the Biblical Scholarship in preparing material for these discussions?

The Bishop of Sheffield: Thank you very much, Richard. Substantial note has been taken of the comments made in the February Synod and elsewhere and of the four essays now in draft in the material, substantive essays, two are major Biblical reflections from Biblical Scholars looking at the material from different perspectives. I believe from what I have been able to see that due note has been taken of that. Thank you.

17. The Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark) asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: In the forthcoming process of shared conversations what procedures and process are the House of Bishops establishing to ensure that sufficient confidence is given to its gay members to enable them to safely declare their sexuality?

18. Mr Christopher Fielden (Salisbury) asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: During the presentation at the last Synod of the Report of the Pilling Group, a question was raised about the need to ensure that clergy participating in the facilitated conversations may be able to do so openly and honestly without risk to their future ministry. Could the House of Bishops please tell the Synod what steps are being taken to enable this?
The Bishop of Sheffield replied: I shall, with permission, answer this and the question from Christopher Fielden together.

GS Misc 1083 records the conclusions of the House of Bishops Standing Committee and says: “There is a task to be done of encouraging those within the church who are at odds on this issue to express their concerns in a safe environment”. The conversations will be guided by trained facilitators who will: “bring the skills necessary to ensure that the process provides a safe place for all viewpoints to be expressed.” The document goes on to say that LGBTI people should be represented by more than one person in each diocesan group. It also notes that “diocesan bishops will normally attend conversations in regions other than their own.”

The Revd Canon Simon Butler: Notwithstanding the fact that the decision for any person to declare their sexuality is an intensely personal one and should never be forced, to use the words of April Alexander earlier, does the House “get it” that the success of these shared conversations depends to a great extent on the ability of the House to model these conversations in its own life?

The Bishop of Sheffield: Thank you. I do believe the House has perceived the depth of the challenge that is in the question and the supplementary. The College of Bishops is spending two days of its three day meeting in September engaging in the pilot process for these facilitated conversations and engaging, therefore, at some depth. I hope that will help us all further in appreciating the challenge of the question and in modelling something which can genuinely be carried forward in a good and helpful way into the future.

Mr Clive Scowen (London): Is it intended that the LGBTI representation in those conversations should include those who perceive their call to discipleship to involve a celibate lifestyle?

The Bishop of Sheffield: Thank you. The decision, of course, will be the negotiation and reflection of each diocesan bishop taking advice, but I would have thought that that would be a natural way forward, yes, the whole range and spectrum of opinion will be represented throughout the conversations.

19. Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford) asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Is the House of Bishops considering any form of structure for pioneer ministry which would enable it to co-exist alongside conventional ordained ministry, bearing in mind not only the very different needs of Generation Y but also the difficulty pioneer ministers have experienced in being accepted for ordination?

The Bishop of Sheffield replied: The Fresh Expressions in the Church of England Task Group chaired by the Bishop of St Albans holds the strategy for promoting and embedding Fresh Expressions in the Church of England and acts as a champion and advocate of Pioneers, both lay and ordained. Its terms of reference include working with the Ministry Division and other partners to ensure that pioneer ministry is included in discussions and decisions about resources and deployment. This builds on existing cooperation through the Pioneer Panel in Ministry Division which assists with the discernment process of those seeking to become ordained pioneer ministers.
or OPMs. Those recommended by the Pioneer Panel may proceed to a Bishops’ Advisory Panel. As with all candidates who attend a Bishops’ Advisory Panel, not all of those commended by the Pioneer Panel are recommended for training. The rate of recommendation of OPMs is comparable to that of other candidates.

Mr Gavin Oldham: I am surprised to hear that the recommendation rate is comparable as this is not what I understood from a recent meeting with the Fresh Expressions Young People’s Working Group. Given that the Pioneer Ministry seems to be capable of attracting young single adults to the Christian faith in a way that conventional ordained ministry cannot, would the Bishop explore ways of accommodating a parallel structure of ministry, such as, for example, those that I have heard are being trialled in the Diocese of Winchester?

The Bishop of Sheffield: Thank you. I do not know about those particular trials. I think the Fresh Expressions Task Group is absolutely open to suggestions. We have just asked the Ministry Council to really take a close look at selection and training for the Pioneer Ministry over the next year, prompted in part by some conversations with the Young Adults’ Working Group sponsored by the Fresh Expressions team. I hope those conversations will come together in creative thinking over the next year.

Mrs Anne Foreman (Exeter): Are there any plans to examine the criteria for selection for training for ordination of Pioneer Ministers to ensure they remain effective in assessing candidates for the Church of the future?

The Bishop of Sheffield: The selection criteria remain under review. There are two exercises currently running, the first of which is the running through of the Common Awards, which is the subject of later questions and the learning outcomes from those, there was some reflection on selection criteria taking place in terms of alignment. I think it likely there will be a review in the next couple of years. Resourcing ministerial education, the task group that you heard about earlier, is also being asked to look at criteria for selection and patterns of formation.

20. The Revd Dr Patrick Richmond (Norwich) asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: The Church Growth Research Programme findings released this January gave more evidence of the critical need to raise and retain children and youth in the Faith if the Church is to have any long-term future. Synod heard in February how this is already motivating young people’s mission academies and further research, but what is being done to ensure that these findings sufficiently shape wider diocesan priorities, policies, culture and spending?

The Bishop of Durham (The Rt Revd Paul Butler) replied: The findings of the Church Growth Research Programme endorsed the crucial importance of the Church’s continued commitment to developing, supporting and shaping ministry with children and young people. The results have been widely disseminated among diocesan senior leadership teams who have been encouraged to involve their professional children and youth advisors in incorporating the findings into diocesan policy. A major piece of national research will identify models of work with children and young people that are most helpful in developing lifelong discipleship within the Church. A smaller project will assess Messy Church in the same way. In addition, the Going for
Growth Programme is supporting the development of new resources to enable children’s voices to be heard at all levels of decision-making in the Church. The programme also makes grants to parishes for mission activity with children and young people, including this year’s projects which were all initiated by young people themselves.

The Revd Dr Patrick Richmond: Thank you, Bishop, for that wide-ranging and encouraging answer and for all that you are doing, but the report does say that nearly half of our churches have fewer than five under-16s; in many dioceses, that being an average, it is worse than that, particularly rural dioceses. As the report says we urgently need to focus on work with children and young people and their parents, what is being done to make this a priority for diocesan strategies and vision statements and policies?

The Bishop of Durham: The honest answer is that it has to come back to the diocese. Every diocese needs to look at its strategy and decide what it is going to do and where it is going to spend its money. There is not much more that can be done from the centre. Change how you spend your money! When I inherited from your predecessor, only 40% of churches had that number of children, three archdeaconry officers were appointed and it is 60% now. So you do not have to invest a great deal to turn it round.

21. Mr Robin Hall (Southwark) asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Given the impact the House of Bishops’ February pastoral statement would have on the morale of many clergy - and also those in discernment or training - did the House consider the pastoral needs of those who were to be forbidden from exercising their civic rights and marrying their loved ones? If so, what support did the House think appropriate and how was this communicated?

The Bishop of Willesden (The Rt Revd Peter Broadbent) replied: The House considered the pastoral implications very carefully, as might be deduced from the fact that what we produced was described as pastoral guidance. We acknowledged that there had already been a range of responses across the Church of England to the introduction of same sex marriages, and we were very conscious that individual bishops would want to talk privately with those clergy for whom the guidance would be difficult and painful to receive.

Nevertheless, as bishops, we have a responsibility for upholding the teaching of the Church of England, and clergy are called on to live consistently with that teaching even when they disagree with it and may wish to argue for it to change, as the statement acknowledged was their right.

Mr Robin Hall: As you say, the guidance was difficult and painful and it was also deeply demoralising for many LGBT Anglicans, especially for those in Holy Orders or in training or discernment. Given that there are many people who feel that the House of Bishops has little or no support outwardly for its LGBT clergy, what advice does the House of Bishops have for those of us in the laity to whom this responsibility has fallen since the guidance was published?
The Bishop of Willesden: I do not think that the House will accept the dichotomy that you are suggesting. All of us who are bishops who have pastoral care for clergy are aware of the pain and difficulty that folk feel in this climate. Most of us are very aware of those clergy who self-identify as LGBTI, so I do not think it is the case that we are withdrawing pastoral support. Nonetheless, as I said in my reply, we are seeking to uphold what is the established teaching in the Church of England and within that to work pastorally with those who find that difficult.

22. The Dean of Portsmouth (The Very Revd David Brindley) asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: What consideration did the House give before issuing the Pastoral Guidance on Same Sex Marriage to the effect it would have on the Church’s mission to those under the age of 30?

The Bishop of Willesden replied: The House of Bishops, like the rest of Synod, heard the Archbishop of Canterbury when he said to the Synod last July that: “we may or may not like it, but we must accept that there is a revolution in the area of sexuality and we have not fully heard it”. The Archbishop also made it perfectly clear that he did not oppose the legislation and was not proposing policy change. The Pastoral Guidance which was issued by the House acknowledged that same sex marriage is a reality in our country while at the same time making it clear that the Church of England’s doctrine of marriage as set out in the Canons is unchanged.

The Dean of Portsmouth: Bishop Pete may have seen in this morning’s Times a report that the Ballroom Dance Association has banned same sex couples from entering competitions together. They are accused of not having consulted widely with their membership. Can he assure us that the House of Bishops has consulted more widely than the Ballroom Dance Association?

The Bishop of Willesden: Not being a devotee of the Murdoch press I missed that one! It does seem to me that you are again confusing roles. The House’s role is to uphold and explain and teach the Doctrine of the Church of England as we have received it. That does not preclude us from having conversations and I think probably over the next two years we will be having plenty of conversations about the matter, but it is not popular opinion that changes the Doctrine of the Church.

23. Mr Samuel Margrave (Coventry) asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Has the Church of England ‘dropped’ its opposition to same sex marriage, as reported in a rolling Sky News report on 29 March earlier this year?

The Bishop of Willesden replied: No. The Archbishops’ covering letter of 15 February to the House of Bishops’ guidance acknowledged that same sex marriage in our country is a new legislative and social reality. That does not, however, alter the fact that we opposed the legislation.

24. The Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark) asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Now that the House has declared policies of not ordaining those in same sex marriages or who are members of the British National Party and the National Front, in both cases on the ground that their actions are in contradiction to the teaching of the Church of England; will the House consider adopting a similar policy in relation to those who choose to campaign for, or to support, assisted dying?
The Bishop of Willesden replied: The implied analogy is false because it blurs the distinction between beliefs and conduct. In none of these three instances does the House of Bishops seek to regulate beliefs or views. Clergy may, and do, express support for a change in the law on assisted suicide or the Church’s teaching on marriage. What the Pastoral Guidance said was this: “The Church of England will continue to place a high value on theological exploration and debate that is conducted with integrity. That is why Church of England clergy are able to argue for a change in its teaching on marriage and human sexuality, while at the same time being required to fashion their lives consistently with received teaching.”

The Revd Canon Simon Butler: I do not agree with it! The House holds that belief and conduct are two distinct matters in Christian ethics. Given that the sermon on the Mount would imply that there is less of a distinction between the thought and the act, will the House revisit its approach to this claimed dichotomy and apply it with greater consistency across all ethical issues?

The Bishop of Willesden: I think an ethical symposium is probably beyond our remit tonight. I do think there is an issue to be explored there but the fact is that the legal framework within which we operate and the one which the House of Bishops’ pastoral letter has sought to address is that its matters of conduct and not of belief that are being addressed here, and our pastoral letter was about what the implications are if clergy choose to enter into a same sex relationship, not about what they think about that. I agree more could be discussed but again we have a forum over two years to do precisely that.

25. The Revd Mark Steadman (Southwark) asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Has the House of Bishops considered the application of:
   (i) its own guidance on Marriage in Church after Divorce to those previously married to a person of the same gender and who are now desirous of being married to a person of a different gender;
   and
   (ii) Canon C4 to a candidate for Holy Orders who is married to a person of the opposite gender but whose spouse was formerly married to someone of the same gender;
   and, if not, when might such consideration be given and guidance issued to the clergy and those responsible for discerning vocations?

The Bishop of Willesden replied: No, and in the nature of things we will have a bit more time before these eventualities are upon it. It is indeed the kind of issue that the Monitoring and Reference Group will need to draw to the attention of the House at the right time.

The Revd Mark Steadman: Can the Bishop confirm that the right time will be before the likely occurrence of such an eventuality to avoid the risk of a knee-jerk response.

The Bishop of Willesden: The House of Bishops is not accustomed to jerking its knees, apart from for prayer. We will of course address the very serious issues that are raised by this question and many others but they are not the kind of thing that we do on the hoof and I agree that we may need to think about the consequences for
our own legislation of a whole series of matters that are raised by same sex marriage.

*The Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark):* Given that the Bishop claimed that this was not the sort of thing the Church of England does on the hoof. Could he confirm how long the House of Bishops had in their hands the pastoral statement that they issued on Valentine’s Day?

*The Bishop of Willesden:* The statement was the product of deliberations when we met together as a House over a whole day and that drew on previous conversations that had been had.

26. *The Revd Canon Giles Goddard (Southwark) asked the Chair of the House of Bishops:* Given Sir Elton John’s recently reported comments on Jesus’ view of equal marriage and his criticism of the Church’s current position, will the House invite Sir Elton to assist with the forthcoming shared conversations?

*The Bishop of Willesden replied:* Notwithstanding the departure of Dr Martin Davie, to which a question from Mr Hobbs refers, the House has no present plans to draw on the services of Sir Elton John as our theological adviser.

*The Revd Canon Giles Goddard:* Does the Bishop not think that Sir Elton would be a bit of a candle in the wind for the Church of England?

*The Bishop of Willesden:* He may, he may not, but of course you are asking for an expression of opinion.

27. *Mr Clive Scowen (London) asked the Chair of the House of Bishops:* In view of the House of Bishops’ very clear guidance that it is not consistent with their role and vocation for clergy to enter into same sex ‘marriages’, what action can and will now be taken (i) to discipline those clergy who have ‘married’ a person of the same sex and (ii) to enforce that guidance in the future?

28. *Mrs Alison Ruoff (London) asked the Chair of the House of Bishops:* Has the House of Bishops considered how its members should respond when their clergy enter into same-sex marriages, including in future by converting from a civil partnership?

29. *Mrs Andrea Minichiello Williams (Chichester) asked the Chair of the House of Bishops:* In its Pastoral Guidance, issued on 15 February 2014, the House of Bishops issued a statement which indicated in s.27 of its Appendix that clergy of the Church of England should not enter into same-sex marriages, nor would a person in a same sex marriage be considered for ordination. Given recent cases of ordained clergy entering into same sex marriages, will the House be offering further guidance to ensure its earlier statement is upheld by all bishops with consistency and that all clergy uphold the church’s historic teaching of marriage being between one man and one woman?

*The Bishop of Willesden replied:* I shall, with permission, take this and the questions from Mrs Ruoff and Mrs Williams together since they are all about consistency.
The guidance itself was prepared with an eye to encouraging consistency by setting out very clearly - too clearly for some I recognise - the policy of the House of Bishops both in relation to potential ordinands and existing clergy.

The best way of securing consistency is, as the guidance said, for clergy to act consistently with the undertakings they gave at ordination to respect authority duly exercised within this Church. That is of course an undertaking that is only significant when people disagree with the view of the person concerned but nevertheless respect their authority, that is the nature of how we do canonical obedience.

Where clergy decides to disregard the relevant Canon and the clear view of the House, it is the responsibility of the relevant diocesan or area bishop to decide what action to take. The House has no present plans to issue further guidance. It has established a Monitoring and Reference Group which is available to give advice to any bishops who seek it and to monitor the situation across the country for the House. The Bishops of Norwich and Sheffield and I are members, and if the Bishop of Norwich were not in London for a wedding tomorrow he would be answering all these questions.

Mr Clive Scowen): Could the Bishop remind us what those of us who are not bishops might do about this matter? Particularly, could such conduct be the subject of complaint under the Clergy Discipline Measure and, if so, who may bring such a complaint?

The Bishop of Willesden: I am not here to give you a legal opinion on how the CDM works but I think Mr Scowen will know that it is set out in the CDM what the provisions are for making a complaint and those are evaluated by the proper person to deal with those, that is the diocesan bishop who consults the registrar of the diocese on whether a case can be brought and whether it is in time or not. Those matters are all set out very clearly on the Church of England website.

I want to emphasise that the way in which we care for our clergy is by the bishop who has pastoral care in a one-to-one relationship with that priest. That is where we do these things, not by debating people’s private affairs in the public arena.

Mrs Alison Ruoff: Given the supplementary from Clive Scowen, I would just like to add does not such flagrant disobedience warrant removal from office of clergy who have gone against everything that the Church of England stands for in its teaching?

The Chair: I am afraid, Mrs Ruoff, that is asking the Bishop for an expression of opinion, which is not permitted.

Mrs Andrea Minichiello Williams: In light of the House of Bishops’ pastoral statement of February this year, does the Bishop agree that the authority of the House of Bishops will be irreparably damaged and indeed it is an abdication of their responsibility ---

The Chair: Sorry, Mrs Williams, once again you are asking the Bishop for an expression of his personal opinion.
**Mrs Andrea Minichiello Williams**: We have experienced the sad provocation by Canon Pemberton ---

**The Chair**: I am sorry, your question is out of order I am afraid.

**Mrs Andrea Minichiello Williams (Chichester)**: Is no action going to be taken with regard to that?

**The Chair**: I am sorry your question is out of order. Thank you. Supplementary Mr Ward.

**Mr John Ward (London)**: Given the priesthood of all believers, when will the House acknowledge that the different treatment of lay and clergy people in this regard demeans lay people? What the Church is effectively saying is married gay people are not welcome.

**The Bishop of Willesden**: We have an interesting situation in that many folk in the Synod would think that there should be no distinction. The law has it that canonical obedience requires a different standard of the way in which clergy behave themselves and the way in which clergy are in conformity with the Canons, and therefore that is the case that we are seeking to address in the guidance that we put out. Again, I invite Mr Ward to be in conversation about whether there is a double standard between clergy and laity when we come to these laity conversations.

**The Revd Canon Rosie Harper (Oxford)**: On the basis that canonical obedience means obedience to the Canons, could the Bishop kindly point me to the Canon which sets out that it is not legal or possible for people to get married when they are gay? What is the Canon that you have been speaking to?

**The Bishop of Willesden**: B 30 I think you will find.

**The Revd Canon Rosie Harper**: It does not mention people of the same sex getting married.

**The Chair**: Sorry, Canon Harper, we are not here for a debate now. The Bishop has answered your question. Thank you.

30. **Mrs April Alexander (Southwark) asked the Chair of the House of Bishops**: In its deliberations on same sex relationships has the House taken account of what Lord Fowler identifies in his book *Aids: Don't Die of Prejudice* as the major factor contributing to the appallingly slow progress of the fights against AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa and the views he expresses as to the culpability of the Church of England in not disassociating itself from pronouncements made there about gay people which, in his view, greatly exacerbate the problem?

**The Bishop of Willesden replied**: No, but the Archbishops wrote in January to all Primates of the Anglican Communion, and to the Presidents of Nigeria and Uganda, recalling the commitment made by the Primates of the Anglican Communion to the pastoral support and care of everyone worldwide regardless of sexual orientation.
Mrs April Alexander: If this communication was by way of a plan A, what is plan B if there is no sign of amendment of view on the part of sub-Saharan archbishops bearing in mind the very serious assertion in Lord Fowler’s book?

The Bishop of Willesden: I think the Synod already heard from the Archbishops that he is in contact with all the Primates. I think it is important that we trust him to have honest communication with them about matters that might be brought to them which are matters of concern, and to recognise that there is a quite difficult diplomatic question to address both to churches and to governments in Africa as to how we make our understanding of the issues clear, and that I think is something we ought to leave to the Archbishops.

31. Mrs April Alexander (Southwark) asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: The Bishop of Norwich expects “constitutional change ... on a massive scale” after the Scottish referendum (Hansard: 11 June 2014) and both the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Leicester support the notion of a Constitutional Commission (+Derby: Hansard; 19 June 2014). In the light of that, will the ‘Expanded Group’ be reconvened to discuss the Church of England’s role in constitutional reform, thus including laity and clergy in the discussions as Synod determined in February 2012?

The Bishop of Rochester (The Rt Revd James Langstaff) replied: The ‘Expanded Group’ and the Synod motion of February 2012, to which Mrs Alexander’s question refers, concerned the Church of England’s engagement with the Government’s Bill on Lords Reform, a Bill which was in the event withdrawn.

There are at the moment no plans to reconvene the Expanded Group but the Lords Spiritual and the staff of the Mission and Public Affairs Division will continue to scan the constitutional horizon carefully, not least as parties prepare their manifestos for the next election, and of course in relation to whatever might emerge or not emerge from the Scottish referendum. If at some point there is a need for a formal Church of England contribution to discussions on these matters, the importance of involving laity and clergy is well understood.

Mrs April Alexander: Given that there is currently active discussion and committee work going on in the House of Lords about reform of the House of Lords and that the whole House appears to have decided “not to go there” (Baroness Taylor of Bolton), will the Expanded Group be convened to work on proposals for bishops to continue their work in the House in order to be prepared in advance for Government proposals?

The Bishop of Rochester: I think where we are at the moment is that the views which have been referred to have been expressed about the possibility of some constitutional engagement are about possible processes, hence the talk about constitutional commissions and such like. Once we know whether there are such formal processes then of course the Church of England will need to put in place means to respond to and to feed into those processes and, as I have said, that I am sure will need to involve laity and clergy as well as bishops. It is worth saying too that the Lords Spiritual of course do not in the House of Lords speak for the Church
of England as such; the Lords Spiritual speak as members of the House of Lords, and therefore it would be important in whatever proposals might or might not emerge for the voice of the Church of England to be heard in those discussions through means other than the Lords Spiritual but also including the Lords Spiritual.

*Dr Philip Giddings (Oxford)*: Would the Bishop invite the House to consider the wisdom of avoiding a situation in which the Church is constantly reacting to what others are proposing and doing across the Church some innovative thinking about the development of our political system, which has already changed in the last five years in matters way beyond the question of whether there should be bishops in the House of Lords. It is an urgent matter for our Common Good.

*The Bishop of Rochester*: I am sure there is sense in what Dr Giddings said and in conversation with the Archbishops with the Lords Spiritual and Mission and Public Affairs staff, it may well be that some engagement with those issues in coming years would be a sensible thing to undertake.

32. *Mr Simon Baynes (St Albans) asked the Chair of the House of Bishops*: Can the Synod be informed of the theme, objectives and agenda for the National Conference on Penal Affairs and Criminal Justice, how many dioceses are currently committed to take part, and how dioceses which have not yet registered can do so?

*The Bishop of Rochester (The Rt Revd James Langstaff) replied*: The theme of the Conference to be held on 11 September at Hatfield House is “Engaging Churches in Rehabilitation”. Its objectives are to engage churches in rehabilitation of offenders; to sow the seed to establish a Penal Affairs Group in every diocese and where such groups already exist to bring them together so as to build a national network to share good practice and resources.

Speakers at the Conference in September include former prisoners; Michael Spurr, the Chief Executive of the National Offender Management Service; Juliet Lyon, Director of the Prison Reform Trust; Lord Alex Carlile, prison chaplains and a variety of others, including, I think, the Bishop of Rochester!

Nineteen dioceses have registered and paid. One has tried to register but has not yet paid. Twenty have not so far responded. That does not quite add up to the full quota of dioceses, but it gives you the rough idea.

If you wish to learn more about this event then there is a fringe meeting at 1 o’clock on Sunday in Vanburgh V44 and Martin Kettle, our adviser on these matters, is around the Synod. The deadline for dioceses to register is Friday 18 July.

33. *Mr Simon Baynes (St Albans) asked the Chair of the House of Bishops*: What general initiatives does the Church have underway to help improve prisoner rehabilitation?

*The Bishop of Rochester replied*: Local initiatives are generally the most effective in supporting people released from prison, as well as those currently in prison, and helping them to build better lives. Serving and supporting victims and families is just as important. Many parishes and indeed dioceses are involved in networks
organised through community chaplaincies and other bodies, nearly always ecumenically and often with other faith groups as well.

Churches often find it best to work with the charities, many of them faith-based, which have experience in this field. The present changes in post-release supervision of offenders present some real opportunities for churches as well as some significant challenges.

The coming national conference - here is another commercial - is a very useful initiative to enable those involved in local projects to encourage and learn from each other, and for those who have the beginnings of a vision for this ministry, to pick up some valuable pointers as to how they might grow it and develop it.

Mrs Alison Ruoff (London): Could the Bishop say at this conference as to whether victims will be there and also representation from sentencers, please?

The Bishop of Rochester: It is initially a conference where those invited have been those engaged with diocesan penal affairs groups where those groups exist, so the invitation has gone to dioceses, so who is there depends rather on who dioceses send. I imagine that in that group there will be quite a range of people whose engagement with the criminal justice system comes from a number of different directions, and I would imagine that we would have on that occasion a good cross-section of experience. It is the first time that such a national conference has happened. It is an initiative for which we need to thank the St Alban’s Penal Affairs Group for taking that initiative and inviting others to join in this conference. My hope would be that out of it might grow something which would be a regular pattern of such gatherings to enable us as a church to engage with these issues in a more thoughtful way across the whole nation.

34. Mrs Mary Durlacher (Chelmsford) asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Since the Archbishops have acknowledged in paragraph 10 of GS Misc 1079 that the normal process for appointing diocesan and suffragan bishops is unlikely to result in the appointment of a bishop “who holds the Conservative Evangelical view on headship” can it be clarified with whom the consultations referred to in the following paragraph 11 are taking place, with a view to ensuring that the aspiration becomes a reality?

The Bishop of Rochester replied: I shall with permission answer this and the following question from Dr Belcher together.

35. Dr William Belcher (Gloucester) asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: In view of the recent admission (in GS Misc 1079) that due process has not only failed to appoint a Conservative Evangelical bishop, who holds to a complementarian view of headship, but is also unlikely to do so in a reasonable timescale, what specific approach is being adopted to ensure that such an appointment is made “within a matter of months”?

The Bishop of Rochester: There have been a number of conversations in recent months in which bishops and some others have been involved. It would not be sensible or proper for me at this stage to go into detail over what have been
exploratory discussions about options.

The way forward, whether or not it relies on the present normal processes for appointing bishops or nominating bishops, will of course need to be consistent with the position that in the Church of England every consecration has to be to a specific see. In addition, the filling of any suffragan see does as a matter of law require the relevant diocesan bishop to seek the consent of the Dioceses Commission and also to prepare a statement of particulars for the role. All that said, the discussions are being undertaken seriously and purposefully.

*Mrs Mary Durlacher:* We are very grateful for the two Archbishops’ recognition that there should be such a bishop has resulted in failure so far. Given the comments that you have just made, and I note the sensitivities, are you able to inform us what there is about the present process or what adjustments to normal process might be made so that we could have more confidence now since past initiatives and efforts have so clearly failed?

*The Bishop of Rochester:* The present processes for appointing diocesan bishops are of course in the hands of the Crown Nominations Commission and the present processes for nominations to suffragan sees are in the hands of diocesan bishops, advised usually by an advisory group from within their dioceses. It is not within the powers of the Archbishops or House of Bishops, nor indeed Synod to, as it were, direct the Crown Nominations Commission or others in how they will approach any particular Episcopal appointment. That is one of the difficulties because we cannot say such-and-such a suffragan see must be filled by such-and-such a person or such-and-such a kind of person, which is why we are having these quite delicate conversations as to whether there are other ways in which we can identify a see which can be used by agreement to fulfil the aspirations which are expressed in paragraph 30 of the House of Bishops’ Declaration.

*The Revd Professor Richard Burridge (University of London):* Given that no less an evangelical Biblical scholar than Tony Thiselton previously chaired the Evangelical Group on the General Synod (who saw themselves as conservative) wrote extensively in his new international commentary on the Greek New Testament about the meaning and mistranslations of the word “kephale” often as headship in ---

*The Chair:* Your question, Professor Burridge?

*The Revd Professor Richard Burridge:* In discussion with somebody who might hold one those views of what that word means, what process will you take to make sure that the person has studied all of those books and understood what scripture is actually teaching rather than what the tradition of a group is imposing upon that word?

*The Bishop of Rochester:* I think it is probably beyond the powers of even of our revered Archbishops to require any bishop to read any books, or indeed any potential bishops to read any books, but one of the issues in this matter is to ensure that anybody who is appointed to any Episcopal see is able to be not just the person who holds a particular set of viewpoints on any one of a number of issues, but is able to be a bishop for the whole Church, and clearly that is one of the things which we
are having to work out in this quite difficult set of conversations.

**Dr Philip Giddings (Oxford):** In light of that last reply, does the Bishop agree that it would be in the spirit of the five principles which underpin what we are discussing this weekend that a way should be found to ensure that this particular part of our Church can flourish even though many disagree with the view that it holds?

**The Bishop of Rochester:** I think paragraph 30 of the House of Bishops’ Declaration clearly understands that necessity, that desirability and the Archbishops’ Statement in GS Misc 1079 indicates the seriousness of the intent to bring that to a satisfactory conclusion.

**Secretary General**

36. **Mr Adrian Vincent (Guildford) asked the Secretary General:** Item 508 on the General Synod Agenda for Saturday 12 July will move that Amending Canon No. 31 (GS 1877D) be “promulgated and executed”. Paragraph 8 of the Amending Canon will reinstate, in a modified form, Canon C 19 (of guardians on spiritualities). If the Synod agrees to promulge the Amending Canon, will the Legal Office be producing a guidance note on Canon C 19, and will it be published on this page of the Church of England website http://www.churchofengland.org/about-us/structure/churchlawlegis/canons.aspx so that future Readers of the Canon, who are unable to understand its meaning, can have ready access to a guidance note as to its meaning?

**Mr William Fittall (Secretary General):** Some members of the Revision Committee requested that the Legal Office should produce a guidance note on the new Canon and one will be prepared.

37. **Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark) asked the Secretary General:** Can a best estimate or calculation be provided of the amount of person hours spent on preparing the Women Bishops legislation between (a) 2000 and the final vote in November 2012. And (b) December 2012 and July 2014 (it would be helpful if that total figure could be broken down in some way, eg between proceedings in Synod, formal Committees and the House of Bishops and in unofficial meetings; and between General Synod members (as volunteers), staff and consultants)? If so, is it possible to put a cost on the time and expenses occurred?

**Mr William Fittall:** It would involve disproportionate cost to try and to put a number on the hours or expenditure. What can safely be said is that the cumulative staff and member time involved in producing and considering the reports of:
The Rochester Group (more than three years and 289 pages)
The Guildford Group (one year and 57 pages)
The Guildford/Gloucester Group (two years and 103 pages plus draft legislation)
The Revision Committee (16 meetings and 140 pages)
The Code of Practice Group (6 meetings and 149 pages)
The working group, steering committee and House of Bishops for the new legislation and associated proposals (GS 1886 and 1924 and 1932 which together run to 78 pages) has been enormous and even this is not a list of all the many documents produced.
38. **Mrs Lorna Ashworth (Chichester) asked the Secretary General:** How many ordained people currently employed to teach and/or research by a Church of England college or course recognised for ordination training are members of the General Synod?

**Mr William Fittall:** According to the information available to us there are 145 ordained staff currently on the staff of a theological college or course, of whom four are elected diocesan members of this Synod.

**Mrs Lorna Ashworth:** Was this information made available to the Election Review Group and the Business Committee?

**Mr William Fittall:** I am not sure whether this question has been asked previously. We had to dig the numbers out, so it may well be that your question has put it into the public domain for the first time. All I would say is that a ratio of four on the Synod out of 145 does compare quite well in terms of the ratios within dioceses among parochial clergy.

**Board of Education**

39. **The Revd Canon Gary Jenkins (Southwark) asked the Chair of the Board of Education:** Has the Board of Education published any guidance to Church schools on how the Church of England’s doctrine of marriage can be presented and explained positively to the students, staff and governors of Church schools.

**The Bishop of Oxford (The Rt Revd John Pritchard) replied:** The Board of Education does not provide schemes of work for schools, although the National Society has in the past developed materials supporting the teaching about marriage in all schools. There are a number of schemes of work specifically developed to resource a Christian approach to sex and relationships education which includes teaching about marriage and these are routinely recommended to schools by diocesan advisors. One popular scheme is *Love and Sex Matters: Relationships and sex education in a context of Christian values* which was written by advisers in dioceses in the SW England. For further resources contact local diocesan education teams.

40. **Mrs Rosemary Lyon (Blackburn) asked the Chair of the Board of Education:** Given that all forms of bullying are contrary to the ethos of Church of England schools, could the Board of Education explain the reasons why, in the opinion of the Board, *Valuing All God’s Children* focuses only on homophobic bullying?

**The Bishop of Oxford replied:** The Church of England is widely if mistakenly perceived to be homophobic due to its teaching on marriage and same sex relationships. That makes homophobic bullying a more difficult issue for schools to negotiate and so producing specific guidance was entirely appropriate in the current climate.

**Mrs Rosemary Lyon:** I thank the Bishop for his answer, but I would just like to press him a little further. Given that the incidence of homophobic bullying is a small percentage of all bullying in school (I speak as a serving teacher with over 20 years’ experience), would the Chair of Board of Education agree that the major priority going forward for the Board should be to address bullying in general?
The Bishop of Oxford: It is absolutely right that bullying in general is abhorrent particularly in a Christian context so we have an absolute responsibility to do that and there is a lot of guidance out there that is already used by schools on a whole range of bullying. What we were asked to do was a very specific thing about an area that had come into particular focus and which the Archbishop of Canterbury had made a promise about, so we got on and dealt with that, but I absolutely agree that it is the whole spectrum of bullying that really matters. We expect the highest standard of teaching, behaviour and learning in our schools because every child is made in the image of God and deserves the very best.

41. Dr Rachel Jepson (Birmingham) asked the Chair of the Board of Education: Given the educational context in which, and with whom the Valuing All God’s Children materials will be used, did the Board of Education consider some other terminology than the phrase “falling short of the ideal” as a way of describing committed same sex relationships?

The Bishop of Oxford replied: A key purpose of Valuing All God’s Children was to place Anglican teaching on love and sexuality squarely at the heart of the document. “Falling short of the ideal” is language used in the General Synod motion of 1987, which remains the formal statement of the Church of England’s position, and so it is appropriate that it is used in the chapters setting out the background to the issues for teachers and governors.

Dr Rachel Jepson: Even so, given that 1987 is nearly 30 years ago, would other more appropriate less demeaning terminology be considered when the materials are revised?

The Bishop of Oxford: It is not a question, I am afraid, that the Board can answer. That is in other people’s hands. It is in the whole of the church. What we were asked to do was to respond in putting together a care for all God’s children in our schools in particular alongside the teaching of the Church as it is at the moment. The debate goes on. We have been discussing that in the last hour.

42. Mr Robin Hall (Southwark) asked the Chair of the Board of Education: The guidance on challenging homophobic bullying in Church of England schools - Valuing All God’s Children - published in May recommends that Diocesan Boards of Education and Multi-Academy Trusts should monitor homophobic incidents in their schools. Will this data now be collated at national level?

The Bishop of Oxford replied: Following the recommendation in Valuing All God’s Children, the Board of Education will consult Diocesan Directors of Education regarding the forwarding of the results of local monitoring to the national team.

Mr Robin Hall: The guidance has had a very warm reception in schools and I am pleased that the Board will now work with dioceses to collate monitoring results nationally. Will this data be ready by the end of the next academic year and then annually so we can review the impact that Valuing all God’s Children will have on homophobic bullying in our schools, especially as we know that one in three gay pupils report being victims of homophobic bullying?
The Bishop of Oxford: We are certainly going to be gathering this material. The issue of course for the Board will be, can we be confident in the statistics that we gather? I suppose there are at least two factors that contribute to that question. The first is are we going to be able to put that against information that is coming from the non-Church schools? Do we have a benchmark, in other words? We do not want the word to go out there have been so many incidents in Church schools and we do not know what the situation was in other schools at all, so that is a question. The other issue, I suppose, will be whether the Board has the capacity to gather that information in a way that we can actually justify; we can trust. So there are those problems. If, however, we can be assured of those things, then certainly this is information that should be available to Synod and beyond.

The Revd Dr Rowan Clare Williams (York): Has the Board defined what a homophobic incident is actually classed as? What is the definition of a “homophobic incident”?

The Bishop of Oxford: I would have to refer you to Valuing all God’s Children and a close reading of the text there to see how that is defined. I think it is difficult to pin that down in some situations and very obvious sadly in others, but have a look at the report.

43. Mrs Rosemary Lyon (Blackburn) asked the Chair of the Board of Education: What form of contact did those compiling the Valuing All God’s Children guidance have with those people struggling with unwanted same-sex attraction, and what use did they make of it?

The Bishop of Oxford: Valuing all God’s Children has a very specific purpose: to enable school leaders to create an atmosphere within which all children, and staff actually, are protected from abuse and bullying, especially that which arises from and expresses homophobia. The most helpful consultees were those with direct experience of developing strategies to address different kinds of bullying. We would hope people experiencing the tensions described in the question would also thrive in Church of England schools, as those schools are all committed to the pastoral care of every pupil.

Mr Richard Hammond (Chelmsford): Would the Bishop please relay back to the Board of Education the grateful thanks for the Valuing All God’s Children guidance that was relayed to me by a non-Church teacher recently who said it was fantastic that the Church is engaging with this vital issue.

The Bishop of Oxford: Thank you for that affirmation; I will.

Church Buildings Council
44. Mr Adrian Vincent (Guildford) asked the Church Buildings Council: Regarding the 14 April 2014 Judgment of the Arches Court of Canterbury “In re St Lawrence, Oakley with Wootton St Lawrence”, where the Church Buildings Council won its case, thereby preventing the sale of a helmet by the parish church, on what grounds did the CBC decide that they would be furthering the mission of the Church of England by objecting to the sale of a piece of armour, which paragraph 26 of the
Judgment describes as an “entirely secular object”.

Mrs Anne Sloman (Chair of the Church Buildings Council): In its judgment, the Court of Arches quoted with approval the following passage from Treasures on Earth (GS 132): One of the most excellent ambitions of Christians ... has been to express their faith in the language of the arts - in architecture, sculpture, painting, mosaic, music and poetry - and this to build houses of God which are symbols of that faith, thereafter furnishing them with objects as nearly worthy of the realisation of that godly ambition by men in every age from that of the early Christian church down to the present day has been instrumental in creating the great store of treasures owned by the churches ...”. The Court went on to say, “Church treasures include secular objects deposited in churches for devotional or other reasons.”

This is consistent with the Church Building’s Policy on Treasures “The material objects of our churches are held in common not only with our predecessors but also our successors. The theological tension is played out in each generation and in each place. The faith of the past will be destructive if it constrains and does not enable the faith of the future. Places and objects are conveyors of identity, memory and doctrine. They cannot be idolised, but their role in communicating faith cannot be downplayed.” (Church Buildings Council, Guidance note on Treasures)

The Wootton armet had formed part of the accoutrements of a tomb in the Church of St Lawrence, Wootton St Lawrence for over three hundred years before being removed to the Royal Armouries for safe keeping. It was held by the Court to be “a national asset with historic links to the parish”. The Court also held that the parish, which it described as “well-managed and reasonably well-resourced”, had failed to establish any financial case for selling the armet. That had been the view of the Church Buildings Council from the outset and the Council was therefore pleased that its position was ultimately vindicated by the Court. The Council also welcomed the Court’s conclusion that the “strong presumption against disposal by sale of Church treasures ... is both soundly based and generally beneficial in its consequences”. As a result of the Council’s intervention a significant historic and artistic asset that forms part of the heritage and history of the Church has been preserved for the benefit of future generations of parishioners and for the public more widely and helpful clarification has been provided by the Court on the test that should be applied to any future applications for the sale of church treasures

45. The Revd Dr Patrick Richmond (Norwich) asked the Chair of the Church Buildings Council: In November 2013, General Synod was told that the Cathedral and Church Buildings Council certainly did not have “hibernation” in mind as a possible strategy to deal with church buildings that threaten to be more of a burden than a benefit to the Church’s mission. I understand from the Bishop of Norwich and the Archdeacon of Norfolk that there is now hope for hibernation as an option. Can the Synod be updated on this matter, so that dioceses can be kept informed of any additional strategic options for the care of church buildings?

Mrs Anne Sloman replied: The Church Buildings Council has always been opposed to the word “hibernation”, because it believes closing churches is bad both for the mission and the buildings itself. However the Council welcomes the innovative scheme to be launched later this year by the Diocese of Norwich known as
“Diocesan Trust Churches”.

The scheme will allow churches that would otherwise face redundancy, because the area they used to serve is completely depopulated, to remain open to the local community for occasional services. A Trust will be formed, legally separate from the Board of Finance, and funded other than through the Parish Share. The Trust will take on a basic level of insurance and preventative maintenance but crucially without closing the building legally or physically and it will therefore still be available for grants. Further details are available on the ChurchCare website with supporting comments both from the Bishop of Norwich and from myself as Chair of the Church Buildings Council.

The Revd Dr Patrick Richmond: I am most grateful to you and to the Bishop of Norwich and to the Archdeacon of Norfolk Steven Betts for this most encouraging innovation and for the article on the website. It does explain on the website that in Norwich there are 50 churches with a population around them of less than 50 and 150 with a population around them of less than 150. Is it the case that there is equivalent research for other dioceses and are projections being made of the need for such diocesan trusts to care for churches?

Mrs Anne Sloman: As I have said in my comment on the ChurchCare website, we think this scheme may well be attractive to other dioceses but, quite frankly, it is up to them; it is not for the Church Buildings Council, or even the Diocese of Norwich, of which I am also a member like Dr Richmond, to tell other dioceses what to do.

Ministry Council
46. Mr Robert Hammond (Chelmsford) asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: Can figures be supplied for each diocese for each of the past five years for the number of candidates attending a BAP and the number of candidates who were subsequently recommended or training?

The Bishop of Sheffield (The Rt Revd Steven Crot) replied: The information is attached as Annex A (See Annex A at the end of this document).

47. Mrs Lucy Docherty (Portsmouth) asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: During the training programme for new clergy how much time is allowed for discussion of and learning about issues of gender and human sexuality? Are clergy under training given any support and guidance on how to manage situations where they are asked for pastoral support on these issues?

The Bishop of Sheffield replied: All ordinands in training are given training in the areas of human development issues of gender and human sexuality as a part of Pastoral and Practical Theology courses. This general area of the curriculum of Pastoral and Practical theology makes up roughly 20% of accredited study and is complemented by placement experience, and informal learning and tutorial work within the training institution. This first phase of training is then built on in the curacy phase by training incumbents and diocesan trainers. Thus all new clergy are given support and guidance in the challenging task of managing issues of gender and human sexuality as they occur in ministry.
Mrs Lucy Docherty: Thank you, Bishop. Is this training that you have described mandatory in all colleges? Is it something that all colleges have to do and, if it is, are there any steps taken to ensure that the training is consistent and of a high quality?

The Bishop of Sheffield: Individual modules are not mandatory. The Church does not define its curriculum centrally, but it does set learning outcomes and expectations which then colleges and courses develop training pathways for. It would be hard to imagine, and I am reasonably sure that there is not a college or course which does not approach these issues in some way. The introduction of the Common Awards has meant there is greater commonality in terms of the modules being used and we are now for the first time able to be aware of what modules different institutions have chosen. However, even within the same institution when I was Warden of Cranmer Hall, we did two weeks of sexuality and gender ministry theme teaching every year with the final year group. There was intense discussion every year about how we approached particular aspects of the course. It is a subject of ongoing debate.

48. The Revd Stephen Pratt (Lichfield) asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: Has the Council made an assessment of the impact, in terms of time, finance and relationships with previous validation bodies, that moving to the 'Common Awards' national validation agreement has had on the theological colleges and courses?

The Bishop of Sheffield replied: The Council has been very aware of the workload of theological education institutions in the transition to the Common Awards and thanks them very warmly for their positive contributions to the new, now validated, awards. Following requests from theological educators it agreed to give an additional year for the transition to be made so the awards will now start being taught this September. Further, the Ministry Division has supported institutions which have needed to renegotiate relationships with former validating partners, especially the universities with Church foundations. The withdrawal of HEFCE funding has meant a reduction in the total resource available but that is now being compensated by the contribution of Common Awards staff based in Durham, led by Professor Mike Higton. Similarly, as the institutions are now working within one validation agreement, the Ministry Division has provided the new Common Awards Virtual Learning Environment which should be of benefit to all of them.

49. The Revd Canon Dr Christopher Sugden (Oxford) asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: How many employed teaching staff on colleges and courses recognised for training for ordination in the Church of England hold postgraduate Masters degrees and Doctorates and what percentage of the total teaching staff do these numbers represent?

The Bishop of Sheffield replied: The Ministry Division does not keep records of staff with Masters degrees. However, 118 teaching staff employed by colleges and courses recognised for training and for ordination hold doctorates. They represent 60% of total employed teaching staff.

The Revd Canon Dr Christopher Sugden: Thank you, Bishop, for your answer and the figures. Was this information made available to the Review Group and the Business Committee of clergy representation?
The Bishop of Sheffield: I think I would echo the Secretary General’s answer to the supplementary earlier that, as far as we are aware this is the first time the question has been asked and the information brought into the public domain.

The Revd Professor Richard Burridge (University of London): Of those 118, how many of them are research-led publishing and participated in the recent Government research exercise?

The Bishop of Sheffield: I think I would need to do some further homework to answer that question.

The Chair: Members of the Synod, I apologise that I have failed to steer you to the end of our questions this evening but time has now caught up with us. The answers to the remaining questions which have not been answered will be available on the notice board downstairs in the concourse.

[Questions 50 – 69 were not reached and were answered in writing]

50. Mrs Lorna Ashworth (Chichester) asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: How many ordained people are currently employed to teach and/or research by a Church of England college or course recognised for ordination training?

The Bishop of Sheffield (The Rt Revd Steven Croft) replied: 145 ordained people are currently employed to teach or do research by a Church of England college or course recognised for ordination training.

51. Dr Edmund Marshall (St Albans) asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: What guidance has the Council issued for the method of appointment, the definition of duties, and the training of lay leaders and enablers of worship in the Church of England?

The Bishop of Sheffield replied: The Council has not issued guidance on these matters. Where worship leaders are not licensed to a canonical office such as Reader or Lay Worker, their appointment and duties are regarded as matters which the bishop and the diocese should determine in the light of local strategic needs. In general, the Council seeks to follow a policy of minimising bureaucratic requirements in relation to such ministries which are best dealt with through local arrangements responsive to local need. Recent Council research suggests that over 50% of dioceses have either episcopal or other local authorisation for worship leaders. Also the Council is aware of the CHP publication “Worship4today” which provides training material for those involved in enabling and planning worship in churches.

52. The Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford) asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: Are the Ministry Division planning another conference similar to the excellent conference they organised for the fiftieth anniversary of the first ordinations from the Southwark Ordination Course, and (if they are) with whom are they working on this, and what are the intended outcomes?
The Bishop of Sheffield replied: Yes, a conference is planned for 2015. The conference is intended to support learning across dioceses about their developing practices around the selection, formation, development and deployment of self-supporting ministers (broadly understood). With this goal in mind a number of people who have taken forward particular projects in these areas since the 50th anniversary conference have been approached to form a planning group. These include a representative from the National Association of Christians in Secular Ministry and a Dean of Associate Ministry.

Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee
53. Miss Emma Forward (Exeter) asked the Chair of the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee: Can the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee confirm that, following the introduction of Common Tenure in 2011, it is no longer possible to appoint clergy to licensed posts on a fixed or limited term basis unless one of the conditions specified in Regulation 29 of the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Regulations 2009 applies and indicate the extent to which the practice in the dioceses accords with that position?

The Bishop of Manchester (The Rt Revd David Walker) replied: Yes. Since Common Tenure came into force on 31 January 2011, it has only been possible to appoint clergy to a licensed office on a fixed or limited term basis if one of the conditions specified in Regulation 29 of the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Regulations 2009 applies. Previously a bishop had power, under the Canons, to terminate a licence on notice or summarily, but that power has been revoked. Common Tenure applies to all who exercise their ministry with a licence from the bishop (including a general or public preacher’s licence) unless they hold the licence in connection with a contract of employment. The Committee is not in a position to monitor practice in dioceses, but we would expect bishops and DBFs to take their legal responsibilities seriously and to comply with the law.

54. Mr William Seddon (St Albans) asked the Chair of the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee: Following the significant reduction in ill health retirement benefits available through the Church’s pension scheme to clergy who are relatively young and have a low number of years of service within the Scheme, what arrangements are the Church putting in place to assist such clergy, should the need for ill health retirement arise?

The Bishop of Manchester replied: Pastoral care of retired clergy is for the Bishop of the diocese in which they live. Clergy who retire because of ill health qualify for help with retirement housing. The minimum period of service to qualify is 5 years (as opposed to 10 years currently for clergy retiring at pension age). They receive a pension based on years earned, without reduction for early payment, plus a graduated enhancement calculated according to potential years of service. The benefits are not untypical of benefits offered by other defined benefit pension schemes. The arrangements were introduced after a review of ill health benefits by DRACSC.

The new arrangements were accepted by the General Synod, and by scheme members in the 2010 consultation on changes to the pension scheme. More
emphasis is now put on Occupational Health provision in service. Guidance was issued to dioceses in January this year.

**Mission and Public Affairs Council**

55. *The Revd Stephen Coles (London) asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:* What plans does the Mission and Public Affairs Council have to ensure that the lack of sufficient and adequate affordable housing in this country is high on the agenda of all political parties for the General Election next year, and what recommendations would they give to dioceses and parishes to ensure that this happens at a more local level as well?

*Mr Philip Fletcher (Ex-officio) replied:* MPA and the Parliamentary Unit are developing a strategic timeline to help plan a variety of interventions between now and May. This is being coordinated closely with the House of Bishops and must, of course, be flexible and responsive. Housing will be among the themes that we try to highlight through this process. MPA is a member of the steering group of Faith in Affordable Housing, a Housing Justice project which facilitates the release of church owned land and property to provide affordable housing. We can share more details on request. MPA links with others, notably Shelter, Housing Justice and the National Housing Federation to help us understand the complexities of housing policy and discern where the church can make a difference. Local Housing Associations and local branches of housing charities and campaigning groups are important partners for dioceses and parishes who want to raise housing issues.

56. *Dr Jackie Butcher (Sheffield) asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:* How will the Church of England voice the injustice of climate change and the need for effective policies, with the main political parties, as they draw up their manifestos for the 2015 election?

*Mr Philip Fletcher replied:* The Parliamentary Unit and MPA are meeting with politicians across the parties, developing initial dialogues and some channels for continuing the conversations. We are deliberately making these conversations as wide ranging as possible, and maintaining confidentiality so that both sides can speak candidly about questions of ethics and of practical politics. Climate change and its effects, and associated themes such as intergenerational justice, are among the topics discussed. As the election approaches, we will be looking carefully for opportunities to voice the church's concerns in more public ways. That will require a balance of planned interventions and rapid reaction to events. Our partnership with the Communications Office is vital here. In our experience, climate change and the problems that flow from it are widely understood among politicians. Finding politically viable solutions is much harder.

57. *The Revd Canon Susan Penfold (Blackburn) asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:* What work is the Mission and Public Affairs Council undertaking or planning in order to support dioceses needing to respond to the ethical and practical issues around fracking?

*Mr Philip Fletcher replied:* The first necessity in tackling a contentious issue like fracking is to distinguish the substantive arguments from the propaganda which inevitably accompanies strongly-held views on all sides. We follow the scientific and
political debate closely, working alongside the EIAG. We will publish material when we have confidence in it, starting with theological considerations.

58. **The Revd Canon Giles Goddard (Southwark) asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:** How is the Church of England using its influence to encourage Government to take a positive approach to the climate change talks in Lima in December 2014, which will prepare for the Paris talks in November 2015?

*Mr Philip Fletcher replied:* Members of the MPA team are involved in a number of initiatives, both Governmental (DECC and FCO) and non-governmental, leading up to the Lima and Paris climate events and the UN Director General’s climate event in New York. In addition, the Bishop of London will be taking part in the Archbishop of Paris’s initiatives linked to the Climate Summit there in 2015. The Bishop is arranging a briefing by the Secretary of State and climate scientists at DECC for him and other faith leaders in the Autumn which will be followed by him hosting an event with the Secretary of State and representatives of faith and science to discuss the involvement of the Church in the run-up to the 2015 Climate Summit.

**Business Committee**

59. **Mr Andrew Presland (Peterborough) asked the Chair of the Business Committee:** What are the estimated costs and savings of each of the main elements of changing the culture of General Synod, including providing facilitators for the group discussions at the July 2013 York Synod; upgrading the backdrop at York this year; and meeting less often in the future?

*The Revd Canon Sue Booys (Oxford) replied:* Some of the ideas suggested in Annexe 2 are at an early stage and for consultation and so have not been costed in detail. The figures I have available are as follows. The facilitators for the group discussions in July 2013 cost approximately £13K. The cost of the upgrade to the backdrop and the audio visual enhancements at this group of sessions is £13,000, which works out at an additional charge of £27 per Synod member. Printing and postage is approximately £20K for a London group of sessions and £30K for one at York. According to calculations made by the Finance Office, the estimated cost of a typical Synod day is £100,000, spread across the NCI’s, the dioceses and the Corporation of Church House (when it takes place in London). A reduction in the number of meeting days would naturally reduce these costs for the National Church and the dioceses.

60. **Canon Janet Perrett (Ely) asked the Chair of the Business Committee:** Since concerns were expressed in 2010 that the information supplied by candidates for the House of Laity had not covered the same matters consistently or clearly, leaving the Electoral College feeling poorly informed about candidates, and since elections for the 2015-2020 sessions of the General Synod will be held next year; has any consideration been given to issuing guidance for those wishing to stand for the House of Laity?

*The Revd Canon Sue Booys replied:* The Legal Office last issued guidance on this issue in 2010 and they will consider whether to amend this prior to its re-issue in advance of the 2015 elections. However, I would refer Synod members to a paper issued by the Legal Office in February 2005, namely GS Misc 764 B. The
conclusion of this paper is that trying to legislate or produce definitive guidance on candidates’ information would be extremely difficult and also could be expensive for the Church since it might result in a greater number of appeals.

61. Mr Clive Scowen (London) asked the Chair of the Business Committee: In the light of the hope expressed by the Standing Orders Committee in paragraph 26 of its 49th Report, what consideration has the Business Committee given to scheduling a debate at a future group of sessions on the question whether Revision Committees should be required to meet in public?

The Revd Canon Sue Booys replied: The Business Committee has not considered the matter because it has not been invited to include such an item of business on the Agenda for a Group of sessions. I note that Paragraph 28 of the Standing Orders’ Committee’s 47th Report states that the Committee was not of one mind on the issue and did not wish to propose any changes. Paragraph 33 of the same report leaves it open to any member of the Committee to test the mind of Synod on this point. I would therefore suggest that Mr Scowen seeks to put down a Private Member’s Motion if he wishes this matter to be debated in Synod at a future Group of sessions.

62. The Revd Canon Karen Hutchinson (Guildford) asked the Chair of the Business Committee: What consideration has the Business Committee given to the urgent need for Synod to reflect on the impact of the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 on the conduct and liturgy of Church of England weddings?

The Revd Canon Sue Booys replied: The Business Committee responds to requests from Church of England committees, Boards and Synod itself when considering items to be included in the Agenda for forthcoming Groups of Sessions. The Business Committee has not yet received a scheduling request from any committee or Synod member with regard to the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013, but if it were to receive such a request, it would consider it in the normal way as part of its planning of Agendas.

Liturical Commission

63. Ms Susan Cooper (London) asked the Chair of the Liturgical Commission: In the light of increasing faith diversity, where a non-Christian sometimes attends liturgy alongside their Christian partner, what plans does the Liturgical Commission have to review our liturgies for sensitivity to these situations (such as the intercessions in the Good Friday liturgy, which include in the same section prayers for those who are Christian, alongside prayers for those who persecute Christians)?

The Bishop of Sodor and Man (The Rt Revd Robert Paterson) replied: The straightforward answer to this question is that the Liturgical Commission undertakes liturgical review at the request of the House of Bishops and we have not been asked to undertake a piece of work along these lines.

More generally, the point needs to be made that liturgy cannot be drafted on the basis that it must not offend non-believers. Paul, writing to the Corinthians is quite clear about this: ‘we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling-block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles’. The question refers to a conspicuous example of this principle in the Intercessions of Good Friday. Close scrutiny reveals that the
intention of the prayer is not to shock but to pray with honesty about the way in which the sacrifice of Christ challenges cultural and religious conceptions about God’s relationship with the world he created.

64. Mr Keith Malcouronne (Guildford) asked the Chair of the Liturgical Commission: In the light of the important celebration last month of the 150th anniversary of the consecration of Samuel Ajayi Crowther as the first black Anglican bishop, what are the steps that would need to be taken to secure his inclusion as the first missiology pioneer bishop from Africa in the Calendar of the Church of England?

The Bishop of Sodor and Man replied: Because the Common Worship Calendar is an alternative to the Calendar in Book of Common Prayer, it can only be created and amended by Synodical Measure. The Commission agreed that it would want a significant period of time to elapse before revisiting any of the decisions in the original Common Worship calendar. In 2018, the Commission is due to consider those who died in the 1960s, and Bishop Samuel Crowther could be considered at that time. In addition, since it will by then be 20 years since the preparation of the original CW Calendar, this may be an appropriate time to look at suggestions for additions and excisions generally. General Synod could then be invited to consider a fuller list of amendments. It would be for the House of Bishops to decide to introduce the business into the Synod, and to invite the Synod to look at the larger question.

Church Commissioners
65. The Dean of Portsmouth (The Very Revd David Brindley) asked the Church Commissioners: What have been the episcopal legal costs borne by the Church Commissioners in relation to the recent discussions between the Diocese of Winchester and the Channel Islands about safeguarding issues and episcopal oversight?

Mr Andreas Whittam Smith (First Church Estates Commissioner) replied: The Church Commissioners agreed with the diocese of Winchester that we would pay 50% of the costs of the Steel investigation and the Gladwin visitation, both of which relate to safeguarding, though not to episcopal oversight. To date this has amounted to about £95,000 including all professional fees and expenses. Further costs are expected to be incurred before the Steel report is published and the Gladwin visitation is concluded. The Commissioners have not paid any costs associated with the arrangements for episcopal oversight in the Channel Islands.

66. The Revd Mark Steadman (Southwark) asked the Church Commissioners: In the light of the decision of the Archbishops’ Council regarding the See House in Wells, what discussions have the Commissioners had and decisions have they made, as to how they will now approach the question of other see houses?

Mr Andreas Whittam Smith replied: No decisions have been made about other see houses since the Archbishops’ Council’s determination on the Palace at Wells. However, the Board of Governors and the Bishoprics & Cathedrals Committee are giving thought to the implications for their role in see house provision.

67. Mrs Pamela Bishop (Southwell & Nottingham) asked the Church Commissioners: Whilst acknowledging the considerable and effective work of the
Church Commissioners, will the First Estates Commissioner explain the reasoning behind the decision, as reported in the *Church Times* on 30 May 2014, that the most highly paid staff member at the Church Commissioners be awarded a bonus of £91,000, bringing that salary to £334,000 a year?

*Mr Andreas Whittam Smith replied:* The Board and Assets Committee firmly believe that a well-resourced, high calibre investment team is crucial to successful long-term management of the Church’s assets. The reward structure overseen by the Remuneration Committee aims to pay no more or less than required to recruit and retain professional staff of the necessary quality. The bonus in question was paid under a scheme which is consistent with EIAG recommendations on executive remuneration and which incentivises and rewards responsible long-term absolute performance. It is worth noting that it was paid in a year when the Commissioners’ fund reached its highest ever value of over £6 billion.

68. *Dr Philip Giddings (Oxford) asked the Church Commissioners:* What conversations are the Commissioners holding with companies with whom, directly or indirectly, they have invested funds about the numbers of persons employed by those companies who are on (a) zero hours contracts or (b) employed at rates of pay below the living wage; and what progress are those conversations making towards eliminating these and other unjust employment practices?

*Mr Andreas Whittam Smith replied:* Engagement with investee companies is conducted for us by the Ethical Investment Advisory Group. To date, it has not considered zero hours contracts and it decided against engagement on the Living Wage until the National Investing Bodies had considered its implications for them. They have now done so and the EIAG plans to discuss engagement on both issues at its meeting later this month.

69. *The Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford) asked the Church Commissioners:* In their policy of ‘positive engagement’, how far have the Church Commissioners got in their discussions with all the fossil fuel companies in whom they invest, on the issue that the current reserves held by all fossil fuel companies contain five times more carbon than the earth’s atmosphere can safely absorb without global temperatures rising more than two degrees Celsius, which is the climate change target agreed by nearly all governments, and how far have they reached in persuading these companies to stop exploring for more reserves, to diversify into other forms of energy and to develop carbon capture and storage (CCS)?

*Mr Andreas Whittam Smith replied:* We are advised by the Ethical Investment Advisory Group which is currently reviewing its advice to the National Investing Bodies on climate change and investment. We expect the new advice to cover how to approach engagement with fossil fuel companies. The EIAG has undertaken to publish a new policy on climate change as soon as feasible in 2015, once it has been agreed by the National Investing Bodies. The Group is holding a lunchtime fringe meeting on 12 July at which it will brief Synod members on the review’s progress.

*The Archbishop of York dismissed the Synod with the blessing at 10 pm.*
Full Synod: Second Day  
Saturday 12 July 2014

THE CHAIR The Archdeacon of Buckingham (The Ven. Karen Gorham) (Oxford) took the Chair at 9.30 am

The Chair: Good morning, Synod. We remain standing for our opening worship led by the Archdeacon of Lincoln.

The Ven. Timothy Barker (Archdeacon of Lincoln) led the Synod in an act of worship.

The Chair: Before our next item of business, I have been asked to draw your attention to two things. Firstly, the Third Notice Paper and instruction number 27; that no photography is permitted in the public gallery or anywhere else in the main hall outside the press gallery. Secondly, to draw your attention to the green, amber and red lights on the desks and on the stalls there; they are smaller than usual but they are still there, so please do pay attention to them!

We come now to Item 10 on the agenda and I call upon his Grace, the Archbishop of York, to give his Presidential Address.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

The Archbishop of York (The Most Revd & Rt Hon. Dr John Sentamu):

“See, I set before you this day life and prosperity, death and adversity ... Therefore choose life” (Deuteronomy 30:15, 19b).

Moses said these words to the freed slaves, as they were on the verge of entering the Land of Promise; and becoming a Nation, Israel, and not just a collection of 12 tribes. They did not know how the future would unfold. But their ‘choosing’ now would shape that future, and for generations to come.

“Choosing life” meant “obeying the Lord God, heeding his commands, and holding fast to him” Deuteronomy 20a). “Choosing death” was the opposite: disobeying God’s commands and following other gods.

In Deuteronomy 29, verses 16-26, there is a stark, two-part warning showing how the attempt of even a single individual to withdraw from the covenant (vv 16-18) jeopardises the entire nation. Turning away, transferring loyalty from God to other gods (Deuteronomy 13:6-11; 17:2-7) is ‘poison weed and wormwood’ (Hosea 10:4).

The necessity of “choosing” was later echoed by Joshua, the successor to Moses.

“Choose you this day which gods you are going to serve’ ... But I and my household, we will serve the Lord (Joshua 24:15)

Centuries later, Jeremiah re-echoes Moses’ words:

“Thus said the Lord: I set before you the way of life and the way of death...
Moses, Joshua, Jeremiah said these words to the children of Israel. And I am persuaded that God is saying them to us as members of the Body of Christ, as members of this Synod, and to all citizens of this “green and pleasant” land.

Yes, to everyone who has a conscience, a sense of right and wrong and the sense to see that they ought to do right and shun wrong.

Choosing life rather than death is built on in all God’s revelation, in all Jesus Christ’s atoning work, in all the Holy Spirit’s renewing work. This is a choice we must each make not just once, but day by day continually. And make it together as members of the Body of Christ.

This daily commitment to be holy, to love Christ and be like him, is a spring of life which does not fail; when other springs run dry: the great spring of all right-living and right-doing. It is a summons to grow into the full stature of Christ: pure, kind, working for the Lord and being unselfish. And we do this, not for our own interests and self-preservation, but for the sake of the Kingdom of God and the peace of God’s world. Only by the grace of God can we choose life.

But there is one choice which we must all make. If we ‘choose life’ it will secure all other choices we have to make. The reason why we so often choose badly is because we have failed in that one great choosing of all - life. That is: “Obeying the Lord our God, heeding his commands, and holding fast to him” Deuteronomy 30:20a). In that choosing, we will always choose other choices rightly.

“Therefore choose life”. Why “therefore”? Because the choosing is ours; and there is no middle space. It is life or death. And life is everything. All that is worth possessing in this world is life. Therefore ‘choose life’.

And, you may ask, what is life? The breath of God - wonderfully restored through Jesus Christ. “Because he lives, we live also”, and for ever. This is the source of life. Life’s real substance is to know God, to enjoy God, and to serve God. For life’s object is the glory of God and we must not rob God of his glory.

Our Lord said, “I am the Life”. When we choose the Christ who died for us, rose again and lives for us; the One who has so long chosen us, we will live. He will be in us a necessity of life; we will live with God and with God for ever.

“Choose life” is still a command at all times which leads to the growth of love and knowledge of God. A God who is for ever present and a living guide to each successive generation, as he has always been.

There are many choices we may find ourselves needing to make, some of them trivial and some of them unnecessary; but the necessity of making this one choice is the granite on which all morality, religious belief, and the Rule of Law, rest.

If choosing ‘life’ meant only biological life, there would not be the necessity of choosing. Choosing life rather than death is rather between life in a covenant
relationship with God - and for us, sealed in the blood of Christ - and life not in a covenant relationship with God.

From this viewpoint, biological existence, and even prosperity, if not in the covenant relationship with God, constitutes death.

“Love the Lord your God, walk in his ways and keep his commandments ... Choose life - if you and your offspring would live - by loving the Lord your Good, heeding his commands, and holding fast to Him. For thereby you shall have life” Deuteronomy 30:16b, 19b, 20a).

“Choosing to love the Lord and to walk in his ways”. In the technical language ever Near Eastern treaties, ‘love’ means to act loyally and to honour the commitments of the treaty.

Therefore, Torah, the Law, requires no esoteric speculation but moral and religious action. And the didactic use of life and death suggests the influence of wisdom teaching on Joshua and Jeremiah.

Furthermore, Biblical wisdom is typically equated with practical, rather than religious knowledge, though later in Jewish translation, wisdom is equated with Torah - the Law.

“Choose life... by loving the Lord your God, heeding his commands, and holding fast to him. For thereby you shall have life” Deuteronomy 30:19b-20a)

‘The commands’ here are Torah - the Law - and more specifically, the Ten Commandments.

In calling us all to ‘choose life and not death, to heed God’s commands, and to hold fast to him’, am I simply inviting us to turn our back on the positive religion of love and grace which we have come to know in Jesus Christ? Am I suggesting that we should return instead to ‘that old-time religion, it’s good enough for me’? After all, it was “good for the Hebrew children; it was good for dad and mother; it will do when I’m dyin’; it’s good enough for me.”

Are we to return to the Ten Commandments as an invincible barrier against the tidal waves of aggressive and intolerant “isms”, whose momentum seems to threaten to sweep us aside. No! I am not doing that. This is to misunderstand the nature of The Ten Commandments and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The truth is that Jesus Christ and His Gospel are the anvil that has flattened many, many hammers!

Mine is an invitation to “choose life and not death”. A correct reading of the Ten Commandments reveal them to be like staves in the soil, mapping out for us “the boundaries where God’s love can reach and bless us” (Jude 21).

They are the pillars that keep holding up God’s tent of love. They represent simple boundaries that protect our freedom to act and grow as disciples of the living and loving Lord. They are road markers that lead us to Jesus Christ, who is the Way to life in all its fullness.
The Ten Commandments determine the limits of the space of freedom defined by our relationship with God. To live lives according to the Covenant sealed in Jesus Christ’s blood, we must make use of the freedom we have received to build a society of solidarity and justice, with God as its source, and do this through all the concrete choices we have to make.

God lives in the space we make for him. Every deed of kindness we do, every prayer we say, every act of learning we undertake is a way of making space for this loving God.

Origen, a third-century Greek Christian, in his *Homilies* on [the Book of] *Numbers*, puts it like this:

“4.1 The power the gospel is found in the law, and the Gospels are understood as being supported by the foundation of the law; not do I even give the name ‘Old Testament’ to the law, if I understand it spiritually.

“4.2 The law becomes an ‘Old Testament’ only for those who want to understand it in a fleshly way; and for them it has necessarily become old and aged, because it cannot maintain its strength. But for us, who understand and explain it spiritually and according to the gospel-meaning, it is always new. Indeed, both are “New Testaments” for us, not by the age of time, but by the newness of understanding. Or does not the apostle John perceive this very thing in his epistle when he says: “Little children, I give you a new commandment, that you love one another”? (1 John 2:8; 3:23). For he surely knew that the commandment of love was long ago given in the law (Leviticus 19:18). But because “love never fails” (1 Corinthians 13:8) and the commandment of love never grows old, he pronounces what never grows old to be ever new; for the commandment of love continually renews in the Spirit those who observe it and keep it. So says Origen

So, let us approach the Ten Commandments not as moralistic or legalistic codes of behaviour, in their seemingly negative demands. But let us see them in the entire Biblical witness.

Which reminds me of very distraught 30-year-old man whose life was in a mess. He turned up to his local church one day, looking for answers and help. As he sat down and looked at the wall behind the Communion Table, he saw on the left and on the right of the wall, two large panels: one displaying the Ten Commandments in huge bold lettering, and the other displaying the Apostles’ Creed and the Lord’s Prayer. His eyes were fixed on the Ten Commandments and he hardly heard the words of the service. Every line of the Ten Commandments he looked at seemed like a huge accusation about his life; a set of rules he had broken again and again and again, which he could never keep. He stumbled out of church at the end of the service, ignoring the greetings of the congregation and feeling as though he could never go back.

However, the quality of the relationships of the congregation and the warm welcome he received when he entered the church, persuaded him to attend church the following Sunday. He sat in the same place, this time his head bowed down and not looking at the Ten Commandments. The hymn, “Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee” was sung. He read the next two stanzas like a prayer, quietly,
while everyone else was singing.

“There are the labours of my hands
Can fulfil the law’s demands;
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone;
Thou must save, and thou alone.

Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress;
Helpless, look to thee for grace;
Foul, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me, Saviour, or I die.”

Richard raised his head and looked steadfastly at the Ten Commandments on the panel. To his amazement, he saw them not as a list of rules for which he was being condemned for breaking, but as ten promises from God:

I am the Lord your God.
There will be no other gods.
Do not make any graven image.
You will not take God’s name in vain.
Remember the Sabbath day.
Honour your father and mother.
You will not kill.
You will not commit adultery.
You will not steal.
You will not give false witness.
You will not covet.

I know so because I was preaching and taking a Confirmation Service at St Mary Magdalene Church, Islington, when I was Bishop for Stepney, and I led Richard to Christ at the end of that service. And confirmed him at a time later.

Unbeknown to Richard, in the Hebrew language, a negative command is expressed not by the imperative mood, but by a tense equivalent to the future indicative - not, “Do not steal,” but rather, “You will not steal”. This is so because the Ten Commandments are not so much a series of commands as promises.

By meditating on Torah, the Law, and taking it to heart, “Loving the Lord our God, heeding his commands, and holding fast to him” (Deuteronomy 30:20a) believers increasingly become people who are truly in the image of their Creator, who live in the way God intends: “You will not steal.”

Here we are at the opposite extreme from a narrow legalistic outlook, so often attributed wrongly to the Jewish people. God’s word is a promise of life pointing towards a world of freedom and blessedness where justice and peace reign.
And for those of us who place our trust in Christ this promise is not a mere object of future expectation. Through the coming of Jesus, his death and resurrection and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit with unstinting generosity, without measure, it has become a permanent possibility in our time: “For in Jesus Christ every one of God’s promises is a ‘Yes’ - Is a ‘Yes’!

We “choose life by loving the Lord our God, heeding his commands, and holding fast to him,” because our Crucified and Risen Lord, Jesus of Nazareth, summed up the essential of his teaching, in Hebrew his Torah, in the Sermon on the Mount, in Matthew Chapters 5-7. This is Jesus' Manifesto, his programme of change, his Mission Statement. He does not water down the divine commands or minimise their importance or relevance. He himself practised and upheld the Law of Moses. Jesus of Nazareth affirms the Ten Commandments and raises them beyond what seem to be the bounds of possibility.

Listen to him:

“Don’t suppose that I came to do away with the Law and the Prophets. I did not come to do away with them, but to give them their full meaning. Heaven and earth may disappear. But I promise you that not even a full-stop or a comma will ever disappear from the Law. Everything written in it must happen.

You know that ancestors were told, “Do not murder” and “A murderer must be brought to trial.” But I promise you that if you are angry with someone, you will have to stand trial. If you call someone a fool, you will be taken to court. And if you say that someone is worthless, you will be in danger of the fires of hell.

You know the commandment which says, “Be faithful in marriage: You shall not commit adultery.” But I tell you that if you look at another woman with lust and want her you are already unfaithful in your thoughts, and have committed adultery with her in your head” (Matthew 5:21-22, 27-28).

The God who calls us to “choose life and not death” sets the bar as high as the Kingdom of Heaven.

To be invited by God, in Christ, to enter into a loving relationship with him, is a demanding and challenging invitation. He is inviting those who respond, to be ambassadors for God, give their time, attention, and selfless respect and demonstrating genuine, ethically demanding, spiritually challenging virtues. Infecting the world with God’s goodness.

God’s invitation to us is to be living role models of justice, this compassion and love. Because defining the ideal society does not bring it about. It is not enough to tell people, “If you want to be free and happy you must live in this way”, for this to happen. It is clearly not enough to tell people how to follow God’s way for it to become a reality that is put into practice. What makes this impossible is not the flaws in the law itself, but rather our “hearts which are more deceitful than anything, and incorrigible” (Jeremiah 17:9; cf. Romans 7:14-15, 19, 22-23).

The human heart needs godly wisdom to hold on to both law and freedom. To seek
freedom by undermining the Law is death. To abolish freedom in the name of the Law is death.

God, the creator of the human heart, is the only one able to plumb the depth, and consequently the only one able to transform it. It needs nothing short of a total re-creation of the human heart by God’s Spirit taking residence there instead of sin (Jeremiah 31:31-24; Ezekiel 36:25-28).

Yes, it is receiving a new, authentically human heart. The Holy Spirit poured out at Pentecost, and received as gift by followers of Jesus, is the ‘inner law’ as they are grafted, incorporated into Christ, the One True Vine. The life they now live is not characterised by the attempt to observe the external law, but the law written on their hearts by the Holy Spirit who creates the habits of the heart, expressed as the “fruit of the Holy Spirit, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self control. There is no law against such things. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit” (Galatians 5:22-25), says the apostle Paul.

The Ten Commandments do not cease to be valid for the followers of Jesus. It is simply that the centre of gravity has shifted from an outward law or command to an inner law heard and kept in the heart by the indwelling Holy Spirit.

The most important thing followers of Jesus can do is to trust in what the Holy Spirit accomplishes in us. And asking the only vital question, “How can we nourish the new heart and flesh and a new spirit in God’s spirit” (Ezekiel 36:25-27) which has been poured and planted in us?

I suggest by reading and meditating on Holy Scripture, worshipping and witnessing, supporting each other, praying, receiving Holy Communion, living lives of self-giving.

Putting learning and study at the top of our agenda and demonstrating that trusting in the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, is neither ignorant nor blind. Putting our faith in God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit does not mean “believing five impossible things before breakfast”. No!

Jesus Christ and his Gospel respects human intelligence more. An intelligence which is not passive, but active, imaginative, and creative; reaching beyond the merely pragmatic and utilitarian, an intelligence which takes nothing for granted, is not afraid to ask questions and to grasp the radical new thinking of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and its call on our lives.

Because we are invited to live in obedience to the God who summons day by day, act by act, the high virtues set by God must be translated into simple deeds. Praying that the Holy Spirit visits us daily, etching our lives with the soft radiance of eternity.

My brothers and sisters in Christ, as members of the General Synod, we have important decisions to make during this group of sessions - especially the Final Approval for the Consecration of Woman to the Episcopate.
The “necessity of choosing life and not death” is loud and clear. The starting point is for all of us to embrace all the five guiding principles. There is a tendency to receive the three and then forget four and five. Those who go for four and five then forget one, two and three. It is to embrace the entire five guiding principles as a package and then to exercise your faith as you come to a final decision and Final Approval.

For me, faith is not certainty; it is the courage to live with uncertainty. Faith does not mean seeing the world as you would like it to be. Faith means seeing the world exactly as it is, yet never giving up hope that we can make it better by the way we live - by acts of gracious magnanimity, kindness, forgiveness and generosity of spirit. Similarly, this applies to all of us in the way we see ourselves and each other in this Synod.

Our Lord says this to us, “As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love” (John 15:9-10)

Each one of us has a special place in the heart of God and he never writes off any one of us.

Can we see each other with the eyes of Jesus Christ, with the eyes of the Father, with the eyes of the Holy Spirit? Can we love each other with that same love with which the Father loves his Son Jesus Christ, and with which the son loves us?

Together we must learn what God wants of us and, by the Holy Spirit, practise doing God’s will. Faith allows us to take risks and face the future without fear. As Franklin D Roosevelt said, “The only thing we have to fear is fear itself.” So let us say to the Lord and to each other, as Jacob did in Genesis 32 when he wrestled with God and man, and prevailed, “I will not let you go until you bless me”.

Let us wrestle with whatever challenge we face in this Group of sessions, refusing to let it go until it blesses us, until we emerge stronger, better and wiser than we were before. I hope on Monday we will be able to say, “I am not going to let go of anyone until they bless me” and at the end of the decision emerging with ourselves stronger, better, wiser than we were before. To be a disciple of Jesus Christ is not to accept defeat. That is the meaning of faith. May our faith be venturesome - delighting in God.

“See, I set before you this day life and prosperity, death and adversity ... Therefore choose life” (Deuteronomy 30:15, 19b).

“Love the Lord your God, walk in his ways, and keep his commandments ... Choose life - if you and your offspring would live - by loving the Lord your God, heeding his commandments, and holding fast to him. For thereby you shall have life” (Deuteronomy 30:16b, 19b, 20a0).

My dear brothers and sisters, let us do it, let us do it now until the Ages of Ages. Thank you.
The Bishop of Birmingham (The Rt Revd David Urquhart) took the Chair at 10.10am

The Chair: Good morning. After that marvellous address we now move to legislative business, which will be this morning and then of course this afternoon the Common Good and other matters looking outwards. Following on from the Scriptures you might like also to remember the instructions of Moses to Joshua, “Be strong and courageous” as we work through this morning.

FORTY-NINTH REPORT OF THE STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE (GS 1954)

For this item you will need the report GS 1954 and the proposed amendments to the Standing Orders which are set out in the First Notice Paper which you had earlier. There has been no request for any debate on the amendments. However, Mr Sutcliffe has given notice of amendments to the proposed amendments at Items 36 and 37 on the First Notice Paper, and you will see those on Order Paper II, which is the orange paper that has been issued this morning.

I invite Mr Geoffrey Tattersall, the Chair of the Standing Orders Committee, to move in the first instance Item 36 and then we will take Mr Sutcliffe’s amendments to that item. After the vote on Item 36, amended or not, we will proceed to Item 37. Mr Tattersall, will you please move Item 36? You have no more than ten minutes.

Mr Geoffrey Tattersall (Manchester): Thank you very much. Chair, Item 36 and indeed Item 37 deal with the discrete point of the Synod’s appointment of the Secretary General and the Clerk of the Synod. They relate to the introduction in both 36 and 37 of identical and new mechanisms whereby a person can be appointed.

You will see that the matter was dealt with by the Standing Orders Committee in its report very briefly in paragraph 23 and that is because it referred to another paper, GS Misc. 1072, which had been prepared by the Secretary General.

You can see from paragraph 5 of that miscellaneous paper the problems which have arisen in the past, and that is that when an appointment is made and a candidate is usually unwilling to give notice until their appointment to the Church of England role has been confirmed, and that can lead to a gap of some months between their departure of one person and the arrival of their successor. This was considered by the Archbishops’ Council which took the view that the current arrangements were unsatisfactory and, given the notice of his proposed amendments, I think Mr Sutcliffe accepts that this is an unsatisfactory state of affairs.

However, there is a small matter of detail and that is the trigger to bring the matter before this Synod. You will see from the miscellaneous paper that the Archbishops’ Council considered various possibilities to the problem, one of which was to remove altogether any concept of Synodical approval on the basis that the person had been appointed by an open competition, et cetera, et cetera. However, nobody is suggesting that that is the way forward. What is suggested in 36, and indeed in 37, is that the appointment of, in 36, the Secretary General is deemed to have been approved unless 40 members give notice within 14 days of notification of the
appointment to the Synod that they wish the appointment to be debated. If they do so the appointment is only approved upon Synod passing a resolution to that effect.

The only issue really, I think, before the Synod is the number. The Archbishops’ Council believed that 40 was an appropriate number, as did the Business Committee, as did the Standing Orders Committee. Forty members is, of course, less than 10% of the membership of the Synod and in these days of electronic communications it really ought not to be very difficult if you really want to debate a serious appointment like this to get to 40 and to find 40 people who might support it.

Chair, the response from the Standing Orders Committee to these amendments will be that five is far, far too low, that ten is really far, far too low, 20 we say is probably too low because really it ought to be quite a high hurdle and it ought to be 40.

Having said that, I have really explained the views of the Standing Orders Committee and I beg to move Item 36.

The Chair: Thank you very much indeed. Can I invite Mr Sutcliffe to speak to his first amendment and then I will ask Mr Tattersall to make a short response to that.

Mr Thomas Sutcliffe (Southwark): Thank you, Chair. May I speak to both this and the subsequent amendment. I do not want to make two speeches, we are talking about numbers and the principle remains the same. If you would allow me to address this issue in one speech I would be very happy to do that.

The Chair: That is most acceptable! It makes sense.

Mr Thomas Sutcliffe (Southwark): My reason for challenging the proposed method of testing the General Synod’s approval of the appointment of its two senior civil servants is that paragraph 7 of GS Misc 1072 tells us that the Archbishops’ Council believes we would wish to retain some role in the process. I consider George Carey’s reforms of General Synod to have led to an increase in managerialism and the blatant manipulation of, for instance, previously reliable assumptions we could make about how Private Members’ Motions, such as my cousin John Ward’s, would be dealt with.

The wish of members to support a motion is no longer speedily answered. The Synod no longer runs its own affairs. The laity of the Church have less power these days than when there was no separate lay body and Parliament, entirely lay in the House of Commons, in effect was responsible for any changes in Church affairs. In fact, I would argue that the Carey era has taken us way back to pre-Civil War days in terms of the power of bishops and archbishops in all of whom - do not laugh so much yet - immense extra responsibilities are now routinely laid regardless of whether they have the ability or the time to deal with them. We count on our bishops to do far too much. However, I am glad the Archbishops’ Council is hesitating to strip us of any association with the choice of these officers and I do see that some speed is needed in Synod’s confirming the choice as and when.

But if we are to be subject to a deeming factor, I would argue that 40 is almost the same as not asking us at all. The issue is whether the consultation has any reality if
so large a body is required to bring proper debate at a meeting into play. Mistakes and tyranny, if that were the problem, are not so often uncovered by large groups already organised in a cabal or party. Indeed, it seems that the General Synod is being thought about increasingly by the Council in the sort of way the National Trust considers its members or limited companies consider shareholders. The Synod is at its best, and its processes work best, when it listens to and can be influenced by a small number, the witness even of just one individual. Abraham bargaining with God may come to mind. One just man may be sufficient.

In Hans Fallada’s extraordinary book Jeder stirbt für sich allein, translated as Alone in Berlin, one carpentry foreman started a personal campaign against the Führer in the form of handwritten cards with just a sentence or two on them. I will not say what happened to him but it was not nice.

Forty is the right number for days and nights in the wilderness. It is far too large a number for a very rare, I am sure, challenge to the management’s choice of officers, itself something which members may not know much about or be well qualified to hold an opinion about, but it may matter immensely at some point, currently unforeseeable, that a few of us are so equipped. For that reason, in my view, five would be a not unreasonable burden to gain support from such an informed individual. I trust the Synod will agree with me and if not five then ten or 20.

My aim in bringing this issue here is for Synod to decide about what I know will be a very exceptional occurrence. If we leave it at 40 we might really just as well ask not to be held responsible at all for endorsing what our Lord Bishops and masters and our own representatives, all of whom of course tend to go native and none of whom individually has much power on the Council, have decided is for our good.

I would ask you to give serious thought to this matter. It seems to me it is like the security stuff we suffer at airports. The assumption is that there are people out there desperate to blow up planes all the time. I think the Synod does not usually interfere with sensible process but I think that on those occasions when it is needed it should not be too great a burden. Thank you.

The Chair: I will ask Mr Tattersall to comment and then open up for debate.

Mr Geoffrey Tattersall (Manchester): Can I agree with Mr Sutcliffe about two things. First of all, we have got to be consistent on both 36 and 37, it would be ridiculous to have different conclusions.

Secondly, I agree with Mr Sutcliffe that what we are talking about is a very rare occurrence and I would have submitted that if this is to be a very rare occurrence then really there ought to be quite a high hurdle. There is no reason on earth why there should not be such a hurdle.

This is a balance, is it not, between one can understand the desire for there not to be Synodical approval to allow the appointments process to take place in an orderly way but we are trying to write in here some mechanism that protects the rights of members in the very rare occurrence that Synod really wants to debate this. I say, dealing with the first proposed amendment, that five is too low and, as I have said
before, ten is really far too low and really the right figure we say we believe ought to be 40.

The Chair: Thank you very much. We are open for debate. Just to remind you, the speech limit is five minutes and we are debating the amendment at number 39, which is “insert 5” and leave out “40”. Mr Spence.

Mr John Spence (Ex officio): May I just observe, Chair, one of the great joys of being blind is I do not notice when lights go from green to amber to red! We wish to appoint the best people. If we are going to get people to do jobs to the best effect we want the best people. These people are not hanging like ripe apples on trees waiting to be plucked; we are in a competition to get them. We are either in competition with other people or we are trying to entice them away from the employers that they have. We have to do so while offering a package of competitive but not premium salaries, you would not want us to be doing that.

So we go about it in a thorough way. We appoint recruitment agencies, we research the market thoroughly, we undertake enormous processes. In a recent case there were eight interventions with candidates before the selection piece and, by the way, during that process three-quarters of the short-list withdrew because of other offers or pressures. All of that, ladies and gentlemen, argues against any sort of Synodical process.

Far from tolerating Synod, those of us who are lay people, and by the way I do not feel that without influence, Tom, on the Archbishops’ Council recognise and welcome the supremacy of Synod and the absolute essential nature of having some process there. It needs to be one which cannot be used frivolously but which can be used sparingly as Tom has said.

So why 40? Firstly it is less than 10% of Synod. Five or ten can just be a group of people who may have a reason to be upset with Archbishops’ Council for X or Y or Z reason, but at 40 you have a substantive number.

I am afraid, Tom, you talked about procedures before the Civil War, and sometimes I wonder if you were there then because the fact is that we do today now have electronic media and ways of bringing people together in a very short form and I have absolute faith that any one individual in this room who had a very good reason why a candidate should not be chosen could, by the use of social media, very quickly attract the support of 40 others. Let me give you a real example. The Government at the start of this Parliament committed to have a parliamentary debate every time a petition reached more than 100,000 signatures. It has had to be abandoned because it is so easy to get that number.

Synod, you are a very capable crowd of people. I may be a new boy here, but I recognise talent when I hear it! Oh, I can be sycophantic! I have every confidence that should you ever see a case where we have made a mistake, you will be able to do so by very quickly corralling not just 40 people but a far greater number. Forty fits with other Synodical processes; it is a splendid number and, Tom, one day together we will go into the wilderness and have those 40 days and nights! I urge you to defend the 40 number and reject the amendments.
The Chair: I see no one else standing. The vote is on Item 39 in your Order Paper, the proposal to leave out “40” in each place where it appears and insert “5”.

The amendment was lost on a show of hands.

We move on then to Item 40. Mr Sutcliffe, do you wish to speak to the second one?

Mr Thomas Sutcliffe (Southwark): I did say I would do them together.

The Chair: Thank you very much. Is there any debate?

We are now voting on Item 40, leave out “40”, the same number, and insert “10”.

The amendment was lost on a show of hands.

We move on to Item 41. Do you wish to speak to it, Mr Sutcliffe?

Mr Thomas Sutcliffe (Southwark): Thank you, no.

The Chair: Will you move it, Geoffrey?

Mr Geoffrey Tattersall (Manchester): I move the motion.

The Chair: So the vote is leave out “40” in each place and insert “20”.

The amendment was lost on a show of hands.

Now we are moving on to Item 42 and this is the next appointment post, which is the Clerk to the Synod one as opposed to the Secretary General. Mr Sutcliffe, do you want to speak to that?

Mr Thomas Sutcliffe (Southwark): I think I would like to just withdraw this further amendment because it is quite clear that the mind of the Synod has been made amply evident and we should not waste too much time on this further. I raised the matters I wanted to raise and I am perfectly content that we have dealt with it properly, so I think we could just go ahead.

The Chair: Thank you very much indeed. Mr Tattersall, would you move the motion, it is in your name and unamended.

Mr Geoffrey Tattersall (Manchester): I so move.

The Chair: Is there any debate on the substantial motion? I see no one standing. We are voting now on Item 36.

The motion

‘That this amendment be made with effect from 16th July 2014:’
**Standing Order 123 (Secretary General)**

“(a) The person appointed by the Archbishops’ Council in accordance with paragraph 16 of schedule 1 to the National Institutions Measure 1998 as Secretary General of the Council shall, subject to the approval of the Synod, be the Secretary General of the Synod. Such approval will be deemed to have been given unless, within 14 days of notification being sent to the members of the Synod, 40 or more members give notice in accordance with SO 12 that they wish the appointment to be debated. If 40 or more members give such notice the appointment will only be approved upon the Synod passing a resolution to that effect.”

was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: Then number 37, which is on your Order Paper again, which refers to the Clerk of the Synod.

The motion

‘That this amendment be made with effect from 16th July 2014:

**Standing Order 123A (Clerk)**

In Standing Order 123A for paragraph (a) substitute –

“(a) The Presidents, on the advice of the Business Committee, shall appoint a person to be the Clerk to the Synod, such appointment to be subject to the approval of the Synod. Such approval will be deemed to have been given unless, within 14 days of notification being sent to the members of the Synod, 40 or more members give notice in accordance with SO 12 that they wish the appointment to be debated. If 40 or more members give such notice the appointment will only be approved upon the Synod passing a resolution to that effect.”

was carried on a show of hands.

Thank you very much indeed. That concludes that item on the agenda.

**THE CHAIR** The Archbishop of Canterbury (The Most Revd & Rt Hon Justin Welby) took the Chair at 10.25 am.

**AMENDING CANON NO. 31 (GS 1877D)**

The Chair: We come now to the legislative business. We begin with a formal item, the Enactment of Amending Canon No.31 which received final approval from the Synod at the November 2013 Group of sessions. I have to report to the Synod that the Royal Assent and Licence to make, promulge and execute the Amending Canon has been given. Under Standing Order 66: “Once the instrument of enactment has been read to the Synod, the motion appearing in the Order Paper must be put to the
Synod and voted on without debate.” I therefore call upon the Registrar to read the instrument of enactment.

The Registrar: “Constitutions and Canons Ecclesiastical maturely treated upon by the archbishops, bishops, clergy and laity of the General Synod of the Church of England. In their Synod begun at Westminster in the year of our Lord 2010 and in the 59th year of the reign of our sovereign lady Queen Elizabeth II, by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and of her other realms and territories Queen, Head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith being a Canon entitled Amending Canon No.31, which received Her Majesty’s Royal Assent and Licence on the third day of July 2014. We, being the Presidents, the Prolocutor of the Convocation of Canterbury, the Prolocutor of the Convocation of York and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the House of Laity of the said Synod, do hereby declare and testify our consent to the said Canon entitled Amending Canon No.31. And in testimony of such our consent, we have hereunto subscribed our names as hereafter following. Dated this twelfth day of July in the year of our Lord 2014 and in the 63rd year in the reign of our sovereign lady Queen Elizabeth II.”

The Chair: Thank you. I move Item 508. There is no debate on this motion.

The motion

‘That the Canon entitled “Amending Canon No. 31” be promulged and executed.’

was carried on a show of hands.

I now sign the Instrument of Enactment after which it will be signed by the Archbishop of York, the Prolocutor of the Convocation of Canterbury, the Prolocutor of the Convocation of York and the Chair and the Vice-Chair of the House of Laity and sent for proclamation in the diocesan synods.

That concludes that item of business.

THE CHAIR Mr Aiden Hargreaves-Smith took the Chair at 10.30 am

DRAFT CHURCH OF ENGLAND (PENSIONS) (AMENDMENT) MEASURE (GS 1936A): DRAFT MEASURE FOR REVISION

The Chair: We come now to Item 525, the draft Church of England (Pensions) (Amendment) Measure. For this members will need the draft measure GS 1936A and the Explanatory Memorandum GS 1936X.

At the February 2014 group of sessions the Measure was referred for revision in full Synod so that there has been no Revision Committee stage. Members will see that the motions by the Steering Committee are set out on the Order Paper. No notice of amendments having been given and no member having indicated a desire to speak against either of the clauses of the draft Measure, I have given my permission under Standing Order 55(c) for them to be moved en bloc. I now call upon Mrs April
Alexander, the Chair of the Steering Committee, to move Item 525, “That Clauses 1 and 2 stand part of the Measure”.

_Mrs April Alexander (Southwark):_ I do so move.

_The Chair:_ Thank you for your admirable brevity, Mrs Alexander. Item 525 is now open for debate. I see no one standing so we move to vote on Item 525.

_The motion_

‘That clauses 1 and 2 stand part of the Measure.’

_was carried on a show of hands._

_The Chair:_ We move to Item 526, “That the Long Title stand part of the Measure”. Mrs Alexander to move Item 526.

_Mrs April Alexander (Southwark) (Chair, Steering Committee):_ I do so move.

_The Chair:_ Thank you. Item 526 is now open for debate. I see no one standing so I put Item 526 to the vote.

_The motion_

‘That the Long Title stand part of the Measure.’

_was carried on a show of hands._

That completes the revision stage for the draft Measure.

**LEGISLATIVE BUSINESS**

**DRAFT CHURCH OF ENGLAND (PENSIONS) (AMENDMENT) MEASURE (GS 1936A): DRAFT MEASURE FOR FINAL APPROVAL**

As the Steering Committee has given notice on the Seventh Notice Paper that it considers a final drafting stage to be unnecessary, Item 509 will not be moved, and we accordingly come now to the final approval stage for this draft Measure. I therefore call Mrs Alexander to move Item 510: “That the Measure entitled ‘Church of England (Pensions) (Amendment) Measure’ be finally approved.” She may speak for not more than ten minutes.

_Mrs April Alexander (Southwark):_ Members of Synod, this Measure is unchanged from the text that came before you for first consideration in February and therefore I do not propose to repeat everything that I said then.

This is a short and technical Measure for a single purpose: namely, to extend the power of the Church Commissioners to spend capital in order to honour their pre-1997 pensions obligations without depriving the discretionary beneficiaries, that is the dioceses, of funds.
Without the amendment made by this Measure the existing power to spend capital would expire in 2018. The Measure would extend the period by a further seven years to December 2025. The Commissioners currently spend over £120 million a year on pensions and that figure is unlikely to fall for at least the next 15 years, perhaps longer given that clergy and their spouses tend to be long lived. So the Commissioners’ expenditure is likely to exceed their investment income for a long period after December 2018.

Although this power is no longer vital to the Commissioners’ ability to meet their obligations because they now have the benefit of a total return order from the Charity Commission, the power provides a very valuable safety net which will become essential if the value of the Commissioners’ assets were to decline significantly, for example, as a result of another worldwide financial crash.

I am happy to say that the Church Commissioners 2013 Annual Report reveals that the total return on their investments in the last calendar year was 15.9%. This return, as well as the average return over the past ten and 20 years, is significantly in excess of their long-term target of RPI plus 5%.

One of the reasons for the Commissioners’ investment success over the past 20 years has been the availability of the power to spend capital. This has meant that they have not been driven to maximise income to pay pensions at the expense of capital growth, and it is this privilege which has supported their investment performance. I commend the Measure to you.

*The Chair:* The motion at Item 510 is now open for debate. May I remind members that under Standing Order 61(a) motions for the closure, the speech limit or next business are not in order in this debate but I retain a discretion under Standing Order 21(c) to alter the normal speech limit of five minutes.

*Mr Ian Fletcher (Leeds):* I think we have reason to be grateful to the Church Commissioners for the input that they give to the pensions’ situation.

I just have one query really, which is that this Measure limits the time over which they can make these capital payments to the year 2025. I do not really understand why there is the need to limit what we are doing. We are actually extending the position as it exists because not extending it would very much limit what the Church Commissioners can do on our behalf. I am just a little concerned as to why we still continue to limit it in any way at all. That really is all I want to say. Thank you.

*The Chair:* I see no one else standing so I invite Mrs Alexander to respond to the debate.

*Mrs April Alexander (Southwark):* The answer to Mr Fletcher’s question is that we do this every seven years because the Ecclesiastical Committee wished to make sure that Parliament had some oversight over the way these financial arrangements were working. They requested that the Church comes back to them every seven years. That is the explanation. Thank you.
The Chair: We now move to the vote on Item 510. Under Standing Order 36(c)(iii) a division by Houses is required for the vote on final approval of a Measure or a Canon, unless I give permission and the Synod gives leave for that requirement to be dispensed with.

It is important to have accurate voting figures for the vote on final approval of the Measure and also to establish how far the Measure has the support of all three Houses, not least in order to make the position on that clear for the Ecclesiastical Committee and both Houses of Parliament. I am, therefore, not giving my permission for the requirement under Standing Order 36(c)(iii) to be dispensed with for this motion and I order a division by Houses.

The motion

‘That the Measure entitled “Church of England (Pensions) (Amendment) Measure” be finally approved.’

was carried after a division by Houses. The voting was as follows:

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No abstentions were recorded in the House of Bishops, 1 in the House of Clergy and 1 in the House of Laity.

The Chair: The Measure now automatically stands committed to the Legislative Committee and that concludes this item of business. Thank you.

THE CHAIR Canon Professor Michael Clarke (Worcester) took the Chair at 10.50 am.

DRAFT AMENDING CANON NO. 32 (GS 1902A); CONVOCATIONS (ELECTIONS TO UPPER HOUSE) (AMENDMENT) RESOLUTION 201 - (GS 1904A); CHURCH REPRESENTATION RULES (AMENDMENT) [(NO. 2)] RESOLUTION 201 - (GS 1905A): DRAFT AMENDING CANON AND INSTRUMENTS FOR REVISION

The Chair: Ladies and gentlemen, we now come to the Draft Legislation on Synodical Government. Members will need the Draft Measure GS 1902A; the three draft instruments, GS 1903A, 1904A and 1905A; and the Revision Committee report, which is GS 1902-5Y. I call, first, on the Chair of the Revision Committee, Mr Geoffrey Tattersall, to move Item 511 standing in his name, "That the Synod do take note of this report."

Mr Geoffrey Tattersall (Manchester): Chair, the draft Synodical Government Legislation which received First Consideration last July was considered at four meetings of the Revision Committee and the proposals which, if accepted, form the basis for four separate items of draft legislation which are now before the Synod. The Revision Committee considered submissions from 27 members of Synod and
the Revision Committee and the Steering Committee both identified a number of issues which led to further amendments of the draft legislation. What I can say in ten minutes is no substitute for a full reading of our report, but the highlights can be summarised in this way. Firstly, the balance of representation as between the provinces. The draft legislation as originally drafted would have removed the current slight weighting in favour of the northern province in both the House of Clergy and the House of Laity. In the Lower Houses of Convocations this would have meant that the number of Proctors would be determined by reference to the number of electors within each diocese, subject to an overall maximum of 195, and there would have been a corresponding amendment in relation to the House of Laity. In practical terms, this is likely to have reduced slightly the representation for the northern province from a proportion of 70:30 to 72:28. The matter, of course, had been considered by the Election Review Group, and they had come to the conclusion that the weighting should remain but the way that the legislation was drafted, was to remove the weighting so that it was thought it was easier to put it back in if Synod wanted to. You will see from our report the arguments for and against this issue. The Revision Committee decided by a substantial majority, 9 to 1, to delete the provision and to preserve the status quo, in other words to preserve the slight weighting. It decided it should do so to enable the distinctive voice of the northern province to be heard and it was concerned whether, if the weighting was removed, the northern province would be able to provide enough members to participate effectively in Synodical structures. You will see that there were two representations about the redistribution of dioceses between the northern and southern provinces, but they were ruled out of order and we did not consider them because we were advised that that would require a Measure.

Secondly, the level of representation as between individual dioceses. Well, the draft legislation as originally drafted would remove the current limitation to two of the number of proctors to be elected from the Diocese of Europe, so that its representation in the Lower House of Canterbury Convocation would be calculated on the same basis as the mainland diocese, and there was a corresponding change in the House of Laity. Again, you will see that there were other representations made, in particular a radical one made by Mr Scowen, which would have reduced the minimum number of seats from three to one. You will also see that the staff carried out, at the Committee's request, investigations as to the effect that this would have had on the elections in 2010. The Committee was not persuaded by Mr Scowen's proposition and, accordingly, the Revision Committee was persuaded to increase representation in the Diocese of Europe from two to three.

Thirdly, the number of suffragan bishops to be elected to the Upper Houses of the Convocations. The draft legislation provided for an increase in the number of suffragans elected to the Upper House of the Convocation of Canterbury from four to five. However, there were a number of representations arguing against that proposal, some noting that because the West Yorkshire reorganisation scheme was going to reduce the number of diocesan bishops in the northern province, that that should be taken into consideration; equally, the representations arguing for a need for additional suffragans from the northern province in itself.

Having considered all those representations, the Revision Committee was persuaded that there was a strong case for the increase in the number of southern
suffragans. It was noted that there was considerable disparity in the levels of representations of suffragans as between the provinces and that to retain the current proposals as to the province of Canterbury was important at a time when it was important to hear the voice of suffragans and it would only, in fact, raise the level of representation to where it had been before the last round of Synodical reform. However, the Committee was not prepared to increase the number of suffragans from four to six. As to the northern province, the Revision Committee believed that following the reduction in the number of suffragans in the northern province, it was appropriate to increase the number of northern suffragans from three to four.

Fourthly, the university constituencies. The draft legislation as originally drafted would have removed the provision for electoral areas comprising universities, thus effectively abolishing the university constituencies. However, on this issue, 13 of the 16 representations received favoured reform as opposed to abolition, which seemed to reflect the mood of this Synod, which in July 2013 had supported a motion by Richard Burridge which had argued for reform rather than abolition of these constituencies. It was in such circumstances that, following discussions between the Steering Committee and the university proctors, the Steering Committee brought forward proposals summarised in paragraph 60 of our report. The main features are (1) a single constituency for both provinces; (2) such constituency to elect four members; (3) of such four members elected, there to be at least one member to be elected from each province; (4) there to be no constraint on the number of persons elected from one university; (5) the eligibility for election and to form part of the electorate should be that you were a priest or deacon with an authority to officiate in a diocese from the bishop of the diocese and you were employed to teach and research (that is important, teach and research) at a university or college or being a fellow of a college in a collegiate university; and, thirdly, that if you were at the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge or Durham, you would be the members of the Convocation of Regent House and Convocation respectively. Finally, that there was to be a register of electors maintained by the presiding officer to whom both the electorate and candidates would have to declare that he or she met the requirements for the eligibility to vote and such a register would be published on the Church of England website.

You will see from paragraph 62 of our report that we considered other matters. First of all, we considered whether or not there should be a requirement that teaching should be in any particular subject. Although we recognised that the providing of theological expertise would be most directly achieved by requiring that the electorate or candidate should teach theology, it was thought that that might be an unduly restrictive tool. For example, there were those on Synod who taught ecclesiastical history who could make a valuable contribution to the Synod. On balance, it was felt better to leave to the electorate itself the decision of who should be elected as between candidates. Secondly, the Revision Committee did not consider that the electorate or candidate should be restricted to those in full-time employment. Thirdly, by a narrow margin, the Revision Committee decided against extending the constituency to the staff of theological colleges where, here, the absence of research being peer reviewed was a decisive factor in reaching such a decision. You will note also that we considered a proposal that there should be theological advisers who were entitled to speak but not vote in Synod, but we rejected that too.
There are all sorts of other provisions in the mish-mash of these four bits of legislation. We had to deal with the position in Sodor and Man where a statute of the Tynewald, the Manx Parliament, Mission and Pastoral Measure Isle of Man 2012 Measure had abolished the diocesan synods, the deanery synods and, therefore, we had to make a provision that the electorate would be that of the diocesan synod. There was a similar problem in relation to the Diocese of Europe where there was no requirement to have deanery Synods.

You will also see that the Committee dealt with the religious communities but proposed no change. Ex officio members, again there was some concern expressed about the number of ex officio members and some members thought that the position was worthy of consideration by the Business Committee but, again, we proposed no change. We considered representation of those worshiping in 'Fresh Expressions'. We considered, again, the electorate for the General Synod and, although we proposed no change and, indeed, did that because recently the Synod itself had voted in that way, a minority wished it to be recorded that this was worthy of further discussion.

You will see, finally, that we decided that Rule 36(3) of the Church Representation Rules with which I am sure you are intimate, which had been abolished, should be reinstated for reasons we have set out. We talked about the nomination of candidates by electronic means, the publication of election addresses and lots of other miscellaneous amendments. For all these reasons, I beg to move that the Synod do take note of this report.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr Tattersall. Item 511 is now open for debate, but before we debate can I say two things. First of all, can I remind the members that under Standing Order 54(c) it is not in order in the debate on this motion to debate matters which are the subject of amendments on the Order Paper. Secondly, if you have read the Order Paper, you will see we have got potentially a long morning in front of us, and so I would ask contributions to be as succinct and to the point as possible. We now come to the debate on Mr Tattersall's motion.

The Revd Professor Richard Burridge (University of London): I want to obviously speak to paragraphs 39 to 63, to pay tribute to the work of Mr Tattersall and the Revision Committee, of Canon Butler and the Steering Committee, to give thanks and explain why we are back at this one again. I have been involved in discussing this at Synod almost as long as we have been discussing the ordination of women to the priesthood and to the Episcopate, and I hope we are going to put both these items to bed this weekend. It goes right back to the Turnbull Report and the Bridge Report when the university representatives asked to be reformed into a single constituency like the religious because we were very aware of the difficulties of the complicated set of rules which made life extremely difficult for Stephen Slack and the legal office and so on. Unfortunately, at that point there was a suggestion instead that we should just simply be abolished. We argued on the floor of Synod that we should not be because of the fact that the university ordained staff are extra diocesan in many cases in Oxford and Cambridge, and because of the expertise we bring to Synod. In the end, therefore, we were saved on the floor of Synod but not reformed, which I did not think was an Anglican position.
The Chair: Mr Burridge, you are straying onto the material in the amendments. I have to rule you out of order. Are you going to make a general point?

The Revd Professor Richard Burridge (University of London): I just want to thank the Revision Committee and the Steering Committee for all the hard work that they have put in to listening to us following on from last year for coming up with a whole set of draft suggestions in paragraphs 39 to 63, which picks up the following motion from last year. We are very grateful to them for all of their thought and their hard work on this and the work that has been put in by Stephen Slack and office. I hope we are going to be able, in taking note, to thank them very much for that and to approve all the suggestions that they are making.

The Chair: Do I see anybody else standing? I think not. Mr Tattersall, do you want to respond?

Mr Geoffrey Tattersall (Manchester): I hope Mr Burridge will take this the right way. Listening was a pleasure, of course, and we listened to Professor Burridge with great care and we are grateful for his comments.

The Chair: I now put Item 511 to the vote.

The motion

‘That the Synod do take note of this Report.’

was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: We now come to the revision stage for the various pieces of legislation, beginning with Amending Canon No. 32. I remind members that any amendments and other items appearing under the Order Paper, where there has been no notice of amendment to a particular clause and no members have indicated a wish to speak against those clauses, I give my permission under Standing Order 55(c) for the clauses to be taken en bloc. As this is a revision stage we will need to use the 40 member procedure under Standing Order 56. Where any amendment is moved by someone other than the Steering Committee, and is simply not consequential on an amendment that has already been passed, the mover has not more than five minutes to speak to it. I will then call on a member of the Steering Committee to speak for not more than five minutes in reply and I hope they will be able to constrain themselves well within that limit.

If the Steering Committee does not support the amendment, the amendment will lapse unless 40 members stand in their places to indicate that they wish the debate to continue. At that stage, I will ask, therefore, whether there are 40 members who wish for the debate to continue. If there are, we will continue with any further debate on the amendment and take a vote on it, otherwise, of course, the amendment will lapse. Can I remind you that an eye cast over the Order Paper shows that we could be in for a long debate and I would ask for your goodwill in ensuring the debate moves forward as smoothly and as succinctly as possible.
DRAFT AMENDING CANON NO. 32 (GS 1902A)

The Chair: So we begin with paragraph 1 of Draft Amending Canon No. 32 and with the amendment proposed by Mr Clive Scowen, which is Item 527 on the Order Paper. I call on him to move that amendment. He has not more than five minutes. I shall then be proposing, for contributions to the subsequent debate, a three minute speech limit.

Mr Clive Scowen (London): Thank you, Chair. This is the national Synod of the Church of England. Although the Church is not a democracy, we have determined that the strand of governance of our Church which Synodical Government represents should be as democratic and representative as it is possible to be, hence the use of STV in our elections. We aspire to be a fully democratic national Synod. It is essential that Church members and clergy should each, so far as practically possible, count the same and have the same amount of representation wherever in the country they happen to live. That is, I suggest, a fundamental matter of justice and fairness. However, the current rigid rule which allocates seats between the provinces on a 70:30 ratio in both the House of Clergy and the House of Laity prevents that happening. If you are in the northern province you count for more than if you live in the southern province. Comparison of the Dioceses of Carlisle and St Edmundsbury and Ipswich illustrate this. St Edmundsbury and Ipswich have nearly 3,000 more lay people on their electoral rolls and 21 more clergy than does Carlisle, yet under the current system St Edmundsbury and Ipswich gets only three members in each of the Houses of Clergy and Laity in this Synod, whereas Carlisle gets four members in each house. Carlisle gets one-third more representation in each of the houses despite having nearly 10% fewer clergy than St Edmundsbury and Ipswich and over 10% fewer laity. How is that just and fair? How is that valuing everyone the same? Various arguments have been advanced to justify this injustice, as it seems to me. It is said that the modest reduction in the number of members from the northern province would prevent the voice of the North being heard. With respect, I do not think that stands up to scrutiny. The province of York would still have over 100 lay and clergy members and 15 bishops. Furthermore, in debate, the Chair can always give preference to speakers from the North if, in a particular circumstance, there seems to be a risk of the North not being heard. In any event, why should the North be privileged over other regions? Why should it be overrepresented at the expense of, say, the South-West or East Anglia. Surely, the best way to ensure that all voices from all regions are heard in our national Synod is to give all regions and all dioceses equal representation based on electoral roll numbers and clergy numbers without being skewed by artificial constraints. Some say that minorities like the province of York should be assisted by giving them extra representation. I have to say that does sound to me both patronising and undemocratic. But, again, I ask, why does that apply to dioceses which happen to be in the northern province and not to dioceses in other regions of England? Then it is said that removing the artificial constraint would leave the Lower House of the Convocation of York with too few members to fulfil all that is required of them. Well, since that House would still have about 50 members, all of them able clergy, I find that claim rather surprising, but Synod must reflect on that. I will, if I may, come back to the particular aspect of the House of Laity when we come to the Church Representation Rules Amendment. For this amendment, which deals with
the allocation of seats between the Convocations of York and Canterbury, I beg to move.

*The Chair:* A member of the Steering Committee to reply, not more than five minutes.

*Mr Geoffrey Tattersall (Manchester):* The answer to Mr Scowen's point is that this is not about numerical fairness but it is still about fairness. Apart from being here Synod operates out of London. To give the example which Mr Scowen relied upon, to travel from Carlisle it is quite a long way to London. If we want people to participate in Synodical Government, then we have to try and help. We note that, and we say this in our report, that there were no members from the northern province on the House of Laity Standing Committee at one stage. Again, that is unfortunate. There is a distinctive voice of the North. It ought to be heard. This is not a huge disparity. This is arguing about giving what is a proportion of 70:30 as opposed to 72:28. This is very much a marginal point. One would have thought that it was showing the commitment of the Church to the entire Church of England by doing this. So can I simply say this. It is not a mathematical exercise. It is not about sums. But it really is about fairness and whether or not this is fair overall to the northern province. For those reasons, we beg to oppose this amendment.

*The Chair:* Are there more than 40 members who will stand who would wish to see this carried forward in debate? There are not 40 standing, so that amendment lapses.

We then move to Item 528. The Revd Christopher Hobbs is going to move the amendment standing in his name. He has not more than five minutes.

*The Revd Christopher Hobbs (London):* Synod may find it helpful to have page 4 of the Revision Committee report, page item 19 and also the Archbishops' Council Budget, page 41. I bring this amendment because I thought the mind of Synod should be tested not just the mind of the Steering Committee. I certainly have nothing but admiration for the Diocese of Europe. As a foreigner, an expatriate Australian, who before ordination has worked in Switzerland, I was very grateful for All Saints, Geneva, where I worshiped for some months, incidentally with some people with no connection with the Church of England other than going there. Later, I was on the Council of the Intercontinental Church Society for six years. I have nothing against increasing the size of the representation on Synod of both laity and clergy for the Diocese of Europe, if it means that we are increasing the size of Synod. But that is not what we are doing. As paragraph 19 of the report of the Revision Committee says: "When we increase the representation from the Diocese of Europe we need to reduce the representation of English dioceses." Going on the figures for the 2010 election, Southwark would lose one proctor and Rochester would lose one lay person. In those 2010 elections, Rochester had around 30,000 on its electoral roll and Europe had 11,000. Rochester had five lay members, the Diocese of Europe had two. If it were adjusted in the way this Measure suggests, Rochester lay members would represent twice the number of people that the European lay people do. I am sorry, Chair, I am addressing both the lay and the proctors and I will not choose to speak later if it is possible to take the Diocese of Europe all as one to save time, if that is okay?
The Chair: I am content with that.

The Revd Christopher Hobbs (London): Thank you. As we all know, for General Synod lay representatives, electoral roll numbers give rise to the number of places. The Diocese of Europe has 4,000 less than the smallest mainland diocese electoral roll of Truro. Let me quote from the Diocese’s own website: “We minister in a myriad of situations in most of which the Church of England has scarcely been heard of. Questions of establishment scarcely arise. Civic links may take a very different form and denominational identity is often much less important than the language of worship. We too are facing questions of identity, organisation and maintenance but we do so in a very different context from that of the other 43 dioceses in the Church of England.” I will turn to my speech now.

Three other Anglican jurisdictions exist on mainland Europe: Spain, Portugal and ECUSA and have overlapping territory. The Diocese of Europe is clearly a special case, like the Diocese of Sodor and Man. Like that jurisdiction, its bishop is not eligible to sit in our House of Lords. Amongst the clergy, it has many house for duty posts and, in addition, a good number of the clergy are from other Anglican provinces and cost us nothing to train and are not part of our pension arrangements. So I want to draw your attention to the Archbishops’ Council Budget page 41 and the Diocese of Europe’s contribution to apportionment is considerably less, for instance less than a quarter of the Dioceses of Truro, Newcastle and other very small dioceses in our own constituency. For these reasons, and with no disrespect to the Diocese of Europe (in fact, my nephew is about to marry the new Bishop’s daughter), I seek to amend the Measure before us by not changing things - not yet - retain the two proctors and two laity for the Diocese of Europe for the time being.

Member of the Steering Committee: The Steering Committee is not persuaded by Christopher Hobbs’ arguments and encourages the Synod to reject his amendment. It does this for three reasons. Firstly, the current allocation of two proctors and two lay representatives reflects the fact that in the past the Diocese of Europe had far fewer clergy and far fewer laity then any English diocese. Over the last 20 years, however, the Diocese in Europe has grown significantly. Christopher picked up on the figures for the laity elections in 2010, but in 2010, Europe had 149 clergy electors and was allocated two seats; Ripon and Leeds, which was the smallest mainland diocese at the time and had 24 fewer clergy, but was allocated three seats. That was hardly fair.

Secondly, having three members in the House of Clergy and House of Laity is generally agreed to give better representation to the members of the diocese, both clergy and lay.

The figures that Christopher has quoted about Southwark losing one clergy and Rochester losing one lay person is a relatively small price to pay to the principle of fairness and allowing the best possible representation for the diocese in Europe.

Thirdly, the Steering Committee does not believe that the budgetary implications are relevant to the principle of fairness. The Diocese in Europe may be a special case, but it is not a special case like Sodor and Man because the sense of proportion
between the Diocese of Europe and the Diocese of Sodor and Man makes that comparison untenable, so the Steering Committee urges you to reject this amendment.

*The Chair.* Do I see 40 of you standing? There are 40 of you standing. The debate continues on the amendment

*The Chair* imposed a speech limit of three minutes

*The Revd Canon Deborah Flach (Europe):* Thank you for calling me. Manifestly I was not expecting to speak on this because I did not expect 40 of you to stand and allow us to be underrepresented. Could I simply encourage you to resist with all your Synodical might this attempt by my colleague from the Commonwealth to not allow the European representatives to be increased from two to three in both Houses. Thank you.

*Mr Robin Lunn (Worcester):* A mercifully brief point. I would like to urge rejection of this amendment, but primarily because I think the Diocese of Europe should have three representatives. Where I have sympathy with Christopher Hobbs’ point is I think they should have three representatives in the Clergy and Laity anyway without taking them from Rochester Diocese or anywhere else. I do not think there is a huge issue of extending the Synod by one or two members because I do not think it is the thin end of the wedge because I think the Diocese of Europe is a special case. I also wonder whether the figure of 11,000 that has been quoted is artificially low. I think it is probably more difficult to compile figures across such a wide diocese than it is in the English dioceses. So, I would urge people to decline this because I think the bigger principle is that Europe has three representatives in its clergy and its laity. Thank you.

*Canon Ann Turner (Europe):* I too have admiration for the Diocese in Europe, but maybe for a slightly different reason. I see the hard work done daily by people spread over an enormous area; people of great faith and belief. Yes, they do come from different traditions, they are of different nationalities, but we provide a home for them and they are very much engaged in what is happening in church in the wider field and also in the Church of England. I think that the members from the Diocese in Europe make every effort to make a full contribution to the life of this Synod. Recently this Synod also agreed that the Diocese in Europe would be treated equally with other dioceses. Apportionment has just been mentioned. I would remind Mr Hobbs that that has very recently changed. We are in the Diocese in Europe managing growth in many areas, something of which we are very proud. I think an increase in number is very fair and would truly represent that growth that is apparent.

In 1980, the Diocese in Europe was never envisaged to even have a Diocesan Synod. Now it has a four-day residential Synod annually, and many of the bishops and officers sitting here have been invited over the years and have always gone away full of praise for the way in which we “do Church of England” and “do church”. I would therefore request Synod to firmly resist this amendment.

*Mr Gerald O’Brien (Rochester):* The last speaker talked about fairness. We hear a lot about fairness in political speak these days, which usually means, “It is fair if I
want it", but not by any other objective criteria. The Diocese in Europe has grown significantly from the time when it was set up in 1980, and I have to confess I am old enough to have been there when we decided to do it. The point is that the Diocese in Europe is still much smaller than any of the other dioceses in the Church of England, with the exception of Sodor and Man, for which special arrangements are made.

In fact, the Diocese of Europe with two representatives for the laity, for instance, has about two-thirds of the electoral roll numbers that the smallest diocese in England has, which has three members. So, two and three for dioceses that are one size or half as large again or even larger does seem quite reasonable, and indeed the largest diocese that only has three members is roughly double the size of the Diocese in Europe. I think the concept of fairness is somewhat misplaced.

I was also disappointed that when we heard from the Member of the Steering Committee, he came out with the old chestnut about Europe actually had more clergy than the Diocese of Ripon and Leeds in 2010. There was also the argument that the Diocese in Europe had more laity than the Diocese of Bradford in 2010, so would it not be nice and fair if they all had three members?

The point is these are comparisons with two dioceses that no longer exist, so since we are looking forward to 2015 and 2020, should we not be making comparisons with dioceses which will exist then? It seems to me that comparisons with dioceses that do not exist any more are, frankly, not relevant to our discussion. So if we are really going to talk about fairness, does it not say that 5,000 electors in one diocese can elect a member here and 5,000 electors in another diocese should have a member here? I cannot see the reason for Europe being 50%, or even 100% over-represented, which is what this is calling for. Please support this amendment.

*The Chair:* Before taking the point of order, can I ask you two gentlemen if either of you are going to speak to the other side of the argument in fairness? (Both in favour of amendment)

*Mr Thomas Sutcliffe (Southwark):* It is just this: I am so surprised to find so many Evangelicals speaking against their representation because the Diocese of Europe is a phenomenon based on church planting. It is in fact paid for by the people of the Diocese of Europe, many of whom, incidentally, are not on the electoral rolls because in some cases they are not really Anglicans at all. It is all about evangelising; it is all about serving people. It seems to me that we should encourage this process. It is a lesson for all of us in how our Church in future will probably have to manage its affairs, because they pay their way.

*The Archbishop of York (The Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu):* Chair, if Synod remembers, we moved in the Synod regularising the Diocese of Europe, where they have now got archdeacons, where the Church Commissioners are contributing, which they did not do before, simply because the arguments then were this is a place that is actually growing and going places, and at this stage to remove what I think the Steering Committee has brought to us would be wrong. For me, reminding you of what actually we have done vis-à-vis the diocese, this would be another affirmation that we were right to take the decision we took with money, with
archdeacons, regularising its membership and everything else, so for them not to be not represented would be very strange. I want to ask Synod to resist this amendment and stick with the decision which has been brought to us by the Committee.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

This motion was put and carried.

The Chair: I put up Item 528 in Mr Hobbs’ name to the vote.

The amendment was lost on a show of hands.

We then move to the amendment in the name of Canon Simon Killwick, Item 529.

The Revd Canon Simon Killwick (Manchester): We did decide in a previous debate that we wanted to see a reformed universities constituency rather than to see it abolished. My question now is, now we can actually see what a reformed universities constituency looks like, do we actually still want it? That is why I tabled the amendment because it gives the Synod the opportunity to debate just that, and indeed to make that decision should it so wish.

The amendments are all consequential, so although there is a long list of them, they simply would have the effect of bringing in the abolition of the universities constituency, so they are there in order to test the mind of the Synod. Now that we can see what a reformed constituency looks like, we can ask ourselves the question do we actually still want it. There are of course improvements that have been made. The requirement to hold the bishop’s licence or permission to officiate is a very big improvement, the merging into a single constituency, and the slight reduction in numbers to four, but I note that it is still more than the representation of many diocesan houses of clergy who only have three representatives.

It still looks rather like a rotten borough. There is self-registration rather than a clearly defined constituency as for other constituencies on the Synod. What if only a few people actually self-register, because not all will necessarily have the bishop’s licence or permission to officiate? You could end up with a situation of four members of Synod representing something like 25 or 50 electors. That is clearly unfair when considered against the diocesan houses of clergy.

What is the purpose of the constituency itself? This is not clear. Richard Burridge, in the first of his trailers for this debate yesterday (that is in the debate on the Business Committee Report) said that it was so that university theologians could be represented on General Synod, but if that is what he wants, the constituency does not make sense, because you do not have to be a theologian to be a member of it. You just have to be a university teacher in any subject. We once had a mathematician, Bernard Silverman - lovely man, but I do not ever remember him contributing any theological expertise to debates in the Synod.
The constituency, if it is supposed to provide theological expertise, excludes lay theologians teaching in universities. It excludes lay and ordained theologians who are teaching in theological colleges and theological courses. It excludes freelance theologians. It excludes the canon theologians of cathedrals. Recently, I went on a diocesan clergy training conference, and we had two excellent theological speakers, one of whom is Elaine Storkey, who is a member of this Synod (I do not know how she managed to get elected!) and the other is David Runcorn, who described himself as a “free-range theologian”. In that case, he cannot stand in the universities constituency and give us the benefit of his theological expertise.

Members of Synod, I put it to you that the concept of the constituency lacks intellectual coherence. The real purpose of this constituency seems to be a special constituency for a particular group of self-supporting ministers, namely ordained persons teaching in universities, but it is not clear why this particular group of self-supporting ministers should have a special constituency while other groups do not. I see the amber light is on. I hope that 40 members will stand so that we can actually have this debate and then reach a decision on the matter. Thank you.

Member of Steering Committee: Simon Killwick gives us a choice. It is the choice to accept the proposals that we have worked on for almost a year or abolition. We need to make it very clear as a Steering Committee that the choice today is not between this form and a slightly different form of reformed university constituency. What Fr Killwick is offering is a simple choice: this or abolition.

The work we have done flows from the July 2013 motion from Richard Burridge. A large majority of Synod asked us to consult on reform not abolition. We have worked on that basis, that the mind of this Synod is broadly in favour of reform. Why reform? Paragraphs 44 and 45 of GS 1902-5Y says so. The simple answer is access to peer-reviewed theological and related expertise. Fr Killwick used the word “theologian”. I always remember from my theological education that a theologian is one whose prayer is true, and that means that we are all theologians in that sense. However, this is a particular sort of theological expertise that we are asking for. The Synod has a wide variety of access to expert knowledge, including theological knowledge from a variety of sources.

However since a debate as long ago as February 2004 in which Fr Killwick participated, this Synod has consistently expressed the view that the universities bring to the councils of the Church in Synod a particular form of stringently examined learning. Over the years that has brought to Synod a wide variety of insights; scholars rooted in the tradition of the Church; scholars working at the cutting edge of theological exploration; scholars whose work is exposed to the rigorous critique of peer review process, about which no doubt we shall hear more during the course of these debates.

Of course, there are many other forms of learning, but the Steering Committee has come to see that this form of learning brings something special to our Synodical process, and not just to Synod either. Our report highlights the work of such theologians, Church historians, ethicists, Biblical scholars, systematians and others in the wider structures of the Church, who enrich it through their membership granted by virtue of their membership of this Synod. We believe that we would be poorer
without them.

Perhaps more so this time, and perhaps for the first time ever, and I have to be a bit careful here, despite the depth of their theological insight and academic learning, the House of Bishops lacks a member with long-standing university teaching and research experience. Bishop Tom Wright was the last member of the House of Bishops who came from that tradition. We believe that we need the uni reps more than ever.

There are issues of the wider disciplines as well. We are in the process of legislation, so having generalities in legislation is not good enough. As we point out in our report, for other allied disciplines we need to draw things clearly. The legal advice we have been given is that this is watertight and the system of self-registration enables us to have a much more secure legal basis on which we can have confidence that our proposals would not face legal challenge because these proposals offer us a reformed, workable system of university representation, which requires the clergy to be part of the wider life of the Church by virtue of being licensed or holding a permission to officiate. We have fulfilled the request of this Synod and have consulted the uni reps and have gained both their confidence and support. We have designed a system that works legally and removes the frankly rotten borough that this constituency had become. We no longer favour abolition, and so we would ask you to resist Fr Killwick’s amendments.

Professor Burridge has commented that the university constituencies have always wanted reform. Over the years he has said the university reps “have been saved but remain unreformed; an un-Anglican position”. By our proposals, we believe that the university reps have been both saved and justified.

*Mr Gerald O’Brien (Rochester):* Thank you, Chair, for calling me twice within 20 minutes. We are looking at the universities constituency. I was actually a member of the Elections Review Group which considered this issue. The universities constituency was a rotten borough. The staff had written out to various universities to say, “How many Anglican clergymen do you have on your staff?” Three-quarters of the universities had not replied and of the quarter who had, some kindly provided us with names of Roman Catholic priests. So whatever the electorate of the universities constituency was, it was crying out for considerable revision.

It does make sense to say perhaps these people could self-identify, but our problem is we are going to set up a constituency with four members of this Synod who will be assigned to the Convocation of York or the Convocation of Canterbury, depending on where they come from, and we have no idea whether anybody will actually opt into this constituency. It is perfectly possible for a lot of the people who might choose to be in this constituency to choose instead to vote in the proctorial elections in the dioceses where they have a bishop’s licence, which many of them do. It is conceivable that we could have set up a constituency into which there might be only four electors. We might have four candidates, each receiving one vote, and they would all be elected here. There is nothing in the proposal that prevents such a *reductio ad absurdum* actually happening.

If you were listening to Questions last night, you would have discovered that when
we look at the people who teach theology who are theologians at theological colleges on courses, there were about 140 of them, four of whom have been elected to this Synod by the normal route, so we are not devoid of theological expertise. I know of members of the House of Laity who have degrees in theology. Theology is not merely the preserve of clergy and bishops, and if people with theological expertise can be elected to this Synod in the usual way, setting up what could be an extreme rotten borough with possibly only four electors electing the four candidates, seems, frankly, pretty stupid and something we ought not to countenance any further. I urge you to support the amendment.

The Revd John Cook (Oxford): I entirely agree with the proposer about there being no guarantee about there being theological expertise coming through on this route, but already in this Synod in recent years, we have suspended Standing Orders so we can get expertise on specific subject, and that could well be a way in which supporting this amendment we can still get the expertise we need.

More specifically, Dr Burridge is very keen to talk about the peer review of all publications. The staggering figure is that the average number of articles read in peer review is only seven people. Only seven people read them, I am told, which seems to me very inadequate, but I would like that to be answered in some way. At the moment I am supporting this amendment.

The Chair imposed a time limit of two minutes.

The Revd Dr Philip Pyming (Guildford): I just wanted to be clear about what the goal of these proposals from the Committee is. The goal is that it will increase and secure theological expertise within the body of this Synod. The test is do these proposals guarantee that?

I want to suggest they do not, for two reasons. First of all, as has already been stated, we already have theological expertise secured without special constituencies through the House of Laity. Dr Paula Gooder and other people are elected because they are recognised by the electoral body as having outstanding contributions to make to the life of this Synod. Within three, four or five places people recognise they need that. So why should there be different rules for clergy than there are for laity? Why should we not trust clergy to elect similarly high-quality theologians from among their number, just as we expect people from the House of Laity to do that?

Secondly, it does not promise expert theological expertise because those who can stand for the universities constituency can be researchers in any discipline. For me this is the key reason why these proposals are not good enough. I have a colleague who is a brilliant Professor in Nutrition. She could stand; she is a wonderful colleague; she would make a great contribution to this Synod, but she is not an expert in peer-reviewed theology, and that is why these proposals do not deliver what they propose to do. That is why I am supporting Fr Killwick’s amendments.

Mrs Christina Rees (St Albans): I would like to agree that this is a special constituency and like Gerry O’Brien, I was on the Election Review Group, but I would not like to agree that it has anything at all to do with a rotten borough or to be describing these clergy who work in our universities as ‘self-supporting ministers’.
There is something about the terminology of a rotten borough that implies a self-seeking end, which this is absolutely not about. These are people who would not get elected in any other way. I entirely take everything Philip said about the other groups of people and how they can stand for Synod in their own right and thank goodness many of them are on Synod, but these are clergy who are in the universities and to query about the number of peer review is to miss the point.

We are going into discussing the 'Common Good' this afternoon. As a national institution, the established Church, we play a role in our national life, as do our universities. Without this special constituency we would be missing out, and to denigrate our scholars in universities is to miss out on things. They may not all be theologians, but I am thankful for people like Bernard Silverman. We need people, we need Christians and we need clergy who can bring their absolute academic expertise to this body so that we can learn - a word which is no longer in fashion - the apologetics; they can help us to do the apologetics. They can help us to do our theology with the expertise they bring in their chosen subject with a rigour that we need in this body, and we would be impoverished without it. I ask you to resist these amendments.

Mr Peter Collard (Derby): I would like to bring Synod into the 21st Century. When I was young, if I wanted to find out about a subject, I used to go to the library and get the Encyclopedia Britannica out and I would look at it and maybe some other books as well. Nowadays, if I want to find out about a subject, there is this thing called Google, or maybe you use one of the other search engines. I have been using search engines for 15 or 20 years, and I have to say that you can get information from the top theologians in the country at your fingertips simply by going onto your computer. Okay, you might need to do some further research, but the days when all of the gems of wisdom were held in the universities and never got out are gone. We have to move into the modern world and realise that the need for these centres has actually reduced, and we no longer need to make special allowances for them. So I would ask that you vote in favour of this amendment. Thank you,

The Chair: Point of order, Mr Freeman?

Mr John Freeman (Chester): On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

This motion was put and carried.

The Chair: Point of order?

A Speaker: May we have a vote by Houses, please?

The Chair: If 25 members stand in support of that request. There are 25 standing. We will have a vote by Houses.
The amendment was lost after a division by Houses. The voting was as follows:

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No abstentions were recorded in the House of Bishops, 6 in the House of Clergy and 4 in the House of Laity.

The Chair: I now call upon a member of the Steering Committee to move Item 530. Just to remind you, this is not subject to the 40 member procedure.

Member of the Steering Committee: Thank you, Chair. Steering Committees and those who advise them obviously try to keep hold of all the reins; usually it works, occasionally it does not, and this I am afraid is one of those occasional moments. Synod will note that the Steering Committee’s proposals in relation to the universities include making the universities one single constituency. While this becomes an essentially non-provincial constituency, there is a constraint to ensure that at least one of the four elected should come from each province.

Looking at Canon H 2, which provides for the breakdown of proctors specially elected to be 136 in Canterbury and 59 in York, that is a ratio of 70:30. These numbers of 136 and 59 include the current six university members, four in Canterbury and two in York.

The proposed change to representation via the university constituency not only reduces the overall number of clergy members by two but crucially does so in an ill-defined way between the two provinces. Depending on the outcome of the elections the four may be distributed as either one in one province and three in the other or else as two in each.

If this amendment were not passed, the effect would be that the number of non-university elected members in each province would therefore alter depending on the outcome of the university elections and that the ratio between the provinces could change from the current 70:30.

There is already a similar issue with respect to those members elected for the religious communities and the Armed Forces Synod who can be placed in either province depending on their geographical locality.

The amendment seeks to remedy the current situation in the same way as for that case by categorising the university members as falling outside of the set of number of clergy members to be elected in each province and ensuring that the ratio of elected members is unaffected by the outcome of the university elections.

There is, however, a consequence of this amendment as well. Because the university elected members would no longer be included in the total, the effect of passing this amendment would be to increase the overall number of elected clergy by four. To rectify this, it will also be necessary to change the number of elected
members from the current 136 in Canterbury and 59 in York. It is the intention of the Steering Committee to return to this through an appropriate adjustment at the final drafting stage on Tuesday, but not now simply because it would be procedurally difficult to do so.

So the Steering Committee invites the Synod to approve this amendment or the mechanism for apportioning seats between the provinces simply will not work. Thank you.

*The Chair:* As I said, the 40 member rule does not apply here so we move straight into debate. Do I see anybody standing?

*Mr Clive Scowen (London):* Just to ask a simple question. I wonder if we could be told in the response to this debate, if it is one, what it is that the Steering Committee plans to propose at final drafting by way of changes to the numbers because we will not at that stage, I think, be able to do anything about those numbers, so it would be useful to know now what they would be even though they are not being formally moved.

*The Chair:* I think there is nobody else standing, in which case I shall ask a member of the Steering Committee to respond.

*Member of the Steering Committee:* I am advised that we will be able to make the adjustment through a special amendment and that it will be in order to retain the 70:30 ratio.

*The Chair:* I see nobody else standing so we will move to vote on Item 530.

*The amendment was carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* We then move to Item 531 and I call upon Dr Sugden to speak to the amendment in his name.

*The Revd Canon Dr Chris Sugden (Oxford):* I would first like to thank members of Synod for your support in prayer which I greatly valued during my surgery at the time of the February Synod.

The Revision Committee Report mentions that Synod needs those with theological expertise to contribute to its deliberations four times. Paragraph 67e states: “The objective of providing theological expertise”, an objective itself proposed by the university members in Paragraph 53. Paragraph 47 argues that the university constituencies deliver a contribution from members with theological and related expertise, which therefore obviates the need for appointed theological advisers.

These legislative proposals do not stipulate that the members of this constituency teach or research in theology. This point has been made powerfully in our previous debate in which the motion for abolition was narrowly lost by 26 votes, which shows that the reform offered to us so far does not have the wholehearted support of Synod.
This amendment offers a further reform to create a constituency that would be much more likely to produce what is aimed for. Including those who teach in colleges or courses recognised for ordination training means that the electorate will include many people in touch with those pursuing a vocation for ministry and with the needs of ministry in the Church of England.

The amendment would also be just. Any principal of a training course or college will tell you that the present arrangements marginalise them from discussions and decisions of the Ministry Council, its sub-committees and about what counts as effective theological education. They are occasionally consulted, frequently with insufficient notice, and have no participation. The reason given is that under previous arrangements of ten years ago they would be perceived to have a conflict of interest, but much has changed in theological education and higher education in ten years to render this exclusion not only obsolete but unfair. We all lose.

Further, those in colleges and courses are doing research that is necessarily mission-focused and related to the needs of ministry not only now but for 2015, 2020 and beyond. In contrast, university theology departments are increasingly becoming departments of religious studies as a branch of social anthropology. As Karl Barth said, it is not possible to talk about God by shouting “human” in a loud voice. If we are going to have a preferential electorate in Synod to provide theological input, is it not wise to have theologians who teach our ordinands, which will benefit both the Synod, the teachers and also the colleges and courses which train hundreds of people each year by keeping them abreast of Synod discussions and decisions.

Making peer reviewed research the main criterion for this constituency would render our electorate and its representatives to be determined by the research assessment exercise in universities rather than by Synod. Full Synod has not considered extending the electorate to include employed staff of colleges and courses. That proposal failed by only four votes to six in the Revision Committee, and they made that decision without the information that such institutions have 118 staff with postgraduate qualifications at doctorate level who represent 60% of all teaching staff. Their exclusion from this electorate is an injustice to them and a failure to enrich Synod with their expertise.

I commend the amendment for the support of Synod in adding this constituency, not replacing it, anyone, but adding to those already listed, for its elegance, simplicity and fairness in addressing a currently anomalous situation and at the very least we should debate and vote on it. I so move, Chair.

Member of the Steering Committee: Thank you, Chair. Just to reassure Canon Sugden that formally I do have to express the Steering Committee’s opposition so that we can have the 40 member rule apply, so we will be asking you to resist this amendment.

Chris Sugden offers us an extension of the university constituency to include colleges and courses’ theological educators. Despite the suggestion that he makes and through last night’s question in his speech, the Steering Committee was very aware of the depth of theological learning and commitment to research in the
theological colleges and courses even if the actual numbers involved were not known.

However, we believe that it is often, but not always I grant, a different sort of learning, teaching and research environment. Others with greater expertise in this field I am sure, if they are called, will raise that in debate shortly, raise the detailed issues of why this is a different environment from the university context.

For myself, I just want to add the technical point at this stage that in the system of self-certification that we propose it will not be possible for the returning officer to distinguish between a lecturer in theological college in some sort of peer review research and another in that environment who is engaged in research but does not actually have the peer review process in place.

Of course, some in colleges and courses are active in peer reviewed research-led scholarship but they will be doing that in connection with a theology department so they would qualify for election under the Steering Committee’s proposals by virtue of being members of university theology departments. We do not need Chris Sugden’s amendment to include those people; the people we submit are those in colleges and courses most suitable for election in this constituency. Chris Sugden opens the door far wider and we believe that it risks diluting the depth and rigour of the theological learning that this Synod might gain from having a university constituency.

He mentions the mission-focused theme. One of the things about the academy, I think, is it does not have an agenda to always deliver what the Church needs in the moment. Whilst the flavour of the month rightly is mission, theological education and learning should not be simply directed at the latest thing that the Church has as a priority.

Furthermore, those who teach in theological colleges have a different role that means that they are not usually employed both to teach and research. For a number of years I served on the Council of SEITE. I was very aware of the pressure that the training environment changes brought, the changes in validation, staff turnover and in the need to engage in ministerial formation. These were a constant draw away from the staff’s desire, even their need, to engage in the rigour of research.

As a consequence, while brilliant theological educators, the rigour of research was not always in the forefront of their minds. It is an absolute expectation of the universities that their senior members are actively regularly engaged in research; if not, such staff would likely be sacked. That expectation is not present within the theological colleges and courses, despite the widespread practice of research in such institutions. As a result, colleges and courses are a different beast from university lecturers, even though we admit they are often active in local university life.

The point Christina made earlier is important as well. People working in universities are actively engaging in teaching and researching in a very different environment, and in a world where we are urgently in need of the apologetic task, to have people bringing to the life of the Synod who are constantly engaged in research in that rigorous and often very secular environment brings a different perspective from the
many people here, canon, theologians, DDOs, theological educators lay and ordained.

The Revision Committee was close to voting on this so we recognised that Synod may wish to debate this amendment. However, it is our view that, while initially attractive, Chris Sugden proposes something that is less consistent in terms of the nature of the academic learning it will bring and more difficult to guarantee the consistency of approach by those offering themselves as candidates. While it would not be a rotten borough it would perhaps, despite all the brilliant learning and knowledge in our colleges and courses, risk being a less rigorous one.

The Chair: Do I see 40 members standing? There are indeed 40 of you standing - more than. We move therefore to debate on this amendment. Mr Capon. A three minute speech limit is in force.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

Canon Dr Peter Capon (Manchester): I am a member of the Revision Committee where, as has already been said, we were divided on this particular point. The question still before us is where is the theological expertise that will best serve this Synod to be found. Is it just in the universities? University now, of course, is a very broad spectrum of traditional and modern universities, a very broad range of institutions. Or is it also found in our training institutions where theologians are often engaged in a high degree of scholarship and sometimes theological research, effectively functioning at university level shortly under the umbrella of the University of Durham.

Of course, it is true that some of our theologians are engaged in cutting edge peer reviewed research which is relevant to the needs of this Synod, but I wonder how much peer reviewed research is actually relevant. We have already had mention of the drift within theology departments away from the central Biblical scholarship needs.

For every leading active researcher there are people in universities who are employed nominally for teaching and research who are not returned as part of the research assessment exercise. I personally was returned as part of a research assessment exercise while I was at the University of Manchester, but if I had continued in my role as Director of the Undergraduate School of Computer Science I would have not been returned in the research exercise that was upcoming because the university, as all universities are, was selective about who they returned to get the best possible outcome.

So there are some doing cutting edge research but by no means all, it is a very fuzzy area. I believe that we need the largest possible pool of people from which to choose this electorate and that by enlarging the pool rather than arbitrarily restricting it we will have the best possible chance of recruiting the best theologians into these positions.

The Bishop of Chester (The Rt Revd Dr Peter Forster): I should declare a past interest inasmuch as I was originally a university proctor in times past and a current
interest as President of the Council of a university with a large and lively theological department.

I would gently but I think clearly resist this amendment partly because I do not want to dilute the contribution that those who teach in universities will make in our midst. There is something distinctive about those who teach in universities that have a Royal Charter as a university and if we extend it in the way proposed here we are also then going to exclude lots of people - some names have been mentioned - who are currently working in our colleges and courses who are very actively involved in theological work in the wider Church. I do not want the universities constituency to become dominated by, in a sense, a too ministerially-focused training constituency. I also do not want the university constituency actually to be too theological because I rather respect someone who is ordained as deacon and priest, and therefore theologically trained, but who is working in a different area of expertise and they often bring the disciplinary interaction of their ordained calling and their wider scholarship.

I do not think restricting the representation to universities is arbitrary, as has just been suggested, I think it is sensible. In the spirit of Synod, Synods should bring together expertise from distinctive areas and I think the more distinctive that we allow universities to be in this regard the better.

The Revd Canon Michael Parsons (Gloucester): I speak to support this amendment. Actually the Bishop of Chester is slightly out of date, all the newer generation of universities do not have Royal Charters, they are under rather a different basis.

The purpose of this constituency is to provide theological expertise to Synod, not necessarily to get the very valuable expertise of other university members in their disciplines who actually are usually more able to engage in their diocesan structures and get elected in that way. Very many of the staff of theological colleges and theological courses work so hard at the job they are doing they do not have the time to be embedded in their diocesan structures.

Those who have been elected to this Synod, I think if you inspect their records, and I was one when I was first elected, had got a considerable track record in the diocese to start with. Had I moved to the post I was in from another diocese and was unknown in Gloucester diocese, I am quite certain I would not have been elected because clergy in dioceses vote for the people they know. There are many dedicated scholars in the colleges and the courses and they do publish in peer reviewed journals. It is a complete canard to suggest that only people in traditional universities publish in peer reviewed journals. They do. They do not do it to the same level or the same volume as those in the mainline universities because their main purpose is the training and teaching of ordinands and Readers, but they do do some and they are very valuable for it.

I will give you some examples of people who would be eligible actually from the college and course constituency. Quite recently, Jeremy Worthen, who was Principal of SEITE, is now the theological consultant, or has been, to the House of Bishops, presumably the House of Bishops did look for theological expertise. The current Canon Theologian in Westminster, Vernon Wright, was principal of STETS.
The one two before that was Tom Wright’s post. There is some theological expertise there. The Dean of St Mellitus is Graham Tomlin, who has contributed theologically to many areas of the Church. The Principal of Ripon College Cuddesden for another month or so, Martyn Percy, would not be eligible under the rules as stated without passing this amendment. Of course he is moving to a post where he will be eligible as Dean of Christ Church. We are not saying surely these people are not academically respectable theologians, no, they are, they contribute to the Church, we need their expertise. Please vote for the amendment.

Dr Rachel Jepson (Birmingham): I oppose this amendment because academics in a university are embedded in the culture of a broad academic institution. As an educator, I greatly value the interdisciplinary collaboration both formally and informally with colleagues. That cross-fertilisation of ideas and understanding issues and ways of working is key to holistic education. That would be undermined with this amendment.

Also, as a Governor of the Queen’s Foundation for Ecumenical Theological Education at Birmingham, staff and governors there are happy with the Committee’s proposals. Thank you.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

This motion was put and carried.

In which case, Item 531, I put to the vote.

A Speaker: Point of order, Chair, will you accept a vote by Houses.

The Chair: If there are 25 of you standing. There are, so we shall have a vote by Houses.

The amendment was carried after a division by Houses. The voting was as follows:

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No abstentions were recorded in the House of Bishops, 3 in the House of Clergy and 2 in the House of Laity.

The Chair: I now call upon a member of the Steering Committee to move Item 532.

Member of the Steering Committee: As I will be standing here for some time I will just wait here. I do so move.

The Chair: Do I see any debate? Nobody is standing. In which case we move to vote on Item 532.
The motion

‘That paragraph 1 as amended stand part of the Canon.’

was carried on a show of hands.

I now call upon a member of the Steering Committee to move Item 533. This is the moving en bloc provision.

Member of the Steering Committee: I move “That paragraphs 2 and 3 stand part of the Canon.”

The Chair: Is there any debate on that? I see nobody standing. In which case we move to vote on Item 533.

The motion

‘That paragraphs 2 and 3 stand part of the Canon.’

was carried on a show of hands.

I am going to break briefly into this part of the business because while we have been at work Bishop Ismail Gabriel, the Bishop of Sudan, has arrived, and I know the Archbishop of York wants to formally welcome him.

The Archbishop of York (The Most Revd & Rt Hon. Dr John Sentamu): Thank you, Professor Clarke. Professor Ismail Gabriel of the Episcopal Church of Sudan is Bishop of the Diocese of El Obeid in Western Sudan and also includes Darfur, an area of large conflict, so he therefore presides over a suffering church. He is visiting us at General Synod today and is sitting in the gallery just behind me over there.

For 30 years there has been a link between the Diocese of Bradford, now part of West Yorkshire and the Dales, and the five dioceses of Sudan, that is the Republic as it is at the moment. Bishop Gabriel has also recently been made Dean of internal Province of Sudan. We welcome him and wish you well.

The Chair: Rather more prosaically we move back to business. Having completed the revision stage for the draft Amending Canon, we come next to the Convocations (Elections to Upper House) (Amendment) Resolution.

CONVOCATIONS (ELECTIONS TO UPPER HOUSE) (AMENDMENT) RESOLUTION 201 – (GS 1903A)

No notice of amendment has been given in respect of paragraphs 1-5 and no member has indicated a desire to speak against any of these paragraphs. Having already given permission under Standing Order 55(c) that paragraphs 1-5 be moved en bloc, I now call upon a member of the Steering Committee to move Item 534, “That paragraphs 1-5 stand part of the Resolution.”
Member of the Steering Committee: I do so move.

The Chair: Is there any debate on that simple motion? I see nobody standing. In which case we move to vote on Item 534.

The motion

‘That paragraphs 1-5 stand part of the Resolution.’

was carried on a show of hands.

That completes the revision stage for the draft Resolution which is now committed to the Steering Committee in respect of final drafting.

We turn next to the revision of the Clergy Representation Rules (Amendment) Resolution.

CLERGY REPRESENTATION RULES (AMENDMENT) RESOLUTION 201 – (GS 1904A)

Simon Killwick, would you confirm that you are not pursuing your amendments?

The Revd Canon Simon Killwick (Manchester): Yes, I do so confirm as they are obviously consequential on the previous thing, but I am very glad that the constituency has been radically reformed.

The Chair: We now turn to Item 537 and I call on Canon Chris Sugden to move his amendment to Item 537.

The Revd Canon Dr Christopher Sugden (Oxford): Chair, I understand, just to formally move, because I understand Synod have passed this amendment in substance and, therefore, it is a formal movement that the consequential amendments are carried, is that correct?

The Chair: That is, indeed, correct.

The Revd Canon Dr Christopher Sugden (Oxford): I formally move. Do you need to speak, Steering Committee?

Member of Steering Committee: The Steering Committee is grateful for this consequential amendment. Because the item under 531 was passed and the mind of Synod has been declared, the Steering Committee is happy to accept the amendment under 537.

The Chair: Do I see anyone desiring to speak? I see nobody standing, in which case I put Item 537 to the vote.

The amendment was carried on a show of hands.

I now call upon Canon Mike Parsons to move the amendment in his name at Item
The Revd Canon Michael Parsons (Gloucester): Chair, this is intended as a helpful piece of clarification. Theological colleges and courses, particularly the courses who employ a lot of sessional teachers, some of whom are on contracts and, therefore, could claim to be part of the universities’ constituency but may only teach one course a year, this is simply intended to ensure that the people included in the universities’ constituency are predominantly employed as teachers and researches in theological institutions. Thank you. I do move the amendment.

The Chair: Thank you. A member of the Steering Committee?

Member of Steering Committee: The Steering Committee is happy to accept this amendment and, if it is not carried, the effect would be that somebody who just did a bit of teaching in a theological college for half a day every other Thursday would be included in the universities’ constituency, and we do not think that that is the intention of this and so we hope that Synod will support it.

The Chair: Anyone standing for debate? Can we put that item to the vote?

The amendment was carried on a show of hands.

Can I have a member of the Steering Committee to move Item 539?

Member of Steering Committee: I do so move.

The Chair: Does anyone wish to debate this? I see nobody standing. I put that to the vote.

The motion

‘That paragraph 1 as amended stand part of the Resolution.’

was carried on a show of hands.

I now call upon a member of the Steering Committee to move Item 540.

Member of Steering Committee: I do so move.

The Chair: I see no one standing for debate. We will put that to the vote.

The motion

‘That paragraph 2 stand part of the Resolution.’

was carried on a show of hands.

No Notice of Amendment has been given in respect of paragraphs 3 to 16 and no member has indicated a desire to speak against any of these paragraphs. Having already given permission under Standing Order 55(c) that paragraphs 3 to 16 can be moved en bloc, I call upon a member of the Steering Committee so to do.
Member of Steering Committee: I do so move.

The Chair: Do I see any desire for debate? I do not. We will put that to the vote.

The motion

‘That paragraphs 3-16 stand part of the Resolution.’

was carried on a show of hands.

That completes the revision stage for the draft Resolution, which is now committed to Steering Committee with respect to final drafting.

CHURCH REPRESENTATION RULES (AMENDMENT [(NO. 2)] RESOLUTION 201 - (GS 1905A)

The Chair: We come, finally, to the revision of the Church Representation Rules (Amendment) Resolution. No Notice of Amendment has been given in respect of paragraphs 1 and 2 and no member has indicated a desire to speak against either of these paragraphs. Having already given permission under Standing Order 55(c) that paragraphs 1 and 2 be moved en bloc, I now call upon a member of the Steering Committee so to do.

Member of Steering Committee: I do so move.

The Chair: I see nobody standing desiring debate, so we put that to the vote.

The motion

‘That paragraphs 1 and 2 stand part of the Resolution.’

was carried on a show of hands.

Can I now call upon Mr Clive Scowen to move the amendment standing in his name at 543. Mr Scowen?

Mr Clive Scowen (London): I am aware that fewer than 40 members stood on the question of the apportionment of seats between Convocations and, of course, this is the same principle with regard to the House of Laity. However, I do think it is a separate issue to some extent, not least because at least one of the arguments deployed against my proposal on the Convocations does not apply because it was said that we would finish up with far too few members in the Lower House of the Convocation of York. Well, of course, that simply does not apply with the House of Laity because we are not divided that way with separate Houses for the two provinces.

The arguments I deployed before stand. This is a matter of justice and fairness and it cannot simply be dismissed: Oh, it is not a matter of sums. The whole principle upon which we apportion seats generally in this Synod is based on sums. It is based
on how many people you have on an electoral roll or the aggregate of electoral rolls in dioceses, and how many clergy you have. It is sums. All I am asking for is a consistency in the democratic and justice principle in how we use those sums, so that it is not sums on some occasions and not on others. In responding to my proposal on the Convocations, Mr Tattersall drew attention to how far it was from Carlisle to London. I cannot argue with that. It is actually quite a long way from Truro to London as well, but that does not seem to count. There are quite a lot of places in England where getting to London is inconvenient and might deter people from taking part, and I am aware that as a London member I am peculiarly advantaged in that way, as are others from dioceses in the South-East. There is, however, nothing in the Canons or the Standing Orders or the Church Representation Rules that says that all Synodically related business has to be done in London, as our presence here rather demonstrates. It is possible to do more stuff out of London. I am a member of the Mission and Public Affairs Council. We meet three times a year. One of those meetings is always outside London, we do not always necessarily make it to the northern province, but we do get out of London. We were in Birmingham this year. If that can work for MPA, then it seems to me other bodies can move. The argument that it is an inconvenience to the staff, which undoubtedly it would be, does not seem to me to be an insuperable argument because at the end of the day the staff are paid officers and that has to be balanced against the inconvenience to volunteer members. That is a matter that can be considered on each occasion that it arises.

So if the concern here is to have more members from the North in order to enable there to be enough people to travel to London, let us honour that concern not just for the North but also for the South-West, which is also a very long way away, and let us make our Synodical activity outside of the full chamber of this Synod something that we do more regularly out of London. Now that would certainly inconvenience me and a lot of London members, but that is probably only right by comparison with the inconvenience to others from elsewhere. So I do invite you to say, at least in respect of the House of Laity, that sums matter. Sums are a way of doing justice and fairness and it should be done consistently and any other special pleading based on distance can be addressed in other ways. Thank you, Synod.

The Chair: Member of the Steering Committee?

Mr Geoffrey Tattersall (Manchester): Can I ask Synod to try and resist the blandishments and the seduction of Mr Scowen. Mr Scowen and I are both practising lawyers. We like tidiness, I am afraid. It would be really rather odd if we had a proportion of 70:30 in the House of Clergy and a proportion of 72:28 in the House of Laity. I think we really do need to make our legislation consistent. Can I say this. This is not about how long it takes to travel from Carlisle to London. It is about the fact that most things are in London and it is about the proposition, which I hope that most people would agree with, that this is not just about numerical fairness. Numerical fairness is not a good test of fairness. So we ask the Synod to resist this amendment.

The Chair: Do I see 40 members standing? No, I do not. In which case, is there any general debate? I see nobody standing and, indeed, it lapses.
We then move to Item 545. Can I ask Revd Christopher Hobbs if he wishes to pursue this?

_The Revd Christopher Hobbs (London):_ I withdraw the amendment, Sir.

_The Chair:_ You simply do not move it. It would follow, thank you very much indeed.

We then move to Item 546 and I ask a member of the Steering Committee to propose.

<Member of Steering Committee: _I do so move._

_The Chair:_ I see nobody standing for debate. That goes to the vote.

_The amendment was carried on a show of hands._

Mr Scowen again, Item 547, the amendment standing in your name.

_Mr Clive Scowen (London):_ Chair, I know when I am beat. This was consequential really on the previous one, so I withdraw it.

_The Chair:_ Thank you for that. I call upon a member of the Steering Committee to move Item 549, "That the paragraph to be inserted in the Resolution."

<Member of Steering Committee: _Can I just, before I move it, thank Synod for its contributions and the hard work this morning and you will see us again on Tuesday morning to polish off this. It is actually worth saying before I move that we need to complete this business in this group of sessions if we are going to reach the point where these changes can come into effect in time for the elections next year. So we do need you to stay and be here and vote on Tuesday if you want to see these things enacted that we have decided this morning. I move that paragraphs 4 to 20 stand part of the Resolution._

_The Chair:_ I see nobody standing. We go straight to the vote.

_The motion

‘That paragraphs 4-20 stand part of the Resolution.’

_was carried on a show of hands._

That completes the revision stage for the draft Resolution, which is now committed to the Steering Committee in respect of its final drafting. I thank you for your patience through what has been a hot and sometimes complicated debate. Thank you very much indeed.

THE CHAIR _Mr Geoffrey Tattersall (Manchester)_ took the Chair at 12.40 pm
LEGISLATIVE BUSINESS

DRAFT CARE OF CHURCHES AND ECCLESIASTICAL JURISDICTION (AMENDMENT) MEASURE (GS 1919A): DRAFT MEASURE FOR REVISION: REPORT BY THE REVISION COMMITTEE (GS 1919Y)

The Chair: So we now come to Item 518, the Report of the Revision Committee on the Draft Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure for which members will need the draft Measure, GS 1919A, and the report of the Revision Committee, GS 1919Y. I am asked to refer you to paragraphs 10 and 11 of the fourth Notice Paper which deals with financial implications. I call upon the Chair of the Revision Committee, the Very Revd David Brindley, the Dean of Portsmouth, to move the motion, "That the Synod do take note of this report." The Dean may speak for not more than ten minutes.

The Dean of Portsmouth (The Very Revd David Brindley): Thank you, Chair. It is pretty late on a Saturday morning to begin to discuss the nether regions of faculty legislation. It is not everyone’s idea of thrilling, but I hope you will be persuaded that the amendments to this Measure are important not only for the care of our historic buildings but also for the mission of the Church in our parishes. It will, we hope, ease the administrative burden on parishes and make the whole process much easier. The proposed Measure follows the work of the Faculty Simplification Group and is aimed at making the process clearer to understand and less cumbersome in operation. The draft Measures makes a number of changes to legislation. Clause 3 provides for greater flexibility and the removal of duplication in relation to consultation with DACs. Clause 4 relaxes the provisions of the Disused Burial Grounds Act 1884 so that the restrictions which are placed on building on closed churchyards are removed, or at least modified. Clause 7 allows the appellate court to intervene in faculty proceedings where there is unacceptable delay in the consistory courts. Clause 9 allows procedural matters relating to appeals to be dealt with by a single judge instead of the four appeal courts. The most significant provision, however, is clause 5 which provides for the establishment on a national basis of lists of repairs and other works that can be undertaken without the need for a faculty. The provision is flexible in that it allows conditions to be imposed when undertaking works in the list, including in particular a condition to obtain approval from the archdeacon before going ahead, but leaves it open to the Rule Committee to decide on a case by case basis what, if any, conditions need to be imposed. So within that framework the Revision Committee looked in detail at the whole Measure and gave detailed consideration to the following points.

Clause 4 proposes that the legislation currently preventing the erection of buildings on disused burial grounds should be relaxed. The Committee was entirely content with this provision and agreed it should be included in the Measure. Since the Committee met, we have heard from the Ministry of Justice (the Department that covers burial law), that they are happy with the policy of relaxing the use of closed churchyards. In a written submission to the Revision Committee, Simon Cawdell made the helpful suggestion that the Chancellor should seek the advice of the DAC before exercising his power to exclude a particular parish in special circumstances from having the benefit of the list of works that can be undertaken without faculty. There may be various reasons for this. A building which has areas of special interest may have them excluded from the simplified procedure; or a church which has
repeatedly failed in the past to comply with faculty regulation may need to be in special measures, the equivalent of the DAC naughty corner, so that a closer eye is kept on its works. The Committee not only accepted Simon Cawdell’s proposal but expanded it so as to require the Chancellor to seek the DAC’s advice before exercising this power. Tony Redman proposed an insertion of new clauses about the review and length of term of diocesan chancellors. The Committee entirely accepted that chancellors need to engage with bishops and others in their diocese, but their constitutional position as independent judges means that they cannot be treated in the same way as other diocesan officeholders. Nevertheless, the Committee was grateful for Mr Redman’s proposals because it provided us with an opportunity to learn of the arrangements for judicial training and engagement with bishops that has already happening and which suggested there is no need to put it on a statutory putting. In my own diocese, where I am Chair of the DAC, we regularly meet with the archdeacons, the chancellor and others to discuss current matters of interest.

Tim Allen, a member of the Revision Committee, proposed a new clause be inserted to increase the breadth of experience on the Rule Committee by including a DAC Chair and DAC Secretary when it is making rules concerned with faculty jurisdiction, and the Committee accepted this suggestion which is outlined in paragraphs 53 to 56 of the reports. As a serving Chair of the DAC I have every confidence that this Measure will speed up and simplify our workings and will be of great benefit to parishes and so, therefore, Mr Chair, I beg to move that Synod do take note of this report.

The Chair: This matter is now open for debate.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

Canon Timothy Allen (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich): Chair, as another serving DAC Chair I know that unnecessary complexities to the faculty system are a bane. They absorb energy and hold back mission by deterring parishes, especially small rural parishes, from maintaining and adapting their church buildings for present day mission and community needs. There is one aspect of this simplification Measure which is really worthwhile. This shall be implemented by clauses 5 and 6, the gist of which is as follows. As many Synod members will know, the present law provides that chancellors may issue a *de minimis* list, a list of items of work on a church or objects to be introduced into a church which, being very minor, are not likely to do much harm and which may, therefore, be undertaken without faculty. Clause 5 will allow the Rule Committee to issue a further list of rather more substantial works or objects which may be undertaken or introduced without faculty, so long as the proposal is approved by the archdeacon, on the basis that the archdeacon first consults the DAC or some of its members or offices. I am reasonably confident that this relaxation of the Rules will be safe and will be valuable to parishes since the reform reflects an approach which we invented a few years ago in St Edmundbury and Ipswich DAC with the helpful co-operation of our archdeacons, our registrar and our chancellor in order to reduce the burden on our parishes. We are doing this already in Suffolk, Chair, and it works, so please support its introduction to all dioceses.
Finally, may I draw attention to clause 6, which, as the Chairman of the Revision Committee kindly said, I succeeded in introducing with his assistance at the Revision Committee. This will ensure that the Rule Committee is well advised by hands-on experts on DAC work and so is more likely to make a competent job of drafting the new lists. Taking clauses 5 and 6 together, we have a worthwhile reform. Please support it. Thank you, Chair.

The Ven. Michael Everitt (Blackburn): Thank you for calling me and for the Committee's work. This is my first speech and whilst that I had hoped that such an action would be clearly intentionally evangelistic, I am reminded of a conversation ten years ago with my Muslim bank manager in Lancashire when she told me that she was helping me in the areas that she could help me in to enable me to be able to focus on those areas that I needed as a priest to be properly engaged with. As a parish priest, I would approach matters that required faculties with great care. Whilst fully understanding the need for due process and a mechanism to ensure that our churches were properly cared for, protected and any major works to be suitable, there were many times that I desired a more time-efficient, less onerous, less paperwork dominated system for the more mundane and routine areas. As an Archdeacon, I see that I was not alone. I note that for many PCCs, church wardens and clergy, our faculty system with the requirements for formal consultations with the DAC, often involving waiting for the monthly meeting, followed by 28 days' notice and then a further period of time awaiting the decision either by the chancellor or by me as Archdeacon, whilst entirely appropriate on major matters or on those that might be contentious or that would have an impact that stakeholders and interested parties might well have a helpful contribution to assist in, often it was in those areas that fall to an archdeacon to determine in the faculty, often this potential delay of two to three months in the initial inquiry caused frustration and a distraction at the local level of the Church leadership from its primary duties. As an Archdeacon, the new system should not add too much to our duties and with suitable contributions with our DACs to gain the appropriate expertise, it will allow the faculty system to be able to facilitate at an appropriate speed and enable the clergy and local church to be liberated to be intentionally evangelistic. I encourage people to support.

The Chair: Can I just point out to Synod before we go any further that we are due to complete this item of business in a few minutes, literally in two and a half minutes. It is not my fault, honest. Under Standing Order 14(e), I may, with the general consent of the Synod, extend this sitting by no more than 15 minutes in order that we may complete the business. I propose that there should be an extension of not more than 15 minutes. Does the Synod give its consent to that? It would obviously help to try and finish as much of the business this morning as we can, so would the Synod consent to that?

This motion was put and carried.

The Revd Jeremy Fletcher (York): One of the pressures of living 15 minutes away from this chamber is that there is a great temptation to pop back if life is difficult here and there are fun things back at home. I have just missed out on a "Gruffalo's Child" family event this morning. But it will be even more difficult to resist this afternoon because we are taking up fitted carpet in the nave of Beverley Minster. It has been the result of a fabulous process between the DAC and the Archdeacon and our PCC,
achieved in record time and at maximum convenience for everybody; and I wish I
could see it as it was happening, but I will be staying here. This Measure that we are
talking about will enable such helpful processes to happen across the Church.
Beverley Minster has an inordinate number of faculties to apply for because we are
of a complexity akin to the great cathedrals. But it will also help Roos, my other
parish which has a PCC and a congregation of eight and it will help us with that
pressure too. So I look forward to the work of the Rule Committee in producing
those lists, A and B, and I am very pleased that I was a part of the Committee which
agreed that we should have DAC members on the Rule Committee for that point.

I will be praying particularly for, and doing all I can, to help resource our
Archdeacons in the enhanced role that they will be playing in all of this. I do wonder
if they and the parishes that they are trying to assist, particularly with list B, might be
assisted by some kind of pro forma, if only to provide a credible record to be kept
because these things need to be transparent. For archdeacons it will be lots of
paperwork and lots of rules and lots of processes. It would drive me nuts, but
because of the time it will save and the good it will do, all of this is mission, Jim, but
not as we know it.

Mr Paul Hancock (Liverpool): Point of Order. Do you accept a motion for closure,
Chair, on Item 518?

The Chair: Yes, that has my consent. I call upon the Dean to respond to the debate,
please. You have no more than five minutes but you have promised to be much
shorter.

The Dean of Portsmouth (The Very Revd David Brindley): Thank you, Chair.
Thanks to those who have contributed and to those who wrote in and commented
during the work of the Revision Committee. Very brief comments. Firstly, thanks to
Tim Allen for supporting that and particularly for the amendment which we took from
him. To both Mike Everitt and Jeremy Fletcher, yes, the role of archdeacons is very,
very important under the new system, but we do think that we are giving them
enough help and back-up and training. There have already been meetings to
explain the system to archdeacons and we are also at the moment testing an online
faculty application system which will allow a parish to fill it in online, for the
Archdeacon DAC Secretary to see what is being filled in and for the Archdeacon DA
Secretary to help as that is going along. So not only are we trying to simplify the
actual rules of what is in and out of faculty, but also the application system should be
much simplified once the road testing of the new system has happened. So I think
that is all I need to say, thank you, Chair. I commend the report to Synod.

The Chair: Very good. We come to vote on 518.

The motion

‘That the Synod do take note of this Report.’

was carried on a show of hands.

We now move to the revision stage of the Measure. As no notice has been given of
any amendments to particular clauses and no members have indicated that they wish to speak against those clauses, I give my permission under Standing Order 55(c) to the clauses being taken en bloc. Therefore, we move to Item 550. Will a member of the Steering Committee, please, put that to the Synod?

The Right Worshipful Charles George QC (Ex officio): I so move.

The Chair: Very eloquently done too. Do I see anybody standing? I do not. I put the matter, therefore, to the vote on 550.

The motion

‘That clauses 1-10 stand part of the Measure.’

was carried on a show of hands.

And we come to 551, which is, “That the Long Title do stand part of the Measure.” Again, the Dean of the Arches.

The Right Worshipful Charles George QC (ex officio): I so move, but may I also crave the leave of the Chairman and of Synod to note the fact that this is the last Synod which will be attended by Anne Sloman, as Chair of the CBC, and I am sure that we would all like to express our gratitude to her for her contribution to this particular Measure, which has been enormous, and for all the work that she has done for us all over what is now many years. There is a new word which has come into being, which is to be "Slomanne", but that is only a tribute to how successful she has been in achieving the common aim. But I move. I have already moved the Long Title.

The Chair: Well, this is matter is open to debate. I see no one standing and so I put the matter to the vote on 551.

The motion

‘That the Long Title stand part of the Measure.’

was carried on a show of hands.

That completes the revision stage of the Draft Care of Churches Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure, and the Measure now stands committed to the Steering Committee in respect of its final draft. Thank you very much.

THE CHAIR The Archdeacon of Buckingham (The Ven. Karen Gorman) (Oxford) took the Chair at 2.30 pm.

‘THE UNCOMMON GOOD’: PRESENTATION BY THE REVD JIM WALLIS

The Chair: Good afternoon, Synod. We come now to Item 11 on our agenda, the ‘UnCommon Good’, and a presentation under Standing Order 97 by the Revd Jim Wallis, and we have until 3.15 for this item. Mr Wallis’ presentation will be followed
by a short time for questions before we move into groups beginning at 3.30. We reconvene again here at 5 o’clock to continue the debate at Item 12. Hopefully everything will flow as we go through.

Jim Wallis come to Synod at the personal invitation of the Archbishop of York and has rearranged his schedule to be with us this weekend. His biographical details can be found on the fourth Notice Paper. I now call upon Mr Wallis to address Synod on the topic of ‘The Un-Common Good’ and on behalf of us all, I welcome him.

The Revd Jim Wallis: Good afternoon. It is afternoon, right? I feel very honoured and blessed to be here with you for these few days. Joy Carroll, to whom I am blessed to be married, was a member of this Synod a long time ago, and she would love to be here, but one of us has to be with our young kids most of the time so we keep switching off. I am also quite blessed to be reading the materials you all have been doing on this topic of the Common Good. I have to say that I do not think that I am aware of any church in the world right now doing as much work on this subject. That I find very encouraging.

The Common Good has become quite uncommon. That is a tremendous problem and, for us, a great opportunity. I wonder if you know what the largest growing religious affiliation in America now is? What would you guess? The largest growing religious affiliation?

“None of the above”. That is the box they check. Many young people check that box: I call them the “Nones” - N-O-N-E-S. I love the “nones”. I love the other nuns too. In fact, the other nuns years ago, when I would go out to speak early on at very conservative Christian colleges in the Mid West, I would see two rows of Catholic sisters fully dressed in their ecclesial garb and I would say, “Sisters, what are you doing here?” They would say, “Well, Jim, we are locals.” I would say, “I suspected that, but why are you here?” “Jim, this is a very, very, very conservative place so we thought somebody should have your back!” So I have had nuns as bodyguards for years!

But I love these “nones” because most of the “nones” believe in God. They say that. They just do not want to affiliate with religion because of what we have or have not done. I think to aim at this ancient idea for you, and for all of us, presents us with an amazing opportunity to actually shape public life, which is failing in most of our countries, and I would say (because I still call myself an evangelical) it would be evangelistic to a whole bunch of people called “nones”, because what they are attracted to are those who are doing something to change their communities. When Christians actually say and do what many people think Christians are supposed to be saying and doing, two things happen: first, they are surprised, and then they are attracted.

Pope Francis has transformed the conversation around the world with these young people who come to me all the time and want to talk to me about Pope Francis, a whole new generation, and, as he says himself, “I am not trying to be a celebrity or a superman”; his job description is the ‘Vicar of Christ’ and he is doing his job, I think, quite well.
We have all heard the stories. My favourite one is less known. There is the kissing of the feet of disfigured men and women, and all these things, but the first night he was apparently sleeping as the Pope in the guest house, he walked out and there was this huge Swiss Guard, a big, tall guy and he says, “Who are you?” He says, “I’m your guard.” “What are you doing?” “I am guarding you.” “Really? Where’s your chair?” “I am not allowed to sit.” “Who says?” “My commandant”, he says, “I’m the new commandant”, and he went inside and got him a chair. “Have you eaten?” “No, I’m not allowed ...” He went inside and made him a sandwich and brought it back. This is the kind of thing that people are really fascinated by. It is changing a conversation.

Here is a quotation:

“This is a rule of a most perfect Christianity, his most exact definition, its highest point, namely, the seeking of the Common Good ... for nothing can so make a person an imitator of Christ as caring for his neighbours”, said John Chrysostom (c 347-407). This goes back a long way; an ancient idea that we have just simply forgotten.

Let me just say, having come from the political battles of Washington DC, the Common Good is absent in what is now the most dysfunctional political city in the world. Absent. Quietly, behind the scenes, there is a hunger for it, even among some of those politicians who are privately saying, “It has never felt this bad. I wish we could find some way forward.”

We want to say to the world, “Our life together can be better”. It is as simple as that. Our life together can be better. Ours is such a shallow and selfish age and we are in need of conversion from looking out for just ourselves and our tribe and our party and our bubble and our group and our class and our race. Look out for one another. Jesus announced the Kingdom of God; a new order meant to be in sharp contrast with all of the political and religious kingdoms of the world. That better way of living was meant not just to benefit his followers, but, indeed, everybody else, too. That is part of the point of it. This is a call to a relationship that changes all of our relationships.

I do not know if it came over here but there was this documentary on the History Channel in the US about the Bible, a whole dramatic thing, and the kids love to see all the drama, so we watched it. Mark and Roma, the Hollywood directors who did this, sent me some clips of it beforehand just to have a comment on it, and the one I liked best is here is Jesus, he is at the Sea of Galilee and here is Peter out in the boat and Jesus, the character, walks into the water and climbs in the boat. Peter says, “Who are you; what are you doing?” And he says, “Cast your net over the side”. You know the story. “There’s no fish” and he says, “Go ahead, cast” and the fish come pouring in. “How did you do that?” said Peter, “How did you do that?” The Jesus character did not answer the question but he instead said, “Follow me, I will make you a fisher of persons”, and then Peter asks the best question, “What are we going to do? What are we going to do?” And the Jesus character in the story says, “Change the world!” - change the world.
I grew up in a church where the answer would have been something like, “Well, let’s see; we’re going to save a few people from hell and judge all the others.” Not a great basis for a movement here, you know!

So Mark and Roma came to DC for their première and they said, “Did we get that right? That phrase wasn’t in the text ‘change the world’, but the more we read the text, isn’t it really about that?” Jesus came to change the world and us with it. So, for us the Church fathers’ aim of the Common Good makes so much sense.

In your materials which I was so happy to read, you talked about how the summation of the ethics and law, says Jesus, is to love God with all your heart and soul, your mind, everything. That comes first. But right immediately after, “… love your neighbour as yourself”, and the more I read this and worked on this and went on sabbatical for this, it went deeper and deeper what this means.

I just left my boys on a week-long vacation with my siblings and their kids. Parents will know what I mean when I say until Joy and I had Luke and Jack I did not know that I could love anyone or anything like I love those boys. I just did not know that I had that in me. I see nodding heads around the room. Loving your neighbour as yourself means that you have to love other people’s children like you love your own.

That was meant to be a transformational ethic and it is; supposed to be, is, has been. What does it mean to love those 50,000 undocumented, unaccompanied minors coming to our borders right now in Washington DC on their own, six-year-old kids, fleeing the violence in Honduras and Guatemala. What does it mean to love them like I love Luke and Jack? This ethic is the spiritual foundation for the Common Good. Self-concern is the personal and political ethic that dominates our world today. Loving our neighbour is what will restore our credibility again as the church. If we do not do this in practical, concrete ways, in places that people can see, the next generation is just going to move on from religion. They are just going to move on.

But what they are drawn to is people who in their communities are really solving what needs to be solved. In Washington DC they do not even attempt to solve problem. They want to make us afraid of the problem and blame it on the other side and then take a poll and have an election. When I was here last time the big debate over Syria was going on, and what the Prime Minister would get and would he support the American President, and no, he did not get what he wanted, and all of the conversation in your meeting was about that. Conservatives lose; Labour wins. Nothing about the millions of refugees in Syria; the human beings who are in such jeopardy. It was all about who wins, who loses. That is all that happens in DC now. They do not govern any more. They are running for office every day; who wins and who loses. The problems, though, deepen, and nobody has even addressed them.

When smart, caring young people see the problems - and they do see them - they are looking for who is going to address the problems. Religion makes a big mistake when its primary public posture is to protect itself and its own interests. We do much better when we lead and actually care about the needs of everybody, not just in our own community but in a pluralist democracy, that we in fact inspire and serve in ways that people say, “Huh! I wonder why they do that? Why are they acting
against the interests of their tribe and class and their race?” I say it at home all the
time and get in trouble for it; most American Christians are clearly Americans first
and Christians second or third or fourth. That is just an observation. Our sociology
trumps our theology again and again. It is supposed to be the other way around.
Who will offer that kind of leadership?

This is an old idea. Catholic social teaching, as you have discussed in your papers, I
think still leads the way on this. You can go back - and I will not in the time we have
go through it all - and go through it all, but I love what the document, the Second
Vatican Council, Pope John XXIII said: “According to its primary and broadly
accepted sense, the ‘Common Good’ indicates the sum total of social conditions
which allow people, either in groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfillment more
fully and more easily, or, as many would say, human flourishing.

I love the way Desmond Tutu talks about ubuntu, the South African notion of the
Common Good, and that we cannot find fulfilment in ourselves apart from each
other. That is clearly what ubuntu is all about. We are connected to one another.

Pope Francis in his inaugural Mass said this on the Pope’s role:
“... he must open his arms to protect all of God’s people and embrace with tender
affection the whole of humanity, especially the poorest, the weakest, the least
important, those whom Matthew lists in the final judgment on love: the hungry, the
thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick and those in prison” (Matthew 25).

That was my conversion text. I was kicked out of my little church when I was 14
years old over the issue of race. The elders said, “Jim, you have to understand,
Christianity has nothing to do with racism: that is political; our faith is personal.” For
a 14-year-old kid, that is the night that I left in my head and in my heart, and I was
gone in the student movements of my time, and I did not have words to go around
that then, but I do now. God is personal. God wants a personal relationship. God
knows everything about each of us in this room and wants a relationship with us
anyway. God is personal but never private - never private - and the privatising of
faith has led to people walking away.

I think the Pope is changing that. He is calling the Church and society back to the
ethic of the Common Good. For her part, he says the Church always works for the
integral development of every person. The Church encourages those in power to be
truly at the service of the Common Good of their people. At Davos this year, the
World Economic Forum, I was able to be there on the opening night and the Pope
had a letter read. All the CEOs were there, and he said “humanity should be served
by wealth, not ruled by it” - served by wealth, not ruled by it.

Pope Francis loves to laugh and is always smiling. I like that about him. The title of
his most controversial encyclical about the global economy is The Joy of the Gospel.
This joy is a revolution; a revolution of love.

Let me give you a case study. Let me explain it the way I explain it to my son Jack’s
fifth grade class. Immigration is a big issue for many of us back in the US. It has
united the churches like nothing has ever done before. The Southern Baptists have
joined Sojourners. The Chamber of Commerce has joined us. We call it Bibles
Badges Business: business, law enforcement and the faith community. We are together on this. I have given lots of talks on this topic, but the most important one I think might have been last year when my son’s fifth grade class asked me to come and talk to it because they were studying immigration. So I did and I laid out the history, how in the US, all of us except for Native Americans are immigrants from some place, some came on slave ships; others came by choice. When I explained there are 11 million undocumented people living in the shadows who cannot get good healthcare without fear of deportation, who cannot protect themselves from law enforcement, there are 1,100 deportations every day that separate families and kids from parents, these kids looked at me and said, “Why don’t we fix this? Why don’t the Congress fix this?” It is a very natural question for a smart fifth grader. I said, “Because they tell me they are afraid.” The kids said, “What are they afraid of?” I looked at my son’s fifth grade class – African American, Latino, Asian American, Native American, White, Somali, Australian - I looked at them and I said, “They are afraid of you. They are afraid you represent the future of America and they don’t think that will work. Tell me: does it work?” All the kids said, “Oh yeah, it’s working great. It’s really cool.” I said, “Well, you’ve got to convince the rest of the country this is really cool.” This in front of me was the “beloved community” that Martin Luther King Jr talked about and the Bible is full of. The Body of Christ is not “admirably” multi-cultural/multi-racial; we are intrinsically, essentially multi-cultural/multi-racial. We are a global community that brings the tribes altogether, and that is our vision of the Common Good down the road in the future. Paul Ryan, who was Mitt Romney’s vice-Presidential candidate, called me one day (he and I disagree on budget issues a lot but he called) and said, “I want your help on immigration.” I went to see him and he said, “You’ve got a grass-roots movement that is influencing the Right and the Republicans as well as the Left and the Democrats across the boundaries.” This was a movement of faith where we said families must be kept together. The economy will be improved by this. There will be more tax money. We will have better law enforcement. The Common Good made commonsense. Most Common Good issues make commonsense and from them we can find common ground. There are always fears - in this case I think political and racial fear; in other cases it is special interest. When 400 Americans have more wealth than 150 million Americans do, you have inequality like we have never seen before. That is a Biblical issue. The Common Good has to address all of that. It gets practical.

I was at a conference on the Congo. Dirty minerals in the Congo are making our cell phones. The room was full of NGOs and CEOs and I was the lunchtime religious speaker, which means I had got to inspire them over their bad sandwiches. I said, “Take out your cell phones.” I said, “No, I mean it, take them out”, and they did and I said, “Hold your cell phones up.” I said, “For most of you, this is your ‘significant other’. You spend more time every day with this thing than any person or anything else in the world. This is your significant other.” Then I read them the parable of the Good Samaritan. I searched for the question, a lawyer says to Jesus, “Who is my neighbour?” What you do not know from the text is it was a Washington lawyer, because I know that tone of voice. It was not, “Who is my neighbour; how can I help?” It was, “All right, so just who is my neighbour?” In the text it was, “The one who was from a different region, different ethnicity, who did not know this stranger and who was risking himself by helping, he crossed all these boundaries and made someone his neighbour who had never been thought to be his neighbour before.
That is how I want you to do this."

I read the story to them. They were not a religious group at all, but they knew the story. I said, "So that means whoever helped to make your cell phone or whose life was impacted by it, that person is your neighbour. So how do we start talking about turning supply chains into value chains? What does that look like? Supply chains into value chains.

These are the practical things that even at Davos are being talked about. I was with the Occupy Movement kids two weeks after they started to come. I went out and talked to them. I was at a World Economic Forum meeting five days later, the only one at both sessions, the issues were the same: this inequality, the lack of trust. People have lost trust in politics and economics. I have seen your polls too. We have lost trust in politicians and economics. We have lost trust in the simple institutions of our society. We have lost trust. How do we restore that trust again? Broken social contracts. This year at Davos they put up this thing called the ‘New Social Covenant’ around the values of human dignity, the Common Good and stewardship. When quarterly profit and loss shareholder results are your metric you are in serious trouble. Indigenous people say you evaluate decisions today by their impact on the seventh generation out. Look at those two metrics and how different they are. Short-termism is destroying the Common Good in economies and politics. It is quarterly shareholder profit and loss statements, not even stakeholders. The stakeholder means your workers and your consumers and the environment and, yes, the next generation. Those are all stakeholders. The conversation about short-termism is alive and well, even in somewhere like Davos. How do we change the conversation in places like that and in our politics?

In Washington DC they literally cannot look past the next month or two. They just cannot. Quietly they share their hunger for that but they do not know how to do it. What would it mean for us, not just in politics but in our family life, our communities, our neighbourhoods? The Common Good will come last to Washington and London and Wall Street. Last. It will come first in social movements. It has always been that way. It is always social movements. When Wilberforce stood up and gave his first speech about the anti-slave trade campaign, he was laughed at. At the end, he was applauded and a prairie fire swept the UK because of a spiritual revival, creating a social movement that changed the notion of the Common Good and that is what changes politics. So we have that movement on immigration in the US. I would encourage you and your work groups to look at what issues in this country are sorely neglected and in fact could be impacted by a whole people taking them on right from the bottom, their own neighbourhoods, parishes, communities, right from the bottom. How could those things change?

Our next issue: we will win immigration. The only law makers’ question now is how many more people suffer. That is the only question. How many more will suffer? They tell me it will pass. They promise it will pass. I said, “So you are going to make people suffer for another year?” and they said, “Yes”. The next issue for us will be mass incarceration, a totally broken criminal justice system, totally unfair and no-one is taking it on from Left or Right, so the churches could take that on. Trafficking - there are so many questions that we could play a critical role in and when we do that we are revitalising our mission at the smallest, most local level, bringing people back
to saying, “Why do you people do this?” and then we tell them why, but also shaping politics and even economics. Klaus Schwab at Davos was talking about the need for a ‘moral economy’. On the wall of their big halls they have this mission statement “Committed to improving the state of the world”. Astonishingly, I was asked to give the closing remarks last year. I said, “That is the mission statement right there. It has not been talked about all week.” “Committed to improving the state of the world”.

So in the time we are going to have now I want you to ask yourselves what you are going to do when you go home to your workplace to provide leadership to implementing that mission statement. Remember, Mandela taught us leadership is not about skills; it is about sacrifice. What are we willing to sacrifice for it? The true leaders are willing to sacrifice for the things they believe.

We had a cellist after the spoken word who played while the CEOs bowed their heads - it was funny to watch - and asked what they were going to do when they went back home. Davos called it ‘a leap of faith’. Even in that, I would have thought years ago, foreign circle to our conversations, they are hungry for what we would call the Common Good.

I also coach Little League baseball and I often learn lessons from the boys, the kids about all this stuff, and so I will finish with a story about a Brit, who was on my team playing Little League baseball. It was about a year ago. My team was the youngest team and we had lost about five games and the game was going on and we were down 5-0 and we were not doing well. I know you do not follow baseball, but there is this bat, they have this bat, and they hit this ball. The best kids had all struck out or did not get a hit and up comes the bottom of the order, meaning the kids that are not so good. Two of them, through no fault of their own, got on base, which means they got to walk, the balls were too hard, they could not hit them and they were just on base. Up stepped Stefan, who was the worst kid in the team, great kid, but he had never played baseball in his life. He was a Brit and he had never played baseball. He gets up there and he is trying to hold the bat and do something and somehow the ball hits the bat and it goes in the outfield and a run scores. Now it is 5-1. Stefan is on second base. When you are on a base, you cannot get off the base, you will be tagged, but there is a short stop playing over here, another kid, and Stefan, he is a Brit, he is very polite. He goes over to shake hands with this kid. “Stefan, you gotta stay on the base.” He says, “Oh, sorry, never been here before.” Afterwards we have these reflections about the game and what do the kids learn and here is what they said. They said, “Sometimes you get what you need from unexpected places”. It took all of us to win today, all of us, every one of us stepped up, because after Stefan began, they all rallied, inspired by Stefan, and we won 15-5. The beginning of a winning season because he stepped up. Finally my best kid said, “Just goes to show you can never give up on hope”.

Tomorrow when I have a chance to preach, I am going to talk about how I think we have really under-estimated human sin, in our economics, our politics, our systems, our churches, but we have also under-estimated the radical power of hope, which is our best contribution to changing the world. The hope that really can overcome the sin. I see it again and again and again and when people who are the “nones” see that, they start to ask why it is that you do what you do.
So I would commend you for your study of this. I know it is changing my life and my thinking and the churches back home, and maybe if we find again our mission, aim at this ancient ideal of the Common Good, we could even shape politics in new ways, but, even more importantly, bring people who are looking and seeking back to the faith that we all hold dear. Thank you very much.

The Chair: I now open up the session for a short time of questions. You will be aware that time is not quite on our side, but if you do have a question to ask Mr Wallis, please do keep questions short and to the point and focusing on what you have just heard. There will be a chance to debate later. If you would like to ask a question, could I ask you to stand please.

The Bishop of Rochester (The Rt Revd James Langstaff): Jim, you mentioned just in passing really that you thought one of the next big issues in the States was going to be incarceration in the prison system, criminal justice system. Do you want to take the opportunity to say a few more words about what you think that is going to look like?

The Revd Jim Wallis: There is a book called The New Jim Crow, which is a study of our whole period where African-Americans were systematically excluded from American life and the civil rights movement was in fact to overcome that. The New Jim Crow is really about how the criminal justice system is now doing that. You take the same crime, the same place, the same time. Have you all heard of Trayvon Martin, a young African-American in Florida? If my son Luke, my big, strong, 16-year-old, six foot white kid were in Sanford, Florida doing the same thing at the same time as Trayvon Martin was doing it, he went out to get some pop and Skittles to watch TV with his dad, everybody in America knows that Luke would have come home to Joy and I. Trayvon Martin did not come home to his parents; he was shot and killed. Then a year later there is this car full of black teenagers in a little 7/11 gas station place getting some snacks, and this white guy pulls up next to them and he did not like their music; they were playing too loud. Have you ever heard teenage boys play music too loud? This white guy yells at them to shut down their music. Did you ever hear any teenage boy mouth back to an adult talking like that? They did, and the white guy pulls out a gun and shoots the car full of holes and kills a kid. There was no consensus to prove him guilty because there is stand-your-ground law in Florida and, if you feel like you might be in trouble, if you fear you might be in danger, it is okay to pull out your gun and start shooting. Take the same crime, same place, same time, the arrest, conviction and sentencing of black and white are starkly different – starkly different all over the country. The truth about society is always known best from the bottom of society, not the top. The bottom is the criminal justice system. The idea of a post-racial society with Barack Obama is a terrible illusion. At the bottom is a broken criminal justice system.

Here is what I learned just last week. The prisoners who are visited in prison, even once during their stay, in the US, is only 20% of all the prisoners. Matthew 25 was my conversion passage. Matthew 25 is being discussed in the halls of Congress around immigration reform because evangelical Christians have been converted to their Scriptures and now believe we would say how we treat 11 million undocumented people is how we are treating Christ himself, that is converted
evangelicals. We have this evangelical immigration table and that text has converted us, and the fact that now these are our brothers and sisters in our churches, so when at a White House meeting they said, "We are only deporting drug cartels and criminals", a pastor from Orange County, California, who looks as white as white can be says, "No, you deported José from my congregation and now his son, Wakeen, has joined a gang", tears coming down his face. He has been converted. Matthew 25: how to treat the stranger. I was a prisoner and you did not come and see me.

I have been thinking a lot about the hermeneutics of that particular category. The category is “hungry, thirsty, naked stranger”. Well, okay, those are all innocent people, it is not their fault they are hungry but, prisoners, “Haven’t they done something wrong?” This is a Biblical suspicion about why people fall into debt. Why criminal justice is suspect because of wealth and power. I have been arrested 22 times. I have been in jail quite often. I am realistic about what is inside our prisons, but I have been next to 18-year-old young kids in jail cells that hold 60 men on bunk beds with one bathroom. He is in there for a bus transfer violation. He will be in there for six months and he will come out from there a very different human being than he was when he went in. I think visiting the prisoners, you hear their stories, you get to know what happened to them and why, and Matthew 25, again, might help spark a movement around mass incarceration and criminal justice.

The Chair: One more question. Simon Butler, and that is all I am afraid we are going to have time for.

The Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): Jim, in talking about the Common Good, there is a hidden implication that those of us who have more are going to have less and most of us do not want that in some way. How can we as Christians bring the resources of the Gospel to that question that dominates the wealthy in our society: the fear of having to make do with less or not having enough?

The Revd Jim Wallis: At the end of this book on the Common Good, the paperback is called the UnCommon Good because it is wonderfully focused on the Common Good, it is on God’s side and should have, there are these ten personal decisions for the Common Good that we could make and they are decisions anybody can make. You do not have to have a relationship with a parliamentarian to make these decisions, and one of them says: “Make choices by distinguishing between wants and needs. Choose what is enough, rather than what is possible to get. Replace appetites with values, teach your children the same, and model those values for all who are in your life.”

The longest chapter in this book is about households, not politics. I think the choices we make in our households with those closest to us will probably impact the Common Good more than anything else. When I see my kids in our household and I see the marketing culture, it feels like it is aimed at Luke and Jack, right there in the household. It is aimed at them: appetites, appetites, appetites. Joy and I were trying to help them understand replacing appetites with values/choices, so now they discuss what these commercials are about. The myth is that we are happier the wealthier that we are. I have known some wealthy people and they are not particularly happy people if that is how they feel.
In fact, a new generation of young entrepreneurs are not taking the best packages offered to them. They are taking jobs where they think they can make a difference, what I call purposeful business, where business can solve problems and not just make profits, even at that level, I am seeing them moving away from that. Wall Street is a casino gambling economy. I am not just being hyperbolic. Friends of mine who are traders on Wall Street say, “When we are at 12/14% of corporate profits that means we are facilitating productive capitalism; products and services. Now we are at 42% on the financial side.” 42% of corporate profits! They tell me that is a dangerous thing. Money making money, making money, making money, and not producing solutions, services, necessary things: that is a problem. Even Joseph Schumpeter talked about that. When there are no ethics in a market system, Schumpeter (who was a capitalist) said the market will end up devouring everything including ultimately itself. How do we create this notion of stewardship? Happy are those, say the beatitudes, happier are those who live this way that Jesus taught. I think we can teach our young people that they will be happier. We could create an entire new energy economy, a whole new energy grid system. It would provide jobs, it would clean the air, it would make us happier, and part of it is conserving energy, which can make us happier, so the idea that this is all sacrifice, I think misses the point of what in fact we were meant to be created for, and what Ubuntu says and the Common Good says is we are never fulfilled, other than in our relationships to each other. Fact: marriage, children parenting, family, congregation, community; human flourishing is meant to be relational. How do we do that? This epilogue has ten things you can do at your local workplace, family, neighbourhood to make this flourishing begin to happen. I think that could trickle up to change politics by social movements around the edges. I would love to hear what the issues here in the UK would be for you all as you try to apply the Common Good to those questions. That would teach me a lot. Thank you very much.

The Chair: We now conclude this part of the afternoon. Mr Wallis, thank you for your speech and for answering our questions. Synod will now move into groups to continue the conversation and we will reconvene here for the debate on the Common Good at 5 o'clock prompt.

THE CHAIR Canon Ann Turner (Europe) took the Chair at 5.05 pm

The Chair: Before we move to Item 12, the Chair of the Business Committee has asked my permission to address Synod.

The Revd Canon Susan Booys (Oxford): Thank you, Chair. I have seen people holding small yellow pieces of paper but I will say that since the Convocations and the House of Laity have decided not to claim a reference under Article 7 of the Constitution, I would like to ask the Chair if she would consent to propose an alteration of business to the Synod tomorrow afternoon. I should like to propose that Synod takes item 524 “Payments to the Churches Conservation Trust Order” at 2.30 tomorrow afternoon, that is Sunday afternoon. Following that, I would like to propose that Synod proceeds as planned with the Archbishops’ Council Report. Is the Chair willing to propose this alteration of business to Synod?

The Chair: Synod, that has my permission. Does it have yours?
This motion was put and carried on a show of hands.

The Revd Canon Susan Booys: Thank you.

THE COMMON GOOD: DEBATE (GS 1956)

The Chair: So we move to Item 12, our debate on the Common Good. Synod members will need GS 1956. Perhaps it would be useful for me to give you an outline of the shape of this debate as there is an amendment tabled.

I shall first listen to the main debate before calling Canon Saxby to speak to and move his amendment. It is my hope that until Canon Saxby moves his amendment each speaker will have a time limit of five minutes. After that, we will see.

I therefore call upon Mr Philip Fletcher to move the motion at Item 12. You have ten minutes.

Mr Philip Fletcher (Ex-officio): Thank you, Chair. I think it was in my worst nightmares that I eventually got told that I would have to be the follow-on act after Jim Wallis. This had never occurred to me as a likely possibility. We are all very grateful for all that he said to us. Speaking personally, the only bit that I did not quite feel I got was the baseball reference, so at that point I think I have got to come back and invite Jim to have a look at today's score from Trent Bridge where, for those who have failed to keep up with things, a Test Match is running towards an extremely boring draw but in the course of it two quite astonishing last stands have been carried out by the Indian team and followed and exceeded by the English team. So those of us who follow cricket still have something to rejoice in, however esoteric it may be.

I am very conscious that will have passed by at least half, probably three-quarters, of the membership of Synod, and yet you were all very quiet in listening to me. There is a little parable there. It is the need to listen to each other even when we are saying things that may be quite tricky to follow or completely boring and uninteresting. In this debate and in the group work that has preceded it, whatever we made of it, I am quite sure we were doing that listening.

At the beginning of the Quinquennium Synod we set out to address three strategic goals and we have subsequently reviewed our activities in pursuit of those goals. This debate gives us an opportunity to ask how our contribution as a Church to the Common Good of all fits into the bigger picture about discipleship, mission and the Kingdom. How can we fulfil our calling as disciples to work towards the good of all by building better relationships, better communities, better institutions, better politics? It is not only, of course, about service to the neighbour we can see but our engagement with those neighbours that we cannot see, and that is perhaps where in the period from now moving to 7 May next year - General Election of course, fixed for the first time - our approach as a Church becomes very relevant.

Interestingly, in the group I was in there was a little nervousness: has the Church disqualified itself - and just to take one example, our repentance and our concerns
about the safeguarding issues which came out very clearly in the debate yesterday - does that disqualify us from performing in the public sphere. I would suggest that it must not disqualify us. Yes, we have to acknowledge our human failings institutionally and individually but we serve a much greater master than the Church and we owe it to our Christian faith to be prepared to say what is right and then to do it as well.

I would pick out three things from Jim’s talk that I think we might want to hold on to in this debate. There is the fear that the Common Good and the pursuit of the Common Good is becoming uncommon. We can pick all sorts of differences between the situation in the UK, and England in particular, and in the US, but there are issues that are also the same there. There is the issue of what is rather grandly called intergenerational equity, and a particular cause in my heart is the business of climate change and the need for our generation to do something about it for the sake of those to come. There is how to change the conversation to make it relevant to bring out what we can offer as well as what we expect of our political parties and politicians.

I hope the group session, and we will no doubt be getting feedback, gave everybody a chance to reflect on their own experience and on some, at least, of those issues. We ought to be giving thanks for those who work tirelessly to make this whole area of Christian discipleship so significant and continue to challenge ourselves on where we may fall short.

There is always a danger that by identifying three goals for the Quinquennium we separate them out as if pursuing numerical and spiritual growth, re-imagining ministry, contributing to the Common Good, as somehow competing with each other for our time and attention. That has never been the case. Our Gospel reading this morning, the story of the ten lepers who were healed and the one, a Samaritan, who returned, nine failed to see the real significance of their healing - spiritual - whilst rejoicing in the physical change; the Samaritan came back in gratitude and love. He had not just been physically healed but had encountered God.

By serving the good of all we are seeking, however inadequately, to show the world what the God is like, a vision of the kind of world that Christ calls us to make and to inhabit. I do not think it is any accident that some of the most impressive Christian social action today is being done by growing churches who understand the interaction between mission, growth and service, all part of discipleship. To focus on one element without the others is to misunderstand the nature of the Gospel.

What we do to try and serve the good of all is actually, surprisingly sometimes, countercultural, it is not how society normally seems to work, so it is all the more important that we press on with it, however inadequately. To others, however ordinary to us, it may look extraordinary.

I suggest we are at a key moment when the service of the Common Good can be reaffirmed as at the heart of our life as a nation. It is not just the self, the individual, that matters; there is such a thing as society.
Towards the end of the last Quinquennium we were debating the economic crisis. We should not be at all complacent that the economy seems to be starting to turn a corner, because the fundamental questions about social priorities still remain. The end of recession does not take us back to where we started, there will continue to be tight constraints on public spending, issues about priorities, massive questions about trust in institutions, trust in politics, solidarity with our neighbours, the value of people for themselves not just for their economic potential. All of those remain largely unresolved.

Now, of course this is far wider than an issue for Christians or the Church of England to debate, but the Churches are among the repositories of strength which can help sustain a politics of the Common Good. Recently, the Carnegie Foundation sponsored a report by a small group of bodies entitled *A Call to Action for the Common Good*. We have got Jim’s book on *The (Un)Common Good*. One speaker at the launch of the Carnegie Report said: “When social activists debate the state we are in, they tend to slip from ‘Isn’t it awful?’ to ‘Aren’t we wonderful’.” The Church as a human institution, we know, is not immune from such temptations but we do need with due humility to tell our own stories, and I look forward to the stories that will be told this afternoon because I think it will help all of us to gain courage to move on and to reaffirm our role in relationship to the Common Good and the good of those communities we serve. It is a theme which reflects our call to be disciples. It shows we reject attitudes which leave nothing between the individual and the state on the one hand or the individual and the corporate sector on the other.

I hope we pass this motion overwhelmingly, that on this hot afternoon that we do not do it with a yawn, we do it because it is really important to us, and I look forward to those stories as I move the motion on behalf of the Mission and Public Affairs Council.

*The Chair:* Synod, this item is now open for debate.

*Mrs Heather Black (York):* This is just my third time at Synod so, Chair, thank you for calling me to speak. I live in North Ormesby, an urban parish near the centre of Middlesbrough in the Diocese of York, one of the parish churches that took part in the research with Theos, which is mentioned on page 1 of the paper that we are debating today. Copies can be obtained in the exhibition area.

The community that I live in reflects many of the indicators of inequality that exist in our country. North Ormesby is in the bottom 0.5% most deprived parishes in England. 55% of children in the community I live in live in poverty, and if you are a boy your life expectancy at birth is 16 years less, and if you are a girl you can expect to live 22 years less, than the more affluent parts of England. Is it really acceptable in 21st Century Britain that there should be such devastating variations in life chances for our children?

It seems that we have become a society dominated so often by self-interest. Following the economic crisis, it feels like a blame culture has been allowed to develop where the finger has been pointed all too often at people that are like you and me but their life chances and opportunities are dramatically different.
Our church runs a families drop-in and sometimes on a Friday morning after the school run mums will say to me, “Pop in and have a coffee”. The conversation is always about our families and especially our children because it is the thing that we have in common. We all want to do the very best we can for our children but our choices are different. I never have to make the choice of not eating so that I can feed my boys, which they often do.

We here, in Synod, when I look around, are just the same as the mums that I have coffee with. We want the best for the people that we love, but often the choices that we can make are different from theirs. So should we pursue those choices and somehow imagine that we are different? No. We must remind ourselves of our shared humanity and the unique dignity of everyone in our society and, as the Church of England, be a voice that speaks loud and clear for the Common Good of all.

I work for the Church Urban Fund, which allows me the privilege of seeing many excellent projects and activities addressing needs in communities across Middlesbrough: work with homeless, asylum seekers, children and young people, the list could go on. But as the Theos report emphasises, it is not so much what churches are doing but the way that we are doing it that is so important. It is the simple acts of human kindness, the way that people come alongside others, value them, listen to them and are willing to build relationships with them that is truly transformative.

So many people who are struggling in our country feel forgotten, overlooked, devalued and isolated. It is the hospitality and welcome on offer in our churches that can be the beginning of change. In simple terms, it is being good neighbours, loving our neighbour as ourselves.

Middlesbrough Food Bank was started by local churches but now has over 100 churches and other organisations. I am out of time, sorry.

The Bishop of Knaresborough (The Rt Revd James Bell): Those who were able to watch the television coverage of Le Tour de France making its way through the glorious countryside of the Dales - welcome everybody who wants to experience that - might have heard the commentator say when the cameras focused on a church tower adorned with a yellow shirt and yellow bicycles, “Oh, even the churches seem to have caught the spirit”. Actually, the churches were at the forefront of engaging with Gary Verity and his team and exploring the ways in which we could extend hospitality and a genuine welcome to Yorkshire and to experience the spiritual treasures that it has to offer.

The rural church offers abundant examples of contribution to the Common Good. Those who read Country Way, or receive Country Way on a regular basis, will see edition after edition containing examples of good practice in that area. These range from the use of buildings for community, the church often being the only public building left, and the Plunkett Foundation offers excellent resources in that area, through to projects like Hope Debt Advice in Bedale, where I live next door to, and the youth projects in Middleham and Masham just up the Dale, through to Helping Hands and visiting teams within the communities extending precisely that principle of loving of the neighbour.
All this, I believe, is because of the integration of church in the community in so many places and because the rural church by and large practises the parochial character of our Church where parishioners are not those who attend services but those who belong within the area and to whom, we believe, the cure of souls refers. Perhaps it would be rather good if at a licensing I was able to say “Receive responsibility for the Common Good, which is both yours and mine”.

There are particular opportunities in the rural communities, not least those that I am very familiar with, to work in partnership with ecumenical colleagues and with people, all people, of good will, so acting as agents of Christian compassion and indeed towards human solidarity.

At a recent gathering of ordinands from Cranmer Hall who were doing a rural placement in our area, I suggested that one way into asking about the impact the Church can make is to ask the question, “What is your Church known for?” “What is our Church known for?” and one of the ordinands said, “Wouldn’t it be wonderful if the Church could be known for getting things done?” I rather like that kind of answer to the question of impact; a Church known for getting things done.

Equally, I want to say I believe that spiritual capital remains our distinctive contribution to the Common Good. That may come through the occasional offices, especially the village funeral, but beyond and above that an offering of prayer, including lament, intercession, thanksgiving and praise, an offer that is related to the context and specific. Yes, the agricultural year offers many opportunities but also to celebrate the special features of that particular village, town, community.

One of the stories I love the best is at West Tanfield, where the Parochial Church Council with the incumbent decided to hold an annual river service because the River Ure - not Urr or the Wensleydale, again referring to that television coverage - flows through the village. So the river service, an annual service, gathering a whole community together in celebration of their belonging and in a connectiveness to the creator of all. People brought together, belonging to the community, in recognition of one another. Surely a wonderful contribution to the Common Good.

Mr Tim Hind (Bath and Walls): For many months at the beginning of this year the little village of Muchelney occupied our television screens. It was very sad to see so many members of that community displaced because of the problems of the floods, but what it did demonstrate was that when the time was necessary the Church was at the hub of the solution to many of their problems, it became a place of distribution of food and all sorts of things. In many of the surrounding villages it was the same. The Church was there to respond to the needs of the community, and I think that is the nub of what we are doing here.

I want to give a contrasting example of what the Church is doing, and that is through the work of Near Neighbours. In the Near Neighbours money that has been given so far, £5 million in the first tranche and another £3 million in the second, small amounts of money are being given to small projects to enable people from different ethnic backgrounds and faiths to work together to overcome their differences. The image I want to leave you with is that of a group of dads coming together at the church gates
where, because of the money Near Neighbours had given them to operate a dads’ football team which was mixed Christian, Muslim and Hindu, when they met at the church gates they were actually meeting at the church gates whereas six months before there would have been the Muslims at one side of the church gates and the Christians at the other. That is where I think the nub of the Common Good is for us.

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (The Most Revd & Rt Hon Justin Welby):* To commit to speaking of the Common Good is not enough, we must also commit to live it not only in the actions in the parishes but in the whole way we live out our common life as the Church.

In many places we are living it out, the Bishop of Knaresborough spoke of that, but the Common Good is not something, as Jim has shown us, that is merely talked about, it is something that is practised and yet we live in a society where the concept of the general interest seems to have the greatest force. In economic terms that basically says that the only people who are worth paying attention to are the ones who are economically active, and you calculate, you measure, so that a gain of £100 by a person with £10 million is exactly the same economically as a loss of £100 by a person with £120 when they started. That is the general interest.

The Common Good is different, because it is more than what happens when you add my good and your good together. Jim Wallis reminded us that the Common Good is a global community, although he did not boast of the way, which he could have done legitimately, that *Sojourners* has lived out what he says. Bishop Ismail’s presence among us from the Diocese of El Obeid in the Sudan is a gift precisely to point us away from simply the Church in this land to the Common Good which we find underlined in the Epistle to the Ephesians. The Common Good is our ethic in the Kingdom here and now. Heather, a few moments ago, talked of how it was lived out day-to-day in her area and yet we sometimes feel overwhelmed and the sense that we cannot turn back the flood of the general interest.

But we need not despair. In our society in three areas we have seen recently extraordinary political change which I would never have imagined would happen. For example, the cross-party support for the level of Development Aid at 0.7% of GDP. How extraordinary that we have stuck to that through the worst recession since the 1930s. The Bill against modern slavery and trafficking and the initiatives on sexual violence in conflict. None of those win votes next summer. In fact, they are certain vote losers in some quarters. So we need not despair nor see only the grim darkness of unconstrained market force as the inevitable future.

Yet, as I said earlier, if we approve this Motion we commit ourselves to a radical change in the way the Church works and there will be practical legislation coming forward to face that. It will change us institutionally, bureaucratically and how we apply the monies in our budgets at every level from parish to General Synod. Philip Fletcher spoke of this.

For the Common Good to be seen, it must somewhere be lived in all its vulnerability, fallibility, tripping over each other, necessary sacrifice and huge difficulties of putting aside our personal preferences. The Church is the place for such cross-shaped incarnation and if it is then, as Jim pointed out and Philip pointed out, people might
begin more clearly to comprehend the God who made our Common Good his primary concern, so that our words may carry the weight they must.

_Bishop Dr Joe Aldred (Ecumenical Representative, Black-led Churches):_ Synod, I stand to support the Common Good from the perspective of the growing movement of black churches across this country, and to encourage Synod to take action by approving this Motion to contribute even more meaningfully to making good truly common to all.

In the Gospels a young man, possibly wanting to ingratiate himself with Jesus, called him “Good Master”, to which Jesus replied, “Why call me good? Only God is good”. But in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus teaches us that the peacemakers, not just the peacekeepers, are children of God, and as children of God we share in God’s goodness, and not just for our own self-gratification but for the good of others.

Although not always lauded for it, black churches in England and across the country have been working for the Common Good ever since the first enslaved African landed in Christian Europe and discovered, as Olaudah Equiano did, that this green and pleasant land was not necessarily green and pleasant for everyone, especially if they were of a darker hue. Since the landing of the SS Empire Windrush at Tilbury Docks in June 1948 and the proliferation of black African and Caribbean churches, making good common has become the vocation of these children of God for all of God’s children.

Faced with the consequences of personal and structural racism expressed in varied and changing forms and resulting in disadvantages in education and employment, health, politics and economics, these churches have nonetheless continued to work at holistic salvation through the faithfulness to the Gospel of Liberation. We see some of the results of this in projects like Street Pastors, supplementary education programmes like Black Boys Can, church-initiated housing associations, the global Day of Prayer and much more; all started within the black church but quickly moving beyond to serve the good of all.

Following on from the significant election of Bishop Eric Brown as the first Pentecostal President of Churches Together in England, this week the National Church Leaders’ Forum published its first black church political manifesto for consultation addressing the main and salient issues affecting the black church and the black community and beyond, and aimed at preparing that constituency for the next General Election in 2015. This marks a political coming of age for the black church movement in Britain. But none of this is enough if we really want to lead the embedding of the Common Good in our society.

Probably the greatest challenge we all face, Synod, is that we are all doing a lot and we probably feel quite fulfilled in so doing, but we are not always doing it together. We forget that this is a family business and we must all work together under the instructions of our good father, the good shepherd Jesus Christ. As an Ecumenist I am only too aware that we sometimes seem to have deferred unity and consequently have deferred our familial belonging, our oneness as the Family of God. The truth is until we truly accept each other as brothers and sisters we will not treat each other
like brothers and sisters across cultural, national, colour, racial and denominational divides.

A good starting point, I suggest, to embedding the Common Good in contemporary political thinking is to embed it first in our own corporate thinking by being and doing good to each other. First let the world be moved to remark, “They do not look alike, they do not even agree, but oh how they love one another”. Brothers and sisters, before we can do the Common Good to others we must be that Common Good to each other.

*The Chair:* I now call on Revd Steven Saxby to speak to and to move his amendment, please.

*The Revd Canon Steven Saxby (Chelmsford):* This is a friendly amendment. It was submitted only after consultation with the Director of Mission and Public Affairs and it has the support of our Chelmsford Diocesan reps, who it has to be said do not always agree with one another.

The amendment changes the tone of the Motion in that it will not call on the political parties to recognise the role of the Churches but rather call on the Churches to ensure that the political parties are challenged on the Common Good. This tone change is significant. It is consistent with the tone of MPA’s background paper and the briefing from Together for the Common Good. I was one of only two General Synod members who attended the excellent Together for the Common Good conference in Liverpool last year and have been working closely with the steering group in my role as Executive Officer of London Churches Social Action.

I want to mention three ways in which this amendment would help to communicate more positively how the Church of England might continue its engagement on the Common Good.

First, it communicates more effectively that calling for the Common Good is ecumenical work. As the briefings have made clear, Common Good includes a strong Church of England strand not least from traditions of urban mission but also other strands within the ecumenical movement, including Catholic social teaching, Methodist social holiness, the witness of the Salvation Army and the recent flourishing of practical ecumenical initiatives on night shelters, Street Pastors, credit unions, food banks and much more; action which is invigorating the churches as they feel they are out there, on the streets and being real in their Christian practice.

Second, Church of England engagement on the Common Good is most effective where it is in partnership not only with other churches but with others too; with other faiths, with schools and universities, with trades unions, with other civil society institutions. Community organising, specifically the work of Citizens UK, offers an effective model theologically endorsed by Luke Bretherton, Anna Rowlands, Angus Ritchie and others, for how churches might faithfully engage in contemporary politics. There is more of that in this excellent book on Anglican social theology, and it is the bread and butter of what we do in my parish where we are connected with many working on food banks, working on migrant issues and working with people of all faiths and none in Walthamstow.
Finally, Church of England engagement should be with those on the margins. In this, it will often be about seeking that which the political parties are not currently willing to endorse. For example, the recognition of the value and dignity of migrants against their economic contribution to society is not now popular with the political parties, something demonstrated by the current unjust family migration rules and by the wider political discourse on immigration. We must be prepared through word and action as the Church to witness prophetically to the Common Good in ways which challenge the political parties to think and act differently, not least in relation to the vulnerable and the marginalised.

In short, this amendment resists asking politicians to pat the good old Church of England on the back, and instead positions the Church of England as an institution engaged with others in the challenge of seeking the Common Good. Please strengthen the motion by supporting the amendment.

The Chair: Revd Saxby, would you please formally move your amendment.

The Revd Canon Steven Saxby (Chelmsford): I formally move the amendment.

Mr Philip Fletcher (Ex-officio): Chair, in an endeavour to help you I shall be very brief. Yes, I would invite the Synod to agree to this amendment which I think helpfully clarifies points that were intended to be within the original Motion. It brings them out very clearly and, as Steven has said, bringing out the ecumenical work, and he has given a list.

After Bishop Joe’s speech, I would want, not least coming from Brixton myself, to emphasise the role of the black-led churches in all of that. Thanks for his plug for the social theology book - it is well worth getting - and his point about engaging with people on the margins. So all of that suggests to me that I should invite Synod to pass this amendment.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

The Ven. Christine Wilson (Derby): I want to pick up, as we think about being prophetic and enacting hope and putting our money where our mouth is, about leadership that is sacrificial and ask us: are we really walking the talk ourselves if we are going to challenge our politicians about this? Engaging with and how we shape our policy around the marginalised, there is a challenge to us as a Church about how we enact the Common Good, particularly I want to suggest around the deployment of clergy and lay ministers into forgotten and neglected mission fields. There is a whole area of North East Derbyshire that is hungry, not just for physical food but for spiritual nurture. Irrigating their lives with the Gospel news and enacting life-giving hope is a real and desperate need and, yet, I cannot recruit to those parishes. So if we are really talking about the Common Good to others, can I suggest that we also need to look to ourselves and how we seek the Common Good for the marginalised parishes where we cannot get parish priests. Can it really be true that God is calling clergy to London and the leafy suburbs and not to the marginalised and the needy? I cannot believe this is really true. So I am asking you, who are you going to send as the Church to enact hope and offer sacrificial leadership in commitment to the
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Common Good to East Midlands and to many other places? When we can walk the talk, I think we will feel a bit more authentic in our challenge to others. Thank you.

The Revd Canon Martin Wood (Chelmsford): I am one of those very much in agreement with Steven's amendment and wish to commend it to you. In doing so, I would like to draw a link between this debate and a debate we will be having later on the Armed Forces Covenant. In the appendix to that document, at section 6, it talks about the role of Armed Forces chaplains and it says that they could be offering pastoral care, or they could be offering a prophetic voice within a leadership situation. I thought to myself, it is not only Army chaplains that should be offering a prophetic voice within a leadership situation, that this amendment calls upon our churches to utter that prophetic voice, to say to politicians, come and see what we are doing, come and listen to what it is that we are saying as you put together your manifestos for the 2015 General Election. But, more than that, far more than that, understand where the motive is, understand that this is not just coming from us. This is coming from our faith. This is something we can contribute to our nation. Not just we in the Church of England; we across the churches, the ecumenical church and, yes, across the faith boundaries as well. This is something we can contribute that others cannot. We need to make our voice heard. We need to show people what it is to work for the Common Good. I commend this amendment to you.

The Chair: Point of order, Mr Freeman.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

The Chair: Synod, that has my approval, does it have that of Synod?

The amendment was carried on a show of hands.

We, therefore, carry on with the debate at Item 12, as amended by the amendment we have just passed.

The Ven. Rachel Treweek (London): Hackney Archdeaconry, where I serve, has lots of very inspiring examples of churches engaged with their local communities in lots of creative ways, seeking to engage with people's hopes and needs, but one of my concerns is that lots of people who attend our churches feel guilty because they are not able to be involved in those church projects and not able to be around or involved in those activities. They do not sign up for the rotas or help with the night shelter, or the project for asylum seekers, but they are living out their lives, Monday to Saturday, in many different places among many different people, often in places of struggle or perhaps in Canary Wharf, perhaps as a carer, perhaps as a caretaker. I am concerned because I wonder how well our worship together on a Sunday is sending people out to seek the Common Good in all those places, to live and work to Christ's praise and glory and engage with issues of injustice, mercy and appetite in the places where they spend most of their hours, in the decisions they make. Yesterday, as we gathered at Synod, where were all the people who worshiped in one of our churches last Sunday, in their homes, their workplaces, their schools, prisons, job centres and care homes? How are we praying for people, helping
people to reflect theologically on where they spend their weeks? How are we giving
people confidence to live out their discipleship among the people and places of our
week? When people come to church on a Sunday, are they fed for the coming
week? Are we preparing people to follow Christ and share Christ and live the
Common Good in their relationships? Please do not hear me say I want to cancel all
our good community projects run from churches. I do not. I want more of them. But
I do want us to perhaps realign some of our focus of what we do in our churches on
Sundays so that people can live out their discipleship and be confident in living out
the Common Good. Somebody in one of our churches said the other week, when
they were prayed for because they were helping with the night shelter, “That is
fantastic but no one has ever prayed for me for what I do tomorrow.” That is a
challenge, I think, in what we are proposing. Thank you.

Mrs Anne Martin (Guildford): Yes, we have to be concerned about poverty, need
and depravation, but one of the things that have suffered in the recession is the arts.
The arts are important for life, for enriching life. We have wonderful spaces that we
can open up with music and art and flowers, that we can open to everybody without
cost. So as well as thinking of what we can do to serve the Common Good where
poverty is concerned, can we remember what we have to offer in our spaces and to
help enrich human life. Thank you.

The Revd Jonathan Frais (Chichester): Thank you, Madam Chair, for calling me. As
the second paragraph of the motion refers to, as exemplified in our parishes, I can
share one thing that I am privileged to see happening in the parish of St Mark’s in
Bexhill in the Diocese of Chichester. Before I came someone was quite struck by a
bereavement and how much it affected people, and when she went through
bereavement herself she started gathering friends, and so many years on still runs
on the third Thursday morning of the month, “Stepping Stones,” a self-help group for
those who have been through bereavement. There are no speakers. It is just a
gathering of people who have this one experience in common. They have gone
through great loss and it binds them together. Set up by believers, it attracts more
non-church goers than believers and it has taught me many things. It has taught me,
for instance, that you do not talk about getting over pain, rather that you have to live
with it and learn to use it. I have learnt that the pain is great in the first year of loss
but it is greater in the second year when everyone else gets on in life and assumes
that you are okay now and you can get on in life. But suddenly, when you feel
abandoned again, that can hurt even more.

Flicking through the pages in the New Testament of 1 Peter, I find three verses that
help me hold together why we should be committed to the Common Good and yet be
people of the Gospel. We are told to live such good lives among the pagans, that
though they may accuse you of doing wrong they may see your good deeds and
glorify God on the day He visits us. The Gospel itself according to Peter is that
Jesus himself bore our sins in his body on the tree. By his wounds we have been
healed. But when is our time to speak? Peter explains. Always be prepared to give
an answer to everyone who asks you, to give the reason for the hope that you have,
and do this with gentleness and respect. So we must be committed to the Common
Good.

I have been privileged in many places to see the initiative of people who just get on
and, developing out of neighbourliness, a desire to meet other needs they see. But in our heart of hearts we set apart Christ as Lord and are eager to speak of him as the motivation of why we do these things. Thank you.

Sister Anne Williams (Durham): Madam Chair, it strikes me that one of the things when we are trying to do this, to get parishes to do things, to get our people to do things, is that so many of the people in our parishes do not feel confident enough to go out and do it. I did just want to tell Synod a little story. Some of them may have heard it before. Some while ago I did a thing called "Body-building." I drew a body on a big sheet and each member of that parish that came to the meeting, they had to put their name on - Fred was on the left arm and Jenny was on the right arm and things like this - and each person in the group had a little drawing themselves. I asked them, "Please, write against the name of the person in each bit of that body the thing that you think they are most gifted with." One lady said, "Eh, it's nay good asking them to do that for me because I'm too old and I canna do nowt." And she did not really want to take part but I did convince her that she could do it for everybody else. When it then came to getting the feedback, I thought I had better start with her because if people started missing her out I would not know how to cope with it. I started with her and she gave me all the different gifts that she had seen in the other people. Then I went on to someone else and when she got to Ira, she said, "She listens and she prays." And another lady said, "She listens and she prays." And that built on and on and on. It turned out that she went to the daily service, but if anybody ever said, "I have got this problem, I have got that problem," they went to her and she would say, "I'll pray for you" and she did. She said, "But anybody can do that." I said, "Well, no, people are nervous about it." She said, "I could help them." So she asked if she could set up a prayer group. That was set up and it was supported by the parish priest, who did not go to it every time but would go to it occasionally. From that one small group, which grew and grew and grew, eventually there were about six groups across that parish working with the people in the street etc. Through that, a lot more people came to church. But through that, also, a lot more people found out what their gifts were and started using them in different ways to help out in the mission work of the Church. I just want to leave that with you as a thought for moving on. Thank you.

The Bishop of Manchester (The Rt Revd David Walker): Thank you for calling me, Madam. I want to start from where Rachel Treweek was a few minutes ago, because when I first became a known speaker within the Housing Association world, I took a deliberate decision that wherever I went, whatever I did, I would actually wear my clerical collar. I soon lost count of the number of people who came up to me at some conference or event, or wrote to me when I had written something in the housing press, and said, "Thanks for that. I am in housing because I am a Christian and it is the way I fulfil my Christian vocation." That made me realise that often we do not support people who are fulfilling their Christian vocation stuff that is not branded church activity at all but is their life, and they are doing that because they are Christians. As Rachel said, we need to support them.

I then remembered way back when my mother, losing her sight in her early 50s, took early retirement and volunteered with CAB. I was ever so proud of what she was doing and loved to talk to her about it. I asked her a couple of years in, "What do your local church think? How do they support you in what you are doing as a CAB
volunteer?" She said, "David I haven't dared tell them because I know if I said I was doing the CAB volunteering they'd say, 'Well, you've got time for that, you've got to be on the PCC and to...'''! There is almost a sense that people would be sucked into church activity rather than activity for the Common Good.

Doing a day some years ago for a parish that was struggling because they kept setting up groups and finding these groups had run for maybe eight month or 12 months and then they would fade away again, they wondered what they were doing wrong. We had an away day and we talked about it, and again and again the story came out: actually, our main Christian work is what we do day in and day out in the community, whether we are teachers or nurses or in business or whatever it is, that is our Christian vocation and we need supporting and encouraging for that. All the time the Church is trying to drag us into more measurable church activity because that looks good on the parish return. As Rachel said, how can we encourage people, sustain them in their vocation out in the world, and how we can make sure that we do not drown them in church-branded activities so that they no longer have the time to do it?

The Revd Thomas Seville (Religious Communities): If I may, I want to direct us to another aspect of the Common Good project, which I warmly welcome, and I recall you to one of these statements on what makes for Common Good on page 7 of the report from the Mission and Public Affairs Council: "The recognition that gross material inequality is deeply injurious to social bonds and the Common Good." It is possible to think that promoting the Common Good is largely a matter of joining people of goodwill. It is, therefore, something which immediately inspires agreement and support, and I hope that is something which marks it to a great degree. But if we are serious about the Common Good we must be serious about economic forces. I have read recently – and, please, those who are expert in economics correct me - there is a large measure of opinion, some very serious theory (French, I believe), that our international economic system is one which is geared to exponential increase in inequality. The capital produces more capital far more than wealth produces wealth, to summarise. That raises very serious questions, I think, for anybody committed to a social vision such as Common Good. It will involve us in challenging those whose wealth is getting greater and greater and greater and greater and not necessarily being used well. Have you ever heard of tax havens and that kind of thing? There are challenges to be made which will have political implications, which will involve getting political hands dirty. I would appreciate much more instruction in economics. I am, in a sense, a recovering Marxist and it takes a long time to recover from Marxism, but I think these are very serious issues if we are to really get embedded with the Common Good and I hope you will give attention to that.

The Revd Amanda Ford (Leicester): Thank you for calling me. I had not intended to speak in this debate but I am having rather a sense of *deja vu*. I was curate 15 years ago at the height of the regeneration industry, and the wiser among my colleagues noticed from time to time that what we were engaged in was pimping on the poor. I want to call Synod to repentance of that and to suggest that we really need to learn from our previous history. So often we find ourselves repeating the same mistakes because a generation has passed. In particular, while we laud and celebrate the wonderful work being done in so many of our parishes, can we ask
ourselves from time to time who is doing this work? Are we a Church for the poor or a Church of the poor? When we think about those who are giving of their time, are they also receiving the Gospel, that sense of confidence, that sense of being part of the Body of Christ? The best projects, the best work is the one where everybody is in it together. That lovely story of Anne’s, gaining confidence by helping one another and by being empowered and finding their voice in this situation. I just wonder if we sometimes lose sight of the importance of that, and I call us particularly to remember that if we really do this mission and ministry in the three dimensions of our goals, we will recognise that we hold those things together and, in doing so, we do this so much more effectively and with real integrity. Thank you.

The Revd Canon Pete Spiers (Liverpool): I want to welcome each clause of our Resolution this afternoon. I welcome clause (a) particularly, and it reminds me to tell you about the International Festival for Business that is taking place in Liverpool at the moment. In the Cathedral a week on Monday, Phillip Blond will be asking the question: “Can business produce a fairer and better society?” It is good that that will be taking place in the Cathedral and it is raising these questions amongst such people. We have already heard about “Together for the Common Good” rooted in the Sheppard-Worlock partnership for the Free Churches in Liverpool in the 70s and 80s, and rooted in the work of churches who are in touch with the lives of real people on the ground.

I also welcome clause (b) and want to encourage us all to engage in our local communities and with our local authorities. Just this week I held a meeting of the Sefton Faith Forum and we met with the local credit union and the Church Urban Fund, who were talking about the Church Credit Champions’ Network. We were asking ourselves, what can we do to promote the whole agenda about saving and budgeting? It was really important that we have that conversation about our economy because, folks, we live in two different worlds. There is the North and there is London, and HS2 promises to get you away from London and to the North a lot quicker than the other way around.

People are disillusioned by politicians, so I welcome clause (c) as well. We need to galvanise the electorate. We need to galvanise ourselves to engage in some really tough choices which we are going to face in 2015 and we certainly need to pray for our politicians.

I particularly welcomed paragraph 22 when it was talking about the Green Party. I have been a member of the Green Party since the 80s and I joined because they seemed to be the only party that were saying that economic growth is not the be all and end all, and that just simply consuming more and more of a limited amount of finite resources was not going to work.

Finally, I want to respond to Rachel Treweek and the Bishop of Manchester’s challenge and suggest why do you not do what we sometimes do in our Church and call it “This Time Tomorrow” where we interview members of the congregation about where they are going to be. The London Institute of Contemporary Christianity has produced some resources called, “Fruitfulness on the Frontline.” Have a look at that. Their prayer card, just to finish, reminds us of the importance of modelling good character, making good work, ministering Grace and love, moulding culture, being a
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mouthpiece for truth and justice and a messenger of the Gospel. Amen to that.

The Chair: Point of order.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): Mr John Freeman (Chester): On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

“That the question be now put.’

This motion was put and carried.

I call Mr Philip Fletcher to reply to the debate. You have up to ten minutes.

Mr Philip Fletcher (Ex officio): Thank you, Chair, and thank you, Synod, for the breadth of the issues that have been raised in this debate and all the various examples and challenges that come through. I particularly welcome the fact that I think during the debate we have sought to strike a balance. We have brought out issues where the Church itself can and does act as part of our living out the Gospel. We have emphasised that we cannot do this on our own. We work with all sorts of partners but, very specially, we work with our ecumenical partners and, where appropriate, with those of other faiths and none. At the same time, we very much see ourselves as addressing government, where appropriate challenging government, whilst working with government when it is prepared to act boldly and sometimes against the public will of the age.

To bring out some examples from our debate: Heather Black in her maiden speech brought out the scandal of the difference in life expectation between those who are least well off in our society and those of us, many of us here in York, who are comfortably off. The Bishop of Knaresborough emphasised the rural dimension, as did Tim Hinds. Not least when disaster in various forms strikes, the Church can often be at the heart of the community more obviously than when things seem to be going smoothly.

Archbishop Justin drew attention to two examples, at least, where government has taken difficult decisions that we should be prepared to continue support because they are not politically popular, the 0.7% of GDP going on aid, the Modern Slavery Bill, and there are others. But, at the same time, the challenge has to be there. The Common Good is wider than a political debate.

Bishop Joe emphasised to us that the Church of England, established it may be, but we are pretty hopeless if we are not doing this in a much wider context with our partners and, above all, that we are prepared to learn ourselves from others what is going on and challenging ourselves where are our own practice is less than best. We welcome that.

I want to emphasise too some of the other particular examples that have come out. There was a little group and, for example, Jonathan Frais brought out that this is more than just practical help. This is a deep spiritual issue too. For the Common Good we have to be spiritually right and if the Church cannot help individuals and communities to become so, then we have further learning to do. Sister Anne brought
out the example of the lady who thought, "I can't do anything," and yet could actually be drawn into something that is very real and very important. The Bishop of Manchester emphasised how much, often without any fanfare, of what is done for the Common Good is done on the basis of Christian faith but without that specific label to it. Father Seville brought in gross material inequalities and the way we are going. This is a wider debate. The Thomas Piketty book (which some of you may have seen referred to in the press) is not necessarily actually right, but that is one for the economists rather than for our debate this afternoon. Where we, I suggest, as Synod need to be is very conscious of whatever drives greater inequality and greater division in our society and work to bring us together.

Are we, as Amanda Ford said, a Church for the poor or a Church of the poor? Looking around, there is little doubt that we are not the poor in our blessed (I mean in material terms) western society. But we need to be there and identifying with the poor literally so and recognising, where appropriate, our own spiritual poverty so that we can share what we do have with others.

Pete Spiers, bringing in Phillip Blond, there is life yet, I believe, in the big society or something founded on it. As we move towards the next election, let us not give up on encouraging all the political parties (and I do not except UKIP from this) to think hard about the Common Good and where they need to be standing. We can press and prod at all levels. Another point that was brought out in the debate is this is not just for us, the Church of England in General Synod. It is for dioceses and, perhaps particularly, it is for parishes, working in individual constituencies with named, faced candidates who will not on the doorstep get quite the same challenge as I hope we, the churches, will offer when we offer the hospitality sometimes of our own halls and churches to hustings’ debates.

I could go on beyond all of that, but I think we have brought together a great deal this afternoon. The one thing we should not do after this afternoon, after hearing from Jim Wallis, after our group work and after this debate, is go away slightly self-satisfied that we have stayed the course on a very hot afternoon and passed overwhelmingly a motion, though I hope we do. We have then got to make it a reality over the next months and, of course, over the next years and I encourage us to do so. Synod, thank you.

The Chair: Point of order?

Mr Christopher Pye (Liverpool): Would you please, in your discretion, order a count of the whole Synod using the electronic means so that we may be accountable not just as a Synod but as individuals? The summing-up about us being responsible for a change, I think, was a convincing argument.

The Chair: Sir, you have just pre-empted me, I was about to ask for one. So as we come to the vote, as this is a matter of public interest I order a Division of the whole Synod on Item 12, as amended by Item 45.

The motion (as amended)

‘That this Synod:'
(a) affirm the theological imperative of serving the common good;

(b) commend the practical activities which serve the common good, exemplified by our parishes, dioceses and NCIs, and encourage their further development; and

(c) call on churches at a local level, along with diocesan and national Church bodies, to ensure by word and action that the political parties are challenged to promote the common good when drawing up their manifestos for the 2015 General Election.’

was carried after a division of the whole Synod. The voting was as follows:

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2 abstentions were recorded.

That concludes this item of business, but I would remind Synod that evening worship follows in a few moments. Thank you.

Members of the Church of England Youth Council led the Synod in an act of worship.

THE CHAIR Canon Professor Michael Clarke took the Chair at 8.30 pm

PRIVATE MEMBER’S MOTION:
CANON B 8 (GS1944A and GS 1944B)

The Chair: Ladies and gentlemen, we now come to the debate on the Private Member’s Motion. Members should have with them two papers: GS 1944A, a background paper from the proposer of the motion and GS 1944B, a background note from the Secretary General.

You will see from the Order Paper that there are three amendments. Having looked at these in some detail, it is pretty clear, I think, that they are each of them particular, they are not general in their nature, and they do, if you like, follow on from the principal motion we are debating this evening. I am going to suggest we spend probably 50 minutes or so in general debate of the motion, and we will then turn to the three amendments and take them as mini debates in their own right. That is to say, have the amendment moved, a short debate and a vote on it, and move on to the second and so to the third. A lot of people have made requests to speak so I shall almost certainly be reducing the speech limit during the middle part of the debate.

I am now going to call on the Revd Chris Hobbs to propose the motion which is in his name.
The Revd Christopher Hobbs (London): Synod, I do apologise for this being on the agenda now, when of course there is so much of real importance that we might have been discussing, perhaps persecution, as was mentioned yesterday, or assisted dying, but from time to time it is important to also do housekeeping.

What exactly is this motion? It is not changing anything at this point. It asks our lawyers to draw up an Amending Canon, so if we pass this Private Member’s Motion tonight, that would happen and the Appointments Committee would appoint a Steering Committee to supervise any proposed legislation, and at some point the Business Committee would schedule a trust to look at maybe amend or throw out. Thus this motion is a very preliminary motion asking for work to be done along the principles of paragraphs 1 and 2 of Canon B 8.

What are the principles of Canon B 8? Paragraph 1 of Canon B 8 brought to an end years of court cases trying to de-church clergy for what they wore. It says together we are one Church and that the doctrine of the Church of England is not to be taken from what the clergy wear. Theology is not meant to be interpretive from our different vestures.

Paragraph 2 says that ministers may not change the vesture in a parish without the consent of the Parochial Church Council, and subject to the bishop, if there is a disagreement. The church council and the bishop are both to be involved under paragraph 2.

So we are not changing the Canon tonight. We are hardly even beginning to change the Canon, but thank you to all who signed the Private Member's Motion so that we can discuss it, nearly three years since I first asked the Legal Office to frame the motion before you. Yes, General Synod has thought about this in the past at least three times, and last time the Laity were in favour but not the Clergy or the Bishops. Today we are thinking together about the pastoral and mission situation in 2014, and whether this is a good time to be revising the Canon, thinking not just for ourselves and what we like, but thinking of the whole Church in its great variety.

Maybe for most of us robes are essential to our understanding of the Church of England. For us they are the essence of the Church of England. For us robes and vestments are unifying and dignified, respectful of the other worshippers who are present. They are instantly recognisable and they neutralise personality. They validate the person wearing them as a representative of the Church. Some robes and vestments may be colourful. Do you know what, they may even be particularly appropriate in some mission contexts and they may be suggestive of Heaven. Maybe we personally cannot imagine a context where robes or vestments would not be the right thing for the leader in public worship.

If you obeyed the Canons now, would robes always be worn? Canon B 8 only says that robes or vestments have to be worn normally at Morning and Evening Prayer on a Sunday, but always for Holy Communion and the Occasional Offices. Of course, some services these days, perhaps quite a lot, are neither Morning nor Evening Prayer but some sort of service of the Word, and so there is of course no particular problem there: robes are optional. But for Holy Communion and the Occasional
Offices there is no flexibility in the Canon. It makes no difference if it is café-style in a pub, outside in a field, in a hotel lounge or lobby or a hospital bedside, surplice or alb is required with scarf or stole.

You might be surprised to know that I like my robes. I wear them at least every Sunday, made in Newcastle by the J&M ladies, and as a formal cathedral chorister as a boy at times it seemed like I almost lived in robes, although I did not like that under-the-armpit kind of feeling in Australia. But not all our contexts are the same. In *From Anecdote to Evidence*, the Church Growth Research Programme found that being willing to change and adapt is one of the key factors for growth.

Just as we welcome the growth in worshippers at Cathedrals - and I thank the Dean of St Paul's for joining me on the platform today - we need to welcome growing Fresh Expressions and informal gatherings, and we should not make them have to fit our different culture. I also welcome Jane Morris, a member of New Wine, and Charlotte Cook of the Church of England Youth Council on to the platform.

There are some contexts where robes should always be worn and some contexts where robes may not help in conveying what we want them to convey. Sometimes they help the mission of the Church. In some contexts they may hinder the mission of the church bringing, I do not know, a sense of costume that jars, or even drawing attention to the celebrant in an unhelpful way. Maybe a clerical collar would do. Maybe in other contexts a stole over ordinary dress. Maybe there could even be some contexts where tidy and clean normal dress is appropriate.

Local decisions, properly discussed by the church council, with mission in mind and minuted, then sent to the bishop for approval, might be a way forward. Something like that has happened with the approval of the Bishop of Gloucester for the past nine years and, to my knowledge, it has not led to undignified and inappropriate behaviour in that diocese.

I offer this Private Member's Motion to the Synod with the hope that we will not just kick it into touch, that we will pass it and let the Business Committee bring before us things that we can debate and agree on as a way forward. Thank you, Synod.

*The Chair:* Item 13 is open for debate.

*Mr Samuel Follett (St Albans):* This time five years ago I had just returned from Australia where I had been serving for five months with a young Fresh Expression in New South Wales. I spent most of my time out in the community meeting all sorts of people and supporting them and sharing the good news with them as they lived in an area of great social deprivation. Our service, on Saturday evenings, was one of the most wonderful experiences of church I have ever had. At first, to me, the 18-year-old Church of England boy who thought he had all the answers, it appeared total chaos. To give you a taste, we would break halfway through for a fag break. We sat around tables and had food available all the way through and most weeks the police had to be called to remove the youth group from the roof of the building. Absolute chaos! But, nowhere have I seen people so engaged in a sermon as there. Nowhere have I seen people's lives so dramatically transformed when it clicked all that Jesus had done for them. This community had previously had seven churches
which had all closed down. Inherited church models had failed to reach them but this, this was working. All the things that I had initially thought were crazy turned out to be the very things that facilitated engagement with the Church, with the good news, with God. The pastor knew his mission field. He knew the culture and he adjusted operations accordingly.

In England we already have a huge number of Fresh Expressions doing amazing things in a whole variety of contexts. Many of them do not look anything like what you or I may be used to, but that is the point: they are “fresh expressions”. In some of those contexts, the nature of the work is such that I would argue it would be inappropriate to meet the requirements of Canon B 8 that we are discussing here today.

The original intention of robing had something to do with removing clothing which could identify the clergyperson as being from any particular class or social status. It was about breaking down barriers that could stop parishioners feeling able to trust or approach the priest. In some contexts, I am absolutely certain, this is still the same, but in many, vestments actually communicate separation and set-apartness in a negative sense. To a generation where so many are already distant and separated from God, this is simply not helpful.

This is not to say that I am against vestments. Quite the contrary. I am currently training as an ordinand and I look forward to the day that I can wear robes at all the appropriate moments, but that is just it: appropriate moments. We need to look to the future. If we are serious about being a mixed economy Church, the decisions made here need to be reflective of that, enabling the flourishing of mission and ministry across that whole diversity.

So I ask that you vote in favour of this motion, taking steps to empower our clergy to choose the most appropriate methods for ministry and mission in their particular context. Thank you.

The Revd Prof. Mark Chapman (Oxford): In 1565 Lawrence Humphrey, President of Magdalen College, Oxford and Thomas Sampson, Dean of Christ Church, refused to wear the surplice at divine service. At Cambridge the Vice-Chancellor informed Archbishop Matthew Parker that “sundry fellows at St John’s will be very hardly brought to wear surplices”. Queen Elizabeth’s advisers were anxious about the lack of uniformity and urged Archbishop Parker to compel uniformity. “There should be one rule, form and manner of order in all actions, without diversities of opinions or novelties of rights and manners.” Parker quickly wrote to the bishops asking for reports and drafted a Book of Articles, which is the precursor to our Canon B 8. The Archbishop challenged Sampson and Humphrey to wear the appointed vestments and Sampson was deprived as Dean of Christ Church. For many of the Godly clergy who came to be known as “Puritans”, however, the surplice could not be freed from its popish associations. A number wrote to their friends on the Continent asking for advice on how to proceed. “Could habits of this kind be worn in church by pious men lawfully and with the same conscious?” Bishop Grindal of London, who did not much care for vestments, was encouraged that “churches redeemed by the blood of Christ ought on no account to be deserted for the sake of caps and gowns, which are to be regarded as mere matters of indifference”, so Grindal allowed some of his clergy to
disobey the rules, which Parker felt was introducing anarchy to the Church.

In the spring of 1566, Parker conducted a campaign throughout the country. Grindal was forced to issue a summons to 98 of his clergy demanding that they give written guarantees that they would conform. Thirty-seven refused and many were suspended. Others lost their living, including William Turner, Dean of Wells. Many looked to a purer form of Church, the kind of thing they had experienced as exiles during the reign of Mary. They wanted the Reformation to go a little bit further, but with a Queen and a Bench of Bishops so intent on enforcing matters indifferent, there was little choice but conform or leave. Comeliness and good order were the essence of the Elizabethan Church.

In the late 1560s, Archbishop Parker could enforce an injunction and he could instruct the Bishop of London to get his clergy to toe the line, and some were disciplined. But I think it is probably impossible to imagine that Archbishop Welby would do the same today. It is even more unimaginable that he could instruct the Bishop of London to instruct his colleagues to wear the right dress, but anyway!

It does strike me that a Canon that can never, ever be enforced in reality is really a very bad Canon indeed, and it would be far better to accept this motion to go further and try and define precisely under what circumstances we might dispense with vestments. If the essential doctrine of Anglicism is about doing all things “with order and with seemliness”, as Richard Hooker said quoting St Paul, then we ought to revisit the Canon to reflect practice and make conformity meaningful, and ultimately that might lead to a more ordered and a less anarchic church, so I urge you to support the motion.

The Bishop of Salisbury (The Rt Revd Nicholas Holtam): It is good to have an entertaining debate after dinner, but I do rather regret spending the time on it! When I was a parish priest, I used to go to clergy conferences and they were all right, but now I am a bishop my fellow bishops say, "Oh, I have just had the best clergy conference ever" - and we have just had the best clergy conference ever in Salisbury! We got the former Bishop of Liverpool, James Jones, to talk after dinner about ‘What I know now that I wished I had known then’, and he said that on the day of his ordination he realised - and it came rather like a bolt from the blue - that ordination was not about him.

I suppose I want to say that I think robes are one way of emphasising that; that this ministry is not ours, but that we exercise it on behalf of the Church and of God, and that robes make that very clear. Of course, doctrinal statements are not made by robes. It is really interesting since becoming a bishop to discover how much people argue about what they are going to all be ordained in: alb and stole, surplice and stole, surplice and scarf, robes at all. There is an assumption of doctrinal positions in each of those dress codes. There is quite a difference between robes being normal and optional.

The very best day I had as a parish priest was one in which I said Morning Prayer in St Martin-in-the-Fields with homeless people; I walked my nine-year-old daughter and seven-year-old son to Soho Parish School through Leicester Square, hand-in-hand with a homeless man shouting: "F... off"; I cycled up to the Euston
Road to the Council of Christians and Jews and met with a nun and a rabbi; I cycled
to the Dorchester Hotel to say Grace at a lunch that President Mandela was giving
the Queen (I arrived at the Dorchester on my bike and they did not know what to do
with it); I went to see a friend in prison; and I ran an adult education course in the
evening, and I did not change dress during the day. I think robes have a similar sort
of effect. There is a given-ness about them, an unarguableness about what happens
with somebody in that sort of dress. What do you wear to church if there are not
robes? Is it suit, collar and tie, suit and open-necked shirt, smart/casual, designer
jeans, shorts? How will you handle questions in a disciplinary about whether
somebody is appropriately dressed or not? And of course robes cover a multitude of
sartorial sins!

Has there been a disciplinary about this in recent years or does everybody behave
like they do in Gloucester and just be perfectly sensible about this? Of course, there
is an appropriateness. People seem to be judging it, and I really do not want to
spend as much time as implied by saying that what will happen next is the
Appointments Committee will appoint a Steering Committee, a Steering Committee
will look at this and produce some stuff to bring back to us. We have better things to
do. I would like to suggest that we move to next business, but I think we had better
have the debate. Thank you.

The Chair: A point of order?

The Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn): Under Standing Order 98, is there a financial
statement in connection with this business?

The Chair: I just need to take a view. (After taking advice) Fr Benfield, the answer
is no, there is not a statement.

The Revd Dr Rowan Clare Williams (York): As many of you will know, I am Chaplain
to this University, and after this came up in February I decided the sensible thing to
do was to consult the students about what they thought, since they are the future of
the Church. What they said rather surprised me. So what I want to say looks at
mission and it also looks at symbol through the reflections that they gave me. If you
spend any time on the internet (other than to get yourself a theology degree because
you do not need to do it properly!) and particularly if you go on social media sites
frequented by young people, you will be familiar with the phenomenon of the meme,
a picture with a caption, usually humorous, which makes you look at that picture
in a new way. The whole idea of what makes a meme work is about symbolism.
What is in the picture? Do you recognise who or what is depicted or do you need the
caption to explain it? How do the picture and caption relate? The meme works by
creating an unexpected relationship between the two and the creation of a whole
range of captions for the same picture illustrates how transient and shifting this
relationship can be. Young people will take an image familiar from one context and
add to it words from quite another. If you have not been on the site Anglican
Memes, I recommend it to you. They delight in adding churchy words to images
which have nothing to do with church at all.

In our debates about appropriate vesture, we need to remember that symbolism is
far from dead. Making churchy things comprehensible to people with no churchy
vocabulary, no grounding in Church ritual is of course hugely important, but we do young people in particular a disservice if we think that mission can only be achieved by ditching symbol rather than by taking the time to explore and explain it. Words are not always enough, and for less literate congregations like the one where I did my curacy, they may be seriously inadequate. Symbols are not meaningless, but what they are intended to mean is not always what they are taken to mean. We have already heard some examples of that. But the young people I work with are trained to question meaning, and appreciate something of the value of symbol. They acknowledge that they may need some help in interpreting the historical weight of a particular symbol such as liturgical colours or what we wear and why. We can no longer take it for granted that they know what these things mean, but we do not need to assume that they will simply think they are meaningless. Young people attach huge amounts of meaning to what they wear. They wear clothes that speak of their taste in music, their political standpoint, their sporting preferences, their membership of various groups and societies on campus. It is one of the most important ways in which they express identity. They said to me, “We are used to dressing in a ritualised kind of way for graduations, for job interviews, for other things that we think are important”, and then this was the bit that surprised me, “Why would we not want the same thing to happen in church, because that is important too?”

To dress in a particular way is a measure of the significance of the event. If you want to quietly subvert that, you can, like the young woman last year who wore six-inch red lamé high heels with her graduation robes. Why can we not do that in church as well - not the six-inch heels, I would personally find that very difficult - but what they said is, “We want there to be this layer of symbolism. Just help us to understand it. Nothing is more exclusive than the sense that everyone except you is in on the secret of what is happening. But do not take it for granted that we get it. Even when you have explained it, we still reserve the right to disagree with you, but at least we will have been included the discussion.” I am really pleased that Charlotte is up on the platform so that she can disagree with me if she wants to.

I do not think we need to change the Canon, but I think we need to have a conversation about what we mean. If religious vestments are a barrier to mission we are wearing them wrongly. We do not need to get rid of them, but we need to consider what the symbols are. Thank you.

The Chair: Is the Revd George Newton standing? I would like to allow you to make a maiden speech with a five-minute length.

The Revd George Newton: Thank you for calling me, Chair, for my maiden speech, and I am delighted to speak in favour of this motion. Primarily I want to speak from an observational point of view but missionally as well. I do not think anyone is suggesting that robes should be ditched once and for all. Nor is anyone suggesting that the York Synod is somehow less important than the London Synods because we dress down for it. My experience is 21 years of ordained ministry, both up north in a challenging UPA parish and in one of the most unchurched of towns down south. I have had the privilege in each case working with a wonderful team, and under God, to see degrees of growth, of people being won for Christ and particularly new congregations planted on a Sunday. They were there specifically to aim to attract the de-church, the unchurched and the younger missing generations. In those
more contemporary services and congregations we chose not to robe. In others we 
do so.

My observation over these years is that in those services where we do not robe, they 
are the ones that have seen the more significant growth, particularly amongst the 
younger generations. Those where we do, have often followed a normal Church of 
England trend of ageing somewhat and declining somewhat and have been less 
good at drawing in and keeping those from outside.

Similarly, as rural dean - a deanery of about 20 churches, a deanery that has seen 
some growth, bucking the recent trend of our diocese, and there have been a 
number of new church plants on Sunday services, new congregations - my 
observation there is both the larger congregations, the growing congregations, and 
these newer ones that are seeing the most significant growth, with very few 
exceptions, are those that do not use robes. That of course would be the case in the 
majority of Fresh Expressions.

Clearly there are many factors at work in growing congregations and churches, but 
as more and more people today are un-churched, often turned off by formalised 
religion, they can find that quite a lot of the formality, including what we wear, 
including robes, can be alienating to them. This Motion aims to give simply 
permission for those new and some not so new services under Canon Law to 
operate without robes after full consultation.

Surely at least from a missiological point of view it is vital that we do release these 
congregations to do so legally. I believe attitudes are changing. About 17 years ago 
in a northern parish, within four years we had planted three new Sunday 
congregations and church attendance there had trebled. The Bishop said, “Please 
do not tell me what you are doing because I will probably have to ask you to stop”. 
Surely that is a nonsense. I believe that would not be quite the same today but to 
have Canon Law that needs to be ignored for some places to grow seems also a 
nonsense. So situations like this, where people are being won for Christ, discipled 
and the Church is growing, where new life and transformation is not just happening 
in the churches but out in the communities as a result, where in many situations 
robes are not worn, surely that needs to be encouraged and supported by Canon 
Law rather than something either we turn a blind eye to or are potentially penalised. 
I also would urge you to vote in favour of this motion.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

The Bishop of Gloucester (The Rt Revd Michael Perham): I want to support this 
motion and encourage the Synod to vote for it. I believe in robes and vestments. 
Not in the way I believe in the Resurrection but I believe in them nevertheless. I am 
not much impressed with some of the views that I hear against them. I subscribe to 
the view that the Liturgy, whatever else it is, and it is a lot else, is a drama and those 
who lead it play a role in that drama that can be enhanced by what they wear.

The one argument for dispensing with them that I cannot ignore is the missional one. 
It is when a priest and PCC say to me, or a Fresh Expression leader says to me, 
“Bishop, in our context robes get in the way, they put people off, they undermine our
mission”, I do not always see it myself but then I do not pretend to know their communities like they do. I respect their view so I am content with certain safeguards that they dispense with robes because of mission in their context.

But why change the Canon? I wrote to the Clergy of the Diocese back in 2006, “It is not good for the spiritual health of the Church where clergy set aside the Canons without consultation and where the bishop colludes by silence”, and I still think that is true. Of course there are some Canons that have almost fallen into disuse, mainly Canons that most clergy have not read for a long time. We did not have to rush to amend them all but this is different. This is a live Canon, people know about it, they consciously break it and the bishop knows they are breaking it. In some dioceses they sometimes know that he breaks it too. That undermines good order and respect for Canon Law.

I would like to see a revision of the Canon that upholds the wearing of robes as the norm, but allows that to be set aside where the incumbent and the PCC together have so decided after careful consideration and have informed the bishop – informed, not asked - providing that, one, in the case of the pastoral offices the priest should consult the family concerned and respect their wishes, two, in the case of an Episcopal service the decision about robes should be made by the bishop and, three, that no minister be made to dispense with robes against his or her conscience since robes remain the norm.

Christopher Hobbs has made reference to my issuing guidance, which I have no power to give, in the Diocese of Gloucester along the lines I have advocated this evening. He is quite right, it has not increased disorder, robes remain the norm, but it has made for a good relationship between a bishop who wears a lot of vestments and clergy who wear none. I think it may account for the fact that when I ask them to come to the Cathedral on days like Maundy Thursday they all come willingly and loyally robed to express something about our solidarity as ministers of word and sacrament. So please support a modest change in Canon Law that will enable even bishops to dispense with the wearing of robes on appropriate occasions without themselves breaking Canon Law, which they ought to guard and uphold.

**Canon Philip McDonough (St Albans):** Thirty years ago I was licensed as a Reader. The bishop of the day, Bishop Peter Hall of Woolwich, handed me a blue scarf. As he handed it to me he said to me, “Philip, take authority” et cetera. With that scarf he gave me authority and I believe to this night that scarf that I wear as a Reader is my authority in the Church of England as a Reader.

When I go to churches as a Reader to conduct morning or evening prayer, I go into a vestry, I see churchwardens, I see treasurers and so on, they tell me what they do. I try to make a point of clearing the vestry five minutes before the service as my preparation as I begin that service. I use that five minutes to put my cassock and my surplice and my scarf on. That is my preparation from just walking in from the street into the church. We all need preparation and just getting ready gives me that preparation.

I also, in the community, conduct funerals. I wear cassock, surplice and my blue scarf. For me, I have not got the option as clergy have of wearing a dog collar if I do...
not do that. I would therefore stand there conducting a funeral just wearing my day
clothes: suit and tie. What difference does that make to me between myself and the
many, many civil celebrants who are now conducting funerals, who are leading
prayers and worship? What is the difference? They are celebrants. If I am not
wearing my cassock, surplice and blue scarf I am not a minister, and I am referred to
as a “minister”.

Families say to me, “We don’t go to church but you will wear your robes, will you,
Philip?” “Yes, I will wear them”. It makes me different. I have been told many a time
a Reader is distinctive in the Church of England and therefore it is my intention
tonight to vote against any relaxation of using robes. When I was a child my mother
used to say to me, “If I’ve taken the time to prepare a meal, surely you can take time
to prepare to eat it by washing your hands and eating with a clean face”. It is a
parallel of respect. To not use robes I think is slovenly and casual and it is a slippery
route that we are sliding down. Therefore, I urge people not to accept this alteration
and to vote against this Resolution. Thank you.

Ms Heather Pritchard (Church of England Youth Council): I like vestments, I always
have, coming from a background of choral music and fairly H

igh Church where
everyone from the clergy down to the smallest little boat girl wore vestments. It feels
natural, comfortable, right to me. That does not mean I am not up for talking about it
though.

Not only was this General Synod glad of the motion for adjournment in February to
allow more time for discussion and debate, so too were the Church of England Youth
Council, for this extra time gave us an opportunity to form our April Day meeting
around Canon B 8 and our own discussions. When the media got hold of this story
back in December they were very quick to promulgate that archaic vestments were
clearly the reason why the Church of England numbers were falling and, therefore,
the proposed changes were specifically to get more young people into Church.

Though the paperwork alongside this motion does not specifically say this, I wanted
to record a quick clarification for any of you that do perceive it is aimed to be as
such. Young people are not all the same! The number of times at this Synod I have
been asked, “What do young people think on?” It is somewhat alarming. I can tell
you some of what some young people think on this issue. Some quotations from our
meeting in April: “Respect for clergy shouldn’t come from what they’re wearing”,
“Sometimes their clothes can seem daunting or unapproachable”, “It is your church
so if your PCC and priest agree there shouldn’t be any issues”, “They can be a
bridge or a barrier, they can close and open relationships”, “The context you are in is
key”, “Clergy identity is in Jesus, not their clothing”, “Things that unite us are
important”, “Canon Laws are the integrity of the Church of England”, “God isn’t
restricted by robes, why are His representatives?”, “Vestments are very useful and
important in pastoral settings, such as funerals and marriages”.

Just as this Synod, CYC members have a wide range of opinions. There were only
25 young people there. If every single one of you went and talked to a young person
from inside or outside our Church after Synod, we could have 400 more opinions
from around the country. Them not even caring about vestments is an opinion in
itself. That is a challenge to you, Laity right up to Archbishops.
It depends/is crucial sums up the final decision made at CYC, who voted through the motion, that CYC believes that principles of Canon B 8 provide a good framework for clergy within the Church of England. However, it calls for changes to embrace the true diversity of practice in the importance of context within the Church.

This is my third July Synod and it is almost incomprehensible the change in culture that we as a body have experienced in the last two years. I hope many of you would agree with me that we have begun to value talking with and listening to one another to a much greater degree. Vestments for some are unquestionably as important as other workings of their Church, as whether or not women can be bishops for instance. This is not a comment on whether or not vestments should or should not be worn but a plea to open the conversation. Please put through the motion. Thank you.

Mr Tim Hind (Bath and Wells): Those of you who know me will realise that I am not in the habit of disagreeing with bishops - well, not for the last couple of years anyway. I would like to say tonight that I agree with the Bishop of Salisbury that we must not take too much time on this but I disagree with him on the issue of whether or not we should do it now.

Canonical obedience is important and if people can be stripped of their duties because they have failed to observe a Canon, but actually they can also be stripped of their duties for not having obeyed a Canon and for other things, we need to be consistent about what we are doing. I remember some years ago we spent a lot of time debating the Canons associated with ecumenism and when I asked the person who was telling us in our deanery synod why we were doing it, he said, “To bring the Church into line with what we are actually doing on the ground”.

I am actually in favour of this motion because I do not think that Revd Hobbs is asking for a revolution. What I think he is asking us to do is to be sensible. I think the key word is “appropriate”. If something is a barrier to the mission of the Church then it should not necessarily stand in the way of that mission. If it is important, if it is valuable to the mission of the Church, then it should be used.

Let me give you an example of one area where it was actually useful to have robes. We have had a succession of very good Bishops of Bath and Wells. Some have gone native recently since they have retired but that is a separate issue. John Bickersteth, who used to run the diocese like a military installation, on his very last service in Axbridge Parish Church was supposed to arrive in time for a 7.30 service. I was advised by the parish priest that as I knew him better than he did I should go down and find out whether he had arrived, so I went down into the square and waited for his chauffeur to turn up. At 7.29 for a 7.30 service, Bishop John Bickersteth came out of his car - it was just by the bus stop - and there were a couple of lads by the bus stop and they said, “Nice skirt, Vicar” and that started a very nice pastoral exchange because John did not care about the fripperies of things really but he did care about mission, and he was actually able to talk to those kids for about three or four minutes. It did not matter that there was a church full of people waiting and he had not quite fully robed. In that particular situation it was really valuable because it actually distinguished him. But on other occasions I am
absolutely convinced that robes get in the way and therefore if there is a Canon that prevents people from using things properly we should get rid of it.

The Chair: I am now calling to call upon the Revd Neil Patterson to speak to and move the amendment standing in his name.

Revd Neil Patterson (Hereford): I am very grateful, Chair, for calling me at this stage in the debate because it does seem that we have a direction of travel, a great number of speeches in favour of a relaxation of the law of “dressing up” shall we call it. I chose, incidentally, to dress this evening as a demonstration of some of the risks of allowing clergy to indulge their personality freely!

What the famous Royal Commission on public worship in the Church of England said in 1906 is true again: the liturgical law seems to be too narrow for the present generation. As Mark Chapman has suggested it seems very likely that we should be able to pin the Church back down again, as it were.

The amendment I have tabled is intended to give Synod an opportunity to say at this stage of the process, which will no doubt be long, that we do care about the principle of Holy Orders and who is in them and who is seen to be in them. A few illustrations of that can come from our very agenda this weekend. Clergy, did we not gather in our Convocations to discuss all the details of our conduct regulations, thus making it very clear that in all sorts of ways we are, painfully sometimes, set apart from the relaxation that is true of most people. We will spend a little bit of time on Monday debating a question that has been debated quite a lot that is to do with who may or may not enter a category of Holy Orders, and many of the questions on Friday night also related to certain categories of people in certain relationships who may or may not wish to be in Holy Orders.

I do not think anyone can claim that we do not care who is authorised, licensed and trained to lead our worship. I believe that worshippers coming to our churches always have a right to know that and to be able to see it somehow. If you say, “But in our church everyone knows who the vicar is”, if you do not have any newcomers coming you are in trouble.

Let me give you two examples to suggest why this might be a slight concern, if I have time. Think of Anglo-Catholic churches where there are many in vestments: do you know the deacon, the subdeacon? Are they a priest brought in from somewhere else? Are they a pastoral assistant who has been allowed to preach, even though he has just been turned down for ordination? Or what about a church where the leading team are all wearing polo shirts with a logo saying “St Pete’s”? The man who leads the worship with the guitar, the man who preaches at length, the lady who leads the prayers, which of them have been authorised to lead public worship in the Church of England?

I hope whatever modification Synod makes, it will make it clear that we still value the good ordering of our life together. Thank you.

The Revd Christopher Hobbs (London): I do not particularly object to this amendment but nor am I particularly in favour of it. I think it is a bit too specific. I
think we should perhaps vote on it and see if Synod wants this particular amendment, otherwise we have heard it and the Steering Committee, if there is one, could reflect further.

The Chair: The amendment is now open for debate.

The Bishop of Lichfield (The Rt Revd Jonathan Gledhill): I do not think we can let Neil Patterson get away with this amendment unless he can help us to see exactly what he means by “distinctive dress”.

Dr Philip Giddings (Oxford): I am a licensed lay minister in the Diocese of Oxford. If I am ministering in a church which does not customarily wear robes, what vesture do I wear, when there are other people taking part in the service, to indicate that I am a licensed lay minister in the Diocese of Oxford under this form of words? I clearly would not wear a dog collar since I am not ordained. I could, I suppose, wear one of those little blue badges but you would not be able to see it from very far back in the church. While I think I understand the motive behind this, I think the words are very unhelpful to the subsequent process of trying to design some legislation to achieve what is wanted, so I would urge Synod to vote against it.

The Revd Dr Jonathan Gibbs (Chester): I was minded as the debate went on to follow the lead of the Bishop of Salisbury but the tenor of the debate I think has changed my mind. My concern with this amendment, and indeed the following amendments, however, is that insofar as they attempt to introduce a greater level of detail into the regulations they are likely to increase our litigiousness thereafter. I would therefore urge Synod to resist this amendment and for similar reasons at least number 48 and possibly also number 47. Thank you.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

“That the question be now put.’

The Chair: That has my full support. Does it have Synod support?

This motion was put and carried.

We therefore move to Item 46 to vote.

The amendment was lost on a show of hands.

We then move to Brother Thomas Quin’s amendment at Item 47. If he would come and speak to his amendment with a three minute speech limit.

Brother Thomas Quin OSB (Religious Communities): Thank you, Chair. Members of Synod, I find myself proposing this amendment not because I dismiss Christopher Hobbs’ concerns but because I believe they are real yet call for an alternative solution.
I have been a monk for 26 years and during that time I have come across a range of attitudes to monastic dress. I have experienced surprise, scoffing and incomprehension, and that is on site at the Abbey never mind outside, but also at times relief, recognition of something symbolic in the habitat, even some expectation that I should be wearing it because I live this seriously weird lifestyle.

When I read Andrew Atherstone's booklet in the Grove series, helpfully circulated by Christopher Hobbs, I welcomed its approach and found myself agreeing with much of its diagnosis of the issues, but I cannot agree with the remedy set out in today's motion.

The problem undoubtedly is that Canon B 8 sets down fairly rigid regulation and thus inhibits mission and pastoral engagement in a variety of situations. That is why it is often flouted and why we are left in the current position of uncertainty and doubt. But the motion as it stands creates as many problems as it solves by deleting any regulation.

My amendment seeks instead to answer the real concerns about Canon B 8 not with deregulation but with flexible regulation, which still provides reasonable safeguards for those who feel uneasy at the proposed change. It seems to me that Canons are partly about setting out the Church's principles and practice, but also partly about protecting the Church and its members from things that might go wrong.

I did have in mind a clear, if somewhat colloquial, wording but that fell foul of the Legal Office. I know it is their job, and we are grateful for it, but anyway that is how the word “commissary” came in, although it is at least slightly more familiar now than it used to be, perhaps for the wrong reasons.

So what am I calling for? First, section (a) of my amendment is offering two safeguards. It requires agreement between the minister and the PCC to prevent any arguments over vesture being used as excuses to appeal to a higher authority. It also demands a liturgical or missional rationale so that the issue is actually looked at as part of the preparation for worship.

Then section (b) asks for reference to a more objective outsider. The bishop is the obvious person but I suggest that the permission could also come from other people, who are these commissaries, whom the bishop delegates because somebody else, the archdeacon or the diocesan mission adviser or somebody who is supervising Fresh Expressions in an area, might know the situation better.

Members of Synod, I appreciate that more work would have to be done at the drafting stage but my aim is to meet the concerns of Christopher Hobbs and his supporters but also those who dislike this proposal. This amendment offers a degree of regulation which is flexible, reasonable, easy to comply with and provides the protection which would be lost in the absence of regulation. Thank you.

*The Revd Christopher Hobbs (London):* Well, I would say without altering the principles set out in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Canon B 8 they in fact do imply that same thing which Thomas has spelt out, so I cannot completely resist but I just think why do we not let Synod decide? I would say in my motion it actually says “without
altering the principles”. The only thing that Thomas adds is specifically basing on a liturgical or missional rationale. I agree with that, but let us see what the Synod says.

*The Chair* imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

*The Ven. Christine Wilson (Derby):* I want to support this amendment. I am an archdeacon. I can remember reading in the e-notices in our diocese one time that one of the parishes was advertising the vestments to any takers in the diocese and actually had also taken a view not to wear robes any more but without any real kind of conversation with the parish. I really welcome the fact that there is something put in here, some safeguarding to make sure there is consultation about decisions that might change what happens in a parish and traditions. Thank you.

*The Bishop of Willesden (The Rt Revd Peter Broadbent):* I think we have actually got to the stage in the debate where it is quite helpful that we have taken seriously what we are trying to do here. I was half impressed by the Bishop of Salisbury and his “let’s chuck it all out.” But, of course, we are talking about Canons here, and it is a Canon that is much breached and, therefore, we do need a solution on this one. I was half taken with the Amendment No. 47, except that I think it is doing what we often do in these debates, which is as soon as we get to the problem we say: I know what we will do, we will give the bishops power to regulate these things. Let me tell you, it is an absolute pain being a Bishop because you have to regulate so many things that you have asked us to do. My colleagues here will say the same. But Amendment 47 is asking the right question: How are we to decide and help parishes decide on what they are doing with this robe stuff?

I freely confess, out of about a third of the parishes that I look after, about 110, are places where they normally do not wear robes for most services. That is the nature of how it is. But there are also many other places where I wear all the gear and do all the things that they want me to do. But the nature of the mixed economy is that we are now in a situation.

So the questions you need to ask are: What does it mean to be Church of England? That it is not just a vesture thing, that it is also a liturgical thing. I quite often challenge some in these parishes that are so liturgy-light that they lack any sense that there is anything Anglican going on at all. How will it be contextual? Because the contextual question is big. I have got loads of parishes where the majority are African Christians. You do not dress down for African Christians. You dress up because, actually, otherwise they outdo you. So how to be contextual and, thirdly, how to be missional. The missional has been around a lot. All those questions are right questions to ask.

I think probably, therefore, 47 is asking the right question, but do not pass it. Let us make sure it is on the agenda of whatever Revision Committee is set up to do this thing but do not, at the moment, set in stone what is being said in Amendment 47. The right question is there, but do not give the answers until we have debated it thoroughly.

*The Revd Canon Dr Simon Taylor (Derby):* It is with a heavy heart that I stand to
oppose this, not least because it means standing against my Archdeacon, but also because I think, as Bishop Pete does, that this is asking the right questions. I do not think it is asking all of the right questions, however. I think what Bishop Michael Perham said earlier about the different levels of protection in different circumstances would be appropriate. So, to coin a phrase, I agree with Bishop Michael.

It is very important in whatever we produce on this - and it is quite right that a dead letter needs revision - that it is not left to the whim of the minister: I do not feel like wearing a cassock, it is a bit warm today. It must be about context, about mission and about liturgical appropriateness, and so something that stops it being about the whim of the minister is really important. You do not want folk turning up for a wedding to discover, “I am not the kind of minister that wears robes, so I am terribly sorry, you expected me to dress for the occasion but you take me as I am.” That is a pastorally inappropriate and a missionally inappropriate thing. There needs to be some safeguards that allow us to be properly missional in a variety of contexts, recognising that wherever we minister there probably will not be one rule at all times. Mixed economy is not just across the Church of England, it is also within the day-to-day life of most of us in ministry, whether that is lay ministry or ordained ministry. So, with a heavy heart, I ask you to oppose this amendment.

The Revd Preb. Stephen Lynas (Bath and Wells): There is something quite interesting going on in this debate. It is something lightly visceral for the clergy about robes. I have seen a tweet which says this could be a debate between the Charismatic and the Catholic and a kind of who is going to win, and it is not like that. I am very glad that someone has just used that phrase "mixed economy" again because I want to make a confession. As a Bishop’s chaplain I robe diligently when accompanying either of our Bishops in worship and they too robe appropriately. But, also (would you please stop your ears now, Bishop of Bath and Wells), quite often on a Sunday I assist in a parish which has two main churches. In one robes are not normally worn. Now should I go into the office on Monday and tell the Bishop that I broke Canon B 8 yesterday? The precedents are not good according to that excellent history lesson we had about a former Dean of Wells. When the incumbent introduced this policy a couple of years ago I was very uneasy, that visceral thing about clergy and robes. I have been ordained for 35 years and it just felt wrong. But I thought I need to do this for the sake of a parish, so I do it. And I can see it is Café Church tomorrow, the person who is taking that service will not be robed and it works fine. When I preside and lead at those sorts of services - and all of us who do that do this – we take extra care to have extra shiny shoes, a crease in our trousers and our best skirt and blouse, or whatever it may be appropriate to it. But it is illegal, and not just for the reason of wearing the wrong kind of clothes. If you pass this motion, as amended by Thomas Quin, nothing is going to happen. Those clergy who are going like this at the very thought can relax, because it will come back later when people have done the donkey work. Those of us whose liturgical horses are going to be frightened by the thought of robes being optional should not panic. Would they please pass this motion, possibly with this amendment to make it clear what we are doing, and might we please ask the Bishop of Gloucester to write down those points he made and pass them to a Revision Committee because they actually spelt out very clearly the way in which this can work and work well for a mixed economy Church. Thank you.
Mr John Freeman (Chester): On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

The Chair: Mr Freeman that has my support, does it have the support of Synod?

This motion was put and carried.

So we now move to vote on the amendment at Item 47.

The amendment was lost on a show of hands.

We now move to the third of the Amendments in the name of Prudence Dailey and I ask her if she would take the rostrum.

Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford): I am not sure if very many, indeed if any, Laity have spoken so far in this debate. Maybe there have been. This really comes from the point of view of the Laity. My amendment is intended to parallel the kind of provision which currently exists in relation to the form of service to be used in respect of occasional offices. If you are getting married or arranging a family funeral, for example, and you want the vicar to use the Book of Common Prayer and he insists on using Common Worship or, unbelievably, even the reverse, then you have the option of appealing to the bishop. This does not happen very often and one hopes that it will not happen very often, but the point is that it sets out clearly in Canon that the wishes of those concerned in relation to these occasional offices do have to be taken into consideration and that they do have some kind of recourse if they have not been able to come to an agreement. Obviously, one very much hopes that that will not happen. I am quite sure that nobody in this chamber who is responsible for conducting services would be so insensitive as to allow things to get that far. So this really is not intended as a licence for litigation.

Basically, all it is saying is that if you are having a funeral or a marriage etc. and you are particularly keen that the person taking the service should be robed in a formal manner, even if perhaps that is not the way that things are sometimes done in that particular church, then that puts down a clear marker that that should happen and if there is a disagreement there is a right of appeal there. I do hope that Synod will agree. Thank you.

The Chair: I should reassure you, Prudence, that while you were talking, we were checking on the number of Lay contributions there have been, and it is not bad actually as a share of the total.

The Revd Christopher Hobbs (London): I resist this amendment because it is too specific.

The Chair: The amendment is open for debate.

Mrs Victoria Russell (Oxford): I would be more inclined to support the main motion if this Amendment is carried, although I have, actually, been really astonished to see some very inappropriate, non-clerical dress worn by those leading Sunday services.
In one case it was a jogging suit and trainers. However, my main concerns are about the occasional offices of baptisms, marriages and funerals. It seems to me that the views of ordinary lay people involved in these services are every bit as important as the views of the incumbent and the PCC. For example, a family where the daughter is to be married may put a lot of effort into dressing formally for a very special occasion and, in my view, should be entitled to expect the clergy to be vested in a traditional and customary manner, if this is what they want. My husband, a recently retired archdeacon, received many complaints when lay people felt that the officiating minister was not appropriately dressed for weddings or funerals. Please respect the rights of ordinary parishioners and support this Amendment.

The Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn): I would wish to resist this Amendment because, as Christopher Hobbs has said, it is too specific at this stage in the process. The point is well made and it can be considered, if we get that far, at Revision Committee and so on. I am concerned, particularly in the case of weddings, more and more people now seem to think they have booked the church for the wedding to be done in the way that they wish it to be done. I can see situations where I am confronted by the bride’s mother (it is always the bride’s mother and never the bride) saying, “we want you to wear that lovely rose pink number you wore on Mothering Sunday.” I explain, it is not actually a mass because it is only an ordinary wedding without the Holy Communion and, therefore, vestments would not be worn in any case. This would not be understood. There would be an argument. I think it would be better that this is left for Revision Committee to consider in more detail, rather than constraining whatever we pass now. So I resist this Amendment.

The Bishop of Leeds (The Rt Revd Nicholas Baines): My objection to this is the last line. If it is going to be referred to the bishop of the diocese for his decision, frankly this is going to happen at the last minute. I do not want to be going into another service, getting phone calls saying, “Would you adjudicate in what people should wear in my service”, which is 50 miles away. Come on!

Mr John Freeman: On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

This motion was put and carried on a show of hands.

We move to a vote on Item 48.

The amendment was lost on a show of hands.

Now the main motion remains unamended. You have behaved yourselves so well and moved with such speed that we have a few minutes and we can return to a general debate. Is anyone interested in doing that?

Bishop of Lynn (The Rt Revd Jonathan Meyrick): Thank you, Chair. Just a few days ago I was commissioning a rural dean in the Diocese of Norwich. It was in the context of a clergy barbecue and I have to report that I did not robe. In February I would have been fully determined to vote against this. I think robes in church are of
immense importance and there would have been no doubt in my mind at all. But for
two reasons I think I am going to vote yes. The first of them is simply that the way in
which the motion has being phrased by Christopher Hobbs is, actually, beautifully
done and is simply asking, as I read it, for the Business Committee to think of ways
in which we could introduce an element of option into it, and that seems to me to be
a perfectly reasonable request to make. But, also, since February I have, like I hope
every member of this Synod, been converted by the Five Principles of the way in
which we seek to work together, which is part of another debate of course, and, in
the light of those Five Principles alone, I would vote yes.

The Archbishop of York (Most Revd and Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu): There is a lot
that has been said but it has not been said by me! I just want this to be simply put
on the record, really. We have had a lot of talk about where churches are growing,
people do not wear robes, Fresh Expressions, and in that wonderful report from
anecdotal evidence, yes, there is plenty of growth in church plants and for Fresh
Expressions and other places, and in these places robes are not worn. But we need
to be slightly cautious because cathedral congregations have grown by 8% in the
last six years and robes are worn. So you just cannot simply go from one to the
other.

The other thing is, if we turn to that wonderful paper by the Secretary General, GS
1944B, and you look in paragraph 5, "The Meaning of the Present Canonical
Requirements," he says: "The services to which the canonical requirements apply
are the Holy Communion, Morning and Evening Prayer on Sundays (either according
to the Book of Common Prayer or in accordance with the provision contained in
Common Worship) and the Occasional Offices. They do not apply to less formal
forms of worship, including many of the forms that would be possible within the
framework of ‘A Service of the Word’. They would also not apply to many forms of
worship that the minister might choose to use under Canon B 5.2 on occasions for
which no provision is made in the Book of Common Prayer or is otherwise approved
under the Canons." So, friends, already that Canon is very permissive.

From all that I have heard, it is not about Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer or the Holy
Communion. It is these other services and they are already actually allowed. There
is a bit of me which wants to share the Bishop of Salisbury's, "Don't waste too much
time," but also, on the other hand, wanting to listen to the Bishop of Gloucester, "If
you take it forward, please let us know what it is that you are looking for permission
for." What worries me - as somebody who has already cut up his dog collar, despite
what the Bishop of Willesden says about Africans like dressing up (and I have cut it
up because I want to make a point, thank God there is no Canon which requires the
wearing of a dog collar. I would have found it difficult if it did) – is the Canon is
already very, very permissive. So let us not go down the road we suggest it ends.
So when you are amending it from mandatory to occasional, know what it is that,
actually, you are amending.

The other thing which worries me is, and I have been a Bishop in different places,
when the clergy-person themselves feel the need to simply wear the best suit there
is and it comes to baptism and the family are offended and they write back and
complain. I hope we are not legislating for those who feel, "Robes are gone, they
are a thing of the past, we are free, we are coming to a new world." If we do that,
friends, you may lose congregations in time down the road.

So I am for permissiveness, but please let us know what we are doing should we pass this motion, that it is not actually saying when it comes to Morning Prayer or Evening Prayer, because you will have to amend bits of Morning Prayer which will not be an easy matter to do. Anyway, I wish you well.

*The Revd Simon Cawdell (Hereford)*: On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

This motion was put and carried on a show of hands.

I am now going to ask Christopher Hobbs to comment.

*The Revd Christopher Hobbs (London)*: I want to start by saying, I hope that nobody is going to call for a vote by Houses in order to try and stop it in its tracks. But if someone does do that, I hope that that would spur you on even more to vote for the motion so that it could be considered further. Brothers and sisters, clerical vesture has been a law that some members of the Church has asked to be reformed for many years and now, with the growth of Fresh Expressions, I think it is more timely for us to consider it more fully again. Thank you, Synod.

*The Chair*: We now move to vote on Item 13 unamended.

*The motion*

‘That this Synod call on the Business Committee to introduce draft legislation to amend the law relating to the vesture of ministers so that, without altering the principles set out in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Canon B 8, the wearing of the forms of vesture referred to in paragraphs 3, 4 and 5 of that Canon becomes optional rather than mandatory.’

was carried on a show of hands.

*The Archbishop of York dismissed the Synod with the blessing at 9.50 pm.*
THE CHAIR The Revd Canon Dr Rosemarie Mallet (Southwark) took the Chair at 2.30 pm

The Chair: Synod, before we come to our first item of business this afternoon, the Archbishop of Canterbury has asked if he can address Synod.

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby): Good afternoon. This is the Jim Wallis effect. Good afternoon. That is better. Now you may have noticed possibly as you -- shush shush -- that is the Church Lads' and Church Girls' Brigade, and I really discovered much more about them when I was up in Durham where Sister Anne looks after quite a lot of them, they do a fantastic job and they are also doing stuff all around the world. When we were in Zambia a couple of weeks ago they met us there and they were doing something similar. So could we show our warmest appreciation and continue to hold them in our prayers as they are going through a process of renewal and it is very exciting, they are a wonderful organisation, so could we express our thanks.

LEGISLATIVE BUSINESS

The Chair: Synod, we now come to Item 524 of the business, Payments to the Churches Conservation and Trust Order 2014, and you will need GS 1955. I call upon the Bishop of London to speak to the motion. You have ten minutes.

The Bishop of London (The Rt Revd & Rt Hon. Richard Chartres): Thank you very much indeed. This is commonly called, of course, the graveyard slot, but I hope no members of Synod are in any doubt the Churches Conservation Trust is certainly not a crematorium for redundant churches. It is 345 churches, that is the number they currently look after. They remain consecrated and the Trust is working very closely with local parishes to support their continuing occasional use for worship and other things. An especially encouraging example is All Saints in Leicester where not only is there occasional worship but, also, it has recently been adopted as a base for a community project run by a neighbouring parish. If needed, of course, the 345 buildings can be restored to regular parochial use, serve new worshiping communities as a result of church growth or demographic change. In fact, there are two recent examples, one in the Diocese of Liverpool and one in the Diocese of London of whom that is precisely the case. There has also been an increasing focus in the work of the Trust on interpretation, helping to grow the number of visitors and to help them to understand the Christian faith which inspired the buildings in the first place. As you will know, fellow members of Synod, most church buildings after closure are found new uses or are demolished and the diocese together, and the Church Commissioners, work very hard at finding suitable uses and, by and large, they are successful. It is not always possible, however, particularly for buildings of outstanding, historic and heritage significance. The presence of the Trust to care for such buildings which have become beyond the capacity of local communities is
particularly important. The Church needs such a vehicle and, this is of key significance, the Church retains the decision on which buildings should be transferred to the Trust. It now looks after buildings in nearly every diocese. In recent years it has taken on newly vested churches in Canterbury, Chichester, Gloucester, Hereford and Manchester, and such buildings would otherwise continue to be a drain on parochial or diocesan funds.

Through all the recent cuts and the financial pressures faced by the Trust, we work very hard together to ensure its continuing ability to take on new vestings and, therefore, support the on-going mission of the Church. When I stood here before Synod three years ago, it was at a time when cuts in the Government's spending review, which have impacted on all who care for historic buildings, had recently been announced. Even though the Trust has not been as hard hit as some bodies, the situation has not improved. Earlier this year the Commissioners made further representations to Government on the need for adequate mutual support to sustain the Trust and the vital work it does over the longer term, otherwise its viability will be under real threat. While meeting a sympathetic response, a restoration of adequate funding has not been forthcoming and the discussions will continue. They will continue as part of what I think is an increasingly urgent need to establish with a whole range of public authorities a new concordat on the care and preservation of the very large part of the listed historical places for which the Church of England is entirely responsible. 45% of all Grade 1 listed buildings in the entire country are the responsibility of our Church.

The paper before you, members of Synod, GS 1955, and the Funding Order itself, sets out the financial arrangements for the Trust and, in particular, the proposals for meeting the Church's share over the next three years. These provide, once more, for freezing the Church's own contribution at its current level of £1.35 million a year over the next three years, meaning that the Church's funding will essentially remain up to 2018 at the same level that it stood at in 2001, because the Church will not and cannot pick up the shortfall from Government. The Funding Order does provide potentially for a small additional sum of £150,000 specifically intended to support new vestings, but this is not guaranteed. It is directly dependent on the recent strong performance of sale proceeds arising from the disposal of other closed churches. The Trust is at present, and I have seen so many examples of its work up and down the country, is particularly well and imaginatively managed.

I pay tribute to the energy and commitment of the Trust under the leadership of its Chair, Loyd Grossman and, also, of its Chief Executive, Crispin Truman, and his team. It is down to their resourcefulness and entrepreneurial skills that the Trust has been able to respond so effectively to the increasingly daunting challenges that it is facing at a time when it has undergone further restructuring and retrenchment. An example since the last debate in Synod is that the Trust tackled a considerable part of a large urban church repair challenge they faced in recent years, securing a very significant partnership for capital investment from the Heritage Lottery Fund. So the Trust is showing considerable gumption and imagination in bringing new funds into their work. This has assisted a flagship conservation and regeneration project, for example in Bolton and in Ipswich. The Trust are also developing strong new partnerships with dioceses, sharing their learning on tourism, volunteering and community sport.
None of it is easy, but the Trust does remarkably well on slender resources. A record 93% of Church Conservation Trust expenditure last year went on frontline projects to repair and open Trust churches with further reductions on expenditure on administration.

In conclusion, members of Synod, we are not where we would like to be. We will be pressing the case hard to Government, as we have been doing. We have been trying to encourage them to meet their fair share of the Trust's funding as part of the complex picture of Church/State relations in this area of Christian life and service for the whole community. Of course, the CCT is only part of the picture. The grant by the Chancellor of the Exchequer of £42 million a year to defray the VAT cost on the repair and maintenance of listed Church buildings is something fresh and new which we ought to recognise and be grateful. Also, the most recent £20 million in the budget to restore cathedrals and presented it in such away as recognising quite rightly their huge significance for the whole community as places of memory and, also, aspiration. But the Trust, as part of this picture, continues to provide a model of successful partnership and is doing work of continuing and significant value to the Church in its wider mission. I would respectfully ask fellow members of Synod to give your approval to the proposals contained in GS 1955. Thank you very much.

The Chair: Synod, Item 524 is now open for debate.

Dr John Beal (Leeds): Thank you, Chair, and thank you to the Bishop of London for his speech introducing this Item. I stand to speak in support of Item 524 and would just like to expand on one or two of the things which the Bishop has already said. As he has already told us, all the Churches taken over by the Churches Conservation Trust remain consecrated and the CCT increasingly look at mixed use of those churches. They are available for occasional and special services, but they also, in consultation with their local communities, use them for arts festivals, for exhibition and, increasingly, for educational purposes, particularly for schools. I know at this moment they are producing a programme for schools to use in their churches, and I am sure that they will be valuable to other churches as well and they will, indeed, be going on the website. All, as we have been told, are open churches. They are either unlocked during the day, or keyholder information is available when you arrive at the church. Altogether, two million people visit Churches Conservation Trust churches. The most visited one (you were very close to it this morning, it is just around the corner from the Minster), Holy Trinity Goodramgate, is the most visited one and, indeed, takes the most donations of any of their churches, over 60,000 people a year visiting that Church.

Now the motion before us is for the Church Commissioners to give what amounts to £1.35 million a year. To that, as we have heard from the Bishop, the Government adds a further £2.9 million, twice what the Church gives, so although the Government have reduced their funding, they are still putting in a considerable amount of money. Once they have got that money, the Trust is able to use that to seed fund and to use it as match funding for raising another £2 million as grants, education and other projects and donations. So our £1.35 million has grown to £6.25 million by the good use of that money, over five times what the Church gives to them.
Chair, there are two other things I would just like to say. As well as voting for this motion you can also, as individuals, help the Churches Conservation Trust. You can become a supporter member for only £36 a year. For that, there are actually benefits you get as well. You get free entry to St Paul's Cathedral and to Canterbury Cathedral. You get two tickets for the price of one to York Minster and, also, Westminster Abbey. You can become a member of the Trust but, most importantly, you need to work to make sure that the churches in your patch do not become redundant. You need to work, just as the Churches Conservation Trust do, with the local community to ensure that everyone has access to that church. It is not a private club which meets for an hour on a Sunday and then remains locked all the time. Many churches are doing this but, equally, many churches are not. There is something to be learned from bodies like the Churches Conservation Trust, or from the Churches Visitor and Tourism Association which again helps parishes look at other uses and keeps churches open and planning for growth. I hope that you will vote very unanimously, hopefully, in support of this money for the Churches Conversation Trust. Thank you, Chair.

The Revd Dr Patrick Richmond (Norwich): Thank you, Chair, for calling me. I too want to express my total support for the motion in front of us and commend to Synod the report in the *Church Times*, which is freely available, which is most encouraging. I think that the work of the Trust does support the Common Good, at least potentially, and this is clearly its intention. I believe that our buildings can be evangelistic and this, of course, must be intentional evangelism. But I want to stand before Synod taking this wonderful opportunity, when so many are gathered together who have so many different perspectives in the Church and who call us to review where we are and to make projections for the future. Some of you may remember that the issue of projections was not at the top of the agenda in 2011 when we were last looking at this question. Indeed, though it was predicted that clergy would retire and projections were being made, there were no projections being made on the number of congregation members who were likely to be, if we use the graveyard shift analogy, visiting the graveyard and going on to glory. But now those projections have been done and they show what a challenge that there is. But it was not always clear that these challenging projections are made in the context of our stock of buildings. The buildings do not shuffle off quite as easily as the aging members of our congregations. As we come three years after that 2011 review of this question, we are still being faced with the challenge of the buildings. That challenge does not seem to have got any less.

I am calling Synod to reflect, as we are together, about how we can do some joined up and strategic thinking about these buildings, not just being aware that we are challenged but looking to the future so that we can be better prepared to meet those challenges, so that we do not find that we do not have the capacity to cope with some of the possibilities that may arise on the horizon. Jim Wallis talked about the challenge that politicians face to plan in the long-term because they have a five year cycle but we in the Church can take a longer perspective. I hope that we will be taking the long perspective as we look to the future of our buildings and what we can do with them.

The work of the Trust is amazing, but the numbers involved are, it seems to me at
least, relatively modest compared with what we might face in the future. Between 1969 and 2014 there have been 1,883 closures, that is about 42 a year I make it; and about 380 demolished churches, that is about eight a year. These numbers are relatively handle-able. They are within the capacity of the Church of England as we are presently constituted but, as we hear, we are already greatly challenged. Some of you may have been present in questions when I was able to celebrate with Anne Sloman the contribution of Norwich Diocese to increasing the options that we have. In Norwich Diocese we have a number of churches in increasingly depopulated or actually depopulated regions. You will remember some of these churches, 50 of them have fewer than 50 people in the surrounding environment, and 150 have fewer than 150 people. Typically, it is these tiny congregations that have more aged members. So there is some estimate of where the need is going to be, and I would ask other dioceses to be predicting where they think they are going to be in the future, to do some scenarios.

I understand that Leicester Diocese has a four part grid based on whether a church is self-sustaining or not and whether it is strategic or not. Clearly, we need to be addressing the question about the non-self-sustaining, non-strategic buildings. Are there any at the moment? I know that some dioceses will not want to admit that there are any that fall into that category, but where will we be in five, ten, 15 years? These are pressing questions, not because they seem so instant but because the Church of England takes a long time to do things, do we not? So I ask us to look to the future. Thank you, Chair.

The Revd Tony Redman (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich): I rise to support the motion but, first of all, I would like to compliment the Business Sub-Committee for putting a debate about churches and old churches in the graveyard slot. We need to make the most of our graveyards the way that the Churches Conservation Trust makes the most of buildings which seem to have outlived their usefulness. As both a priest and a member of a DAC and, I have to admit, a member of the CBC, I am conscious that we have a rich heritage of heritage buildings which almost uniquely among Christian denominations, particularly in the West, themselves help with the story of mission and help with the story of salvation, because they tell stories of faith and hope, of suffering and success as a significant part of what we say as a Church.

Whenever I meet a struggling congregation, and that is quite frequent in different parts of the country, of course, other than Suffolk, they always express a love for their buildings more than the love they have for their priests. It is as though they are saying: “Look, I do not mind going to worship somewhere else if it means I can worship in a vibrant community, so long as somebody else looks after our building because our building says something to the wider community about the constant love of God than perhaps we can today as we are getting older”. Many, of course, have to be disabused of this wonderful safety net they view that the Church has in the Churches Conservation Trust. I think the Redundant Churches Fund and the CCT perhaps have been too good in their PR, because we have this view that if we cannot look after the church anymore somebody else will take it on and do something better with it. It is true that often where the CCT does take over a church, there are funds available which can make the church be in a better state of repair, it can be restored, it can have its sense of newness restored, and the building appears to be in a far better condition than perhaps it was when it was a living church, so to
speak, and I use those words carefully.

I am very very impressed by the way the Churches Conservation Trust has developed its work, not just from looking after buildings which have become tired or perhaps, let us say, not redundant anymore but just resting, to working with communities to see how they can make the best use of their community buildings, often the only community building left in their particular communities. I am very impressed with the way perhaps they have been working with local communities to see what can be done in terms of tourism, what can be done in terms of using the building in an alternative way, of seeing a great variety of ways perhaps in which their building can be used which could not have been envisaged when they were just a struggling congregation. There are two examples in Suffolk. One at St Mary Le Quay in Ipswich which has been mentioned in the *Church Times*, where the port went downhill, the area went downhill, three struggling churches, both surrounded by desolation, the Churches Conservation Trust has taken one on and has looked after it, while the area comes up, and now the area is becoming more vibrant again this Church can see a new life ahead of it, maybe not always as a worshiping community but certainly a building which is useful for the Common Good and for the wider community. At the other end of Suffolk in Sudbury, the Redundant Churches Fund, the forerunner of the CCT, decided that it would look after two of the churches in that area. One was in the city centre, the biggest church in the community, and it was kept and looked after and maintained and now it has become a vibrant community centre. They have organ concerts, they have farmers' markets, they have all sorts of dancing and all sorts of other things, which no other church in the community can handle because they are too small. On the outskirts there was a small church which was surrounded by an industrial estate at Chiltern. It was vandalised. The windows were blown in. Somebody got a Land Rover and attached a telegraph pole to it and started using that as a battering ram through the porch door because they thought there would be money inside. They stole two and sixpence from the box in the wall and did £2,000 worth of damage.

I have two issues. One is, first of all, when you look at the Trustees, you see that Trustees to the CCT are a number of accountants and we have people who are involved in heritage management, but there is nobody there with a professional qualification in conservation and I wonder whether that ought to be addressed in the future. The second point is that we have the CCT and CBC, as well as the Church Commissioners. The English Heritage used to say that when they went to look at a church there would be one person from the Government and there would be five people coming from the Church of England. I wonder whether the Simplification Group ought to look at the ways in which we can work together as a body in order to improve on the synergies which we have within the various bodies available. Thank you.

*The Revd Canon Chris Lilley (Lincoln)*: Synod, you may think I have been a little greedy over the years, but in my groups of parishes I have not had one, not two but three churches looked after by the Churches Conservation Trust and it has been a real joy and pleasure to work with them in partnership. They have always been most helpful, not least when the neighbouring parish church had a new roof. We were unable to use it for several months and so we simply switched with agreement our worship to the CCT church. The only problem with that particular church is that
immediately behind the altar there is a large double bed with two people in it. The bed is made of stone, the people likewise, and it takes up almost half of the space of the church but it is one of the jewels of the Churches Conservation Trust crown.

I have spoken in this debate before when I said that perhaps we will be better off keeping open churches open, and putting energy into that, rather than keeping closed churches closed. I have very much changed my mind now and, indeed, the Trust now do give help to dioceses and parishes who are needing assistance with keeping their small church with a tiny congregation open. Patrick Richmond referred to Leicester, he may have meant Lincoln, I do not know. In Lincoln we are forming this grid of churches where each PCC decides which category it falls into, and a number of them will be deciding that they fall in the bottom category which means they need help and we are working out how we can give help.

I do not want to go too far into the Monty Python sketch, but in Lincoln Diocese there are places where we wish we had got that huge population that Norwich Diocese have to support those small churches. The one thing that does concern me is that we have got several hundred Grade 1 listed buildings, many in small communities, many of which perhaps over these next five, ten, 15 years will really struggle. The Churches Conservation Trust cannot take them all on but in most cases they are in areas where we have no chance of selling them. If we make them redundant, the Church still has to pay. The diocese has to pay the maintenance cost if we cannot find any other solution. So there is a bigger issue here, I agree with Patrick, that we do need to look at as a Church how, in particularly the larger rural dioceses with many Grade 1 buildings, we can support the future of these churches. Thank you.

Mrs April Alexander (Southwark): Thank you, Chair. I really wanted to bang the CCT drum, but a lot of people have done that so I will try as I go through to miss out the things that have already been said. I became closely acquainted with them as a member of the Closed Churches Committee on the Commissioners. Each year we make a visit to a different diocese and in each diocese, there are several CCT churches to visit, they are always beautiful, Grade 1 or Grade 2 star, and they are shown off to us with enormous pride by the staff, although there are not many of those. One thing, I can tell you which others have not, is that the National Trust has 200 historic houses and gardens and coastline, of course, but it employs 5,000 staff. We have heard that the CCT has 345 church buildings and adds to them by approximately three per year and they employ, wait for it, 50 full time equivalents. The difference is staggering. As we have heard, we have a huge amount to learn from them, and that is one of the things we need to learn, I think. They have two million visitors, as we have also heard.

So how do they do this? They have prioritised the recruitment and training of volunteers to manage the churches. There is nearly always someone present when you visit and they will talk to you with ebullient enthusiasm. I cannot think of any other way of putting it. They are vigorously marketed as visitor attractions and community venues for cultural activity and particularly the arts. There are stacks of these leaflets in the Exhibition Centre. Please go and pick them up, they will be delighted. They have been beautifully restored and, as soon as they can manage it, each of the most visited will have facilities that visitors expect, like loos, cafe and shop, all sympathetically constructed. They have partnerships with other
organisations, as have been mentioned, particularly local businesses, to ensure two way traffic, between pubs, B&Bs and historic churches. The one about pubs and B&Bs is called "Saints and Sinners," so there is clearly something I need to learn about B&Bs because I have not found that so far. As a result of these partnerships, these beautiful churches are recognised for the local asset that they are.

Now for every £1 received by the Trust from the Commissioners and the Government combined is turned into at least £3 through matched funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund and other foundations. More than this, they earn a large amount of money, about £2 million per annum, for hiring out their buildings for functions and from donations. Increased footfall equals fuller wall safes, and better visitor facilities increases the footfall. You get the message: We have got a lot to learn.

What I would like all Synod members to do now is approve this motion, visit the stand, pick up the leaflets, visit the website, join up, visit the churches and shout it from the rooftops. Thank you.

The Archdeacon of Lincoln (The Ven. Timothy Barker): Picking up what Mrs Alexander has just said, there are a number of CCT churches in Lincolnshire, and I do encourage people to come to Lincolnshire to see not just the CCT churches but also the wonderful heritage buildings which are still very much open for business and for worship across Lincolnshire.

The churches which have been vested in earlier years, some of them perhaps might not have been now, are wonderfully looked after, and so it was of particular sadness a few months ago to see how much the local community as well as the CCT was affected by the destruction by fire of the gorgeous little church at Goltho near Wragby. These buildings, even though they may be closed for worship, are still very much loved and treasured.

In the Diocese of Lincoln we have been doing an awful lot of reviewing in recent months and years, and I had the task of convening the working party that was reviewing our work with church buildings. One of the things in the terms of reference was coming up with a strategy for closing buildings we did not need. We decided we did not want to go down that particular line, beguiling though it might have been, because we felt that as far as possible we wanted to keep our churches open. It seemed to be bad witness to close them, to have closed churches, second guessing what might be happening with population changes as well as it being expensive for the diocese and time-consuming for the diocese and the wider Church to seek to close churches. Instead we are wanting to categorise all our churches in the Diocese of Lincoln: the key mission churches, the local mission churches, those that are effectively supported by the pillars, those who are within the life of the Church, but also recognising that some churches need to be supported more overtly from outside by the buttresses, the celebration churches, the festival churches, and we look forward to seeing the result of the parishes’ self-assessment of their churches, which is due in tomorrow. I do not think we chose Bastille Day for any particular reason, but we are looking forward to seeing what the response is from our parishes, and seeing this very much tied in with a wider initiative for parishes identifying themselves in mission communities. That is a way of leading into a programme for
developing discipleship across the diocese, trying to get that joined-up thinking, with our church buildings being part and parcel of our growing in discipleship.

There are some churches which are going to come into our fourth category. We could not think of a particularly snappy title so it is “Churches where the immediate future is uncertain”. We have no idea at this stage how many parishes are going to put their churches in that category. Sadly, if there are some which eventually do close, I guess there are a few that will be able to be taken over by the CCT. So there is a major concern for the Church in working not just with local communities but, where there is not obvious local support and a church needs to close, with local authorities, because there is a very real resistance in some areas to local authorities being, frankly, realistic about the future for church buildings. The last thing we want to do is to demolish them, except in the case of one church which engineers described as “floating on a sea of custard” in the fens. There is a need for local authorities and the Government to be much more realistic about the uses for churches where there is no other realistic alternative.

**The Revd Canon Steven Saxsby (Chelmsford):** A few people said to me before this discussion, “That is not very interesting”, but I would like to say this is an interesting topic and it is very much about the Common Good. I would really recommend that people look on the CCT website on the tab “Regenerating Communities”, because the CCT is playing a key role in many parts of our country in regeneration. I had the joy of doing a placement with the CCT when I was doing a Cultural Heritage Masters and I just want to echo all the comments I have heard about its marvellous work.

The point that a little money goes a long way is really evident in those areas where the CCT is involved in regeneration projects and where churches have been opened for the benefit of communities. I have to say I visited a CCT church in the Diocese of Liverpool not too long ago, and I was so impressed with what is going on in that church, which is open every evening and often in the day times, is fully used at weekends by the local community, both the church and its churchyard, and is a real resource for that community. I thought to myself how sad that all this energy and imagination has come only after this church has closed and how sad that there is not a Christian community there at the heart of doing that kind of work.

The thing to emphasise as well is that the CCT is, as has been mentioned, doing a lot of work helping churches which are open and helping them to think about how they might also be involved in regeneration in their local communities. One of the things I feel about the package, which I entirely support in this round, is that I hope in the future we might try to find a way of the CCT not being so reliant on the money it gets from the closure of churches. It seems to me anomalous; we have a marvellous organisation which has so much expertise in helping us to prevent the closure of churches and yet part of its funding stream comes from the closure of churches. I am hoping that in the future that we will find ways of finding more support for the CCT. I think it is the most professional organisation around in terms of helping churches think about how they can be involved in the regeneration of their communities, and I think it needs all the support that we can give it as the Church of England.

I have got a bit of an academic interest in this as well. One of the narratives around
closed churches is that “more and more churches are closing”. The evidence suggests otherwise. In fact, English Heritage produced a report not too long ago which showed that Church of England church closures had really slowed. They are some of the lowest rates of closure that we have experienced in the last 40 to 50 years. I think we can tell ourselves this story that churches are closing, closing, closing and in fact the opposite is true. I think part of it is that we are often projecting out to wider society a very negative view of ourselves and our role in this country. I think talking up church closure is very unhelpful to mission. On the other side of things, where there is leadership at diocesan level which actually seeks to prevent the closure of churches, I think that really has helped some dioceses to prevent closure. I would cite the excellent leadership of the Bishop of London in that regard not least.

I hope we will support this package but I also hope that in future we will find other ways of giving even more support to the CCT in helping our live churches be part of the regeneration of our communities.

The Revd Duncan Dormor (University of Cambridge): I feel extremely redundant because I have been a Trustee of the Churches Conservation Trust for just about a year now, and everybody has spoken in such extraordinary terms, eulogising the Trust, that there is very little indeed left for me to say.

But I just want to say a couple of things. The first is when I was asked to become a Trustee, I do not have an academic interest in this area, I am not a conservation person, I am not madly fascinated by buildings, so I thought, “Why me?” Two things really reassured me. The first, which people have alluded to, is just how incredibly well run and how creative and entrepreneurial it is, I have to say. I think of it more as the “Churches Regeneration Trust” than anything else and there is lots of creativity. The volunteering programme, for example, is fantastic. I think the Church of England has a great deal to learn from the Churches Conservation Trust.

I was at All Saints, Leicester, with a Trustees’ tour just a couple of months ago and that church has linked in with Fresh Expressions. There is some real community regeneration going on there. It is fantastic. Loyd Grossman, the Chair of the Trustees, is an outstanding advocate for parish churches in this country. He is a fantastic advocate within the heritage world and the CCT really stands out in that world. We as the Church of England should be immensely proud of the CCT, and I am hearing that a great deal here this afternoon.

So in addition to echoing what everyone else has said, I would say vote this through unanimously with your absolute wholehearted support because that will help us leverage more money from other people. Thank you.

The Chair: Point of order?

Mr John Freeman (Chester): On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

The Chair: Synod, we have a motion for closure on Item 524. That has my
permission. Does it have that of Synod?

This motion was put and carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: I call on the Bishop of London to sum up. You have five minutes.

The Bishop of London (The Rt Revd & Rt Hon. Richard Chartres): Thank you very much indeed. Despite the hour, the liveliness and energy in the debate tells its own story, and of course it is a matter that touches almost every parish in the Church of England. I was very grateful to John Beal for pointing to the educational work. I did not know actually that membership secured free entry to St Paul’s Cathedral and I shall have to check that with the Dean! Patrick Richmond and so many other speakers expressed anxiety about the future, which is very prudent.

One of the things that is happening in the Church of England is that we are moving to a clearer statistical base. I think one of the best things that has happened in recent years is the publication of From Anecdote to Evidence, which is enabling us to look to the future with rather more confidence and hard information, and I think that is something which the Church Buildings Council and the CCT have been following up in their own area. Actually at the moment only about 20 churches a year are being closed, so it is not an enormous spate, but I think those who are anxious about the future have good cause. One of the things that we shall have to do is continue to press hard on a more realistic partnership with local authorities and government, a new concordat which includes a look at the planning legislation and new legal vehicles, as we try and make sure that a part of the Church’s life and all the work we do on behalf of the whole community really does serve regeneration, which of course was the theme of the last two speakers, and a very welcome note it was too.

We have had voices from all over the country and I just want to thank everybody who has participated in this debate, and formally move that the payments to the Churches Conservation Trust Order 2014 be approved.

The motion

‘That the Payments to the Churches Conservation Trust Order 2014 be approved.’

was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: The order is accordingly approved and will now be laid before both Houses of Parliament. That concludes this item of business.

THE CHAIR The Revd Canon Dr Rosemarie Mallett (Southwark) took the Chair at 3.20 pm

ARCHBISHOP COUNCIL’S ANNUAL REPORT (GS 1957)

The Chair: Good afternoon, Synod. We now come to Item 14, the Archbishops’ Council Annual Report. You will need GS 1957 to hand. Revd Canon Robert Cotton will present the report and there will be time for questions afterwards. To that end
Canon Cotton will be assisted by members of the Archbishops’ Council, who will be answering your questions. I invite Canon Cotton to present the report and to introduce the members of the panel.

The Revd Robert Canon Cotton (Guildford): This is a picture of the Archbishops’ Council at work. As far as I can tell, they are not members yet but this is the Archbishops’ Council’s work at work. As much as in us lies in all our meetings, we concentrate on schools, Fresh Expressions, chaplaincies, parishes: the frontlines (notice the plural) of the Church of England. What I did not want to do today is put on the screen in front of you the facts and figures. All that lies within this document. I am working on the assumption that you have read the Report, you have digested the numbers, or indeed you will do so soon.

What I did want to do is represent in pictures some aspects of the life of the Church of England that affect the Archbishops’ Council and indeed the Archbishops’ Council then affects back as well. It is because the governance of the Council, the work the Council essentially does, is done in a way that tries to match the character of the Church of England. The Church of England is, in essence, I believe, local, engaged with neighbours and is a community of holiness; both it is holy and it aspires to be holy. The way we do our business in the Council tries to match the nature of that character of the Church of England. We try to honour what the Church of England is and go with that grain. So in all our agendas we seek to listen thoroughly to what is going on in local initiatives, especially good action that is based on sound theology, and increasingly we are trying to get the life of prayer and worship within the meeting of the Council. That is trying to honour the nature of the Church which we serve.

But as to now, now lies somewhere between the bear pit of question time and the potential bear pit of the budget debate this evening. Now lies somewhere between what is towards the end of this Report, which is about your chance to hold the Council accountable for what we achieved in 2013, and what will happen tonight, which is when we allocate money to spend next year. In particular, I draw your attention to page 15, where we outline the plans for the now.

So we are accountable for last year; tonight we are looking at next year; and I hope some of the time what we can do now is listen to your questions about what is going on in the present. So although this is called a presentation, I am not going to spend much more time with that, this is not question time, but I do want to highlight one of the phrases that is often used within the Council and that is about “tending” relationships. A lot of attention has been given over the last few years to trying to tend the relationships the Council has with the House of Bishops, the Council has with the Church Commissioners, and, in particular, we are increasingly aware of wanting to tend and improve the relationship we have between the Council and the General Synod, especially with the Synod viewed as a collection of local people who are actively committed in communities of holiness. You will know at times Synod becomes a political body, but we are also people all engaged in local communities of holiness. I hope that will characterise our time now.

It is time for you to speak to us, to ask us questions and we have here three of the appointed members of the Council: Rebecca Swinson, Philip Fletcher and Mary Chapman, and I am one of the two elected clergy reps. In this time we are listening
to you because this is our chance to hear how we can improve our links between Council and Synod.

Finally a few brief thoughts to try and provoke some questions. Firstly, the Council is always very cautious about “big picture” speeches. We are not the House of Bishops, we do not do theology in that sort of way, but it is our role to ask some of the questions which sometimes are hard to put but need to be asked. What steps need to be taken now? What resources are required? What resources can we lever in? What does success look like? How can we replicate? The sort of questions that I know in a PCC I find very tiresome, but someone has got to ask them, because at a national level our work is improved by the asking.

The second thing I want to again underline is that this is a time for us all to hear one another. The Council is not about centralisation; it is about connecting with what is going on locally. In my notes - because I went back through all my notes from the last year’s meetings from the Council - one of the things I wrote down that I particularly wanted to say back to you was someone said in one of the Council meetings, in speaking about subsidiarity, “It’s the tone of subsidiarity that really matters”, not just ensuring that good decisions are made at the right level, but how can we listen to one another in such a way that the value of what is going on locally is heard and enhanced. So that is my hope that some of what we do now picks up on that.

Then I suppose finally just to note again the three Quinquennial goals. I think it is fair to say that one of those goals has in some ways been least advanced, re-imagining ministry, and I would love to hear some thoughts on that. It is not because a great deal of hard work has not been done. The work in putting forward the Common Awards is an enormous amount of detailed work for which we are very grateful, and there is Young Vocations and there is the Pilgrim course, but I know that a number of people still want more to be done about that, and if there are comments about that it would be very good to hear them. You could refer to some of what has already been said on pages 10 and 11 of the report, but if you have comments we want to hear more on that.

With the Chair’s agreement, it would be very useful to hear maybe three questions at a time and then we will decide between the four of us how we might reply. If there is detail you need from us, we may need to ask your forgiveness and get your response back over the next few weeks because I want this time to be a time of listening to each other together. We now invite comments on anything that is within the Report and indeed anything that we are undertaking within 2014. Thank you.

*The Chair.* Thank you, Canon Cotton. May I just remind members that this is supposed to be a time for questions and not for speeches.

The *Revd Christopher Hobbs (London):* First a comment. The Archbishops’ Council’s Annual Report this year is much better than it used to be. It used to be the poor relation of the Church Commissioners’ Annual Report. It is like a proper report this year. Well done!

The *Revd Robert Canon Cotton (Guildford):* Can I just pause you a moment. Thank
you. I did practically nothing towards that, but the man who did, Nicholas Hills, serves us in so many ways so well, and he arranged all the slides and so much of the design with his team behind him, and I am grateful.

The Revd Christopher Hobbs (London): A second comment before I get to the questions. At page 15 it talks about the Christenings and Funerals report. I regard that as a slightly unfortunate title for it because it talks about “At your Christening, your child will be baptised…” and all that kind of thing, and for years we have been trying to tell people, “No, it is not a christening, it is a baptism”, and somehow I do not think that has been helpful.

Now I come to the questions. It says on page 9 that the Council helped reshape Churches Together in England making it “sharper and more effective”. How did it help the Churches Together become sharper and more effective? I note we are giving it less money. That might be one way of making it sharper and more effective.

On page 23, structure, I note the Council is in the process of reviewing how it goes about its business. This is just a suggestion, but to me mission rather than public affairs would go better with ministry, to have a Department of Mission and Ministry, to have a really missional thrust to ministry training, and then I would make it Public Affairs and Theology. I would beef up theology in the Archbishops’ Council. I think it is unfortunate we have lost one post. Maybe Jeremy Worthen could be devoted more to theology and public affairs and you could have even more theologians to help in the Archbishops’ Council.

Finally, on page 10, you tell us of 15 theological institutions which are joining up to the Common Award partnerships. Which of the 15 or so are not? Thank you.

Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford): I would also like to echo my congratulations on the presentation of the Report which is much better. I know many of us here are very concerned about our outreach to children and young people. It is absolutely right that on Friday evening we had that major debate about safeguarding which is now a mandatory part of the training, and so it should be, but I am continually reminded that ordination training does not include as mandatory any form of working with children and young people, as I understand. I find it extraordinary that we are doing what we need to do on the safeguarding side but we do not have that. When we talk on page 10 about “reshaping and re-energising” lay and ordained ministry, could we please move working with children and young people into a mandatory part of ordination training?

Ms Susan Cooper (London): I too would like to congratulate the Archbishops’ Council on the way the Report is presented. However, I do regret that on the one page I really wanted to read the colour combinations do not quite work. The black print on the blue pages I found difficult to read in dim light, and that was what I wanted to read, so please could a little bit of attention be given to that, but the general presentation is very good.

My other point relates to this particular page. The heading is “Seeking to re-imagine, reshape and re-energise lay and ordained ministry”. Lay is first in this, so you imagine that perhaps half the page that follows will relate to lay ministry. If you look
very closely down at the bottom of the page, at the very last tiny paragraph, there is a reference to lay ministry, and most of that is about the Pilgrim course, which brilliant though it is was first published last year. My question is, what actually is the Archbishops’ Council doing in commissioning further work to develop lay discipleship and lay ministry?

The Revd Canon Robert Cotton (Guildford): We have lay ministry and ministry training and we will come on to those later but I think, Philip, you are going to do first some of the response to Christopher Hobbs on christenings and baptisms.

Mr Philip Fletcher (Ex-officio): The response: why christenings? Basically because that is where people are, on the basis of the feedback and the research that we have conducted as part of this project. So rather than launch into a word which does not come naturally to the lips, we are told, and I say this with all due recognition that parish clergy, and there are numerous parish clergy here, deal with this all the time, but the clear feedback was, if you want people to understand what you are talking about, start with the word “christenings” and develop from there.

Of course we all know that the word “baptism” is absolutely crucial to get over the final output of what is going on. Both in relation to funerals and christenings/baptisms and weddings, which you will remember came first, we are trying to produce material that will reach people where they are, to lead into the relationship with the parochial clergy, which we long for as part of the providing the service to the people of England.

There was one other point on the Churches Together. There I think the Church of England as a member and, of course, a funding provider for Churches Together is seeking to encourage CCTBI in the direction that it wants to go. It knows it needs to sharpen its process, it is getting on with that. The Church of England is one of the member organisations helping it in that direction. Thank you.

Ms Mary Chapman (Ex-officio): Taking first of all the Common Awards, there are in fact only two education institutions who are not participating in that. The number of 15 may have sounded rather low, but that is a reflection of the fact that a number of institutions have grouped together in order to come forward, so in fact the coverage is very extensive but not quite complete yet.

Also on Common Awards, the question of safeguarding, working with children and young people, is certainly part of the Common Awards. I am advised that we cannot make it mandatory because the syllabi, if one puts it that way, are controlled by the education institutions. However, there is a working party at the moment focused on precisely that issue, to say how can we ensure that the training for ordination gives proper coverage of the issues with which we are so deeply concerned at the moment around safeguarding?

In response to Susan Cooper’s question about lay ministry, this is very much an iceberg situation. There has been an enormous amount of work done as a preparation, as thinking, as reflection, as consultation and as research around the question of lay ministry. In fact, there was a survey earlier this year to which 40 dioceses contributed and it simply serves to emphasise the scale of the challenge.
we have, because lay ministry and certainly development for lay ministry is not something which is determined centrally or nationally.

It is intriguing that about 50% of the dioceses who responded in this survey are exploring new forms of lay ministry, but the reality is that most of the resources allocated in dioceses currently are allocated to the much more formal forms of licensed lay ministry. It is also the case that still a minority of dioceses have included in their strategies the development of lay ministry. Of course, where strategy leads, resources will follow normally, and so there is a question about resources being allocated to lay ministry.

Part of the challenge for the Council and for Ministry Division and the Ministry Council within that, has been to try and identify first of all what is going on at the moment and, secondly, to think about what role the Council can play that is not already being played by dioceses and where in fact we could get more impact if there were a way of facilitating shared working between dioceses or learning from those dioceses that have been successful.

The final thing I would say on that is that we are also working towards a specific focus on discipleship for the November Synod I think is the commitment that has been made, thinking about the fact that we are all - lay and ordained - disciples and the ministry of all of us is what is vital in the work that we have ahead of us. There is no running away from the fact that we do need specific developments for lay ministry but we want to take it in the context of discipleship as a whole. I hope that has answered all the questions.

Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark): I want to press a bit further on this issue of lay ministry and discipleship. Robert, I think I heard you say that you recognised that probably of the three Quinquennial goals the one that is least advanced is to do with re-imagining ministry, and that may be because we are in an iceberg situation and there is a lot going on.

I have been following this very closely and submitting regular questions about the phrase in GS 1815 “turning the rhetoric of lay involvement into reality”. I think I got the Bishop of Sheffield to put in writing at the last time in February that clericalism or over-clericalism is a problem. I would like to press this. Does the Archbishops’ Council feel that the Church is over-clericalised, that this is an issue which is hindering the release, the empowerment, the development of the gifts of all baptised believers? We have heard this weekend about the challenge of full discipleship which leads through our salvation in Jesus Christ which comes through evangelism, and from that we then work towards the Common Good of all. Active discipleship of all is absolutely key and it was great to hear what Mary just said.

Could I just add that I have just completed three years of Reader training and I do feel, reflecting on that process, that we are being trained for a job that is no longer relevant. I think society has moved on, we keep being told that. We are in a much more missionary situation. We need to be equipped to inspire and encourage those we minister to become active disciples who are confident in their faith, able to gossip the Gospel, able to contribute to the Common Good.
My question is, does the Archbishops’ Council accept that we are an over-clericalised Church and this needs to be addressed before we can all move forward together before we can all flourish? Thank you.

*Mrs Jennifer Humphreys (Bath and Wells):* My question refers to page 19 of the report on mission funding. I just wonder if it will be possible to have a couple of examples from the mission development funding stream of the kind of thing that has been undertaken. Also, is it something that dioceses have to apply for or can parishes apply directly? Is there an upper and lower limit to the kind of grants that can be given? Just a little bit more information, if possible. Thank you.

*Mr Peter Smith (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich):* I would like, please, to refer to page 15 and the Council’s plans for 2014. I think too just to echo what one of the earlier speakers said, that small font size on black paper is not the easiest for many of us to read.

I have read through all of the ten points. I understand nine of the ten points but I do not know anything about point 8, the Anglican Voices project and year long @OurCofE Twitter project with 52 users. I would imagine there will be others here on the floor of Synod who, like myself, are not Twitter users, so if we could have a little bit of information on this I would be very grateful, Madam Chair.

*The Revd Canon Robert Cotton (Guildford):* Can I just start by maybe rephrasing what I said about re-imagining ministry. I was not wanting to imply that nothing has been happening. As I said, with the Common Awards an enormous amount of work has already been achieved but, the more we go into it, the more we recognise needs to happen.

Picking up on what Adrian said about the over-clericalisation. There are 17 members of the Archbishops’ Council, obviously supported by many staff. Of the 17 members four are bishops, five are clergy and nine are lay, so just from the very bodies sitting around the table we are constantly aware of the importance of what we all do beyond Sunday. It is shifting the language, I think, from just seeing where the divide is, is it between clergy and lay? Sometimes when you listen at Question Time it seems there is a lot of suspicion of bishops and the rest, or is it clergy and the rest. I think by using the word “disciples” and seeing how much that can release the sense that there is not an “us and them”, Adrian, that is part of our trying to find a language that is inclusive.

You then mentioned something else about being trained as a Reader for a role, a job, that has already seemed to pass by. I think that is the sort of thing that needs to be heard, very valuable that it is said in this context. There are plenty who are involved in looking at syllabus and can take that and see how that could develop into maybe changing the way Reader training happens, so that is a valuable thing to be said.

*Ms Rebecca Swinson (Ex-officio):* The Anglican Voices project is something that started up and is involving training people in dioceses in communicating a strong Anglican voice into their local issues but that is with the media and other tools. That
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has started, that is going on. It will be going on in some of your dioceses, and some of you may even be Anglican Voices.

The @OurCofE Twitter project is again something that is running for a year. Each week someone on Twitter takes over that account and it is a way of showing the diversity within the Church of England. We have had bishops who have done that for a week, youth workers, members of the laity, new curates, and it is allowing them an opportunity to talk about what they are doing engaging the issues that they have with other people on Twitter. It is still going on. If anyone has not started following it, do.

Ms Mary Chapman (Ex-officio): I will just add a word on training for lay ministry and also maybe, with the Chair’s permission, the Bishop of Sodor and Man, who is responsible for the Readers’ Council, might want to say a word on Readers. I will carry on while he reflects on that.

I would hesitate, and I think anybody in this room would hesitate, to comment on the question about is over-clericalisation hindering the development of all baptised believers. We have to focus on all baptised believers, and indeed we are.

The work on Common Awards: while the initial work was certainly around training for ordination and what was necessary for ordination, there is further work going on now looking at learning outcomes for lay ministry, including Readers. As we work through this there will be a need for defining roles more clearly, generally defining roles more clearly, and what are the skills that we need, what is the knowledge we need, what are the dispositions we need for people who are filling different roles, and that we then develop people appropriately. Readers are an important resource for ministry but there are other emergent ministries which need support as well. Our pioneer ministers are a good example of that.

I would just say finally that there are two task forces running at the moment, the one on resourcing the future, which is looking at the broader question of resourcing the work of the Church of England, and the one on resourcing ministerial education. Both of those, because they are deeply rooted in work that is going on in dioceses right across the country, are throwing up an enormous amount of information about how people in dioceses and in parishes see the future, what they see as the shape and in particular the emerging shape of ministry in their areas and what the needs of that are likely to be for the future. The aim of a lot of these task forces is to enable us to move from being on the back foot or rooted in the present perhaps to thinking about what it is that we need for the future and then to shape things accordingly and to find the resources to allocate it. I do not think that we should under-estimate the scale of that challenge. Thank you.

The Bishop of Sodor and Man (The Rt Revd Robert Paterson): Three things really. The first is that theologically the word “ministry” is changing. We are understanding a great deal more about the word that was used in the New Testament and we are gradually moving away from the concept of “every member ministry”. Ministry is something to which someone is commissioned and accountable, and that is clear from our understanding of the word used at the time that St Paul and others were using it in the New Testament. So we need, before we start to talk about various
aspects of ministry and the way that ministry is developing, to take the concept back to its roots and the root is the call of Jesus to be a disciple. It is that word that Jesus said to the first disciples, a kind of almost military order, “Fall in behind me and become my apprentice and then go out in twos” and all the other things that Jesus did as He was preaching the Kingdom of God.

That is one of the reasons why the Reader movement has been pressing, and it is one with the Ministry Division in this, for a discussion here, a debate here in November, about the root of all this talk about ministry in discipleship. It is also a reason why the Reader body is now thinking much more broadly than people who stand there in their blue scarves. I was tempted to say yesterday, “Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to my scarf I cling.” The Reader movement is outgrowing the blue scarf. 150 years ago when it was founded, it was the Fresh Expressions of the Victorian era, it was the body that was connecting the Church with society that was separated from the Church, and it is seeking to get back to those roots, to not abandon but soft-pedal on the blue scarf and surplice image and get back to a bridge-building ministry.

To that end, on 16 July in 2016 when we celebrate the 150 years, the Reader movement is going to give to the Church a celebration of discipleship. We are hoping 10,000 people will come. Put the date in your diary for two years’ time. Thank you.

The Revd Amanda Fairclough (Liverpool): My question concerns the circulation of this excellent report, which for the record I had no difficulty reading. I would just like to know how it is delivered and to whom. I understand the Church Commissioners’ Annual Report is sent to all members of General Synod, all senior clergy, and previously the eight-page Annual Review that the Church Commissioners produce was sent to all stipendiary parochial clergy. From this year onwards it has of course been sent to all non-stipendiary clergy, anyone carrying the bishop’s licence and where possible, where a database exists, to licensed Readers and other licensed lay workers. Can you reassure me that a similar approach is taken to disseminating the excellent news about the work that the Archbishops’ Council is doing to all those who are licensed to ministry? Thank you.

Mr Paul Hancock (Liverpool): I do want to say that the Report was great. The fingertip facts, it would be nice if these were going to be updated on a regular basis because I find them very useful on the church notice board to tell church members and the general public exactly what the Church of England does, because I am proud of it and I think we have every right to be proud of the Archbishops’ Council’s work in this.

The main question: on page 52, the pensions section halfway down, “costs specific to the Archbishops’ Council”, would it be possible to comment further on that paragraph about the expectation to be paying additional contributions up to 2016?

The Revd Canon Giles Goddard (Southwark): Additional congratulations to everyone on a welcome sense of engagement with the Archbishops’ Council, which is very good. A question about simplification and a question about complexity.
Under simplification, I am told by my treasurer that Church accounts are perhaps more complicated than they need to be. Is the Simplification Working Party going to look at Church accounts at some stage? Maybe not this year but could it go on the agenda for a future year.

Then I noticed that your plan is to put the faculty application forms online, which is a very welcome development. As part of that, is it possible to beef up the sustainability element of the faculty application? I have a question about sustainability of proposed works.

Mrs Margaret Condict (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich): I see on page 15, the Council’s plans for 2014, number 7 is “publish the remaining volumes of Church House Publishing’s Pilgrim course”. A small group at my local church met during Lent and followed one of these booklets, the Lord’s Prayer, and it was absolutely excellent. There was a lot of good theology there which led to a lot of discussion amongst us all. However, I am afraid it is yet another thing about the readability. As we get older our eyesight deteriorates. That is common for many people. This is printed in pale grey on white. Some of us are sitting in badly lit sitting rooms struggling to read this; there is a lot to read in it. The content is wonderful. Please, please, could you look again at both the font and the colour? I have to say that I am absolutely delighted that our normal papers that come - I am one of the few who has them sent on paper by post - are still Times Roman black ink on white paper and I can read those; so many other things are getting less readable. Thank you.

The Revd Canon Robert Cotton (Guildford): I really appreciate the positive comments about design and the accessibility and, alongside that, hear a number of comments about readability which I am sure are both literal and metaphorical, so that is heard, both the colours but also how can we get the message out. I think that, Amanda, is what you were asking. The Church Commissioners have done fantastic work getting their message out. I see in particular you and Peter were referring to pages 14 and 15, so that sets in motion for me ideas about trying to continue the development of the design of our Annual Report and possibly a shorter supplement that goes to - question mark - who. We will look again at that and consider how the Commissioners work on that and an appropriate response will be done. We will take into account all the points, literal and metaphorical, about readability, so thank you for those.

Mr Philip Fletcher (Ex-officio): Pilgrim. I was very pleased to hear, as I am sure Bishop Steven Croft will be when he is in the Chamber, the praise for the course, which I do think is a really important commercial break/tool for discipleship and going forward. The points about making sure the documents are readable are certainly ones that we will take away and discuss with Church House Publishing and ensure that they are fully picked up. Thank you.

Ms Mary Chapman (Ex-officio): The question that relates to the paragraph on page 52, that refers to a deficit for pensioned service that was earned before 2000 when there were separate funding arrangements for the national staff depending on whether they worked for the old Central Board of Finance, the Commissioners, or the Commissioners’ pension fund. So it is a historic deficit which was the Central Board
of Finance’s responsibility that the Archbishops’ Council has inherited, if you like, but I can reassure you that it will finally be paid off in 2016.

The comment on, can we simplify the accounts, I would certainly love to simplify accounts. We are advised, as you might imagine, not only by the staff team but by our auditors. There will be some different arrangements for accounting as of next year. I think if anyone wishes to talk further about that sort of aspect, there will be a presentation of the Archbishops’ Council Audit Committee Annual Report tomorrow evening last thing.

The Revd Canon Robert Cotton (Guildford): Can I just briefly refer to Giles’ point about sustainability within the faculty process. We do not have an answer for that at the moment, but it has been heard and a response will come. Hopefully, if change is appropriate, change will come too. Thank you for asking that.

I think we have done all the responses apart from, Jackie, your comment about mission funding. Can I read this? I am not making this up as I go along. "Mission funding falls into two parts. Most is distributed by formula to the dioceses for them to use for mission support in accordance with local strategies." But the second part starting this year, so it is not in these figures, has been distributed in responses to bids from the dioceses. So far, ten of the poorest dioceses were given the first opportunity to bid and five substantial grants, each between half and one million pounds, have recently been awarded to support mission strategies.

One of the key things to hear within that, if I may, is precisely the role of the Council in ensuring that subsidiarity continues to happen. It is one thing to simply allocate money to a diocese and let them get on with it, but if it is money that we as Trustees are accountable for, that does not seem to fulfil all good governance demands. But there is no way we, the Council, can tell the dioceses either what their strategies should be or, indeed, how to implement them. That is bad governance. That is not working in a fashion that is in accordance with subsidiarity. So the processes are changing. But if it is done in the right way, the experience seems to be that diocesan teams value having a friendly asking-of-questions that tries to ensure that the money is spent in a way that they wish to spend it, but is spent in ways that respond to the questions I named in my opening speech about what are the success criteria? How can things be replicated later on? Is it done in accordance with local communities' wishes? So that is the formal answer. The informal bit is we are trying to work with dioceses to ensure that the money is spent in ways that suits them and allows us as Trustees to fulfil our responsibilities as well.

I suppose, if I may, my summing-up, because I think we have come to the end of our time, is to say how much I have appreciated the sort of questioning and probing that has gone on here. Adrian, your comment about clericalisation, we are listening, we are concerned about that and that can be taken forward, as Giles said in the faculty process. One of the things that I know has been mooted is the idea that the Archbishops’ Council could, on a more regular basis not just on an annual basis, listen to what your concerns are and have some chance for, not just replying to questions but responding and pointing to what is possible and what we are doing to try and serve not just the dioceses, not just Synod but to the parishes and the community of Holiness that you represent beyond that.
Thank you very much for what you have done and I look forward to being, I hope, part of the presentation of the annual report in a year's time. Thank you.

The Chair: As Canon Cotton has summed-up, that concludes this Item and we move to our next item of business.

THE CHAIR Mr Geoffrey Tattersall (Manchester) took the Chair at 4.10 pm

LITURGICAL BUSINESS
ADDITIONAL TEXTS FOR HOLY BAPTISM (GS 1958): DRAFTS FOR FIRST CONSIDERATION INTRODUCED BY THE HOUSE OF BISHOPS

The Chair: We now come to Item 601, which is the First Consideration of the Draft Additional Text for Holy Baptism. GS 1958, and I call upon the Bishop of Sodor and Man, Chairman of the Steering Committee, to move Item 601. He has up to ten minutes to speak.

The Bishop of Sodor and Man (The Rt Revd Robert Paterson): I beg to move that the liturgical business entitled "Additional Texts for Holy Baptism" be considered for revision in Committee. Chair, I am a little concerned to be up before the Judge of the Manx Court of Appeal and I promise to behave in future. Some people have defined liturgists as Canon lawyers in drag. I now need to find a new definition after yesterday's debate.

When the original Synod motion was made on behalf of the Liverpool Diocese by the Revd Dr Tim Stratford, he began by telling the story of Adele, a baby brought for baptism from Liverpool's outer estates. Adele's parents were married in church three years after they had started to build a home together. They remembered their wedding as one of the greatest and most significant days of their lives and they returned to the church for her baptism. They took part in careful preparation, along with two of Adele's Godparents. Despite this, Tim realised that the Common Worship liturgy had not really communicated the meaning of what had taken place to the family and friends who had come to the service, because the current provision is simply too wordy and complex to allow the rite to speak clearly in such circumstances. In presenting the motion the Liverpool clergy had worked out how to make use of the permission to use "these or other suitable words," as it says, and to shorten the service by omitting elements that are not obligatory. This was no attempt to cheapen Grace. Quite the reverse in fact. Martin Luther once commented that infant baptism is the sacrament of the empty-handed. When a child is brought for baptism, he or she comes empty-handed, with no good works, no doctrinal understanding, simply the most precious thing in God's sight, a child of his creation. Throughout the service the things that are done will express the meaning of the rite as much as what is said. Feedback from families who have taken part in baptisms suggests that they remember the symbols and the actions of the service more than the words that were used.

To that end, the Liverpool Motion suggested that three awkward sections in the Common Worship Baptismal Rite could not be resolved by making use of permitted
flexibility. First, the decision, where it was felt that the texts do not make strong enough connections with life choices to be meaningful, even after careful preparation. Second, it was felt that the various Prayers over the Water draw too heavily on a greater understanding of salvation history than can be assumed. Third, it was hoped that a shorter and more direct form of the final commission could be drafted.

In essence, this provided the House of Bishops a brief which they passed to the Liturgical Commission, not a request for a revision of the whole service but a focused review of those parts of the service that it had been proved did not fulfil its pastoral purpose in the situations in which many clergy often ministered. As with the recent provision of additional Eucharistic prayers for use when a significant number of children are present, this is a specific request to draft liturgy to meet a pastoral need while retaining the full content of the provision that has already been in use for many years. This exercise proved more challenging than the restricted brief might suggest. Despite comments in the media, no one in the Commission had thought to produce baptism-light. Clearly, the fuller form is bound to give greater scope for expressing doctrinal nuances, and the Commission balanced that awareness with taking seriously the experience of those who had brought the original motion and the feedback received from the trial use of the texts.

What is proposed is integrity with intelligibility. A good example would be the use of the word "submit," which can seem to some like bullying. Similarly, sin is a word that has been captured by parts of the media, such that the expression "dying to sin" can carry two very different meanings. The texts being presented to Synod today use language that is clear and direct, so that the Baptismal Rite, which is rich in symbolism, can communicate at a variety of levels. I would like to stress that all of these texts in their authorised forms would be additional alternatives to the provision already made in Common Worship. These options are not intended to replace the existing Common Worship texts, nor will the use of one or more of the options make it necessary to include them all. Of course, they would be subject to yet more Synodical processes and we have to find a better way, but do not get me on that.

When children are to be baptized, the presentation of the candidates begins with the words of Jesus as recorded in the Gospels of Mathew and Luke: "Let the children come to me. Do not stop them." In the feedback from the trial use of the texts, there was widespread feeling of gratitude for this scriptural reference. The dialogue that follows makes it clear that those to be baptized are being welcomed not only into the local Christian community but become part of God's family, the Church.

It will come as no surprise to learn that the texts of the decision proved more challenging to the drafting group. Earlier versions of the text were critiqued in the House of Bishops prior to the liturgical trial before Easter of this year. The absence of the devil from that text attracted particular attention. However, we all know that for many people the devil has been turned into a cartoon-like character of no particular malevolence. We have no quarrel with standing up to the devil. The problem is helping people with little doctrinal appreciation to understand what we mean by affirming that the devil is a defeated power. So the decision is now introduced with words that encapsulate what we mean by a broken and restored relationship with God, His searching love and where this fits with baptism in our journey of faith and
discipleship. Well, where better to look than the parable of the “three” lost things in Luke 15. So we took up that theme and came up with this: "We all wander from God and lose our way. Christ comes to find us and welcomes us home. In baptism we respond to this call."

The questions and responses that follow show a clear continuity with texts that have been used since the early centuries of the Church. First, there are pair of questions in which the candidates, or those answering on their behalf, turn away from sin and reject evil. At this point, the Commission strongly encourages a physical turning of those making this act of commitment so that they face a Christian symbol. Candidates then make a pair of positive statements: "I turn to Christ and I give my life to Him." The Commission suggests that these say everything, just as the healed, blind man acknowledged when he worshiped Christ: "Lord, I believe." It is clear that many clergy have preferred to continue to use the alternative simpler form of the decision deriving from the ASB. The Commission believes that the texts offered here significantly improve on the ASB provision because they exemplify the process of conversion, a turning away from sin, a turning to Christ and an act of commitment.

The text proposed for the Signing of the Cross offers small revisions to the Common Worship provision. There has been a good deal of discussion throughout the revision process about the extent to which imagery drawn from the realm of combat and fighting should be retained. The Commission hopes that the texts offered for consideration are a balanced response to these concerns.

Two Prayers over the Water are presented. The first is rich in scriptural references. Exploring this prayer in baptismal preparation would help to explain the ways in which events described in the Old Testament gain new significance in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The second has a single point of reference, the baptism of Jesus by John in the River Jordan. Both prayers are considerably shorter and more focused than those contained in the Common Worship provision and are doctrinally strong.

We are convinced that, wherever possible, the final Commission should be expressed simply and directly, eye-to-eye and not read from a prepared text. Although the guidance notes include a worked-out example of this short address, our view is that this will carry greater conviction and credibility if this has some element of spontaneity about it.

The various descriptions that we have of baptism in the early centuries speak of rites that were characterised by great simplicity, clarity and effective symbolic actions. It is right that we should expect our clergy and churches to make baptism an important evangelistic priority. Let us give them the chance to use words and actions that may connect more easily. The Commission offers these alternative texts in that spirit, hoping that they will help to take forward the mission and growth of the Church in meeting a very real need. I beg to move the Item standing in my name.

The Chair: The matter is now open for debate. No amendments to the motion are allowed and speeches should be directed to the general purport for business rather than to points of detail.
The Chair imposed a speech limit of five minutes.

The Revd Anne Hollinghurst (St Albans): Thank you. I want to broadly welcome the draft texts. I believe they are along the right lines and they contain some gems that, I hope, will make it through to the final revision stage. As vicar of a busy city centre parish, I have around 60 - six zero - infant baptisms a year, along with a number of adult baptisms, so baptism liturgy is in use probably about three Sundays every month. Now in some situations I believe that the existing form of the baptism liturgy that we have serves us well and I will continue to use it. But at an afternoon service of baptism for two or three (we try not to do too many more than that) children, with maybe over 100 people in church who are largely unchurched as our congregation, I think the new text that we are offered offers more meaningful and effective resonances.

In particular, I would like to comment on the language of the decision in light of an experience my husband had a couple of months ago at the London Mind, Body and Spirit Fair. My husband organises a small team to run a stall and be a Christian presence in that marketplace of spirituality. This year a young man, clearly troubled, began talking to my husband about how he felt, “That he’d taken some wrong turns in his life.” My husband thought that he would tell him a story that Jesus told and is known to us as the Parable of the Prodigal Son. So he started to describe the father who had a good inheritance that he wanted his sons to share in, but how one of the sons demanded his share of the inheritance then and there so he could go and hit the bright lights and make his way in the world. The young man had never heard this story before, as many in our culture now have not. He did not realise it was a parable from the Bible. Before my husband could get any further he exclaimed passionately, “The bastard, how could he do that to his dad?” He was both incredulous and deeply moved to hear how the story ends, with the father running out to meet and embrace the son with love and compassion. “We all wander from God and lose our way. Christ comes to find us and welcomes us home.” The words from the introduction to the decision that we have also just heard from the platform. If that young man now goes forward to baptism as the beginning of a new path in life that he has hopefully glimpsed, those simple words will be both poetic and powerful, filled as they are with echoes of the scriptures as well as resonating with his own lived experience. They serve also as an interpretative context and key to understanding what is meant by the language of sin that follows in the liturgy.

This is not language that is dumbed-down, I believe. This is language that is rich and accompanied by a physical turning, I think, yes, speaks even more powerfully. It is language that seeks to communicate more clearly to a new generation the age-long love of God of which baptism speaks. As those from non-church backgrounds continue on their faith journey, they may learn to interpret more of our traditional language, for example how rejection of the world and the flesh does not mean denial of God’s good creation. But if, as I understand it, baptism marks the start of the journey and not the end, and if it is often conducted in situations of mission and evangelism, then the words need to speak for themselves and be allowed to point to story and image that resonate, as Jesus knew how to do only too well.

So thank you to those who have prepared these texts and I do hope I can look
forward to using them in some form. Thank you.

The Revd John Cook (Oxford): Chair, thank you for calling me. It was David Beckham a while back who said, "I have a sense of spirituality. I want Brooklyn christened but I don't know into what religion yet." Certainly what we have before us as a supplement would be a good addition to help to explain to David Beckham what Christian faith means and what baptism means. These are a good supplementary text but there is further we need to go. They are not as good as they could be.

Can I come, first, to the decision. We are told page 17: "We all wander from God and lose our way." It is all rather nice and vague because rightly understood - baptism often involves very precious young children as well as adults - baptism is insulting. It says there is something wrong with each one of us, whether babe, child or adult, we are rebels and failures. The language seems too nice to me. I wonder whether Grace really shines out, despite what we had in the introduction from the Bishop, I am not sure it is as sharp as it should be; the joy and wonder of Grace. Do we really have as clear as we could the biblical, the Christian, view of who we are without Christ and who we are in Christ and with Christ, because baptism is about union with Him.

Going on to the introduction, page 40, it is good and the guidance notes are most helpful, but when you get to the text it is not quite realised. I understand we are obviously trying to fuse a complex thing into simple form. I think it was David Stancliffe who, some years ago at one of our meetings, said that baptism always involves three metaphors: death and resurrection, rebirth and washing from sin. I would like to ask that the Revision Committee should look through carefully and see whether what is before us properly involves those three metaphors of death and resurrection, rebirth and washing. Looking back, rebirth for Cranmer was the most important thing. We have never held in isolation the other two New Testament metaphors. Could we look at the balance of that.

As we go on, we have talk about, "Reject evil." Now I can reject an idea, I can reject an insurance offer, it does not really matter. But what we are talking about here is serious. Could we find another word, if not "renounce," something else about how we are deliberately leaving, embarking on a new journey. I still would like to have the devil there, but I hear the questions about that and is there some way we could look at that again?

Then we are asked, page 17 onwards: "Do you give your life to him? I give my life." Do we need to say more about the Lordship of Christ and not play it down? He is the King and Lord, we are his subjects. Can we try and use in appropriate ways more New Testament language?

The Commission I move on to. Very good suggestions given to us there on page 21, but on page 9 we have that we are not just to learn the story of Christ's birth, death, resurrection and teaching, we are actually to absorb into ourselves. We need that new birth to come from darkness to light, because baptism is about union with Christ, more than that, it is about union with God's people. And we just have talk here about helping children on their journey, but actually we are commissioned to the work of a Kingdom. As the Lord Jesus Christ was ushered into his ministry of his baptism,
baptism demonstrates that we have surrendered to Him as King, and it is a uniform
to say we are engaged in active service.

Then, finally, the Prayer over Water is good, much better than we had before; but in
the second prayer at page 6, lines 26 and 27, we have the word "bless" which is so
misunderstood by people who use it so badly. In the Book of Common Prayer in the
ASB the word "sanctify" meant "set apart", and we need to make sure the word
"bless," which is just used so weakly and anaemically is perhaps replaced. Could
we put something like, instead: “And so, Father, set apart this Water, that those who
are baptized in it ..” etc. I find it strange to bless inanimate objects, though of course
want to bless people continually.

Much work made, but can we do some more so that conversion of the person to Lord
Jesus Christ, as has been mentioned, is clearer. Joining, conversion to the people
of God, the Church is there, and then a consecration conversion to the cause of
Christ. As Jim Wallis said, it is this relationship that changes all relationships. That
is what we need to have in this service.

The Revd Canon Michael Parsons (Gloucester): Thank you for an opportunity to
contribute to this and thank you to the Committee who produced, firstly, the initial
trial and now this draft. My parish was one of the ones that took part in the trial at
the initial baptism liturgy, and it was like a gift of water to a thirsty soul. We took it
before the PCC, who discussed it. We discussed it also with the families who we
used it on and it went down with great approval. Unlike Anne Hollinghurst, I do not
have 60 baptisms a year but I have getting on for 40, and it is a council estate outer
suburb parish. I have to be careful not to take more than two families at a time for
baptism, since being caught out a few months ago when I had agreed to have three
and found I had 480 people in church. It became an exercise in people management
rather than the administration of the sacrament. It seems to be the culture around
our area that large numbers of people do turn up, which is why we have them in the
afternoon; to put it into our parish communion service would completely swamp the
small congregation.

So we did quite a bit of work on this and the PCC discussed various forms of
preparation. I started off with the Pilgrim Course which went down like a lead
balloon. They could not understand the words, the language. It was not a question
of being able to read the text, they thought the concepts were far too advanced for a
preparation course because they were finding trouble in dealing with it themselves.
That may say something about the need for Christian education on my PCC as well.
The language was too churchy. They did like the CPAS baptism video with its
imagery of journey, but they thought the rather intense and earnest bit to explain
they were making all the right decisions was a bit too much, but the concept of
journey was very helpful.

Various bits of opposition I have already heard to this new liturgy are along the lines
of it being dumbed-down, but I think the real problem is that Common Worship
and also the Book of Common Prayer before was far too prescriptive and made too much
heavy expectations on the understanding of the families. They come to me and they
request a christening always. I use the language of: “We welcome you to this
christening service during which your child will be baptized,” so they do actually get
both words. They want to be known as Christians. They have a very distinct desire for that. They want to acknowledge that, as humans and families, they fail and they do not live up to their standards, let alone God's. They also acknowledge that they need help in bringing a child up in a world that is full of so many pitfalls and so much evil. They do understand what evil is. Words like "sin" and the "devil" do not help, because they either give the wrong context or unhelpful ideas, or they just have no idea quite what it means.

I do commend the Revision Committee in the words in which they have used in the decision, "when we all wander from God and lose our way," they are using the New Testament concept of sin. The word there, in the Greek is *hamartia* and it has the context of having missed the mark. So wandering from God and losing our way is a very New Testament and biblical context. We have to remember the word "sin" in English comes with a vast amount of baggage from our own history and I would suggest as a starting point is entirely unhelpful. You can get to it later but you start from getting lost and losing your way. They acknowledge that they have missed the mark. They want to reject evil. They have an unformed knowledge that in some way or other they need help. In other words, they have this feeling that Grace is needed in their life.

I am really happy to use a service like this, but I would ask the Revision Committee instead of just an illustrative service and using it within a context of Holy Communion, could we have it in a context of all age worship? Because that is how I am going to have to use it. Thank you.

*Mrs Alison Ruoff (London):* Thank you very much, Chair. When previously I mentioned that I hoped to speak, something about bringing back the devil into the baptism service, everybody laughed. Well, I guess you are beginning to know me, but there you go. But I was astonished and really saddened to see some of these papers that came out in January, and I am sure you have seen them: Casting out sin from christenings; Church accused of dumbing down after dropping sin from baptism; Embarrassed Church, the sin of omission. This new baptism, wait for it, is more of a benediction from the good fairy than a church service. And so on. Don't ditch the devil, he has done great service to Christianity. I thought, what is that about? But that is about knowing what we need to be saved from. It is all very well having a God of love and a God of love and a God of love, but if we do not have the remotest idea as to why we need to be saved, that is only half the story.

I want to beg the Revision Committee when it is set up to bring back the word "devil." If you read the Book of Job, God asks Satan where the devil had come from, and he said in reply that he had been roaming through the earth and going to and fro in it. Well, friends, nothing has changed. Yes, the Lord Jesus Christ has won the victory at the Cross and the devil is defeated, but God still allows the devil to do his work and we have to be prepared to face up to the devil. After all we have talked about the devil for centuries and centuries and centuries, and from 1995 to 2000 here in Synod we worked our socks off to get Common Worship as right as we could and I do not want to throw that out. I am happy to have something that might be a little more simple, but when we are talking about removing the title of the devil, we must not.
Further, I would suggest we must not patronise people. They are not stupid. People can look at television and radio and the news, and they see evil well and truly, and we have to tell them, if they do not know, that it emanates from the devil. So we must not do that. It is about teaching and preaching and preparation and, members of the clergy and House of Bishops, that is your responsibility. You have to tell people how bad it is, with what is going on in the world and it belongs to the devil. We can triumph through the Lord Jesus Christ, yes, of course we can. Why on earth did the apostle Paul write about in Ephesians 6 “putting on the armour of God”? As Christian people we need to put that on every single day to be able to triumph over sin, evil and the devil.

So there we have it. I want, and beg you, to bring back the devil into this slightly simplified service. When I was at school, I used to get, “Could do better; must try harder”, and I leave that with you for the Revision Committee. Thank you.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

The Revd Canon Jennifer Tomlinson (Chelmsford): Let me too start by welcoming these texts and thanking those who have written them and trialed them. I think we now have a draft baptismal liturgy which will communicate much more effectively with those unfamiliar with Church culture.

However, I do wonder if there is a prevailing cultural attitude which we need to challenge in our liturgy in some subtle way. I am thinking of the value that our society places on being self sufficient, on being hard working and making your way in the world. The proportion of the liturgy now taken up with the parents’ and godparents’ responses is greater in these additional texts because the element of explanation, of proclamation, is reduced.

I do realise that we cannot have a less wordy and more accessible service which somehow keeps all of the old words in it, but I wonder if the balance is right between what you might call the Call and the Response in the course of the service. I wonder if some of the reduction in the wordiness has left us with an implicit message that the role of parents and godparents is the crucial element rather than the priority of God’s love and grace and forgiveness. We have lost the words, “Today we are trusting God for their growth in faith”, and we have parents and godparents being asked if they will help children to become part of God’s family. I hope that could be rephrased to point to the work of the Holy Spirit in becoming a child of God, part of the family. I hope that the Revision Committee will look again at the balance between different elements of this liturgy.

In my experience, baptism families and those exploring the Christian faith often find grace difficult. The notion that what we have to do is to receive, that it is not about how good we are, is alien. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is counter-cultural here, and I hope that by close attention to each word of the liturgy at the revision stage, we will be able to ensure that the message that comes out clearly, that is predominant from these texts, is that of God’s love and grace and welcome and acceptance. Thank you.

The Revd Karen Hutchinson (Guildford): Like some other speakers, my parish was
also one of those road-testing the trial texts earlier this year, so I was very interested
to see what the Liturgical Commission made of the various submissions, ours
included. I was very heartened by how responsive they have been to the feedback.
I particularly appreciate the Prayer over the Water and the changes to the trialed
Decision. I was one of those who cringed at the previously suggested wording for
the Decision. Having gritted my teeth and trialed this with baptism families with all
the enthusiasm I could muster, I saw many pained expressions on faces and had
very mixed feedback, so I was very pleased to see it go.

However, I did wonder about the new question “Do you give your life to Him?” bolted
on to a Decision that is otherwise very similar to the ASB provision. We might know
what we think we mean by that, and I would be very happy using that with adults
who are coming to faith and coming for baptism as new converts to Christ. But in the
sort of baptism services we have been talking about, with large congregations of un-
churched people, where parents and godparents are speaking for their children, I
wondered what it would mean to them. I tried it out on a few people. I showed it to
one person who is not used to churchy jargon and she had no problem with
turning away from sin, rejecting evil or turning to Christ, but her comment about “giving your
life” was, “It makes me think of suicide bombers” and then somebody else said, “Or
child sacrifice” - their words not mine - and those are connotations we would
very much want to avoid.

Overall I support the aims and contents of the new texts. I am a little uneasy about
the liturgical discontinuity that can be experienced when we have texts in more
accessible language inserted into a service that otherwise remains unchanged, but
that is a problem when we have more of a “pick and mix” approach. I wonder if the
Liturgical Commission might have a look at how the service might look overall to
ensure that the balance and the flow of the whole service works if these texts are
used. I thank the Liturgical Commission for its work on these texts and very much
look forward to hearing more.

The Bishop of Chichester (The Rt Revd Dr Martin Warner): I just want to pick up
some words which come in the annex in the introduction to the notes. It a very
simple phrase: “To think seriously about text and the way the whole rite is
articulated”. “To think seriously” - and I welcome this discussion. I also welcome all
the work that has gone into producing these texts, but I also hope that the processes
of thinking seriously will continue, not only for the Liturgical Commission but also
within our dioceses, deaneries and individual parishes. That is one of the things that
concerns me most about our approach to liturgy as such.

Surely, we should be thinking not just about the texts, but we are encouraged in
these papers also to think about the other ways in which the rite/the text is
communicated, to think about the environment of our church places of worship, to
think about all the other things which communicate to somebody who crosses the
threshold, perhaps for the first time, to come to a baptism or christening about what
they experience. It seems to me that our worship, our liturgy ought also to be in the
category of primary evangelism, particularly in these initiatory rites. The same is true
I think of confirmation. The same is true also of ordination. They are often the
moments when we do encounter in church people who might never, ever have been
there before.
In thinking about what the wider environment, what the wider sense of communication, might be, I think we probably need to stir up much more imagination. I completely agree with Alison Ruoff that we should not patronise those who encounter these environments. The seriousness with which we consider what the liturgical environment of worship is like seems to me to be akin to the seriousness with which we ensure that it is first and foremost a safe environment.

One of the things that saddened me, as we went through the processes of revising the liturgy and bringing in common worship, is we never made any requirement for each diocese to have a liturgical adviser or indeed a liturgical committee. I would hope that we might reconsider the importance of that in our life, because it seems to me that if these opportunities are being given to us now in ways that we have heard and which have prompted this serious thinking, then perhaps there is much more work to do on the use of our worship and liturgy as primary evangelism.

The Revd Philip North (London): How do I cram a sense of Heaven’s Kingdom into our quayside pidgin Aramaic? That challenge, a questioned posed by an imagined Jesus in U A Fanthorpe’s poem Getting it Across, has been much on the mind of the Liturgical Commission since this Synod requested that some of the texts of baptism be re-written in accessible language. It is very important to remember from the start that this is your idea and something that we have undertaken under your instruction.

I speak as a member of the drafting group responsible for the text before you. Our problem throughout this process has been that nobody is quite able to say what “accessible language” is. We all know of course that there is a great deal more to worship and its accessibility than the text we use. Equally, indeed perhaps more important, is the warmth of the welcome, the style of the leadership, the use of space and music, the employment of visual symbol. We know also that liturgical language communicates on many more than levels than the literal. It conveys meaning also through sound, through drama, through invoking a sense of mystery and awe and through enabling us to inhabit a different world. You do not need to understand every single word to be raised up by it into God’s presence.

Nonetheless, this Synod agreed by a large majority that many of the existing baptismal texts are not functioning on the didactic or evangelistic level, especially in urban areas. These texts, it is very important to remember, are intended for that very specific pastoral need and they must not become the default liturgy for baptism.

In terms of accessible language we have done two things. We have thought very carefully about words and sought to employ words which are comprehensible to those with a limited theological vocabulary. Secondly, we have thought very hard about ideas, both by writing texts which have an element of the didactic and also by not making explicit some which are particularly open to misunderstanding. The examples we have already seen, retaining to my great pleasure the word “sin” but putting to one side “the devil” because that image is so open to misunderstanding, that does not in any sense imply a lessening of our belief in the power of evil or indeed a change to the teaching of the Church of England.

The process of drafting and revising has been an exhaustive one. We have listened
very carefully to feedback from the experimental period. On a personal level I still find the responses that parents and godparents make are too linguistically challenging. Most of the baptisms I do are for parents and godparents with very limited or no literacy skills, and I regret the Bishops’ decision not to allow our first draft which gave the simple response “I do” to every question. I would be interested to know what Synod members think about it.

I would argue that these texts in their current form adequately reference the Anglican liturgical tradition whilst at the same time being written in language that is clear and comprehensible. To write them off as “dumbed down” or “liturgy-light” is profoundly unhelpful, unless you are able to enlighten us to the meaning of accessibility that you had in mind when you voted for them to be prepared. To cram a sense of Heaven’s Kingdom into the language of the people is still as challenging as ever. These texts are an honest attempt to meet that challenge and I would urge Synod to send them on to the revision stage.

The Revd Canon Dagmar Winter (Newcastle): I also welcome this report. Thank you very much for the work that has been done. I think particularly successful is the wording for the Signing now. I thought that was a good way forward.

I want to make three short points, firstly, about the presentation of the candidates. I was not quite sure to what extent we can say theologically that we can help anyone to become part of God’s family, and whether we might want to help them to respond to Christ’s welcome or to Christ’s call into the Church.

In the Decision, there is a nice poetic parallel. As we turn away from sin and we turn to Christ, and that is underlined with the option of physically turning around and turning to the candle or the font, but I find that breaks down in the second pairing. We reject evil but then I wonder whether it might be more helpful, also picking up on Karen Hutchinson’s point, to have something like, “I accept Christ’s rule” or, “I receive Christ’s rule over my life”, so “Do you accept Christ’s rule over your life (or receive)?”

Finally, page 6, when we come to the Blessing over the Water, again like I think virtually everyone, I am very happy to have less wordy Prayer over the Water. I wonder whether as a third option the already existing provision in emergency baptism could be added, which is a very brief Blessing over the Water, as an option when that is appropriate.

Finally, I think in the end we can have whatever words we like; it is how we welcome people; it is how they see Christ inspiring us in what we say, in what we do, that can either make our words sparkle or render them utterly meaningless, whatever speech level they happen to be at. Thank you.

Mrs Penelope Allen (Lichfield): I am speaking generally now as someone who has taught about this service in RE lessons for 20 year to Years 5 and 6 in schools, who have enacted this service so that they can see the procedures in the classroom, and has tried to explain the liturgy to them.

During the course of my career, I have taught in many different schools and I have
always had to pitch my language to the environment and the culture of the young people who I am with at the time.

I want to warmly welcome what has been done to this liturgy to make it available in an understandable form to young people and to adults. I am not simply thinking here of adults of usual intelligence. I am thinking of children with special needs. I am thinking of adults with special needs. I do think that clergy should have the freedom and the ability to express themselves in this service and to be able to tailor this to what they need to say to the people in front of them. That will vary according to the family that the child is coming from or the adult is coming from.

I think the actual idea that has been said today about dumbing down is something which is a real insult to young people. It is a real insult to the adults and the parents that I have met, and I have to say to you that it took me an hour to explain the liturgy of this service to young people in Years 5 and 6 because it was in complex terms. There were words we had to look up in the dictionary and it was one of those situations where the young people said, “Well, if it means that, why doesn’t it say that?” I have to say to you that out of most of those lessons, in fact out of all of those lessons, some of the children in the state schools in which I have been teaching have gone on to ask their parents if they may be baptized. So if it is explained in language and in concept that people of any age can understand, then they will find it accessible. And I would warmly hope that everyone here - and we are warm - will pass this on to the next stage and not agonise over every single expression here, but that the clergy will be able to tailor it for their own needs. Thank you.

The Revd Canon Tony Walker (Southwell and Nottingham): Chair, members of Synod, I welcome very much the proposals set before us. I would like to draw Synod’s attention to the Commission on page 9 at paragraph 5. I like very much the proposal set out there that the minister will talk directly and simply in his or her own words covering the topics listed in the bullet points, but I would like to go a bit further than that and see some opportunity taken for lay members of the Church to play their part at that part of the service. I too was one of the clergy involved in the trial earlier this year. I used the proposed liturgy in urban suburban and rural churches in different contexts. My experience was very positive.

One of the things I did earlier in the trial period was to split the Commission between myself and a churchwarden. In each church - rural, urban and suburban - I got a churchwarden to say the first part of the Commission emphasising the welcome of the local church and explaining specifically in that welcome what the Church will offer and do to help guide the children along the way of faith. That seemed the appropriate point to say in some churches that we would give the family a book of prayers, in other churches that we would welcome the family to a parent and toddler group or invite them to Messy Church or whatever it might be. That seemed to me to be more appropriate to do actually in part of the liturgy in the Commission, not just in the notices at the beginning of the service. This local part of the Commission seems to me to be more powerful coming from a lay member of the local church rather than from the minister who takes the service and particularly in multi-parish benefices where the minister may live some way away.

I then took over the Commission at the point where says “bringing up children as
Christians has its challenges ...” As a parent myself who has tried to bring up children as Christians, that part of the Commission rings true to my experience, but I could see that in some cases, perhaps if the minister does not have children and the churchwarden does, it might be more appropriate for the local churchwarden, and more authentic, for that person to say that bit too.

So I encourage the Revision Committee to consider explicitly allowing the Commission to be said not just by the minister but by appropriate lay people as well. Thank you.

The Revd Sister Rosemary Howorth (Religious Communities): I have looked forward to this with great eagerness and I do think that the new wording will help me to help people who bring children for baptism to understand a bit better what I am asking them to commit themselves to and what the service is about. However, I would echo Jenny Tomlinson’s disquiet about what seems to be the emphasis on the performance of the parents and godparents being more stressed than the grace of God as though this is something that they have to achieve. I think the language of the Decision is much more comprehensible than what we had before. By the way, I think the theological doubt applied just as much to the Common Worship baptism service. I think it is just something that has not been improved in this.

The language of the Decision I think would be much easier to explain, but this text does not answer something that not only the parents and godparents do not understand about the baptism service but something that I do not understand. It is a question of a rubric and in fact a rubric that is not there. The last rubric that we have before the Decision says, “The president addresses the whole congregation”. There is no rubric in the Decision to say to whom that is addressed. We seem to be assuming that it is addressed to the parents and godparents, but in Common Worship the rubric says, “The minister addresses the candidate through the parents and godparents”. I do not know what that means. Am I asking the baby to respond to something that he does not understand? Am I asking the parents and godparents to explain to the baby what he believes? Am I asking them to give me a guarantee what the child believes or will go on to believe or will go on to practise? I do not understand it. I wish somebody would either help me to understand it or change the rubric. Thank you.

Miss Sally Muggeridge (Canterbury): I think a great job has been done by many who have already spoken today. In fact, my very first speech I made at General Synod in 2005, my maiden speech, was about baptism because I was very concerned about the way that it was being presented on the website of the Church of England, and the Church of England certainly sorted it out and made it look more accessible and pleasant.

I also came to it because Mumsnet, which, as you know, is a popular social media for young mums, were debating the issue without any relationship to anybody that they could talk to about it. It is important, it is a sacrament and I wanted people to come to baptism at our church feeling that they were going to get something that they fully understood.

Last week I was asked by the rector at another church to go and preach for five
minutes at a baptism because he did not have anybody to preach and he thought
they ought to be entertained a bit. I quickly put my thinking cap on and remembered
an essay I had written in my training on baptism, and what I merely talked about was
the fact of those things that people feel about and think about baptism which are just
not true. For example, not everybody was clear in the congregation that you could
only be baptized once. There was an older child being baptized who actually piped
up who said he would have liked to have been asked if he could be baptized, and I
have had that experience before. Of course the godparents are often, I would
suspect, very little in knowledge of baptism, and they made a very good spread
when I asked them to stand up and repeat on cards the things that I was going to
ask the children to do. The one feedback I had was that it came to me that people
had actually been engaged in understanding a little bit more about what it was, and
that is I think about as far as you can get. But I do urge people to accept new
legislation and I do think that there is a great measure in what I have seen and heard
today, so thank you.

Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford): The claims made in baptism are radical: claims of
belonging to God, of being grafted into Christ's Church, of being regenerate. These
things are radical and they are awe-inspiring and they are not easy for any of us to
understand. These new liturgical texts have been put together particularly with
people in mind who may not be regular church goers and are not familiar with church
language. Those people, even more than regular church goers, are in urgent need
of extensive catechesis if they are bringing their children to baptism. Those parts of
baptism which are difficult to understand need to be explained to them. They
deserve to have explained to them the radical truth of the Gospel. There is no
shortcut to that. We need to ask ourselves carefully whether that is where
accessibility really lies; the way in which the baptism service and everything that it
contains and means and the difficult theological concepts which cannot be easily
reduced. How those are explained to people is what really matters, I believe. Thank
you.

The Bishop of Blackburn (The Rt Revd Julian Henderson): Because I may have
misunderstood the paperwork 1958 and because no one has mentioned it, I just
want to draw Synod's attention to the difference of wording in the Prayers over the
Water on page 6 and page 19. On page 6 the first prayer says "Now send your
Spirit" and on page 19 it says "Now send your spirit upon this water". I would just
like to find out from the Liturgical Commission which is the prayer that they are
recommending, because there seems to be a difference in the wording in the sample
service from that which is in the text for authorization.

The Revd Charles Read (Norwich): It was my predecessor as liturgy tutor at
Cranmer Hall, Michael Vasey, who said a liturgist is a Canon lawyer in drag. Michael
also said that getting a liturgical text through the General Synod is like trying to do
embroidery with a bunch of football hooligans. He was a member of General Synod
when he said that. Michael also said "Liturgy is a way of doing the Bible". That is a
Michael Vasey quote that I often put on the top of handouts for students that I teach,
whether they are Readers or ordinands.

One of the things that I think the Drafting Group have worked at very hard and very
well, on the whole very well, is the use of Biblical material in this service, for indeed
“Liturgy is a way of doing the Bible”, to use Michael’s phrase. I think that there are lots of Biblical allusions here which give us a rich quarry for teaching and instruction and catechesis. It is quite difficult to use the Bible in liturgy because it raises all sorts of difficult questions, and so while I warmly welcome these texts and hope they will go on to revision stage, some of my hesitations are around the use of the Bible.

One is on page 4 at line 12, the return of the allusion to the Synoptic story of Jesus welcoming the children. I can understand why people like that being brought back but it is not really what that Synoptic Gospel story is about. That story is about Jesus taking a marginalised group of people and bringing them out of the margins and making them the centre of His attention. Although that text does have a long history in baptism liturgy from the Middle Ages through to the Reformation and beyond, in the late 20th century we began to stop using it and we certainly stopped using it as a justification for infant baptism but, as the trial parishes found, people like it. I do not like it but I am a geeky liturgical scholar so perhaps that is why I do not like it, but there is a question there.

Then the Prayer over the Water, I am glad to see that Moses and the people of Israel are there. I was at an international liturgy conference two or three years ago where somebody presented a draft liturgical text of the Prayer over the Water, including references to stories like Naaman being washed in the Jordan. The professor of liturgy who presented this said, “Of course, we know that none of these Old Testament stories actually happened, but it’s right to use them and refer to them in our baptismal liturgies”. In the question time I said, “In North America” where she was from, “you might know that these didn’t happen; in the UK I’m not sure that we know they didn’t happen”, but our problem is the whether they happened or not people who come to baptism do not know what we are talking about. It is not about historicity, it is about Biblical literacy. I am glad that these allusions are in, including Moses, but it does still raise some difficult questions for us.

The Ven. Andrew Brown (Sodor and Man): Thank you, Chair, for calling me to make my first speech to Synod on this vital topic, and thank you because you may have given me the last word, except for my Bishop.

If we are to baptise infants then we do so on the basis of grace and grace alone. Grace means, I believe, that there should be no hoops to be jumped through by baby or parents or godparents. My experience of three decades as a parish priest is that our current liturgies are a hoop too far for too many young parents.

I always tell parents, “I’ll fill in the gaps in the years to come” when they return and bring their children to our fellowship, and very often they give me the opportunity. A babe in arms cannot understand what is going on, cannot have earned heaven or hell. This makes the baptism of infants perhaps the supreme sacrament of grace, whatever we make of the need for godparents and parents to make promises on the child’s behalf, whatever we understand of the liturgical use of categoric language. When we baptise a baby we offer a free gift from God, a gift wrapped up in others’ promises and our liturgies but a gracious gift of God to a child. This is what I believe our baptism liturgies should major on, and they should do so with far fewer words than at present and the words we use must mean more to the young parent, or parents, and godparents.
We can do the work of explanation in baptism preparation. I believe we should not do this in the liturgy. The words of the baptism liturgy do not stand alone. As the preface reminds us, there are actions and symbol and silence. If we are setting this in the context of the Holy Communion then the whole Gospel of Christ is laid before them.

Personally, I shall miss the devil but I am not a young lass bringing her baby to the font in fear and trembling. My own spiritual struggles assure me of the enemy's reality but there remains in this revised liturgy enough reference to evil in the world, and the challenge rings out in the words of the Signing with the Cross “stand bravely with Christ, oppose the power of evil and remain faithful to Christ”, and perhaps “oppose” is a better word than “reject” in the Decision. Let us rejoice in this sacrament of God's outrageous grace and make it freely available and more directly approachable to one and all. I believe this new liturgy achieves both of these things. I urge you to support this motion and commend it to a revision. Thank you.

A Speaker: On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

The Chair: Yes, that has my consent. Does it have the consent of Synod?

This motion was put and carried on a show of hands.

I call upon the Bishop of Sodor and Man to respond to the debate. Because I am sure it would be helpful if he replies in some detail, I am going to allow him up to ten minutes.

The Bishop of Sodor and Man (The Rt Revd Robert Paterson): Thank you, Chair. Thank you too for all of the people that have contributed to the debate. I would like to say to the Bishop of Blackburn that his eagle eyes have indeed spotted something which was inaccurate but it is not part of what is presented, it was there illustratively. The second version of that prayer is incorrect. The first version, the version in the main section, is the correct version. I apologise for that mistake.

Thank you to the contributors, to Anne Hollinghurst for her reflection on the language as “interrogative” and “poetic and powerful”. Cranmer's language was poetic and powerful because Cranmer had the ability to take a Biblical story and convert it into an image which lasted only a few words, “We have erred and strayed like lost sheep” and so on. We have sought to try and do that. There is always a threat when you do that, that you might interpret the text incorrectly. We believe that we have done that fairly faithfully. Penelope Allen kindly referred to the text helping us to say what we mean.

Mike Parsons revealed the fact that the introduction to the Decision, is in fact an attempt to explain sin by telling a story which illustrates what sin is about. Jennifer Tomlinson brought the dichotomy of self-sufficiency and grace to the fore and that probably does need to be looked at by the Revision Committee. Similarly, Karen Hutchinson's reference to “give your life to Him”, which was repeated by Dagmar
Winter, do need to be looked at along with such things as “helping the child to become part of the Church” and so forth.

Obviously we will look at the provision for the Blessing of Water in emergency baptism. There is a provision there in Common Worship already but it may be a good idea to print it with the alternative stuff as well.

All that is very good. There were some serious criticisms which are taken to heart. John Cook faces us with the balancing act of complex theological concepts which simply are not current today. We would love them to be current. You have only to read a George Elliot novel to realise that in the mid-19th century such concepts were regularly part of people’s awareness and language. They are not any more. As the Archdeacon of Man said, that becomes the job of nurture, that becomes the task of the Church to give the child or the adult being baptized the language that enables them to develop their Christian faith.

Alison Ruoff, you have given the devil some good publicity, even more than the stuff which has been given to him in the red tops. None of us are saying, I think, that we do not believe in the devil, we certainly do not believe in the devil in any sense that we believe in Christ. I suppose we believe, as the famous American said, “I believe in baptism, Sir, I seen it done”. We believe in it in that sense but we do not put our trust in the devil. The devil, as Luther said, is always God’s devil. Therefore, we have got to be a little bit careful that we do not give the impression that somehow or other the devil is constantly our enemy and undefeated, for we believe he is defeated. So trust the clergy to prepare well. Yes, Prudence Dailey is absolutely right, catechesis is desperately important.

There is one other issue and that is Sister Rosemary’s issue about who is to ask the questions at the Decision. Common Worship did raise this question. In the Prayer Book the equivalent questions are addressed to the child, the child is interrogated through godparents. The ASB and other rites of that period changed it to interrogating the godparents primarily on behalf of the child. Common Worship, I believe, curiously, returns to interrogating the child through the parents and godparents, unfortunately just as ecumenically most of the other churches were turning to what we were doing in ASB. I think that is something that in the long term we need to look at and maybe this whole area of initiation needs to be looked at more carefully in the long term.

Finally, two things. EM Forster said, “I am a Cambridge man and my favourite word is but”. I would like to reinterpret that one: “I am a Durham man and my favourite word is and”. That is going to be difficult for you, Archbishop. There is a balance between the need for commitment and the primacy of grace. There is a balance between sin and forgiveness. There is a balance between theological language and intelligibility and we need to get those balances right.

Finally, may I thank Bishop Martin and Philip North, yes, we need to do a lot more thinking about worship. I am very glad to move the motion that is standing in my name.

The Chair: I am going to put Item 601 to the vote.
The motion

“That the liturgical business entitled “Additional Texts for Holy Baptism” be considered for revision in committee.’

was carried on a show of hands.

The liturgical business entitled “Additional texts for Holy Baptism” now stands committed to a Revision Committee. Proposals for amendment must be submitted to the Clerk to the Synod in writing so as to reach her not later than 5.30 pm on Friday 15 August 2014.

That concludes this item of business.

THE CHAIR  The Bishop of Birmingham (The Rt Revd David Urquhart) took the Chair at 5.26 pm

CHURCHES’ MUTUAL CREDIT UNION

The Chair: We now move on to Item 15 on the Order Paper IV, which is a presentation under Standing Order 97 on the Churches’ Mutual Credit Union. This will take the form of a presentation by the Revd Canon Antony MacRow-Wood and Hilary Sams, who are the President and Chief Executive Officer Designate respectively of the Churches’ Mutual Credit Union. The aim, just to remind you, of the CMCU is to provide a mutual ethical vehicle for tax efficient savings and affordable loans for clergy and staff of church charities. It is hoped that the establishment of the CMCU will help to support and strengthen the credit union movement and provide a viable, ethical alternative to mainstream banking for people irrespective of their financial status.

We are going to have our presentation and then there will be an opportunity for questions. Can I invite Canon MacRow-Wood and Hilary Sams to offer their presentation.

The Revd Canon Antony MacRow-Wood (President, Churches’ Mutual Credit Union): First of all I would like to thank Synod for this opportunity to give the presentation. My journey to this point began some 33 years ago about 200 yards away in the old Langwith College. Coming to the end of my degree in politics and economic and social history here at York I needed to find a job at the height of graduate unemployment during Mrs Thatcher’s first recession. There were jobs in accountancy and I had done a maths A-level and I remember deciding as I walked to college one day, “I know, I’ll become an accountant”. I had an overwhelming feeling of divine affirmation at this decision, which was odd because I was not particularly a practising Christian at the time.

So it was ten years later I started a curacy. I was a chartered accountant when I started my curacy in a large urban proletariat estate in Swindon. On that estate it had two branches of High Street banks which were withdrawn in the 1980s when banks moved away from that ethic of service to the community more in favour of
shareholder value, which we heard Jim Wallis talking about yesterday. There was a chap on the estate who had worked for an American company that had set up a credit union for their employees, so he knew about credit unions, I knew about finance, so we got a group of volunteers together and set up a credit union. Within three years we had 700 members, which was 5% of the population, and we were changing lives, people no longer feared their washing machine breaking down or their car breaking down, and some were jetting off on foreign holidays for the first time. That was when I realised what an agent of transformation and an agent of the Kingdom credit unions could be.

Subsequently I moved to Weymouth and helped expand the first Dorset Credit Union to cover the whole of West Dorset and then became its President, and then I moved on to Poole and helped merge three credit unions to form one in that conurbation.

In 2002 I became a Director of ABCUL, the Association of British Credit Unions, and eventually in 2009-12 was its President. It was an exciting time during those three years. We achieved the Legislative Reform Order giving new powers to credit unions. We set up a mutual services company for credit unions, appropriately named Cornerstone Mutual, and we did a lot of the preparatory work for the Credit Union Expansion Project.

I stepped down from ABCUL in 2012 to concentrate on Churches’ Mutual. I will hand over to Hilary to introduce herself.

Ms Hilary Sams (CEO Designate, Churches’ Mutual Credit Union): I cannot honestly say that I sat on my mother’s knee as a child and said, “When I grow up I want to run a credit union”. Rather similarly, I left school and university without a clue what I wanted to do and ended up falling by accident into working for Birmingham City Council and their housing department. Being an employee of Birmingham City Council I was a member of the employee-based credit union there. Twenty years later, after working in various fields in social housing and money advice and taking a couple of detours along the way, I have spent the last nine years building up a community-based credit union in the north of Birmingham.

When I first took on the job with Advance Credit Union, knowledge of credit unions was very, very patchy and very few people understood what they did or what I did. I am glad to say that it has changed considerably in the last nine years and I am delighted to be joining Churches’ Mutual as we launch a credit union designed to serve a community whose needs are often overlooked while they serve the needs of others.

The Revd Canon Antony MacRow-Wood: Amazingly enough, I first had a conversation about a clergy credit union with the Central Payroll Department back in 1995. As a result of that talk, I leafleted all the clergy in the Bristol Diocese, where I was, about 200 then, but I received less than ten replies and half of those that did reply said they had no wish to join a trade union. Clearly the time was not right.

Moving on, in 2007 we had the review into clergy pensions and retirement saying we needed a tax efficient way to save and a cost-effective source of credit. I wrote in and said, “That sounds like a credit union” and from that the conversation arose.
I have to say that if the Israelites had known they were going to spend 40 years in the wilderness I doubt they would have followed Moses out of Egypt, and if I had known in 2007 that it would be seven years before we reached this point I might not have started the conversation. We are here and, some of the highlights along the way have been that we had an online survey in March 2009, which was the first online survey that clergy were ever asked to participate in, so if you are fed up with them by now blame me. The crucial permission for payroll deduction came in the autumn of 2009, and that was a prerequisite to starting this project. Then in 2010 we set up the Project Board, and then we were stalled because we needed to wait for the Legislative Reform Order in 2012 because we needed the new powers that were coming in: the ability to offer interest on savings, to mix and match the common bond and to take in corporate members.

Then in 2013, credit unions hit the headlines with the abuses of the payday lenders. The Archbishop had conversations with the then Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, Albert Bogle, who is sitting behind me who is on our board now, so it became a joint venture with the Church of Scotland, hence the change in name then to the Churches’ Mutual Credit Union. Then in recognition of our Covenant with the Methodists, they were invited to join us. Sue Howarth, I am delighted to say, is here representing the Methodists. She is on our board. There is every intention of including other denominations in due course.

Our membership strategy: we are following the Glasgow City model. Glasgow City Credit Union started as a credit union for the employees of the City Council and they established a core membership of several thousand payroll deduction members before extending their common bond to anybody who lived or worked in Glasgow. This means they built a viable and sustainable business quickly and it is that core payroll deduction group of members which continues to underpin their business. They now have over 25,000 members and are one of the largest credit unions in the country.

We want to concentrate our attention initially on those members who can transact with Churches’ Mutual by payroll deduction, because we are seeking to emulate that model to build a sustainable business first before extending out. Eventually we will be extending membership to all active Church members but not for the first five years. The delay is deliberate partly to help local credit unions because I know that is a concern to many Church members, how is Churches’ Mutual fitting in with this strategy of supporting community credit unions.

The new products and services being delivered by the Credit Union Expansion Project and the work of the Archbishops’ Task Force, in the next five years community credit unions have an unprecedented opportunity to reach sustainability and those that do not make it in the next five years probably are never going to do so, but we want to maximise their chances of success and we are not drawing a large body of potential members away from them at this juncture. A few thousand clergy and Church employees are not going to make a great difference in the wider scheme of things.
Ms Hilary Sams: The aim of the credit union is to offer a number of products with competitive rates for savers and for borrowers. Clergy and Church workers are often disadvantaged when it comes to financial products. They are often stymied by contributing factors, such as living in tied accommodation, incomes that do not reflect the area they live in, and I wonder how many of you know of a Church worker who is in the fifth year of their two year contract.

There are a number of items that we want to offer. We particularly will be taking over the Church car loan scheme which will actually give people more variety, more choice and a more competitive rate on their loan. There will be a chance to take out loans for other things. The house that you buy for your retirement is not necessarily the house you want to live in when you retire. An outside loo and two electrical sockets in the kitchen might be cope-able with for a fortnight’s holiday once a year but not all the way round.

We want to respond to you as well regarding our loan and savings products. One of the tenets of the credit union model and movement is to offer free life insurance with all loans, so every loan is insured and the debt dies with the debtor.

The idea behind mutuality and credit union is that the money goes round. The money one person invests with a credit union enables a minister in another parish to drive around in a new car. The interest they pay on that loan enables the credit union to add to that first person’s retirement pot, and on and on, the money goes round to the benefit of all the members.

The credit union aims to offer a straightforward, seamless online application process for joining, opening deposit accounts and applying for loans, so everyone with an internet connection can access our services. We will have a physical office based in Gloucester and there will be someone to speak to on the phone during office hours.

Payroll deduction is key to the service the credit union is going to offer and it is of mutual benefit to both the member and the credit union. Research shows that if a person has a small reduction, say equivalent to £10 a week, from their salary by a payroll deduction saving direct, they adapt their outgoings by that reduction within three months, so if you are picking up £40 less in your salary or your stipend you will actually adjust to that within three months and that will build up your savings pot.

It is cost effective for the credit union too. Keeping our overheads low enables us to pay interest and keeping our loan rates low as well. There will also be the facility to pay by direct debit, and withdrawals and loans will be disbursed into a bank account by BACS.

The Revd Canon Antony MacRow-Wood: There will be a voice at the end of the phone so you will not be totally left to drift.

You will have read in the briefing paper of our aspirations to model mutuality as an alternative form of economic organisation, one that highlights the importance of relationship between the participants. We also aspire to be an agent of transformation and to be an innovative flagship credit union helping to raise the profile of the sector and so benefiting all credit unions.
An example of this is the way that we have used new powers granted to credit unions in the Legislative Reform Order of 2012. You may have noticed a month ago the BBC carried an item saying that less than 2% of the population belong to credit unions.

They put this down to the fact that savers did not know what return they will receive. Well, with the LRO in 2012 came the facility to offer interest on savings if you had more than 5% capital. The reason that we have raised now (it is actually 360,000 as a result of a conversation yesterday) 360,000 deferred shares, which is more than any other credit union start-up or credit union per se in this country - so we really are breaking new ground -- is to ensure that our capital will always be above 5%. So we aim fairly early on into being authorised, we have to wait a few months to show evidence of transactions and our ability to cope, we will be offering interest on savings. So instead of wondering what dividend you will get at the end of the year, you will be able to deposit money with the credit union knowing what rate of return you will receive.

We are still slightly short of our target of 400,000 in deferred shares and so far 30 dioceses have given a grant or taken deferred shares. It is not too late if your diocese has not contributed so far and would like to. There is still time to repent and believe, if you like. For those who have offered deferred shares, once authorised we will be collecting them through our restricted account with the Archbishops’ Council. This is partly a safety measure in order that you are asked to pay into a bank account that you know and recognise. So please do not respond to anything until you hear from David White.

An update on our launch process: at the moment there is no fundamental impediment to launching. We had an issue with the Equalities Act, which I will not go into now, and that at one stage looked to be quite a serious impediment but we have got over that. To be authorised you have to pass certain threshold conditions such as raising sufficient opening capital, demonstrating you have sufficient skills and expertise to run the credit union. Churches’ Mutual probably has the most skilled board of any credit union in the country. Demonstrating that you have a business plan that stacks up and that systems and controls are in place to ensure smooth operation, coupled with appropriately qualified staff to run the business, and in Hilary we are very confident that we have a hugely experienced and excellent CEO Designate.

We are a long way into that process of demonstrating to the Regulator that we have passed the threshold conditions. The only remaining item is being able to demonstrate, as you see on the screen, that our IT system and controls are fit for purpose. We anticipate completing that in August, ready to go live on 1 October. At the moment we are confident of achieving that date but I have to say we cannot absolutely guarantee it. To return to my allusion to Moses earlier, after seven years it feels like we are standing on the top of Mount Nebo in Jordan looking across at the Promised Land and ready to enter. Hilary stands ready to lead us across to Jordan. I will stop the analogy there as it would be most ungallant to liken Hilary to Joshua, and I have no intention of being buried in Moab.

Ms Hilary Sams: So how can you in Synod help us? Well, firstly, each and every
one of you who sits here as an officer within the Church, Church clergy, Church worker, is eligible to join, so please do register for updates. On your way out you should be given a little card with our website. Just indicate through that that you would like to be on our register. So please do register and join the Credit Union as a saver and consider being a borrower as well, to make the Credit Union your lender of choice. Please take the information back to your diocese, your chapter, your deanery or your PCC. We want to get the message out that Churches' Mutual is here and it is about, just to be registered and it is just round the corner, and so please take that back.

Please consider becoming a champion, somebody who is prepared to talk to PCCs and chaplains and deaneries within your diocese. I worked out that if I actually attended every deanery in every diocese that I could be out every night for the next couple of years, and I really do not have the capacity for that. But we will be looking to provide a briefing pack and a description and information for you to take out if you are prepared to support us in that way. You have the opportunity to invest your skills in your local credit union, so be generous with your expertise. There will be churches who will say, “We never have anybody, we never have an accountant, we never have anybody in IT in our church, in our congregation.” But there are other churches that have a number of people who are prepared to say, “I can give a couple of days office work to you”, and be generous, tithe that time to your local credit union. Because governance, expertise and skills are vital in a real area of risk where credit unions are concerned.

Finally, Joshua did not get anywhere without prayer, so please pray for us. We have got a lot to do in the next six to eight weeks, a lot of hurdles to jump and a lot of things to get through and give us the strength and the stamina, the patience and the wisdom to deal with the people who are regulating us and authorising us. So thank you very much for that.

The Chair: Thank you very much indeed. We are now for questions and I am proposing to group them in groups of three and then ask Hilary and Antony to respond.

Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford): Three questions, if I may. First of all, congratulations on the progress that you have made with CMCU. I think it really looks excellent and I recall the putting of capital into it from Church Commissioners. I am delighted to see you have made such progress so quickly. What progress are you making with bringing in a ratings system for the different credit unions, and where does CMCU fit in any such ratings register to give a guidance to people as to how secure they are?

Secondly, does the exclusion of building societies indicate that the wider credit union initiative is more focused on the provision of lending than on identifying a better home for savings than banks? If not, please could building societies be included within this publicity? I am sure the Building Societies' Association would assist if they can be.

Thirdly, on financial education (and this features in the paper on clause 2, the first item actually, and I do also here declare an interest as a Board member of the Personal Finance Education Group), I am just wondering if we could be informed
how this aspect will be financed and what is the authorisation process and timing for that process?

_The Revd Dr Meg Gilley (Durham):_ I want to press you a little more and ask you a little bit more about the relationship between the Churches' Mutual Credit Union and how this could detract from clergy supporting and being involved in their local credit unions, which are likely to have a greater impact on poor areas. When the questionnaires came round a couple of times over the last few years, I embraced it warmly and said I would support it. However, I feel it is much more important to support the credit unions where I am now, especially coming from a very poor, very urban, very difficult parish, and that is where the problems are. I am really concerned that the impact could be quite hard and I want you to speak a little more about that. Thank you.

_Mrs Julie Dziegiel (Oxford):_ I have two questions but one is only a yes/no answer. The first one is that I am also interested in financial education and what role that CMCU may have in that, and how wide that financial education to children in our schools could be made. It seems to me that they need a broader education than just encouragement to save and an awareness of credit unions. So the breadth of financial education I would like a comment on. The second very brief question is I am a PCC treasurer. I run a payroll. Can you work with my payroll? Thank you.

_The Chair:_ Would you like to start to answer those questions, and congratulations each questioner on getting at least three questions in.

_The Revd Canon Antony MacRow-Wood:_ I think the first question was about ratings systems for credit unions. I think credit unions are, by nature, co-operative entities, they try to work together to support each other. I think introducing a ratings system is not something I have heard of in my years in the sector, and I think many credit unions would be reluctant to go down that route. Building societies are not explicitly excluded from the work of the Task Force, so it is on that agenda there. Credit unions do work closely with the Building Societies' Association already. In fact, an employer of the Building Societies' Association is on our board, so there is a link there but it is not one of our work-stream priorities. They are a mutual and they are not excluded from what we are doing.

Financial education came up twice and I think, particularly in rural areas where churches have a great role to play with credit unions, that church schools are an easily accessible building. They are generally good buildings, they are not draughty, old churches, but they are modern pleasant buildings. They have a footfall already of people coming into them. That is a place in which the credit union can have a service point to reach people in rural areas. In the schools, I quite agree on the curriculum, and I think the curriculum has just been changed at the moment to include budgeting and some financial education and it is high time too. Children need to learn that at an early stage as part of maths really. Credit unions can support that and they can reinforce it by being part of the practical example of when you join your local credit union become a junior saver.

The big issue, I think, is the poor areas question. I am a member of three credit unions, reflecting that I have moved around. I am still a member of them. I actively
help my local credit union with advice. I am not serving on their board at the moment because I cannot do everything. A key part of what we are about here though is moving away from the Lukan model, we must help the poor, and adopting a more Johannine model of we are all in this together, we must be one. When Jesus got into the boat with the disciples there was only one boat. What we are trying to do with credit unions is to make them viable businesses in order that they can achieve their social objectives. Part of that has to be getting a wide cross-section of society to join the credit unions and actively use them. If they just try and serve poor areas and people on the margins, they will never become sustainable business and they will fall over. Hilary, you might like to say something about it. You have been a community credit union director, have you not?

Ms Hilary Sams: Yes. Interestingly, when I took over as manager of what was North Birmingham Credit Union and is now Advanced Credit Union, about 80% of our membership were working and had good savings and they used the credit union as a lender of choice. Quite interestingly, we have an ordinand in training on placement in my parish church back in Birmingham, and he said, "I have been told to come and talk to you because I am doing an essay on food banks and food poverty and I need to talk to you about the credit union." I said, “Well, one of the difficulties is that credit unions exist for every single member of our society, irrespective of their financial circumstances.” Anybody can benefit from having rainy day savings, access to low cost affordable credit and financial education. Every single one of us needs that. So do not polarise credit unions for the poor. You need to have a balanced portfolio and, again, this way of people who can save, people who can borrow and in that way the credit union becomes sustainable, strengthens, good capital reserves, good loan book, good revenue income, less reliance on outside grants and things like that and it builds it up.

Yes, by all means be involved. As I said, be generous with your experience, with your skills, with your abilities with your local credit union. Save with them. There are roughly 63 million people in the population of this country. Only just over one million are members of credit unions. There are enough people to go around.

The Revd Canon Antony MacRow-Wood: What I would add to that is it depends on your vision for the credit union movement. My vision is that in ten to 15 years’ time there is a viable credit union serving every part of this country. They will be on the high street pretty much like building societies were in the 1980s. It may be a virtual high street by then, but they will be there, an established part of the financial sector of this country, a rebuilt mutual sector if you like. The institutions are a primary choice for their members and they can be from a cross-section of society, because with the Credit Union Expansion Project we are bringing in the products and services that will make credit unions competitive. There will be things like a fully functioning current account and ease of access to those services. There will be a 24 hour helpline for credit unions, telephone lines, so you can transact any hour of the night by telephone and things like this. It is about creating competitive institutions that are financially viable, then they can achieve their social objectives because they can leverage the credit union advantage.

There are three elements of the credit union advantage. Firstly, payroll deductions, which we have talked about. Transaction costs are lower and bad debt is lower in
payroll deduction. Secondly, the use of volunteers. You can use volunteers to help serve those on the margins if someone is on a poorer housing estate. You also have volunteers on your board and you are not having to pay board members. Finally, the fact that just like a bank you have to give a return to savers but, unlike a bank, you are not paying a dividend to external shareholders and neither are you paying large bonuses to people with an exaggerated sense of their own worth. So it is about leveraging those advantages to achieve your social objectives.

The Chair: Thanks very much.

The Ven. Christine Hardman (Southwark): My question is in exactly the same area as that of Dr Gilley. I was approached some months ago by the chair of the trustees of our local credit union which operates in a poor area. He was initially incredibly encouraged by the Church of England's initiative to support credit unions to get Wonga out of business, but came to me because he was alarmed that rather than the Church's energies going into supporting local credit unions, those energies were going to be diverted into a Church-wide credit union. My anxieties and his anxieties, I have to say, have not been entirely allayed by the presentation this afternoon. I am working with him to relate to the local churches that the credit union has two needs. They are not short of funds but they are short of volunteers. So in terms of our commitment to the Common Good, it is clearly something that many Church members and Christians could do, which is to offer their time and talents to their local credit union which is touching that local area. The other need they have is to put pressure on the banks because they are just not getting a realistic rate of interest on the --

The Chair: Christine, sorry to interrupt, do you have a question to ask?

The Ven. Christine Hardman (Southwark): Yes, I am asking how are the Church, through the union, going to help with that pressure on the banks to make the whole thing viable?

The Revd Canon Giles Goddard (Southwark): Thank you. I hugely welcome this initiative and it is a very, very positive one. I want to give comfort to Christine slightly, because I am involved in setting up a credit union locally in Waterloo. But I have a kind of philosophical question about all of this and also its relationship with the Pay Day lenders. Somebody sitting not very far from me talked about competing Pay Day lenders out of business, but we realised quite early on when we were thinking about setting up our credit union that, of course, you can only lend to your members, can you not? We work with the Debt Advice Centre in Waterloo, and the people who come to the Debt Advice Centres are people who have quite chaotic lives and they are the kind of people who tend to go to Pay Day lenders, and they are the kind of people who credit unions will not be able to lend to because they are not members of the credit union. So although I fully support this initiative and our local one, I just wonder how it is going to help in our long-term aim of getting those Pay Day lenders out of business.

Mr Robin Lunn (Worcester): Two very brief questions. Firstly, would you agree the great advantage that you have got over some other people in, particularly, the Pay Day loans sector is one of trust? Speaking as an Independent Financial Adviser
myself, trust in finance is absolutely essential. The second question is, again, have you thought of reaching out to financial advisers because, hearing you present and reading this material, there is undoubtedly a niche here with the retreat of Friendly Societies over the years, and this also may attract the sort of money that you are also looking for to help people most in need. Thank you.

The Chair: Would you like to answer those, please?

The Revd Canon Antony MacRow-Wood: The first question about pressure on the banks, the Archbishops’ Task Force are actively engaging with the banks. Barclays have announced support and Lloyds have announced a £4 million fund to help credit unions specifically towards sustainability. But, largely, the Task Force is doing that side, it is not strictly a CMCU issue.

Ms Hilary Sams: To address the point about credit unions competing Pay Day lenders out of business, that is quite a challenge for credit unions to actually work on the same wavelength as Pay Day lenders. With Pay Day lenders, you go online and you get your decision in 15 minutes. A lot of credit unions do instant lending. Whether they will do you a decision in 15 minutes is quite a difficult one. The other thing is interest rates are capped for credit unions. In my credit union that I was working for we had a member who wanted to borrow £300 and pay it back in three weeks, and we said no. We could not raise enough interest to actually cover the cost of the loan and we could not run at a loss, because the interest on a £300 loan for three weeks was £1.26 and, with the best will in the world, we could not deliver that loan for that amount. She said she would borrow the money over six months. Three weeks later she came in and paid back £301.26. Two weeks after that she applied for a loan for £450, and that is how Pay Day lenders work. Pay Day loans, dare I say it, work, if you really are going to be in difficulty and you can guarantee that your income is going to raise by the amount that you borrow within three weeks. How Pay Day loans trap people is that they do not offer any kind of budgeting, money advice and actually changing your lifestyle so that you are not constantly overspending. That is where the Task Force and the Church working with the credit unions in Liverpool and in London will actually say, “You need to reduce your expenditure and not borrow £300 or £400, try and pay it back very quickly without changing your lifestyle because the following month you need to borrow £450 and the month after that you need to borrow £600.” It is actually very hard.

I was a money adviser in a previous life and it is very hard and it is a long slog to actually change your lifestyle and get out of debt, and credit unions work alongside people to help them do that, to save for a rainy day and to anticipate expenditure rather than reacting to expenditure. That is how we will work to compete Pay Day lenders out of business, not by necessarily giving short-term instant loans. We cannot compete in that way.

The Revd Canon Antony MacRow-Wood: Can I just add to that? What we are trying to do is increase the capacity of the credit union sector and provide a viable alternative. In my time in credit unions I think that you have to realise, as Hilary just said, they work on deferred gratification. There are about three types of people: Some people get deferred gratification instinctively, others can learn it, and there is
another group that have not got a hope and never learn it, and they are quite difficult to help in this context.

The other thing to say, to return to the question about trying to help some people with chaotic lives more specifically, I had an animated conversation with someone yesterday who was saying that they have got a debt advice function at their church and they wanted to get the local credit union to come in. They got the person on the straight and narrow, they had done the budgeting, they had helped them, and the credit union was a bit lukewarm about lending them any money. So I challenged that person to go along to the credit union with them (the Church member this is), join the credit union with them and then offer to guarantee their loan. Because that actually is the Good Samaritan approach, is it not? It is going the extra mile, it is showing love in sacrifice, and that is the way that maybe a Church member should react in that situation.

The Chair: Thanks very much. We have got time for some more questions.

The Bishop of Blackburn (The Rt Revd Julian Henderson): I am going to declare an interest, I did start a credit union in a parish when I was there, and I see that credit unions do challenge the culture of high interest rates for credit, and that needs to be challenged and you are doing that and that is good. Then, there is also the helping people to learn to save which is something that is very foreign to a lot of people in our culture. But I think one of the biggest issues is that of debt, and it has just been mentioned. I just wanted to ask whether you are working with other organisations that are trying to deal with that like CAP (Christians Against Poverty), who would actually be good partners with you in trying to deal with those issues. They could be good friends for you.

Mrs Penelope Allen (Lichfield): Could you explain, please, what the relationship will be between the Credit Union and the new envisaged Williams and Glyn’s Bank? And is there to be a link between the two and is, for instance, financial information to be provided between the two? There are a number of people who are waiting anxiously to see, with the demise of the Co-operative Bank, what is happening with the Church banking systems, and we seem to be going in two directions. So if you could clarify that for me, I would be grateful.

The Revd Canon Andrew Nunn (Southwark): I am not sure whether you can answer this question, but I think a lot of us have been disturbed during our lifetimes by the demise of so many building societies and by what has happened in the Co-operative movement. Is there any way in which you can future-proof credit unions so that somebody does not pick them off in the future and we start going round these same cycles again?

The Chair: Thank you very much. Answers, please.

The Revd Canon Antony MacRow-Wood: Specifically about Christians Against Poverty, we are not actively partnering with them. But just to go back to what we are saying, we are trying to set up a flagship credit union that raises the profile of credit unions and demonstrates to the British public that credit unions are for everybody, and to get that wider cross-section of society involved in credit unions because that
is what will make them more viable in the long run. The question about Williams and Glyn’s is not really one for me. That is one to ask the Commissioners. But I would challenge you saying about the demise of the Co-op Bank. They have not demised. They are restructuring and they are getting their act back together and I, for one, am glad to see that happen. Future-proofing, so we do not go round this cycle of credit unions. I understand exactly where you are coming from. I have been to America on the Credit Union Conference there and some of the American credit unions have got large, like the building societies did, and then the directors have started to see advantages in de-mutualising and taking the big dividends for themselves. Nobody can guarantee against that. If that were to happen, we are talking 20, 30 years on. But I think it is about values. It is about sticking to your values, promoting those values and, ultimately, keeping your members involved in those values, informing them and getting their buy into the values. Because if the members do not vote for de-mutualisation, it cannot happen. It is one member, one vote.

Ms Susan Myatt (Deaf Anglicans Together): When you come to consider future expansion of the membership, what you will do about access for, for example, the deaf members of the Church for whom English is a second language, and maybe considering other people who may have difficulty accessing information such as other disability groups?

The Bishop of Peterborough (The Rt Revd Donald Allister): This is in the context of complete support for the principle of credit unions and for what you are trying to do. I still have a concern that I would like you to reassure me about, that credit unions of this sort are not going to encourage any sort of debt and loan lifestyle but are going to discourage people from borrowing unless they need to? Secondly, could you reassure me, having read your literature and particularly your website, that loans in double figures do not have to be charged and, particularly, loans over 20%? I know that is not Wonga figures but 20% plus seems to me to be too high.

The Revd George Newton (Guildford): A question that comes in, I think, on a very different wavelength to almost all the others and picks up a little bit from one of Christine’s earlier, and to which I am fairly sure the answer is going to be no, but as a vicar of a parish that saw the highest increase last year in toxic debt amongst the parishioners, we are in the process of starting a branch of a credit union. We would have loved that to have somehow been a Church credit union. It can no longer be simply started in the churches these days as it is a branch of the Hampshire one. Is there any way of expanding further so that we can actually serve our parishioners rather than be served or, in five years’ time, simply the members of our congregation be served? I have such a heart for linking up the first Mark admission, sharing something of the good news of Jesus, with Mark 3 and 4, acts of compassion and justice, into which I think credit unions fall.

Ms Hilary Sams: In answer to the first point, obviously we will do everything that is possible to make the credit union as accessible to everybody from all walks of life and with various needs. The fact that it is online means it can be accessed by anyone who has got a computer and an internet connection. Obviously if there are issues with sight or deafness or other disability these also will be being addressed within that person’s home, one would hope. We in the past have used accessible leaflets and literature, looking for clear plain English that is understandable as well.
Also, as I said in the presentation we are looking for people out in the dioceses that are prepared to champion the credit union and, although it will not be possible for us to be out there in every individual diocese, it could be that somebody can get alongside a person who needs help in using and accessing the Credit Union's facilities and services. So we are aware that equality of access is absolutely principal to the membership of the Credit Union.

**The Revd Canon Antony MacRow-Wood:** As we say in the briefing paper, clergy and Church employees form a natural mutual society. We live, clergy, particularly for the most part, on modest, fairly fixed incomes throughout our working lives, and so we need help with the peaks and troughs of expenditure. Buying a car is a major item. We also need help to save for retirement housing and stuff. I do not see that as a debt and loan lifestyle, I see it as managing the peaks and troughs of expenditure and providing a means for healthy tax efficient saving, not promoting a debt and loan lifestyle.

You mentioned about the loans of more than 20%. If you look at the leaflet, it is actually a very small loan. I think it is under £1,500. The fixed cost of granting a loan is anywhere between £50 and £80, if you look at the overheads of a credit union. So if you are granting a very small loan you have to at least recover your cost of granting it. That is why we are looking at 2% per month on the very small loans. As soon as you get slightly larger, it goes up to 1% a month and then, larger than that, it comes down below that level. It is just entirely related to the size of loan. We just have to get real about the costs of running the business and how you recoup your costs.

Linking and serving communities. When we extend to all active Church members, we are going to have to find a definition for that. It may well be something like for Anglicans, the Electoral Roll; for the Church of Scotland, it would be similar, yes, the Communal Roll; and for Methodists, something similar. So there will be a definition there. We all know that there are people on electoral rolls that do not necessarily regularly attend church on a Sunday but it can be quite a wide net of people we can serve. Just going back to the initial point, we will be helping to strengthen the credit union sector as a whole. If we can do that, if we get the buy-in of the wider population so there are strong credit unions across the country, then it is increasing that competition in the market and it is providing a service for everybody. That is the way forward. It is increasing variety and competition so that you get a good service for people because, ultimately, people want a good service to be able to use and to prosper by it.

**Ms Hilary Sams:** I was going to say just two things. One is that clergy get into debt. Those of who you are bishops, diocesan bishops, who have worked with clergy will know that sometimes you have to bail them out. Credit unions are about giving people the best case scenario for borrowing money and taking responsibility for their finances and saving, looking ahead, planning ahead, being proactive rather than reactive. That is what we are about. As an exemplar of good practice we can actually take what we are doing out. Through your involvement in Churches' Mutual you can take that out into your local credit union. So please continue to support us and pray for us.
The Chair: Please thank Anthony and Hilary very much. I congratulate all those who stuck to the brief and asked questions. Well done.

The Revd Phil Williams led the Synod in an act of worship.

THE CHAIR The Bishop of Manchester (The Rt Revd David Walker) took the Chair at 8.30 pm

THE ARCHBISHOPS’ COUNCIL’S BUDGET AND PROPOSALS FOR APPORTIONMENT FOR 2015 (GS 1959)

The Chair: We come now to Items 16 through to 23 on our agenda. For this you will need GS 1959. In a moment I am going to invite Canon John Spence to open proceedings, but just to explain that whereas normally we would have the person presenting speaking for up to ten minutes, what I have agreed with Canon Spence is he can speak for up to 15 minutes, but then when it comes to Items 17 through to 23 I will be anticipating a very simple moving of the motions that stand in his name. So, Canon Spence, may I invite you to begin on Item 16 and you have up to 15 minutes.

Canon John Spence (Ex-officio): Ladies and Gentlemen, I am indeed mindful that I compete tonight with the World Cup. I will try to score no own goals and trust that any questions with which you tackle me will be fair ones. If you do want to go over the top, I suggest you wait for the First Estates Commissioner! If anybody wants to throw in any other footballing puns, it might add some humour to what otherwise might be a rather dry occasion.

At the start of this Quinquennium, the Archbishops’ Council committed to Synod that the apportionment to dioceses would not increase by more than the rate of inflation across the five years. The budget that I will present tonight will see that that commitment has been honoured. It was a commitment that was noble, bold and appropriate. Noble because it recognised the financial pressures on the dioceses across the country; bold and appropriate because it focused the minds on achieving efficiencies wherever possible, and making Church House think about the things it should stop doing rather than continue them just because they had always been done that way. But in what I say tonight, in presenting the budget, it will become clear that such a commitment is neither possible nor appropriate going forward.

For such time as I have the privilege of being the Finance Chair of the Archbishops’ Council, I will work to three principles. Firstly, subsidiarity: wherever possible action should be taken at parish and diocesan level. The centre should only do those things that it absolutely must do for legal reasons; that it can only do because they are of such a scale that they require a national approach or can best be done because that is the most effective solution.

Secondly, efficiency: we shall continue to find every means by which we can increase the cost efficiency of the central operations. That again will mean stopping doing things that do not need to be done. It will be enhancing the productivity of the great people that we have working for us at the centre, and I do take my hat off to all the staff with whom I have had the privilege of working now for nine months.
Third effectiveness, because the unintended consequence of that noble, bold and appropriate commitment, is that it has focused everybody on cutting costs all the time rather than measuring the effectiveness of the spend. Cost efficiency is of no good if it is not matched with effectiveness. We need to be very clear that we are achieving the desired outcomes and impacts from every penny that we spend, and I commit to you that that will be a key focus for me.

Those of you who have been listening carefully will observe that the first letters of the words “subsidiarity”, “efficiency” and “effectiveness” spell the word “see” and you may have noticed that I am wearing a purple tie but, please, Episcopates, do not be worried; I am not creating a see, merely working to those principles.

You will find incidentally that the tie in which Yvonne has dressed me tonight is exactly the same tie as that being worn by the First Estates Commissioner, albeit in different shades, which I think is a piece of team work worthy of the World Cup final itself. Sometimes the best things happen in unintended ways.

So, we come to the votes and with your agreement - well, not with your agreement, because I am going to do it anyway - I will take these out of order. Vote 3, the money given for grants to ecumenical bodies and the Anglican Communion Office, and Vote 4, the pension commitments related to missionary people, are both very small and incapable of major strategic change.

Vote 5, retirement housing for clergy, fulfils a commitment to continue increasing at 5% per annum. You have already heard from the Chairman of the Pensions Board that that sum can be expected to increase by more than inflation going forward because of the demand for such housing, because of the cost of such housing and because of the cost of finance, but I have already begun a dialogue with them as to how we can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of that spend.

Let us be clear, however, that a 5% increase in Vote 5, to which we are absolutely committed - we have moral and fiduciary responsibilities to ensure that our clergy have adequate house in retirement - on its own, represents a 0.7% increase in the apportionment.

So we come to Vote 1. At one level I regret to say that the increase in spend next year is only 2.7%. Why do I say that? The increase in spend of 2.7% is driven by the increasing costs for the educational institutions themselves, but it reflects the fact that we have no major increase in the number of ordinands coming forward for training. You are aware that we have task forces in operation and our research is already revealing that there is a significant gap between the number of people coming forward for ordination against the demand that dioceses have going forward given the pace of retirement of the wonderful clergy we have already. We will need to see the number of ordinands increase and we will need to consider what provision needs to be made at national level for lay leadership and lay ministry training in the work coming out of the Resourcing Ministry Education Task Force. We will also in that work stream be considering what the effectiveness of different forms of training are. There is no point in constantly looking for the cheaper alternative means of training if it were to be proven, only if it were to be proven, that such a means did not match the effectiveness of other means of training.
The 2.7% increase would have rendered impossible the fulfillment of that commitment to increase the apportionment by less than inflation, but a fairy godmother appeared in the shape of the Corporation of Church House who, due to the success of their commercial operations, have not only enabled items of maintenance and improvement to be carried out at their cost but who have signalled that for 2015 they will give us a waiver of rent, which to the Archbishops’ Council is worth about £500,000. £315,000 of that sum is being allocated to Vote 1 to reduce the apportionment down to the 1% in your Order Paper.

Which leaves Vote 2: national church support. We had to face this year that we would need to spend more money. We had the safeguarding discussion over the weekend and you heard how we have had to increase the resource available for safeguarding at national level, and tribute has already been paid to the wonderful work being done by the staff there. We are working on an on-line faculty which will be of great benefit. We have had to increase the people working in the research function in the short term in order to cope with the extraordinary amounts of work that the task forces are creating but also coming out of the Anecdote to Evidence report. We have reduced the apportionment to zero by the use of the rest of the Corporation rental waiver, and I must express our gratitude to the Corporation on behalf of the Archbishops’ Council, the Pensions Board and the Church Commissioners for this unnecessary but very welcome gesture of generosity and by the judicial use of reserves, restricted and designated funds.

But be clear, you can take efficiencies so far. The apportionment relating to Vote 2 now stands at 30% less in real terms than it did ten years ago and you cannot go on like that. If we are truly to be a growing Church in terms of numbers and spirituality, we need to have at the centre a very efficient but equally an effective engine room in order to co-ordinate and promulgate the work being taken forward. The best shared services are those that do not just serve those for whom they work. They are those that provide thought, leadership, creativity and innovation. I cannot see a possibility that we will continue to reduce the vote to apportionment, either in real or cash terms in the long term.

I am pleased to say that although we are using reserves across several of the funds this year, the reserves that remain are both adequate and not over-abundant. In addition to the votes, I need to mention under Item 23 that the various dioceses give additional allowances to ordinands who are married, or sometimes single, and the means by which that is allocated is by using the usual apportionment formula, and that formula remains unchanged this year and will remain unchanged, indeed, until the work of the task forces is complete. What happens thereafter has to await the outcome of those pieces of work.

Synod, I am delighted to move the motions in my name to Synod.

The Chair: It is about to be open for debate. I am just going to explain that because Canon Spence is not able to take notes to use to reply I have decided exceptionally after every three speeches he will have the opportunity to make a brief response.

The Revd Dr Patrick Richmond (Norwich): Thank you for calling me, Chair, and
thank you to everyone who has decided not to choose between enemies, which one to love more, and to come to this debate. Thank you so much to the Archbishops’ Council and to Canon Spence for what I found was a refreshingly realistic and a most bold statement of where we are and where we want to go.

I am very much in support of our spending this money and I note that there is even a bit of additional money for statistical work, which I think will help us to be realistic as we go forward. I would like to make a speech which is more a matter of questioning in seeking clarification as I offer my support and gratitude, for it seems to me that there may be further work in clarifying the priorities and the goals. I use that word advisedly. The goals that we are trying to score are presumably outlined in some of the goals of the Quinquennium, and I can see already the signs that there is a new realism about finding criteria for success, for finding out whether the money is well spent. I am wondering what is the situation with the spending as it reflects the goals of the Council? How far is it possible for the spending to reflect the priorities, given the constraints we have already heard described to us in such realistic terms? Is there any room for investing in what the Council considers to be most important when it has kept the show on the road?

Then, I would like to ask what are the current and expected future goals? The goals of the Quinquennium seem to be around growth, the Common Good and re-imagining ministry. Our new Archbishops’ priorities are slightly different from that: prayer and reconciliation and evangelism. It seems that there is now under Canon Spence’s direction a new task group, a task group for imagining the future, and its goals seem to be numbers, spirituality and evangelism. None of these goals seems to be identical and that raises the question which end are we playing to, where is the line and will the ball have crossed it? Can we focus and explain what the goals of the Council are at the moment and where they are going to be after November, when I understand the task group that Canon Spence is leading will report?

Why do I ask this? Because I think it is helpful if we know what we are aiming at and, as I mentioned in questions and in the business agenda debate, I think it is helpful if we can reflect our commitment to the goals as we attempt to provide leadership in Synod to the country’s Church, reflecting and respecting subsidiarity, as Canon Spence has already outlined at the beginning of his speech. So I wonder whether the goals will be aligned? Will our new Archbishops’ priorities align with the goals that the task groups will come in with? Will there be a shift in priorities and a shift in the goalposts, in the criteria for success? Again, I want to express my thanks for the answer that was given in questions on Friday night which did show Canon Spence was already setting up a set of stringent tests for success, which is all part of the realism and the business-likeness that I think has invigorated our proceedings over the past few years. So my question is, what are our goals? How will we know whether we have scored them and will there be a change in those goals in the next half of the game? Is that after November or perhaps in the new Quinquennium? Thank you.

The Chair: To remind Synod members there is the usual five-minute speaking limit. I might reduce that by one minute for every footballing analogy if I get really fed up of them later in the debate!
Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford): I trust that will be after the speech and not before the speech because you can expect another one coming up in a second.

First of all, I wish to congratulate Canon Spence for his very, very crisp and clear delivery of the budget proposals. I would say that I support them very, very much. I am extremely grateful to the Church House Corporation for making the contribution that they are. I have to say as someone who visits Church House quite often, it is amazing to see the diversity of people who use that building for all kind of seminars and presentations, and it is of great credit to Church House Corporation that they really do keep those revenues flowing because that is what is enabling this contribution to be made.

There is a malaise in the national game at the moment. We have very good league clubs all over the country who do exceedingly well and get international acclaim, but when it comes to the national game, our team gets knocked out before we get beyond the team stages. You have to ask why. That is because we are not really doing things in a very joined-up way in the national game. I would put it to you that I do not think we are doing things in a very joined-up way within the Church of England either, because I think that taking those three principles, the principles of efficiency and effectiveness should be applied to the Church as a whole; not just the Archbishops’ Council, the Church as a whole. The consequence of that is that subsidiarity should only be applied where you have got issues of ministry and mission, things which drive the taking forward of the Christian faith. Subsidiarity should not be applied to administration and as a result it means that the Church is paying more as a whole than it ought to be to look after its running expenses.

I have to say that I asked the other day what the overall figures were for the Church and I was told that the latest year we could get those figures for now is 2012, two years ago, and that illustrates the problem that we have of actually knowing where we are for a Church as a whole. In my view, the General Synod should see an aggregate position across all the dioceses and the centre every year and it should be presented to this debate, not necessarily for approval, because of course dioceses have got to approve their own individual budgets, but certainly the members of the General Synod ought to be able to monitor the overall costs of the Church to see whether we are doing things in the most efficient way. There will be many, many areas where we can do things centrally in a more efficient way than pushing them down to dioceses level so that they are done over and over again. I know there are a lot of bilateral arrangements between neighbouring dioceses, and hooray that that is going on. However, I have to say there is a great deal more that we could achieve in this way, and I think it would be hugely helpful if John Spence could actually draw into his consideration the whole Church position, so that the £1.4 billion or something that we spend each year can be properly examined across the Church as a whole to see whether we are delivering efficiency and effectiveness for the whole. Thank you.

The Revd Stephen Trott (Peterborough): For those of you who have made careful investments at Ladbrokes you might like to know that the score currently appears to be Francis 0 Benedict 0 at half time.

I would like to say something about the CHARM scheme. It is vitally important that people should not come to the end of a long ministry and find themselves homeless.
The CHARM scheme was a very imaginative and a very practical arrangement that was made I think perhaps as long as 30 years ago, perhaps even longer, to make sure that nobody should find themselves in the position, having spent a lifetime in a tied house and coming to the end of their ministry, of being without anywhere to live.

Things have changed considerably and I understand it is now possible to get a mortgage even quite late in life. I have heard of people aged 65 and perhaps a little older starting a mortgage with a building society. I wonder whether perhaps it might be worth investigating with one of the building societies or other financial institutions to see whether some sort of arrangement can be made on the commercial market that provides both for the clergy retiring a cheaper package (because the parameters of the CHARM scheme are not straightforward like an ordinary mortgage from a high street provider) and in that way provide something more satisfactory for the clergy in retirement, but perhaps also to reduce the costs of the CHARM scheme, which are a considerable part of the budget before us. I have not checked out any of these figures, but I know what I am paying for a retirement property, and I think it is actually a better bargain on the high street than it would be if I was to do it through the CHARM scheme. So I wonder whether perhaps that might be something to be explored.

*Canon John Spence:* Thank you all very much. I think I had better draw a line under these football analogies. I find myself quite torn on it actually because if I carry them on I might get sent off which would be a much nicer outcome!

Patrick raised two questions, one about measures of effectiveness, and that is absolutely where we have got to be. I really am sorry to say that I do not think it has been our strength in the past.

If you look at funds that have been distributed by Darlow, there have been some dioceses who have been very good at measuring the impact of that, there are others where it has been less clear. If you are really going to understand that every pound that is spent - and by the way none of it is our money, it is the Church’s money - means another pound cannot be spent elsewhere, you have a responsibility to ensure that it is being spent in the most effective way. Therefore you must have clear measures; therefore you must have clear plans. Strategic alignment should be one of the key measures by which you understand how you prioritise spend. Yes, we will be continuing to work hard, as we have already begun indeed with some of the money being distributed through the Spending Review Task Force, which is very clearly only being released on the basis of stated impacts which will be measured and evaluated throughout.

Patrick went on to talk about the Quinquennial goals and I am pleased to say that my state of dialogue with the archbishops, who are present, is healthy. So they are fully aware of where we are going and it is for them to talk about the Quinquennial goals going forward. But I would distinguish between goals, such as numerical and spiritual growth, which are outcomes, and prayer and reflection which are something about how you go about doing it and how you influence the country as a whole. I myself find no lack of alignment between the Quinquennial goals that we have and the stated priorities of the archbishops. I believe that we will see those outcomes continuing to be at the focus of the next Quinquennium.
Yes, re-imagining ministry is very much within the purview of the Resourcing Ministry Education Task Group who are looking at everything from selection criteria and how we increase the number of people coming forward for ordination, or for lay leadership roles, as well as right the way through to continuous professional development.

Gavin is of course quite right to talk about us thinking about the whole Church. I observed when joining the Archbishops’ Council, and this is noted elsewhere in the report - and I am sorry I could not be here this afternoon when the report was taken - that the Archbishops’ Council had a risk register which was about risks to the Archbishops’ Council. Actually we need to be thinking about risks to the whole Church, and similarly we need to be talking about the effectiveness of spend across the whole Church.

Subsidiarity is about delegation not about abdication, it is about co-ordination, and you can have subsidiarity to greatest effect where you help the dioceses and parishes be best equipped to fulfil those pieces, and that is where the effectiveness comes in. So it will indeed be about a whole Church agenda, Gavin, you need not worry on that score whatsoever. We will only achieve the optimal levels of co-ordination where we so work with the dioceses that they have the confidence in us to allow us to do things at the centre for them.

If you ever think about a pyramid, never think about the centre being at the top passing things down, think about the centre being at the bottom moving upwards and outwards in order that you at diocesan and parish level can achieve those great outcomes for the Church as a whole.

As far as Jonathan’s question is concerned, it is probably better directed to tomorrow night when the Pensions Board give their presentation on CHARM. I will say - I had stated already - we have a moral and fiduciary responsibility to ensure that housing is available for the clergy who have served us so well. It is true that mortgage markets change but they have actually recently changed again with the introduction of the new Regulatory Mortgage Market Review which will make it harder for older people to get mortgages.

We have clergy people who in the past have been told not to worry about their retirement housing needs because the Church will look after them, and they will certainly not be able to obtain a mortgage if they have not accumulated the capital for a significant part of the deposit, so we do see the CHARM scheme continuing. I think when you see the presentation from the Pensions Board tomorrow night you will see just exactly how they are thinking about taking the scheme forward. It will be living, it will be vibrant and it will meet the needs of the clergy.

I should just mention to finish that we are doing things to facilitate work across the whole Church. The Parish Buying Scheme and the Parish Giving Schemes from Gloucester where we are working to promulgate that across the country, are two great examples.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.
Mr Tim Hind (Bath and Wells): Many institutions across the land have had crises over the last few years. We think of the banking industry with their PPI claims. We think of the insurance industry with mis-selling. It is quite clear to many of us, I think, particularly those that attended the MACSAS fringe meeting on Friday that there may well be a crisis for the Church of England going forward that will cost us something.

The question I have, John, is what provisions are being made over the next three or four years to make sure that any compensation claims that might be brought against the Church of England are covered.

The Revd Christopher Hobbs (London): I could not join in the applause about the use of the Corporation of Church House rent rebate for, at page 34, £195,000 of it is for training additional ordinands on context based training pathways. That should not be part of some clever rent cushion, it should be part of Vote 1. There is another one of the other categories that really belongs in Vote 2. I think this wonderful windfall should have been used for one of improvements or, if not, put aside for some Archbishops’ Council fund for, who knows, evangelism, something, but not for cushioning us this year. The dioceses should have been made to pay greater apportionment this year. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you. I do notice I do not think we have had any women standing so far. It would be nice if any of the women would wish to stand.

The Revd Charles Read (Norwich): As I mentioned in a speech earlier today, for a part of my ministry I taught in a residential theological college for seven years and for the past seven years I have taught on a diocesan course and now on a regional training course and I am director of Reader training, so you will not be surprised that I want to make some comments about training budgets, although some of the things I want to say apply more widely.

To cut to the chase, what I want to say is something you all know already, that our training institutions, colleges and courses are under immense financial strain to the point where it is quite difficult to do all the things that we want to do. There are lots of areas of the Church’s life and national life where that is true.

Let me give you an example. When I began to teach liturgy at Cranmer Hall most of our residential colleges had a full-time teacher specialist in liturgy, as in most of the subjects. That is no longer true, not because colleges do not want a liturgy teacher on the staff but because they cannot afford to employ a full range of staff. I know the college where I trained, St John’s College in Nottingham, wanted to appoint a liturgy tutor to the staff and have been unable to do so for financial reasons.

That is not a covert way of begging for more money in Vote 1, it is saying these are the realities under which we operate and if members of Synod do occasionally say in speeches, “Why don’t the colleges and courses do X, Y and Z?”, that is fine to say that but the reality is it is very difficult to finance all of those things. We may have to live with that reality in straitened financial circumstances but that is a reality of working in ministerial education. Money is very tight, we cannot do the things we want to do or need to do. To go back to debates earlier on in the weekend, it means...
that staff time is a bit squeezed for doing other things because you have not got enough staff to free staff up to do lots of research and writing, much as we would all like to do it, or indeed to resource regions and dioceses.

In my contract at Cranmer Hall I had a clause that said that part of my job was to be a theological resource for the churches of the north-east of England. I do not know whether I fulfilled that bit very well, but those are the kind of things staff ought to be doing and would find it hard to do.

Finally, I think there are some things that are better done centrally. It is always difficult to let go of diocesan control but we sometimes have to face the harsh reality that some things are better and more efficiently done centrally. Wearing my other hat as director of Reader training, I think we might need to have a very honest discussion about whether Reader training is no longer best held at diocesan level but is funded and resourced at national or regional level if we want Readers to be proper lay ministers who can minister with real responsibility. That takes us into another debate we might have in November. Thank you.

Canon John Spence: Thank you very much. To turn to the question about compensation, of course we are all very concerned about the victims of past abuse. I think you would all agree, however, it would be totally inappropriate for us to start creating a compensation fund at this stage as it might be seen to be some admission of responsibility which cannot be proven until each case is reviewed. Should we have to find the funds, we will find the funds. The Church of England is not poor and we will find the means so that we can deal, whether it is at national or local level, with such claims as might come through.

On the question of the use of funds, well of course one would wish to use things for one-offs but we were faced with a choice. The very kind offer from the Corporation of Church House came very late in the day in the budgeting process and we had a choice: do we further raid our reserves or renege on our commitment that the apportionment would not go up by more than inflation, or do we hold the funds for a project that has not yet materialised, or do we actually say to dioceses, “We recognise the financial pressures upon you, therefore have the benefit of these funds now”.

I can assure you, ladies and gentlemen, that there are many exciting initiatives that are going to emerge from the current task force work, and we will be looking to see how we can fund those and how we can bring in other funds from places other than dioceses to do so. We will not be halted from the essential and urgent progress so really brought to life by the anecdotal evidence work. We will not be slowed in that because we cannot find a way of financing it.

As for Charles’ piece, well I do recognise of course that everybody would like to have more budget but, let us be very clear, the budget under Vote 1 has increased by over 40% in the last ten years, second only to the CHARM spending, while the number of ordinations has stayed broadly static. Would that other parts of the Church could have had such a budget increase. Again, the work undertaken by the Bishop of Sheffield and his task group on Resourcing Ministry Education will examine where money can be spent to better effect. It is not about the effectiveness of individual
TEIs, it is all about how can we tell which different forms of initial ministry education create the longest lasting, the most effective vocations, what leadership we need and what leadership can be created through that. Yes, it may be that the right thing coming out of that would be to look again at the whole means by which the funding of such education is arranged, but that is for another day.

Canon Elizabeth Paver (Sheffield): Canon Spence, mine is more of a comment than a question. May I draw Synod’s attention to Vote 3, paragraph 89 in this excellent report. As the Vice-Chair of the Anglican Consultative Council may I express sincere thanks that the inter-Anglican budget of the Church of England’s contribution to the Anglican Communion Office, which also provides the Secretariat for the Lambeth Conference, the Anglican Consultative Council and the Primates Meeting, has repeatedly had an increased percentage in their contribution. You will see 4% from 2009-13, 3% in 2014 and a now planned 2% increase in 2015. That is so very welcome for the work of the Anglican Communion. The Church of England’s contribution is the highest across the whole Communion. There are many parts, churches and provinces, who cannot meet a request but I am so very grateful that in planning our budget we continue to do this because our brothers and sisters across the whole Communion rely upon us for support. Thank you so much.

Ms Susan Cooper (London): It is really a sort of subset of something that Gavin Oldham said about needing to know about the whole of the Church, aggregating all the dioceses’ expenditure. When I was looking at the figures for the training budget, I wondered what percentage it would be of stipends but that would be for the whole country. So I think there really is a need to be able to look at simple ratios of training that is a national thing in relation to what we pay out in stipends for clergy throughout the country.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

This motion was put and carried on a show of hands.

We invite Canon Spence to respond.

Canon John Spence: Elizabeth, thank you for your kind comments and the work of the Anglican Communion office is of course very important. It does raise in my mind a piece actually. We have heard throughout this weekend of various international issues, whether it be about persecution of Christians, whether about people trafficking or, sadly, the internationalism of paedophilia. I believe we will need to think about how the Church can move from doing great work on an inter-church basis to thinking about how we develop what you might almost call a foreign policy which will enable us to address not just congregations but countries on the key issues that face this world.

Taking the last question from Susan, I am afraid it really is not a fair comparison to talk about the budget for training, which is principally about ordinands. We have about 1,200 in training at any one time. That is a completely different number from the salaries of the clergy that are in service. Again, I will stress one of the pieces
that Steven Croft and the Resourcing Ministerial Education piece are looking at is how we should think about the budgets that are applied for continuous professional development, and indeed the work of Lord Stephen Green that I alluded to on Friday night is very much focused on radical changes to the approach around leadership development and talent identification and growth.

Chair, it would be wrong of me to conclude this piece without paying tribute to the staff of Church House. I was a Church Commissioner before but I only came to work with Ian Theodoreson, David White, William Fittall and the rest of the Archbishops’ Council team in October. They have given me unstinting support. I am not, despite appearances, the easiest person to deal with. If that was you nodding behind me, William! We heard a very funny piece at Archbishops’ Council at the last meeting where William, when asked a question, gave an inordinately complex answer and, as I pointed out at the time, you can take William Fittall out of the Civil Service but you cannot take the Civil Service out of William!

Enough of this! I was sincerely wanting to pay tribute - I can do sincerity - to William, Ian, David and all the staff at Church House, they are doing a splendid job, and the great news for them is it is only going to get tougher!

I beg to move all the motions in my name.

The Chair: We come then to Item 16, “That the Synod do take note of this Report”.

The motion ‘That the Synod do take note of this Report.’

was carried on a show of hands.

We then come to a series of individual motions. I believe, Canon Spence, I heard you have moved them all en bloc.

Item 17 is that the Synod approve the Archbishops’ Council expenditure £13,437,670 in terms of Training for Ministry. Is there any debate on this item? I see nobody standing. I presume, Canon Spence, you do not wish to respond to that. I therefore put item 17 to the vote.

The motion ‘That this Synod approve the Archbishops’ Council’s expenditure for the year 2015, as shown in its budget, of £13,437,670 in respect of Training for Ministry.’

was carried on a show of hands.

Item 18, the expenditure of £11,103,305 on National Support. Is there any debate on Item 18? Again, I see no one standing. Again, I assume Canon Spence does not wish to reply and I put Item 18 to the vote.
The Archbishops’ Council’s Budget and Proposals for Apportionment  Sunday 13 July

The motion

‘That this Synod approve the Archbishops’ Council’s expenditure for the year 2015, as shown in its budget, of £11,103,305 in respect of National Support.’

was carried on a show of hands.

Item 19, £1,264,314 for Grants and provisions. Is there any debate? Again, I see no one standing and again I presume Canon Spence does not wish to respond. I therefore put Item 19 to the vote.

The motion

‘That this Synod approve the Archbishops’ Council’s expenditure for the year 2015, as shown in its budget, of £1,264,314 in respect of Grants and Provisions.’

was carried on a show of hands.

Item 20, a sum of £772,500 for the Mission agencies’ clergy pension contributions. Is there anybody wishing to speak on this item? Again, I see nobody standing and presuming Canon Spence does not wish to make a response I put item 20 to the vote.

The motion

‘That this Synod approve the Archbishops’ Council’s expenditure for the year 2015, as shown in its budget, of £772,500 in respect of Mission agencies’ clergy pension contributions.’

was carried on a show of hands.

Item 21, £4,151,591 for the CHARM Scheme. We have someone standing.

The Revd Canon Chris Lilley (Lincoln): A simple question that I would have asked earlier but this gives me the opportunity now to ask John Spence. You referred to the fact that budgets will increase. It would be helpful to DBFs if we could perhaps have some medium-term forecasts of future expenses once the task groups have completed their work and you have an idea of where the central expenditure is going to go. Dioceses for some years have been able to budget knowing that the expenditure was going to be below the inflation rate. If it is likely to go above that, it would be a great help to us to know that even if they are just indicative figures perhaps for two, three or four years ahead. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you. Is there any other debate on this item? In that case, I do invite Canon Spence if he wishes to that question.

Canon John Spence: I am delighted Chris asked me the question because it gives me a chance to apologise to Stephen Trott, who I called Jonathan Trott earlier, so I
am getting my sports muddled up now. Chris, your question was on the basis of CHARM. The CHARM spending will not be contingent on the task force work, that is for the Pensions Board to work with us in identifying what the likely needs are and, as I have said, the dialogue has already begun.

As far as looking further ahead, 2016 we will need to see about. We have already given a commitment that Darlow formula-giving will remain in place until the end of 2016, so if there were to be significant changes they would take effect from the start of 2017. I am fully cognisant, having been a DBF Chair myself, of the fact that the sooner that we can come to this, and that is why we are working with these task forces to really identify what our options are by the end of this year, we can then work out what we need to do in terms of legislative or other change, so that you have a good picture for the triennium starting in 2017 during 2015.

The Chair: Thank you. I now put Item 21 to the vote.

The motion

‘That this Synod approve the Archbishops’ Council’s expenditure for the year 2015, as shown in its budget, of £4,151,591 in respect of CHARM Scheme.’

was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: Item 22, I shall not read this one out in full, around apportionment, is there debate on this Item 22? I see no one standing so again, assuming Canon Spence does not wish to respond, we put Item 22 to the vote.

The motion

‘That this Synod approve the Archbishops’ Council’s proposals (set out in the Table of Apportionment contained in GS 1959) for the apportionment amongst the dioceses of the net sum to be provided by them to enable the Council to meet the expected expenditure shown in its budget for the year 2015.’

was carried on a show of hands.

Item 23 is now open to debate. Again, I see no one standing and presuming Canon Spence does not wish to respond, I put Item 23 to the vote.

The motion

‘That this Synod approve the Archbishops’ Council’s proposals (set out in the Table of Apportionment contained in GS 1959) for the pooling adjustment for 2015 in respect of additional maintenance grants for ordinands.’

was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: That completes this item on the agenda. Item 24 will begin in a few minutes.
THE CHAIR The Revd Canon Dr Rosemarie Mallet (Southwark) took the Chair at 9.23 pm

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS’ ANNUAL REPORT

The Chair: Good evening, Synod. We now come to the last session of the day, to Item 24 on the agenda, the Church Commissioners’ Annual Report. Mr Andreas Whittam Smith, the First Estates Commissioner, will give the presentation, after which there will be time for questions. Mr Whittam Smith and Mr Andrew Mackie, the Third Church Estates Commissioner, will answer them. May I invite Mr Andreas Whittam Smith to present the Report.

Mr Andreas Whittam Smith (Ex Officio): Thank you very much, Madam Chair. The hour is late and I am not going to speak for very long because the thing which I most treasure here is the dialogue we might be able to develop between us about the work of the Church Commissioners, so your questions are a key element in what comes.

Before talking about the financial markets, which is obviously our major business, I want to say two things about the context in which we work. First of all, I have to say that in the 12 years that I have been First Church Estates Commissioner, I have never felt as optimistic about the Church as I feel today. We have moved, have we not; the old context for the Commissioners was maintenance, the new context is growth. There are a whole variety of developments which make me feel optimistic: the work which the joint body of the Church Commissioners and Archbishops’ Council is able to do in financing promising new mission initiatives, which is a reasonably recent development; the study which we were able to commission into the factors influencing Church growth, which seems to have had a very big impact; then of course the “famous four” task groups, which are reporting in very swift order and which will themselves no doubt pose questions for us about the way in which we make our funds available. It almost changes the atmosphere of the Assets Committee, I think.

The other day at one of our regular meetings I insisted that we started by looking at the five grants of almost £1 million, or thereabouts, which the joint body had made to five dioceses for their mission plans, in order that my colleagues could see that being entrepreneurial is as much an activity of the Church as it is of the financial markets which we spend so much time looking at. We are in a shared endeavour here. It is not just us in one corner of the Church and everybody else outside. There is a sense in which we are both, by very different means and with very different materials, trying to do the same thing.

The second bit of context, before I get on to my main points, is of course what I might call the “ethical setting”. I noticed a poll the other day which showed that two-thirds of voters, half of them Conservatives, want the next Government to be tougher with big business. I think we have all been appalled by the many examples we see of bad business behaviour. I have been rather astonished by this because I have been following business behaviour since I first became a financial journalist as long ago as 1962. That is more than 50 years ago. I do not remember observing this bad behaviour in the first 20 or 30 years of the time I have spent following this
subject. I first of all thought that maybe something has changed and gone wrong, and now I begin to think it has always been like that, but we did not really know it was. What this means is that the work of the EIAG, with which we work very closely, has a strong influence on how we conduct our business - in fact, in my period we have never done anything but accept their recommendations - which means that the engagement policy bit, engaging with business, is really important. Of course, the banned areas and the places we will not invest in unless it is a very small proportion of a firm's activities, that is important obviously, but the engagement bit is the way in which we can perhaps bear on this question of business behaviour. Those are the two settings in which we work.

Now I will turn to my more traditional concerns, which is of course the financial markets. 2013, as you will have seen from our accounts, was an extremely good year. Our assets exceeded £6 billion for the first time, but more important than the size of our assets is the fact that we have consistently exceeded our target of inflation plus five percentage points, which is a demanding target. We have exceeded it for the past 20 years, 15 years, ten years, five years, three years and one year. I will not go into the many reasons for that, not least many of the good decisions my predecessors took, but it has been, I think, a satisfactory result.

As to 2014, 2014 is not turning out too badly. That must not disguise the fact that I am somewhat pessimistic about the long-term outlook, but our portfolio seems to have grown by 3.5-4% in the first six months of this year, and, if only for the sake of the arithmetic, not as a forecast, I double that up to, say, 7% then we will have exceeded inflation by five percentage points again. When we say exceeded inflation by any number of points, five percentage points, that is actually creating useable wealth, if you like, on behalf of the Church.

What I also notice is that these growth figures we are achieving are exceeding the movement in wages and salaries by an even greater amount. That has made me see a book to which you will have seen many references recently by a French economist - of all the books we might not read, one by a French economist might be a good candidate - called Capital in the 21st Century, which some people have compared to Keynes’ General Theory and Adam Smith and Karl Marx and so on. It is certainly in the same category as A Brief History of Time, a book everybody knows about but nobody gets through. I will come back to that because I think actually the conclusions he reaches about the long term are really important for us.

But in the short term, the next few years, I think that it is a difficult scene. We have falling real incomes in this country. The evidence accumulates about falling real incomes at all levels other than the directors of banks, and our still very high indebtedness. We have a Eurozone where growth is very, very low, and perhaps falling, whose future is still in doubt, in my mind. I will not allow the Commissioners to keep any funds whatever in a Eurozone bank and I do not intend to change that soon. Deflation may be just around the corner. Recovery in the United States is subdued. So what we are doing is we are switching our resources into assets whose performance is not closely correlated to the performance of leading economies. Of course, nothing escapes being correlated, but you can have degrees of correlation; a very tight correlation or quite a weak one. Examples of this may be that for some of our fund managers the test we apply to them is how resilient are they. We do not
ask them or look at their numbers to see how well did you do in bull markets. We have got other managers who do that. The key thing is how did you do in a bear market? That is what I mean. Resilience is a really important quality.

We have moved heavily, as you will see, into owning timber, mainly in the United States, which is not completely dissimilar from our agricultural holdings. The thing I find rather charming about timber is when you come to harvest, if you do not like the prices which people are paying because of the way the economy is, you just do not harvest, you leave the trees to grow a bit more, and that seems to me a very good quality.

If I could return to Mr Piketty. In his book he writes: “In my mind, this book is as much a work of history as economics”, and, if you do read it, that is one of the really charming things about it, it is a very long sweep from the 18th century to the present and into the future. For part of his work in the early part of that period he relies upon, in a charming way, the work of novelists. He refers a great deal to Jane Austen or Balzac or whatever, which makes it, I think, very interesting. He says the key factors to look at are population growth and innovation. Those are the two key factors. He thinks of global growth for advanced economies, the old economies if you like, as having been a bell curve, with a very high peak. The increase starts in the second half of the 19th century and peaks somewhere around the 1960s/1970s at a very high peak, but as population growth eases off across the Western world, and as innovation may or may not be slowing down, he says the future we have got to get used to is the one we used to know in the 18th and 19th centuries, which is that annual growth will be about 1% per annum. That is his major forecast and it makes sort of sense to me. He also says that inflation was largely a 20th century phenomenon. He throws out this rather challenging remark that novelists stop writing about money when inflation is very high. I am still thinking about that one, whether it can be true. In other words, we have got to get used to low growth. Then comes this key relationship which is between the rate return on capital, which is at 3-4% per annum through history, and the rate of growth of wages and income, which he says would be the same as output which is about 1%.

I think about these forecasts and I apply them to the Church. I apply them to the Church looking 30 years ahead or something, what should we be getting used to as dioceses manage their affairs and we do our best to help them? Think of costs as being equal to wages growth. I think that is a fairly sensible assumption. That is 1% per annum. That would be my long-term assumption. Think of giving as rising by a bit more than that, but not much more because many givers depend upon salary or pension, which is quite close, but others have savings, and if we think that savings are growing at around 4% per annum, and there is a bit of that, so my forecast for giving over the long term would be maybe +1.5%, maybe something like that. Then I think of the Commissioners’ funding growing by a little less than 4-5% because we have our pensions liabilities which will rise to a peak in the 2020s. Those are my basic long-term forecasts for the Church’s finances. There has been lots of learned debate about Mr Piketty’s work, but those forecasts sort of feel right to me so I offer them to you as maybe some guidance which could be useful.

On that note, I would like to step down and take with great enthusiasm your questions.
The Chair: Just before we begin the question time, may I just remind members that this is a time for questions to the Commissioners and not speeches.

Mrs Penelope Allen (Lichfield): Could I direct to you a question I asked earlier today which could not be answered which is about the development of the Williams & Glyn Bank and the relationship between that and the new proposed credit union? Could we have a comment from you about that, please?

Mr Andreas Whittam Smith: Yes, I would like to say something about Williams & Glyn Bank, where you know we are the major shareholders. I insisted we be the largest shareholder so we could have influence, which is working out very well. They brief us regularly. They have asked, although we have not agreed because it is at way too high a price, that Edward Mason, who is, as you know, in charge of ethical policy, work with them full-time for a while, which is asking a bit too much but at least he is going to do a day a week. It shows they are very concerned to put into operation the good bank principles which are deeply embedded in all the documents, the bid documents, I lodged them with the regulators; they are very embedded. Part of the good bank principles is that Williams & Glyn will be sensitive to its community duties, that everywhere there is a Williams & Glyn manager, you will know he has a duty to the local as well as to the national, and part of being a good bank is that you will make attractive low-cost lending available to community projects. That does not directly impinge on credit unions, but I think it is perfectly possible that this bank (and we have not put it to them yet) might be able to give house room to credit unions and may be able to make them part of the literature. I think they will do everything they can to work on a wide front of being a responsible and good bank. Of course, I must remind you that we would not have gone into it if we did not think it would also be a profitable one, and so far the signs are good because they are trading above the forecast.

Mr Tim Hind (Bath and Wells): Setting aside the other residential difficulties that you have had in the past with Bath and Wells, it is now obvious that there is a lot of development work going on in the Wells area on land that is owned by the Church Commissioners. Given that the Church is seen by the public as a whole unit and not separate national church institutions, what are the Church Commissioners doing to ensure that they are engaging with the local communities in the interests of the Common Good?

Mr Andreas Whittam-Smith: As you will observe, we have a lot of land all over the country, some of it is on the edge of growing settlements and may be put forward for housing development essentially. As you probably know also, the procedures for gaining permission to change of use from agricultural land to residential development are very onerous with lots of demands, perfectly reasonable demands, for social housing and so on. Normally the process takes three, four, five years or something; a long debate with the local authority who are very sensitive to local opinion. We actually cannot bring a scheme to successful fruition without being very sensitive, otherwise we will just not get the permission we are seeking.

Canon Pamela Bishop (Southwell and Nottingham): In light of the presentation and debate we had yesterday on the Common Good, I would like to ask in what ways
does the policy of the Church Commissioners to offer significant financial bonuses to already very well remunerated staff impact on the reputation and work of the Church more widely and specifically in pursuit of the Common Good? Very briefly, the context for that is that this year a bonus of £91,000 was paid to the most highly remunerated member bringing that salary to £334,000 a year. Of course, yesterday in our debates we heard that there was recognition that gross material inequality is deeply injurious to social bonds and the Common Good. It seemed there was a tension there, and so the question. Thank you.

*Mr Andreas Whittam-Smith:* I do not like to admit, Madam, I am going slightly deaf but I think I heard most of your question. I think you are referring to the pay and incentive bonuses of our Investment Director, Tom Joy. I can do nothing else but admit it is a very large sum of money but it was very, very important, and this is where I really thank my fellow Commissioners, when I suddenly out of the blue asked them in 2009 whether we could appoint such a person. I said that the pay would be very high, would be much higher than anybody else in the Church, either at Church House and certainly much higher than ordained ministry, but it would be essential, especially in financial markets which are becoming ever more complicated and faster, to have the very best we could find. I think those people who have worked with Tom Joy - of course me and the Assets Committee but also others around the Church who have worked with him - will say that he has brought enormous benefit. I have to say frankly I do not regret a penny of what he receives.

*The Revd Simon Cawdell (Hereford):* The First Church Estates Commissioner has made some very helpful and interesting observations just now about corporate behaviour over a long time and made the interesting observation that actually the behaviour was probably there in that first 20 years of his journalism but we just did not know about it. He will also be aware, no doubt, of a certain amount of feeling between this Synod and the Church Commissioners about an incident in the South West earlier this year. The Report refers to accountability. In this age when transparency is perhaps an increasing expectation, not least because of the allusions he has made to past behaviour, will the Church Commissioners consider making the minutes of its meetings public subject to the redaction of sensitive matters?

*Mr Andreas Whittam-Smith:* I have often thought about making minutes of meetings public and a number of institutions do it. I think the BBC Trust probably does do that. It sounds like a good idea and I am certainly not opposed to it, but the minute you do something like that you push decision-making out of the boardroom into the corridor, that is essentially what happens, that the minutes no longer really capture what was going on. I have had some experience of this in the financial markets directly right at the present moment, where I chair a supervisory body on the Prudential and our minutes go to the regulators and of course the minutes are written for the regulators, so it is not a cost-free thing to do. I still say that I am sort of basically attracted to the notion.

*The Bishop of Leeds (The Rt Revd Nicholas Baines):* The question I have is not meant to be taken as implying any criticism of the Commissioners because the way the Commissioners have handled the West Yorkshire scheme I have been very impressed with and very pleased with. The trouble is that once the vote had gone
through it seems that that involvement ceased, and we are being asked to establish a new diocese and the whole transformation that goes on, having brought three together, without any resource to do that, apart from the regular budget that we have from three dioceses.

My question really is about the joined-upness of how we operate as a Church and in any future - and I will be coming back to the Commissioners in respect of that - is there a mechanism for ensuring that schemes that the Synod and the Church decide are important going forward for the wider Church and for its mission are brought into a properly thought through strategy that involves Commissioners’ funding and support as well? If the Church wants us to do this is there a way of resourcing it to make sure that it does not fail? That is the question.

Mr Andreas Whittam-Smith: I do not think I can give you a full answer but the joint Archbishops’ Council/Church Commissioners’ body which makes spending decisions is already reserving funds for your new diocese, in the sense that dioceses are coming forward with their plans and so on and we tell ourselves that we have to make sure that we wait until you and your new diocese are ready to come forward, but it is sort of earmarked and I hope that is some comfort.

The Revd Mark Steadman (Southwark): Can I return to the issue that Tim Hind was beginning to raise, but come at it from a slightly different aspect. In thanking the Commissioners for all their financial acumen and their stewardship of their resources, can we think a little bit more about the relationships they have with those who feel the impact of the decisions they are making. In particular, following the decision of the Archbishops’ Council over the Wells See House will you now begin to introduce proper consultation with people who will feel the impact of the decisions you make?

Mr Andrew Mackie (Ex-officio): Thank you very much for that. It is obviously important, and I think I made this point to Synod in February, that we are not just seen to consult with those who are affected but that we do so. I do not want to reopen past episodes but I said then, and I repeat now, that no organisation, and certainly we should not be an exception to this, should think that there are never any better ways of doing things. We ought to be mindful of the need to consult as much as we can and as much as time and processes allow with those people who are affected. We are always mindful of this and we will continue to be so mindful.

Dr Philip Rice (London): I have to declare an interest: I was part of the Church Growth Research Programme. I am on page 11 of the Report. I think research and development is something that I commend the first Church Commissioner for stressing, for developing, and he said some very kind words about it. I would just like to encourage him to move with the entrepreneurial spirit and to seek to spend some more money within the research and development area. I think the report From Anecdote To Evidence has been a splendid example of the way that we can spend a modest amount of money and generate a lot of interest and generate some good feeling for the important issue of growth in the Church.

My question is on page 11 there is a reference to £8 million of funding still to come and I would particularly recommend if we can understand how the Diocesan Boards
of Finance work. I think it would be very interesting if we can go slightly to the side of the Church Growth Research Programme. I am probably not going to get any friends here for this but I think there is a real issue about the way the Diocesan Boards of Finance work. I think we can be very helpful and I think we can generate best practice and more funds for really good practice.

Mr Andreas Whittam-Smith: Thank you, Philip, very much indeed, we enjoyed very much working with you on that big report, but I am going to say something which you might not agree with. There is a second piece of research which is being studied very deeply at the moment, as many of you will know, which is this whole issue of amalgamations, do they work or do they not, and so on, the pluses and the minuses, and there seems to be a difference between the effect in rural dioceses and the effect in largely urban ones and that has got to be straightened out. The trouble with research is it is a little bit like a drug and people want more and more and more of it. I know perfectly well that before long I am going to say, “No more research, let’s just give more money to the dioceses”.

Canon Timothy Allen (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich): Chair, we have recently been told that the Church Commissioners’ holding in Wonga has been disposed of and that no profit has been made. Previously, during the past year we were told that the holding in Wonga was tangled up as a small part of a much larger collective investment and thus could not be individually sold without incurring a disproportionate cost on the whole larger investment. Would one of the Commissioners please briefly explain how this obstacle has been overcome and, roughly speaking, what overall gain or loss has been made by the Church Commissioners on the overall transaction related to Wonga.

Mr Andreas Whittam-Smith: Thank you. As you say, it is very difficult to disentangle oneself from a pool. The Church Commissioners’ name was not on any shares in Wonga and it was held about four layers beneath us, but that is not to say we should not have known we had it, I fully accept that. In the end it suited the pool that we should exit and so we were provided with a route which meant that we came out without a loss or a profit. It is a very complicated story which I cannot go into but that is essentially what happened. It needed patience but finally we got the right result.

Canon Timothy Allen (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich): Thank you and congratulations.

The Ven. Ian Bishop (Chester): Can I welcome the mission focus that there is in the report, which is very good, and particularly take you to page 12 and the item on developing Church growth in deprived areas where there were some really good grants made to deprived areas a couple of years ago. I notice that there is going to be some research, monitoring and evaluation done of those projects, £150,000 put aside for that. Can I suggest we can save that money and just tell you that they were all brilliant! In particular I would like to just tell you a little bit about Glow in my area, which has grown hugely.

The Chair: I am sorry, please contain yourself to a question.

The Ven. Ian Bishop (Chester): It was terrific. Can we have some more please, Sir?
Mr Andreas Whittam-Smith: Thank you. I thought that facility was one of the best things that we in the Archbishops’ Council had done. I went to see each of the beneficiaries of those grants afterwards, not to sort of see whether they should get them but afterwards to see how they were using them and just learn about it really. I made a few interesting discoveries. One was that, contrary to what I thought, no area is too difficult because almost all these areas were very difficult, very unpromising indeed; really no area is too difficult. Secondly, that churchmanship did not seem to matter as far as success or failure is concerned. Those schemes were at all points in the spectrum of doctrinal beliefs. Those, to me, were a very valuable learning exercise and I am glad you are satisfied with what we did.

The Revd Mark Ireland (Lichfield): Andreas, can we express just huge appreciation to you and your team, not only for the excellent performance in this Report but also for the clear focus on growth. We indeed pray that your comments on page 6 about this may be a turning point when the Church decides to increase its focus on securing numerical and spiritual growth might be fulfilled.

Particularly picking up on your previous answer, the question is this £8 million which is still reserved for research and development funding, it is great that it is not going to be spent on more and more research but can we really ask if you have got any more detail as to how that £8 million will be released, particularly bearing mind the many good initiatives in making new disciples and evangelism being developed at local level which are starved for funds which could otherwise be rolled out and made more widely available across the Church?

Mr Andreas Whittam-Smith: We think in terms of funding rounds and one round has just been completed, which was the five dioceses I mentioned. I think the actual announcement may not yet have been made although it is not a terrifying secret. There will be two further rounds and that was part of the answer I was giving earlier on about reserving something for the new diocese in Yorkshire, and the criteria recently being revised a little bit after consultation with the Archbishops’ Council and the Church Commissioners. That is a very strong ongoing programme and in the new triennium, which will come upon us before long, I am sure we shall be adding to it if we possibly can.

The Revd Canon Giles Goddard (Southwark): I do not want to talk to you about climate change this year but I am hoping we can have a good conversation next year once the EIAG have reported. I do want to ask you what your general attitude is towards the Commissioners’ exposure to fossil fuels, particularly in the light of recent correspondence over carbon bubbles and also the dramatic reductions in price in renewables, especially solar, and the knock-on effect that might have, and also more generally about the sustainability of the portfolio.

Mr Andreas Whittam-Smith: I hope you will not be disappointed with my answer, which is that you are referring to two or three different pieces of work which the EIAG is doing at the moment on climate matters generally, also on fracking and so on. I hope you will forgive me if I say I would just prefer to wait for them to come through with their work. What they do is they show us work as it is going along. We have had a preliminary conversation about these matters. Certainly we are going to be in
the eye of the storm in the case of fracking because we have so much land across the country that by definition somebody is going to come along soon and say, “What about doing something underneath your farms?” so we have to have a policy, but I prefer to wait for them if you do not mind.

*The Chair:* Synod, that completes our business for the day.

*The Archbishop of York dismissed the Synod with the blessing at 10 pm.*
The Bishop of Manchester (The Rt Revd David Walker) took the Chair at 9.30 am.

The Revd Canon Pete Spiers led the Synod in an act of worship.

THE ARMED FORCES COVENANT AND COMMUNITY COVENANTS: PRESENTATION BY THE BISHOP TO THE FORCES

The Chair: Synod, we come now to our first items of business this morning, Items 25 and 26 on Order Paper V, for which you will need GS 1960. We are going to begin with Item 25, a presentation under Standing Order 97. I will invite the Bishop to the Armed Forces to address us. We will not be having questions after the Bishop has spoken. If there are matters that arise I hope they will be dealt with during the debate under Item 26.

The Bishop to the Forces (The Rt Revd Nigel Stock): Good morning, everybody, and what a pleasure to address you in yet another manifestation. Can I begin by welcoming some members of the Armed Forces community who have travelled quite some distance to come and be with us, sitting in the gallery up there. You are very warmly welcome.

When I was about eight or nine I remember the school trip being disrupted by a strange and, to an eight or nine year old, rather frightening figure, an old man in a blue suit standing unsteadily in the middle of the road shouting and swearing at the traffic and waving his walking stick threateningly. Everything ground to a halt, and I was frightened and assumed that someone would summon the police and take this person away, but a rather gentle man passing by just walked up to him, gently led him off, saying to anyone who would listen, “It’s shell-shock, terrible thing”. It certainly was a terrible thing because, as I subsequently learned, nearby was a small unit in the local hospital where a group of veterans from the First World War were still being treated 40 years on from the end of that war at that stage, and for them the war had never ended. Well, now 100 years from the start of that conflict we still live with the consequences of it though no longer with those who participated.

What the debate that follows is about is over how we, as a Church, might best respond to those who are part of what is often referred to as the Armed Forces community, that is not only the actual serving personnel but their families with them. The particular means of response is through what is called the Armed Forces Covenant and if some here are wondering “Well, what exactly is that?” you will not be alone. Arguably the principle can be found in a Statute of 1593 but it is only relatively recently that a wider understanding has developed.

I first heard about it about nine or so years ago when I went with a group of bishops to the Joint Services Staff College at Shrivenham for an eye-opening discussion on the role of the Armed Forces today. The discussions were honest, wide-ranging, included aspects about the morality or lack of it in warfare, how it is conducted, ethics, moral behaviour, and included heart-rending examples of the sorts of
decisions people in command had to make. I know it is all contested ground, contested within the community and theologically, and there were a range of opinions, including pacifist views, expressed during that visit.

Amongst the things brought to our attention was the concept of the Covenant, then referred to as the Military Covenant. At its most basic, it is about the duty of care owed by society to those who put themselves in harm’s way in defence of society or in undertaking duties at the direction of the democratically elected government.

Not long afterwards I was at a Remembrance Sunday Service where I gave a short address and mentioned all this and the local MP came up and said, “That sounds a very interesting idea, what is the Military Covenant?” Well, Members of Parliament know about it all now because things have moved and the Covenant has been codified in the Armed Forces Act. This means that the government recognises the duty of care that it owes to the Armed Forces community past and present. Those of us in the House of Lords at the time asked that the observance of the Covenant could be monitored independently. That we did not get but there is an annual report on the health of the Covenant to which the major Departments of State contribute. This means that those areas where service families can be particularly disadvantaged, such as housing, healthcare and education, are addressed.

With that provision in the Act has come also the opportunity for wider society to contribute. Four hundred local authorities have signed Community Covenants and, indeed, when I was Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, I joined the signing of a Community Covenant. Additionally, 100 firms or businesses have signed Corporate Covenants. How specifically we might respond you are about to hear from the Chair of MPA, Philip Fletcher.

The Armed Forces are always subject to change and you might have seen the reports of the latest set of changes. The size and structure of the forces is changing rapidly and a greater emphasis will be placed on reserve forces. Service personnel must always be ready to deploy at short notice, but with the withdrawal from Afghanistan some of the classic garrison areas are set to expand. Very often now there will be forces’ families living in their local community “outside the wire” as the phrase goes, and this could mean more isolation for those dispersed in this way.

Families do have to face, of course, long periods of separation, never mind the anxiety that is inevitable when a family member is deployed. Reservists, almost by definition, are in the same circumstances and if deployed their families too will know anxious separation. War produces casualties. We became all too familiar with the tragic sight of repatriated bodies and grieving families passing through Royal Wootton Bassett when that was the route taken. Now, of course, repatriations go through a different location. The effect is the same.

There are too the casualties with life-changing injuries, many of whom achieve remarkable rehabilitation through some of the specialist centres, such as Headley Court.

Unlike the shell-shocked World War I veteran I remember from my childhood, there is of course a greater understanding of the psychological effects of being in a war
zone, the realisation that some of the severest reactions can come many years later. That means long after someone has left the Services they can be affected and might be far from direct assistance. Whilst the percentage likely to be affected can be assessed, it is not so easy to predict who will be affected by some form of trauma in this way.

Reservists have been serving in conflict zones as well and these return to their usual occupation, now usually with assistance to adjust, decompression as it is called, but still dispersed into the wider community, and such Reservists have of course included chaplains.

The Strategic Defence and Security Review, and a later set of changes I referred to earlier, and the new employment model have meant major adjustments for military personnel and their families yet again, and post-election there will almost certainly be a further review with all the accompanying uncertainty.

As we know, chaplains are there for the pastoral and spiritual support of the Armed Forces community. Much could be said about their ministry but the chaplains have asked that we make it clear that this is not a debate about them, this is about our wider support as a Church for the community of those who they serve. As I say, the how is what Philip Fletcher will address.

I also realise this is a difficult subject and perhaps some fear that too much overt support might seem to be glorifying war. I was interested in what Richard Burridge said at Questions on Friday evening, and if I heard him right I think he said that this is a concept that could be supported even if you hold pacifist convictions. It is about a compassionate response to people affected by some of the recent conflicts and more distant conflicts of our world, an opportunity to think how we could respond through the Covenant concept. Richard also challenged me, I think, to put some theology into this. Well, I look forward to him producing some as well and I hope he might expand further from the pacifist point of view if I understood him right.

Surely this is a continuation of something to do with the Common Good, but it begins with the penetrating realism of the Scriptures. Those of you working through the readings at Morning Prayer, the Book of Judges, have been confronted with images of total war, the sacking and massacre of whole towns. At this time particularly chilling is the same sort of violence and brutality as is being enacted in our world today, and you cannot help but be aware of that when you work alongside an archbishop who has recently seen the aftermath of exactly that sort of violence in South Sudan and other countries. Scripture, of course, does not leave fallen and sinful humanity without hope. It speaks of salvation, redemption and hope in the person of Jesus Christ, who could see faith when it was real and he certainly saw it in a soldier who came asking for compassion for one of his servants. Our Lord’s compassion is not limited but of course neither was his condemnation of the sin that leads to the violence of war.

If you want to think more on just war or pacifism there are very good works to consult but this is not what this is about. Covenant undertakings between parties is of course a concept familiar to us from Noah onwards, but it is the new Covenant that
calls us to repentance and to give ourselves to the Lord and to our neighbour, and this is surely an expression of such giving to people who are in our midst.

I remember in the lifetime of this Synod a presentation of the work of the Forces’ chaplains that was very well received. In support of that presentation a number of members of Synod appeared in uniform, the first time that many of us took on board that serving military personnel were among us. I particularly liked the effect of one member in uniform who gave his name and Synod number and then told us his day job was Commandant of Sandhurst. It was an obvious reminder of the Armed Forces community who are amongst us who deserve our support, and I hope you will show that by taking up what is said in what is going to follow from the Chairman of Mission and Public Affairs.

Covenant, responsibility, taking up the Common Good, themes that have gone through this Synod despite a rather important item about to come up, but I hope you can give your attention now to this particular one. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you. We move directly on to Item 26 and I call upon Philip Fletcher to speak to and move the Motion that stands in his name. He has up to ten minutes.

THE ARMED FORCES COVENANT AND COMMUNITY COVENANTS DEBATE (GS 1960)

Mr Philip Fletcher (Ex-Officio): Thank you, Chair. Bishop Nigel’s presentation has raised our awareness of the challenges facing the Armed Forces community and, as he has said, we now come to the motion itself, the how of how we can show support. I am grateful to the Chaplains General and the Armed Forces Synod for asking the Mission and Public Affairs Council to sponsor this debate and for all the assistance they provided to the MPA division in putting together the Report which is before you today.

Why this motion now? First, because the members and families of the Armed Services, and the Army in particular, though this does not exclude the Navy and the Royal Air Force, are no longer to be based outside the UK in remote barracks, they will be much more obviously part of the wider community. Second, because we need to respond to a new generation of veterans, those who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan. These veterans have specific welfare needs that need to be understood and then addressed.

The Chaplains General have pointed to other changes affecting the Armed Forces community: the new employment model and the greater reliance on Reservists. Between them, these changes will see those who provide for the country’s defence and security more dispersed, more embedded in the wider civilian community than at any time since the end of National Service. So the relationship between the Armed Services community, or communities, and wider civil society is changing.

I suggest we need to recognise a particular responsibility for the Church as a whole, a task which we may have previously, wrongly, assumed will be borne by the military chaplains, both lay and clerical. So the provision of pastoral and spiritual care to the
Armed Forces community needs to become a shared responsibility involving both the chaplains and the wider Church, and to make this possible the Church needs to understand the complex needs of that community so that we can take our part, with the chaplains, in providing long-term pastoral care.

Responding faithfully to the spiritual and pastoral needs is not about providing preferential treatment to one section of society, rather it is about how the Church builds inclusive communities and combats marginalisation and disadvantage. This marginalisation of the Armed Services is hardly new. The older generation, including me, are probably familiar with Rudyard Kipling’s poem *Tommy* which still I think resonates: “It’s Tommy this, an’ Tommy that, an’ “Chuck ‘im out, the brute!” But it’s “Saviour of ‘is country” when the guns begin to shoot;”.

Now it is dangerous for me to quote Kipling. He is not quite the militarist you may think, remember his son was killed in the First World War, but put that aside if it worries you. I suggest this marginalisation tends to happen when we rely for our protection mainly on a small professional group in the Armed Services. It was true when Kipling was writing before either of the World Wars. It is true, again, today more than a century later on. Nor, as Bishop Nigel has already made clear, is this initiative in any way about glorifying war, or is it about endorsing any particular government’s deployment of troops, it is about providing appropriate support for those who, on our behalf, in the interests of wider society carry out difficult, sometimes near impossible, tasks at the behest of our democratically elected Government. You only have to look at the pictures during prayers to see what happens when Armed Forces are not subject to such control.

The Report before us, GS 1960, makes the case that the recently introduced Armed Forces Covenant provides a suitable framework for the Church nationally and locally to think through and respond to the changes affecting the Armed Forces Community and how it helps meet the welfare needs of this new generation of veterans. Paragraph 38 of the paper sets out the areas that the Archbishops’ Council might consider including in a Corporate Covenant. Many of the commitments listed are ones that the National Church Institutions already seek to uphold, but the Corporate Covenant would bring them together in a coherent way that reaffirms the national narrative of the Common Good. In our debate it would be helpful to learn from members of Synod of other issues which the Archbishops’ Council might want to include in such a Corporate Covenant. The MPA Council hopes that one of the advantages of the Archbishops’ Council signing such a Covenant is to act as a catalyst for wider diocesan reflection and action on what the Covenant might mean locally. I know some dioceses are already reflecting hard on these issues. What this might look like will vary from diocese to diocese and, while the report asks dioceses to consider signing Community Covenants, it does not follow that all should do so. As part of its preparation for the debate, MPA Division consulted various diocesan networks about their awareness of the Covenant Scheme and the mission opportunities it may provide. The responses agree that the aims are consistent with the Church’s wider mission. Community Covenants offer the possibility of additional funding to support covenant initiatives. Paragraph 34 of the paper provides a few examples of projects funded to date. So far, they reflect the existing needs of the Armed Forces Community but, as members of the Armed Forces become more
geographically dispersed and more embedded in the wider civilian community then the scope and remit of eligible projects should widen.

These changes in the location and organisation of the Armed Forces are likely to be implemented over the next five years. It is for this reason that the report suggests the Archbishops' Council should report to Synod in the next Quinquennium on the implementation of the recommendations in this report. It would show how the Church is responding to the changes and share any general lessons more widely. This is, if I may build on what Canon Spence was saying in the budget debate last night, very much one where subsidiarity requires that it is not all done at one level. There needs to be a real interaction between the Archbishops' Council, dioceses, parishes and the Armed Services communities to ensure we are learning lessons as this goes forward. I commend the Report to Synod and I move the motion on behalf of the MPA Council. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you. Before I open for debate, just a couple of things to say. Firstly, because this is a matter of public importance I will be ordering a division of the whole Synod at the end of Item 26. Secondly, just how we are going to frame this debate. We have got about an hour or so for our conversation on this item. I am going to hear a couple of speeches to begin with. Then, I am going to ask Canon Bruinvels to speak to and move the amendment that stands in his name. If there is debate on the amendment, we will take it then, but I want us quite quickly to be clear about the final text that we are going to be voting on eventually this morning so that we can maximise the time we have to spend on that. This matter is now open for debate. I am going to call on Mr Chave for a maiden speech, please. You have five minutes.

The Revd Preb. Brian Chave (Hereford): Thank you, Chair, for the privilege of speaking. It is my first Synod, but I attended last week a Conduct under Capture briefing so I feel I have had some preparation. "See how they love each other." It is a phrase with strong Christian resonance, but it was once spoken to me by the Commander of British Forces in Afghanistan as he observed the almost incredible bond of friendship that exists between our troops. He described his admiration for their physical and moral courage displayed on a daily basis by our often very young servicemen and women which, of course, is very necessary when you are depending on each other for your lives. You can imagine how difficult many find it when returning home to their loved ones, and for the loved ones who are receiving them home, as they seek to re-establish relationships and patterns of life. It really is a clash between two different, highly contrasting worlds. It is especially difficult for those increasing number of reservists and many regulars who live away from the main base communities. It is harder still when these people come out of the Services, often still in their 20s, leaving behind such intense experiences, strong community and still perhaps carrying some physical or mental scars of their experiences.

What can the Church offer through the Covenant? Well, we are very grateful for the support already given by dioceses and parishes. That ranges from a welcome in congregations to regular prayer for the work of the Armed Services, that they may truly be a force of good, to assistance in running the necessary relationship courses that we have. It ranges from the unawareness of the particular needs of Service
children in Church schools and engagement with the youth cadet organisations, people who would not otherwise perhaps have much contact with the Church and then, of course, the very practical help for homeless veterans or for those suffering from mental health issues. Signing a Corporate Covenant would reinforce this good work whilst giving impetus to fresh local initiatives. It would also nationally be making a very public statement from the Church of support for the Armed Forces Community with all the potential for extra influence in public policy.

A number of people have asked me and my colleagues about the practical details, what can they do to help? Well, these things can be worked out subsequent to this debate and in ways that are appropriate to each context, but chaplaincy certainly stand by to help liaise with perhaps representatives from dioceses along with the Ministry of Public Affairs and to find out ways in which we can support the Common Good. I urge you to view these proposals favourably. They seem to me entirely consistent with Anglican theology and practice as we work in creative partnership together. Thank you.

The Revd Sue Rose (Bath and Wells): I welcome this debate and this motion, particularly today. 32 years ago today HMS Intrepid sailed back into Portsmouth Harbour following the Falklands’ Conflict amid great rejoicing from the huge crowd gathered to celebrate the safe return of those on board, who included my husband of one year and three days. During the period of the conflict I was sustained by the fellowship of the naval community, of which I was a part. Even in the frightening circumstances of the conflict we managed, in good naval tradition, to meet up. Indeed, one of my husband’s favourite stories is of the occasion when the mail came in and the various members of the ward room tried to work out exactly what had gone on on the evening when their wives were threatened with a ban from their favourite restaurant. My other support though came, of course, from my family and friends and from my home parish, from the small village in Gloucestershire where my husband and I had both grown up, where we had married a year earlier and where both sets of parents still lived.

32 years later I am very aware that many members of the naval and other military communities are not as easily able to access the sort of support I had. Far fewer members of the Services live in married patches, including the huge number of reservists actively involved in today’s conflicts and peace-keeping operations. With increased mobility, fewer people have the sort of relationships with a home parish that Piers and I found so helpful. It is about home parishes I want to speak. In my present smallest parish of less than 50 people, it is fairly simple to know who and what is going on, but in my two larger communities I am aware of a sense of frustration in that I do not find it at all easy to know about the Service personnel. All too often, the first thing I discover about reservists or regular Service personnel living locally is when I see a smiling photo of someone who has just returned from a tour somewhere else. Whilst I am delighted to see this, it would have been easier to support the families at home if I had known they were living among us earlier. Service families are used to coping. We know that washing machines wait for ships to be hulled down over the horizon before they break down but, in the light of the motion which talks about how we will offer pastoral support, can thought be given to how, data protection notwithstanding, parochial clergy can be made aware that there are Service personnel in their parishes in order that we can provide the sort of
The support I know can make such a difference to families who may be living with a very high level of concern, but living among us? Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you. I am now going to call on Canon Bruinvels to speak to and move the amendment that stands in his name; after which Philip Fletcher will have the opportunity to reply. The text of the amendment is appearing by magic. Our technology is working on the screens in front of you. It is not quite as it appeared in the Order Paper this morning, but it is as on the Seventh Notice Paper and on the screen. Canon Bruinvels, you have up to five minutes.

Canon Peter Bruinvels (Guildford): Thank you very much Chair. I speak as the Surrey County Council Civilian Military Liaison Adviser. I speak on behalf of the ABF for Soldiers Charity but I am wearing red, white and blue for obvious reasons today. I personally have signed seven Armed Forces Community Covenants, and Guildford Diocese is a leading Diocese in the sense of the number of military bases within its area: Sandhurst; Aldershot; Deepcut; Keogh, Headley Court (which sadly is closing in 2018); Minley Barracks; ATC Pirbright, and this week's Farnborough Air Show. We are also going to receive many, many extra troops under the Army rebasing of 2020. With troops expected to be recalled from Afghanistan in late 2014, it is important that we as a Church do all we can to support them on their return and those who are already living in communities across the dioceses across the country, very much a message of the Common Good. Statistics. One in 12 of the adult population is a veteran. One in eight in prison at the moment, including prison officers, served. One in six selling the Big Issue in London has Service connections. There are 407, actually, Covenants signed. They are the Community Covenants and my amendment is reflecting that virtually every Covenant has been signed within the local authorities and it makes sense now, really, to move onto the Corporate. There are 190 Corporate Covenants signed as of 7 July. It is very important to remind people that no Service person must be disadvantaged.

If you drive onto a military base your Sat Nav goes blank. The postcodes do not exist. You are really a non-person from the moment you go on there and, yet, we are, under the Corporate and under the Armed Forces Community Covenant's key objectives, calling for recognition, remembrance, integration and support. The issues have not yet been raised, but it is housing; it is education; it is redundancies; it is retraining; it is GP and dental waiting lists; social services and debt. We take these as read, but in the Armed Forces Community it is very difficult to get on a housing list and to get on a school waiting list. You do not have that postcode. The issues are so clear that if we could speed up admissions' procedures, if we could ensure Service families are not disadvantaged on housing waiting lists -- you have got to live there in the first place to get on the list -- to ensure Service families are on GP and dentist NHS lists. What about making available health and well-being checks. We take that for granted but, as they leave, where do they go? They are not even really advised. There are Army welfare services. We must not forget the role of reservists and the ex-Army personnel, capable, motivated, loyal, ideal and ready to do more work, yet they could go onto the scrapheap unless we look after them. We know that there are grants available to help the communities work with the Armed Forces and there are particular ones for youth and faith. We have a number of key stakeholders and I have brought along two Covenants, the Armed Forces Community Covenant for Mole Valley, which is where I live in Dorking. The
Faith Community were a signatory. It says: "The purpose of this Covenant is to support and encourage support for the Armed Forces Community, working and residing in that district and to recognise and remember the sacrifices made by members of the Armed Forces Community and, particularly, those who have given the most." Then, we have the Corporate Covenants and, I have told you a moment ago, Chair, there are 190 signed. This is supporting the Armed Forces Community, but recognising the value of serving personnel, both regular and reservists, veterans and military families and what they have contributed to the business and our community. That is tri-Service, the Royal Navy, the Army and the RAF. It says in the Covenant they deserve our respect and support but, most importantly, fair treatment. They are disadvantaged at the moment.

Two lines from the Corporate Covenant: "No member of the Armed Forces Community should face disadvantage in the provision of public and commercial services compared to any other citizens and, in some circumstances, special treatment may be appropriate, especially for the injured or the bereaved." I said a moment ago, Chair, that virtually every local authority has signed up to the Covenant. Therefore, my amendment is really clarifying the position, making it clear -- as I can see the red light comes on -- it is important to support the Community. My amendment makes it clearer, defines what the Armed Forces Community is all about, and "based" is better than "located." I beg to move.

The Chair: I call on Mr Fletcher to respond to that. You have up to five minutes.

Mr Philip Fletcher (Ex officio): Chair, I will not need five minutes. I welcome Canon Bruinvels’s amendments. One always wonders about adding extra words, but I think they are helpful here and, particularly, in that they bring out that we are not just talking about serving personnel but regulars, reservists, veterans crucially, and military families. All of those are valuable points of clarification and if Synod would like it, as I certainly would, I would like to see the motion amended in this way.

The Chair: Thank you. Is there any debate on the amendment?

Canon Dr Jamie Harrison (Durham): I think it is helpful to have particularly two added elements, as we have just heard, the ones that relate to both veterans and also to Army families. Recently, I was visiting Knightsbridge Health Centre, yes Knightsbridge behind Harrods has a Health Centre run by the NHS for 8,000 patients. The vast majority are extremely fit, healthy and well-heeled, but there are two small social housing areas and also a rather large (some people think very ugly) tower called the Household Cavalry Barracks. You may know it. It is 300 feet high, it is 33 storeys and it has around 200 Army families who could come from anywhere that any of us come from. I come from Durham. They are thrown together and their family member is probably away somewhere dangerous. They have got relatively little money compared with those who live at No. 1 Hyde Park opposite; discuss the price of that. They are also at risk because I think there was a bomb not that long ago in the building. Just think of those folk who are one example. I might talk about Catterick Barracks near us and so on. I think bringing families the pressures, the worries and all sorts of things I think is really helpful from Peter's amendment.

I have also worked as a prison doctor for many years in Durham. Again, as we have
heard already from Bishop Nigel, there are more prisoners who have an ex-Service element than one would hope and perhaps certainly expect if things were otherwise. These are for often mental health issues and prison, obviously, may not be the right place. They are another group of veterans, as are those who are not in prison but, equally, one of my patients is very much involved with that wonderful organisation, Combat Stress, one of the leading mental health charities dealing particularly with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder related to those from the Services. It seems to me, again, the use of the word "veteran" is helpful. It reminds us not only of what we owe such folk but, also, of the effects that being in such combat zones as they have been in have left them, and again that poignant reminder from Bishop Nigel from the First World War. I am not a great fan actually for making motions longer. My general sense is to keep them as short as we can but, for me, certainly, adding those two particular elements of veterans and Service families is extremely helpful. One of the key elements I think in paragraph 38 of the Report talks about us being alert and aware and more focused, this helps us to see things perhaps through more effective and caring eyes. So I wish to support this amendment.

_The Chair_: I do not see anybody else standing at the moment, so we will move to vote on the amendment.

_The amendment was carried on a show of hands._

So we move now back on to the main Item for debate this morning.

_The Chair_ imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

_Mrs Sue Slater (Lincoln):_ Lincoln Diocese is also home to many RAF bases. There are many more which were used during the War, particularly the Second World War. The currently active ones include RAF Barkston Heath; Coningsby; Cranwell; Digby; Donna Nook; Holbeach; Kirton in Lindsey; Scampton and Waddington. If those names do not mean a lot to some of you, one of them is home to the Red Arrows, one of them is an RAF college and the headquarters for Air Cadets, and there are many homes to operational aircraft. Near where I live is RAF Holbeach, which is a bombing range, and our parish church with a very prominent spire seems to be the point where the pilots turn around to go back to the Wash, because there are days when they circle and they circle.

People in Lincolnshire are very aware particularly of the presence of the RAF amongst us but, also, of the Army. I am not aware that we have many great connections with the Navy, but others may know better. The Army recruits a lot and has always recruited a lot in Lincolnshire, I think particularly because of high levels of rural unemployment. The effect of that becomes particularly apparent when people leave the Services for whatever reason when they come to the end of their period of service, because often they gravitate back to Lincolnshire. My particular connection with them has been through the time when I was a volunteer adviser at the Citizens Advice Bureau. We would get people coming for all sorts of advice about all sorts of circumstances. Sometimes when we had given advice about the benefits people were entitled to and helped them with various other matters, there were still underlying problems, particularly of debt. Sometimes we would have to be scratching around to find other sources of help for them. One of the questions we
were trained to ask was: "Do you have any connection with the Armed Forces? Are you now or have you ever been connected with the Armed Forces?" This, as has already been said, did not just include Service personnel and veterans but it did include family members as well. I found, particularly as an adviser, that I could ring up the Royal British Legion and SSAFA, and one or the other would almost immediately send out somebody to do a home visit to find out the particular circumstances and, very often, to provide immediate financial help for those people. Thank you.

The Dean of Portsmouth (The Very Revd David Brindley): Thank you, Chair. Early in 2003 I stood on Portsmouth sea front with thousands of other people as we watched the fleet headed by Ark Royal setting off for the Second Gulf War. The day before I had been talking with a naval chaplain. He told me that every morning at his door there was a queue of young men wanting to talk about death and about God. Never as a parish priest, and certainly not as a Dean, have I ever experienced such a queue. I realised at that point that Forces’ chaplains are involved in frontline evangelism and mission, young men and women scared and wanting to talk about God, what an opportunity. I want to ask partly how does the Church in its parishes and dioceses and in its national institutions learn from that cutting edge missionary experience?

Portsmouth Cathedral holds several services for the Royal Navy each year. Seafarer Sunday is a major event. We host the Royal Marines’ Band Memorial Service. We have in the last few weeks had several major D-Day Commemoration services, including a drumhead service on South Sea Common attended by several thousand people. The Archdeacon of the Navy is an Honorary Canon of our Cathedral. Some while back I signed the Covenant between the City of Portsmouth and the Royal Navy in front of HMS Victory. That Portsmouth, with or without a Covenant, supports the Royal Navy is not in question. Everyone in the City has a friend or a relative who serves or has served in the senior Service. My daughter is the wife of a soldier. She has lived in six places in three different countries in the eight years since she married him. Her two little girls, my granddaughters, have coped well with repeated moves, and five year-old Jessica is about to begin her second school in a year. The disruption experienced in many Forces’ families is potentially very traumatic and for many families it is disastrously traumatic. It discourages engagement in the local community. Schooling is sporadic. Relationships are necessarily short-term and fragmented. I recognise that the new shape of the Forces will potentially lead to more family stability, but that is yet to be seen in practice.

My hesitation about supporting this motion is not about whether I support those who serve in the Forces or their families. I do. They include members of my own family, my colleagues and my neighbours. My hesitation is a real question about whether it actually means anything in practical terms. If you vote for the motion, what are you going to do? What difference will it make? Is it just a nice sentiment that we can pass and then forget? In Portsmouth most people do not know that there is a signed Community Armed Forces Covenant and nor do most members of our churches. That is, no doubt, partly my fault for not making it better known. Of course, I want support for the Covenant. Please vote for it but, if you do not intend to support it, then do not.
Lt Gemma Winterton (Armed Forces Synod): This is my maiden speech and I am going to concentrate on my personal experience of what it is like for a member of the Service community to worship in a civilian parish. I do not live with Service personnel on a married patch but instead as part of the wider civilian society. I have served in Afghanistan and my church was hugely supportive, both before and during this time. People I did not even know prayed for me, wrote to me and sent me parcels to pass on to others who were not lucky enough to receive post from home. It was a fantastic blessing and a great comfort, if slightly overwhelming at times.

I was particularly grateful to those that were willing to support my husband who was left behind in the slightly awkward position of being a male “navy wife”. Their simple gestures, such as an invitation for a curry and a pint, even if he did not always accept it, I know it mattered to us both greatly that people tried and asked. The flipside of this is that because of my commitment to the Royal Navy, I inevitably live a slightly different lifestyle from those that are around me. I am away a great deal, often at relatively short notice. This can make it difficult to fit into traditional church and parish life. I have been directly questioned about my faith and am told that I am not committing as a Christian because I am not on the rota for the Sunday school or coffee after the service. These are comments that I have found difficult to deal with. I genuinely love going to my local parish church, being part of that local community and family is important to me.

I want to give what I can, for example reading the list of names of those that died during World War I or World War II as part of the Remembrance Service or receiving a text message asking me to bake six cakes for the baptism tea at the weekend. If I can do it, I will, and I like to be asked. I simply ask for consideration for the fact that because of my commitment to the Armed Forces I am slightly different and, for that reason, I ask you to support this motion.

The Revd Charles Razzall (Chester): I am from Crewe, the home of the Merlin engines which played their part in the international victory against Fascism in the last War. The same factory that builds those engines now of course produces high-performance motor vehicles for the Surrey Hills footballers and their wives and WAGs and California and India. As the barriers and the division between civilian and Army life become more porous, there will be another aspect of our national life which will come into clearer focus, and that is those who work in our defence industries. Amazingly, soldiers need munitions and equipment and weapons, and the defence industry sector still forms 10% of our manufacturing base and its work is technologically advanced and, in general, high skill and high wage, just the kind of jobs we need to be encouraging in the new economic climate. We do need to take that on board and to make links, if we can, with those who work in our defence industries, in the North West particularly, from Barrow-in-Furness through Lancashire into my own part of Cheshire, where we have one of the largest munitions factories which supplied a great number of the bullets used on D-Day. This is an important part of national life.

Secondly, the defence industries are those who have signed up, at least in part so far, to Corporate Covenants, and there is the whole area of employment for our retiring and veteran military personnel, and we must try and encourage business to
provide the right opportunities, where legally appropriate, for those who find it difficult to find employment.

Thirdly, and briefly, I hope it is not a complete red herring, as the balance between military force and security and intelligence matters changes in the coming years, we will need in the future to consider what kind of Covenant we want with the security and intelligence services. As we speak, the Investigatory Powers Tribunal judges are looking at claims by Amnesty International and others that our security services have not been acting entirely under the law. That is an issue for the future but it is going to become increasingly important. Thank you.

The Revd Professor Richard Burridge (University of London): I have been awake since early this morning wondering whether I should make this speech and, in doing so, I am responding to Bishop Nigel’s invitation. I am speaking to support the pastoral and spiritual needs of the Armed Forces, but to explain with a heavy heart, for this a debate on whether we would wish to do that but whether we wish to sign a Covenant, to ask the question whether the language of “covenant” is appropriate. That has not been mentioned so far. Everybody has been telling their stories.

My story is personally as somebody from a poor mining community where the only jobs open to my father, my uncles, my cousins, as an alternative to going down the mines, was going into the Forces, and they benefited enormously from that. My father-in-law was killed in the Borneo and Malaya insurgencies in the early 1960s and there has not been a day in my adult life where that has not had a deep effect upon me and my family. My daughter’s partner has returned from service as a Marine in Iraq and Afghanistan and has been living in my house.

Professionally, as Dean of King’s College, London, I am proud about the fact that our War Studies Department is the best and biggest in the country. Shrivenham, which has already been mentioned, is a department of King’s College. I will go on giving support to all of that department, holding services for our fallen students and alumni in the chapel and providing debates with my good friend and colleague, Nigel Biggar’s big book on just war in the Chapel, and so on. I have provided pastoral, personal and spiritual support for all involved in the Armed Forces community, and I will go on doing so, but this is a debate about whether we should sign a covenant.

This is the first time I have felt able to come back into this chamber since we were told on Saturday morning that not only not needing university representatives, you do not need universities because you can get your answers on Google. I have done the work for you. I have actually used an Accordance Bible program and looked at every reference to covenant in the Holy Scriptures this morning. Throughout the Old Testament, covenants are referred to between people often involving bloodshed, but there is an increasing sense that the only covenant is the one between God and his people. In the New Testament the only use of covenant is through the shedding of blood of Jesus Christ on the Cross, through the Last Supper, 1 Corinthians 11. There are lots of discussions about Paul’s support for his churches, but the language of covenant is never used.

I am a Biblical scholar, not a theologian, but when I read the Bible and Jesus Christ’s
The Armed Forces Covenant and Community Covenants

The Suffragan Bishop of Dorchester (The Rt Revd Colin Fletcher): On 6 May 2006, a helicopter crashed in Basra. Five people were killed. Two members of the crew came from RAF Benson, in Oxfordshire. Neither the base chapel nor the local parish church was sufficient to take the congregation who wished to come to a service following that. It was natural that Dorchester Abbey should be used to that end. Likewise when repatriations started to flow in from Royal Wootton Bassett through to the John Radcliffe Hospital, and subsequently to RAF Brize Norton in Oxfordshire and again to John Radcliffe Hospital, it was natural that the local clergy and church members should be involved. Neither of those required a Community Covenant. They happened naturally because we are good at being parish priests, at being chaplains to our communities. In Oxfordshire I think we were the first local authority to sign a Community Covenant and I was delighted to add my signature to those of county and district councils in doing so, in addition to the military and a number of charitable and community groups. The results have been very encouraging. Go to the report. Paragraph 34, mentions Carterton Parish Church which now serves at the base chapel to RAF Brize Norton. Likewise, when the county council were cutting very significantly youth work throughout the county, in Carterton, through the Community Covenant and the RAF Benevolent Fund, the youth work there is better now than when it was very dependent on the county and again that flowed in part through the Community Covenant.

Go to the county council’s website and you will see that money has flowed in for the Oxford Play Association, for young people’s work, for schools, in a job club, in education provision, both for children and for adults. In terms of the Common Good, the community has benefited hugely from the Community Covenant. In looking back and asking myself, “Well I signed it” - and this is the Dean of Portsmouth’s point - “is there more we can do?” “Yes, there is” and what I shall do is to go back from Synod and get round the table again with those particularly from the Army but also from the RAF and say, “What more could we do?” because just a line of buildings and activities will not be enough. Pastoral and spiritual needs need something much more and we can do a lot more in partnership together.

The Revd Ruth Hind (Ripon and Leeds): I would like to welcome this report and thank the Mission and Public Affairs Committee for their work and also Bishop Nigel. I have asked to speak because of the large military presence that there is in my local

compassion for the centurion, he told me that I must carry a legionary’s pack, and the next time I meet one on Waterloo Bridge I will do so, but consistently throughout the first 300 years of the church, Tertullian and others said that Jesus Christ had “unbuckled every soldier”. Paragraph 4 of GS 1960 is a masterful summary of the “just war” theory, done by my good friend, I imagine, Charles Read, but it is Christian tradition drawing on pagan philosophy and, as somebody who believes in the supremacy of Scripture, it is not a position I can accept.

I agree absolutely with Philip Fletcher that this is not about endorsing anyone in particular. I want to go on supporting all those under pressure - doctors, nurses, teachers - but we are not asked to sign covenants with them. So in not voting for this, I will provide support, but the only covenant I can sign is with God and Father through the shedding of his son Jesus Christ’s blood on the Cross and following his teaching and example.
area. My parish borders RAF Leeming and within a 20-mile radius you can find Alanbrooke Barracks, Dishforth Airfield and Catterick Garrison. I have watched with interest the changes to MoD policy as they appeared on the news, but I failed to make all of the connections between them and their pastoral impact, so I would like to thank you for making this connection so explicit in the report. It may be that other clergy are better at joining the dots than I am, but just in case I would like the briefing, in particular paragraphs 6 to 25, to be available beyond this Synod to all parish clergy as a first step towards making the aspirations contained in the report a reality.

It is true that pastoral care is already being met simply by doing what churches do. An open building affording a soldier some space for reflection at the time of a family funeral that he was unable to attend, an offer to pray for a teenager whose father had been deployed to Afghanistan; a conversation where the need to know whether the Ten Commandments refers to “killing” or “murder” was of vital importance.

We may imagine that Service personnel and families live together and have their spiritual needs met by their contemporaries and chaplain. Chaplains do a wonderful job but yet, as paragraph 16 points out, that does not mean that the rest of us have nothing to contribute. A clergy colleague who like Sue Rose was once an army wife, describes movingly of how the local church in a number of locations gave her stability and continuity, providing her with meals after the birth of her child and taking the place of her extended family who were in another part of the country. She also tells how they nurtured her vocation even though there was nothing in it for them because she was only with them for such a short time.

I did have some reservations that the Covenant might be interpreted as one of unconditional support for the institutions of the Armed Forces, and it is clearly not appropriate for the Church to be a cheer leader to the Armed Forces. However, I have been reassured and I hope that our role will be one, as it is in so many cases, that of a critical friend. Thank you.

The Ven. Ian Wheatley (Armed Forces Synod): Thank you for calling me, Chair, for my maiden speech. When a Royal Navy warship sails, whether for a few days of routine training or for a nine-month deployment, it is away from its base port and its ship’s company are separated from their families. Consequently for us it is common for naval families to live in their home communities where they can be rooted and enjoy perhaps some extended family support. Whilst to some extent of course there are concentrations of naval families around Portsmouth and Plymouth, most are literally peppered all over the country, often just a few families per diocese, but sometimes in greater concentrations, with for example approaching 10% of all naval families living in the Greater Liverpool area. Typically young and with school aged children, they can feel isolated in spite of being nearer their families.

The military are working hard to communicate the positive message of the Covenant and, as we have already heard, over 400 councils across the land have taken up the challenge. But it is through the Church as a national institution that we have a golden opportunity to connect with the military families and, in helping them, build up the Body of Christ.
What can the Church do? Well, at the most local level an openness to military families and an awareness of their needs can go a long way to helping them to integrate. Many of the things we already do for young families like parent and toddler groups and messy church already scratch an itch, but a warm welcome, your continuing prayers and an understanding of the challenges they face take things a lot further. The Armed Forces recognise that the Church has a unique opportunity to help us and could do much to smooth out the often patchy provision made by local authorities. We the military are more than willing to engage with the Church in the form, say, of diocesan champions, to explain in depth the provisions of the Covenant and the needs that we perceive in our Diaspora. At its heart, the Armed Forces Covenant is about removing some of the inequalities faced by Service families, which suggests to me that it is most surely part of the broader Common Good. So I commend this report to Synod and urge you to support the motion. Thank you.

The Revd Paul Cartwright (Ripon and Leeds): Chair, I welcome this debate into what the Church can do to support our Armed Forces. At the beginning of last month I was privileged to be one of the chaplains that attended the observances in Normandy as one of the police chaplains and also a member of the West Yorkshire Police Band. Looking out into the sea at Arromanches, it was hard to imagine what those Service personnel must have gone through on that ill-fated day. Two weeks ago in Barnsley, I was ministering to a Falklands War veteran who used to be a Marine and whose father’s funeral service I was about to conduct. He said to me, “When I came home from the war, all my family said ‘you’ve put your dad through hell’, and I did not really know what they were talking about until when I was going through my father’s belongings, I found the letters which I had sent home and which he had kept. Every letter had something along the lines of, ‘Well dad, this might be the last time you hear from me as we have got another big battle coming up’.”

Today we send off our Service personnel to wars and peace-keeping duties, but I think the difference now is that we are more likely to come into contact with those who have experienced warfare. Gone are the days when you could join the Forces to get a trade and not be deployed. The likelihood now is that if you take the Queen’s Shilling you will soon be in a conflict zone, and this more than ever includes those in our Reserve Forces, maybe our bank managers, doctors and congregations members. This gives a challenge to the Church in what we need to identify ways in which we can effectively support all those affected by service in the Armed Forces, families and personnel alike. Those of us who are ordained and under 49 need to think about whether we are called to serve as chaplains to our Armed Forces, a role which at times it is hard to recruit to. Today we have a chance to show our support for this Covenant, and I use that word “covenant”, but remember Jesus gave us an example of what the term covenant means. It is not only words or an agreement; it is action. It is an agreement backed up by action, something, I guess, we will all be thinking about today as we go on to debate other things.

I urge our Bishops to identify someone who could take on this important work as a champion in our dioceses of collating best practice and ensuring parishes take this seriously, act on it fast, but, more that than that, I ask all members of the Church to identify what can be done and what is lacking in their own community.

The numbers of Normandy veterans continue to decrease but the numbers of Armed
Forces veterans continue to increase. I urge you to support this motion and put the Covenant into real, tangible action. Thank you.

The Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): There has been an enormous change in public attitudes, and I think Church attitudes to the Armed Forces since the days in the late 1980s when I served in the Royal Navy. To Lt Winterton, I would say if you get the sort of comments that you are getting in your parish church, some well-chosen lower deck language might be an appropriate response! I would also say to Richard Burridge that there are other covenants in our traditions such as marriage, and this one seems to me to be a perfectly reasonable use of that word. However, a covenant does imply commitment on both sides. It is easy to see how our Forces do that in terms of service to our society but what about the Church’s unique commitment to this idea? Obviously, we can share, as we have heard, in the support of Service families in parishes alongside chaplains. Recently an army medic in my congregation went on his first deployment to Afghanistan. The Army called him to service just before he was due to get married and his fiancée was under severe pressure at work and we were able to support her in that way. Perhaps more specific to the work of the Church is this, and it come from the Croatian theologian Miroslav Volf in his book The End of Memory that what we can do is to help people not just remember but to remember rightly and to remember truly.

Churches can do this in a number of ways. My own congregation has a long history of relationship with the London Regiment and in our Remembrance Sunday service we not only pray for them but we give them an opportunity to, as it were, report back to the civic community gathered on their work in the previous year. It has proved popular and welcome on both sides, that also provides us an opportunity to help our civic community to remember rightly. There is a danger I think that we over-simplify military service. We too easily use the language of heroism today in our public discourse. Service itself I do not think is heroic. I am reminded of some words of a favourite poem of mine of Wilfred Owen when he talks of returning soldiers: “With superhuman inhumanities, long-famous glories, immemorial shames."

Service is complex and returning servicemen remember in complex ways. We must remember rightly when we speak to both our community and the Forces, right remembering helps us to play a part in reducing the romanticisation of military service which diminishes its importance to society and reduces the humanity of soldiering and sailoring and airmaning to mere ciphers. Thank you.

Archdeacon for the Army (The Ven. Peter Eagles CF) (Armed Forces Synod): I think at this stage of the debate perhaps simply two points. One has to do with the mutuality of the relationship. If the word “covenant” is not everyone’s favourite word, and I can understand that, it is nonetheless the word that has been chosen, and perhaps we have to live with it. I would wish also to emphasise that this is a relationship of mutuality, of mutual responsibility, and so within the mutuality of the Covenant we as a military would need to hold ourselves to account morally and ethically for our side of the bargain. In return for promoting our structures and for integrating further into health, welfare, education and employment, we as a military clearly must contribute. We must contribute in outreach, in supporting, in pre-radicalisation, in securing UK resilience and in UK-based international engagement.
The other point that I would wish to emphasise, which was touched on certainly by the Dean of Portsmouth, is to encourage Synod to look at the Covenant in the context of mission. We know that every twelfth adult is a veteran in the Covenant’s definition of someone of any age who has given at least one day’s service. The new employment model will bring these people more fully into our parishes, so we need to find them, to seek them out and, having done so, we may discover that we actually need to do less work on them than you might imagine. In other words, the language of belief will not be foreign to them in most cases. They will have encountered the ministry of the Church in their chaplain and if they have served in Iraq or Afghanistan, they will have encountered it to an acute degree. The grammar of faith will be there. They will have asked those questions that soldiers do ask: “What is God like? What happens when I die? How do I manage when my friend is killed?” Their lives will have been framed by concepts such as obedience, formation, service and sacrifice. They may not of course fully appropriate those things for themselves, that happens when the individual will engages with the divine will, but, nonetheless, the potential is clearly there, and we see that for example in the large numbers of vocations to ordained ministry currently being generated by the Armed Forces. So I say that the Armed Forces Covenant enshrines a vital moral principle and its outworking is an opportunity for the Church of England to show yet again its profound concern for every area of public life.

Mr Tim Hind (Bath and Wells): I also was going to remind Synod that there are other covenants, and in fact the covenant that I entered in with my wife was as a result of us meeting in the Officers’ Training Corps at Cambridge University, so we have thanks for that. I think it is so important that we support our Forces from where we sit having sent them out. If you think back to the Second World War, my father was in what was called the “Wavy Navy” and he was out in Sierra Leone. He was on HMS Penelope. HMS Penelope went out and he stayed on shore leave because it was his time to be looked after, so the duty of care was important, but what was staggering was that in fact that was the last time that HMS Penelope left port because it sank. I told this casually to my son and he paused for a moment and then went white and thought, “Oh my goodness, I would not be here if that bit of care had not been shown”, so we need to show that care, and this Covenant is the right way to go about it.

The Very Revd Dr David Ison (Dean of St Paul’s Cathedral): Two weeks ago my son came home from flying helicopters in Afghanistan. Five of his colleagues came home in coffins. My daughter and her husband have been bombed and shot at in Iraq and Afghanistan and my son-in-law is currently serving on a front-line somewhere in a dangerous part of the world. Some of you will know what it is like when every time the front doorbell rings when your loved ones are away, a shadow of fear goes across the back of your mind as to what you will find when you open the door. Every time there is an item on the news that says someone has been killed in action, there is that moment of panic until you realise that the next of kin will have been informed, followed very quickly by a pang of guilt that it should be so, and an overwhelming sense of compassion for the family and friends, for those who are injured, for whom life will never be the same again. We train people to be able to use force. We train them against nature to be able to kill. We send them out to do sometimes what is our dirty work and some come home physically and mentally damaged, and should we not respond?
You may not be aware that at the end of an officer’s training at Sandhurst, the officers go into the chapel for a service. I have been privileged to be there twice. At the end of that service they make a promise, a promise not to Queen and country, but a promise to their soldiers that they will serve those soldiers and put their lives above their own. They promise to be ready to sacrifice themselves for what we ask them to do, and to hear them making that promise, knowing that many of them are going out to active service in places where they could actually lose their lives, in a cause which I guess quite a few of them thought was not a terribly good one, and yet they were willing to go and serve their country, was hugely humbling.

I do not mind whether you call it a Covenant or a promise but they make these promises to us, should we not make our promise to them. Oh, and by the way, it is not them, I do not put myself in a box labelled “Service family”, we are talking about sons and daughters and members of our society and community who we are alongside. Let us love them, recognise them, honour them, those who pay the price on our behalf, those who commit themselves to us, so that we do not cast them adrift but instead give them our care.

*Mr John Freeman (Chester): On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:*

‘That the question be now put.’

*The Chair:* That has my agreement. Does it have the consent of Synod?

*This motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

I therefore invite Mr Fletcher to respond to the debate. He has up to five minutes.

*Mr Philip Fletcher (Ex-officio): Thank you, Chair. In fact, perhaps I do not have an awful lot to add to what the Dean of St Paul’s said. I had been, as we went through, trying to notes the point where the dog did not bark and until David Ison we had hardly mentioned Iraq and Afghanistan, and I do not think that was entirely an accident, but I would like to suggest to Synod that the need is all the greater where those who serve on our behalf are serving in unpopular wars. They did not choose to go. They come back even more with needs when society is not waving Union Jacks at their return.

I want to express particular thanks to Richard Burridge for speaking because Richard was the only one of us that really came from a very different position and said, “Think hard before you get into this particular set of Covenants”. Richard, I think, is the necessary grit in the oyster of Synod. If I may quote to him, “Richard, I think you are worth far more than many Googles!”

We do not have to sign up to the full just war theory to think that it is a good idea to sign these hierarchies of Covenant as a practical statement of our concern for needs. I found myself thinking again of another quotation, and again one that does not come from the Bible, “From each according to his ability” and hers “to each according to their needs”. As most of us know, that is Karl Marx and that is why, in this particular context, we need this sort of Covenant or promise because it is
meeting a need which is not quite the same for all the other communities that we value. The bankers, where would we be without them? It is all right. I mean the teachers, I mean the health workers, I mean a whole set of others who so easily are part of our hierarchy of the good.

So I come to those of us who do support this Covenant, and we have heard very helpfully from a number of members of the Services, including three Chaplains General or equivalents, about how they would be helped if the Church both at national level and then, as appropriate, at individual levels, signs up, makes a promise/a Covenant to think things through: “What are the particular needs on our patch? What should we be doing?” This, Synod, if we pass it, as I hope we shall, completely overwhelmingly is the challenge back to us.

Yes, MPA will do what it can with limited resources. For example there was the very valuable suggestion that we might try and disseminate more widely the central part of the paper that we have given to support the motion. Well, we can do that. We can put it out on the Web in a supportive way but it will not be any use unless people draw attention to it and then make use of it.

Let me pick out Gemma Winterton, who serves in the Royal Navy and is asked unthinkingly, “Why aren’t you on the coffee rota?” Now, I am quite sure that Gemma is absolutely mature enough to sort of put that out of her mind but it hurts and we owe it to the members of the Armed Services and their families amongst us, especially when the serving member of that family is out in danger, to offer particular support. We need to work it out. I took the point, I am not going to identify everybody, that Data Protection can come in. We need to work at that. We need to ensure with the help of the chaplains in the Services that parochial clergy, with permission, know what they need to know to provide pastoral support.

We need to care for veterans and we are already very familiar from the press with those who have what we no longer call shellshock but post-traumatic stress disorder, which may go on for many years and how are we going to allow for that. We have issues about Covenant as a word. David Ison has usefully told us “think of it as promise”. Despite Richard, we do use Covenant in all sorts of other contexts. It is much more than contract, and marriage is just a good example. My time has run out. Apologies to those I have not mentioned. Thank you for the debate. Please pass this motion.

The Chair: Thank you. I now order a division of the whole Synod.

The motion (as amended)

“That this Synod, believing that the commitment of those that serve in the Armed Forces demands a reciprocal obligation from the Nation to ensure that they and their families are not disadvantaged:

(a) ask dioceses to reflect on the Armed Forces Covenant and to consider signing Community Covenants, where not already signed, and Corporate Covenants setting out how they can meet both the pastoral and spiritual needs of the Armed Forces Community

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including serving military personnel, regulars and reservists, veterans and military families based in their own diocesan area;

(b) invite the Archbishops’ Council to sign a Corporate Armed Forces Covenant setting out how it will provide pastoral and spiritual support for the Armed Forces Community; and

(c) ask the Archbishops’ Council to report to Synod in the next Quinquennium on the implementation of the recommendations set out in The Church and the Armed Forces Covenant (GS 1960).”

was carried after a division of the whole Synod. The voting was as follows:

| IN FAVOUR | 393 |
| AGAINST   | 2   |

3 abstentions were recorded.

THE CHAIR The Archbishop of York (The Most Revd and Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu) took the Chair at 11.15 am

LEGISLATIVE BUSINESS

WOMEN IN THE EPISCOPATE
DRAFT BISHOPS AND PRIESTS (CONSECRATION AND ORDINATION OF WOMEN) MEASURE (GS 1925B): DRAFT MEASURE FOR FINAL APPROVAL

The Chair: We come now to Item 3. This is the third time in two years that we have embarked on a final approval debate for women bishops, so you ought to by now be getting the hang of it! That means that on this occasion my introduction can be very short.

There will be three further women bishops’ items to be taken after the Measure if, and only if, it is given final approval. One of these, the Canon, will also require an electronic vote because it too needs a two-thirds majority for approval.

My hope is that all the big issues will be discussed in this debate on the Measure so that if it is approved we can then take those following three items quite briefly and leave time for a short break before we address the smaller matter of the Magna Carta. If, therefore, we do not get to the end of this debate by around 4.30pm you will see me getting fidgety; that is not a sight worth beholding. If we get there earlier because everything has been said, so be it, but as you know I am in your hands.

A closure cannot be moved so I shall have to rely on varying the speech limit according to how many people want to speak. Just to let you know that 85 members have signalled that they would like to speak but it may be that some of them may change their minds once they have heard somebody else make the same points they were going to make!
The documents needed for this debate are the draft Measure GS 1925B, the draft Amending Canon GS 1926B, the Petition for Royal Assent and licence GS 1926C and the draft Act of Synod GS 1934A. In addition, there are three GS Misc. papers: 1076, 1077 and 1079 which you may want to have to hand, particularly 1076 since it includes the text of the Declaration that the House of Bishops made in May.

Before members raise the point, can I say that we are aware that the Order Paper does not set out the latter part of today’s business entirely correctly, for which I apologise. Item 506 will be moved by the Bishop of Rochester and Item 507, the Motion for the Affirmation and Proclamation of an Act of Synod has been omitted. A corrected Order Paper will be produced for this afternoon.

Lastly, I should like to draw members’ attention to the financial comment on this item of business contained in paragraph 1214 that a financial memorandum is set out in the Eighth Notice Paper.

We therefore come to the debate on Item 503, “That the Measure entitled ‘Bishops and Priests (Consecration and Ordination of Women) Measure’ be finally approved”. As required by Standing Order 92, I declare that on behalf of the Presidents, the Prolocutors of the Convocations and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the House of Laity that the requirements of Articles 7 and 8 of the Constitution have been complied with in respect of the Bishops and Priests (Ordination and Consecration of Women) Measure.

The Bishop of Rochester, you have up to ten minutes.

The Bishop of Rochester (The Rt Revd James Langstaff): Members of Synod, brothers and sisters, we know that as we meet today for this final approval debate and vote there are many eyes and ears which are attentive to what we say and do. In terms of our formal synodical procedures, the wider church of England has, as we heard on Friday evening, expressed a very clear view through the Article 8 reference to the dioceses and now that the Church looks to us and, indeed, thankfully prays for us.

The wider Church, both Anglican Communion and our Ecumenical partners, also looks on and, of course, because we are the Church of England our nation, not least in the persons of its parliamentary representatives and through its media, is also taking a keen interest in what we say and do. But while we may properly be aware of those others, we are here today to do what we believe under God to be right.

As has already been indicated, I am standing at the moment to move the motion at 503 in relation to the Measure but I hope I have the Chair’s consent also to address matters which are to do with 504 and 506 in this opening speech.

The Chair: Granted.

The Bishop of Rochester: Thank you. That will save time later on, if we get to later on!
In one way or another we have addressed the matters before us in each gathering of
the Synod since last July. We have seen the various documents at different stages
of their development, we have an opportunity to study them and debate them. There
is little before us today that we have not seen or discussed before and I for one do
not intend to repeat myself too much by going over what I have said on previous
occasions.

We have a draft Measure and a draft Amending Canon which, with the exception of
the drafting amendments we made to the Canon on Friday, are as they went to the
dioceses. It is to those two documents and an Act of Synod that we have to give
approval today or not.

The Measure very simply authorises the making of a Canon to allow women as well
as men to be ordained both as bishops and priests. It repeals the 1993 Measure
and certain other provisions.

The Amending Canon then does what the Measure permits, by amending Canon C 2
such that a man or a woman may be consecrated to the office of Bishop, and Canon
C 4 such that a man or a woman may be ordained to the office of priest or deacon.
Other necessary amendments are made to other Canons and then a new Canon C
29 is created requiring the House of Bishops to make regulations for the resolution of
disputes and also prescribing a special majority in each House of the Synod for any
subsequent changes to those regulations.

The text of those regulations has already been seen by this Synod, as has that of the
House of Bishops’ Declaration which has now formally been made by the House.
Under the Standing Orders of the House, also amended, that Declaration also may
not be changed without a special majority in each House of this Synod; thus
durability to these arrangements has been built in to our processes. With those
arrangements in place, if they are, the proposed new Act of Synod simply rescinds
the Episcopal Ministry Act of Synod of 1993.

The only document which is new is the note from the Archbishops issued as GS
Misc. 1079. This summarises the decisions taken in May by the House of Bishops
and shares with us the current thinking of the Archbishops in relation to matters
referred to in paragraph 30 of their House’s Declaration, that is future arrangements
for consecration services and the issue of the evident absence within the life of the
College of any bishop taking the conservative view on headship, though there are of
course a good number of bishops who take conservative views on various other
matters. As was touched on in questions on Friday evening, assurance is given that
though there are not simple ways through the necessary processes, the latter matter
is under very active consideration indeed.

The question of the shape of consecration services, when a person to be
consecrated is unable to accept the priestly or Episcopal ministry of women, is set
clearly in the context and the spirit of the five guiding principles and of conversation
between the Bishop Designate and the Archbishop of the Province. If any
exceptional arrangements are to be made in particular cases they will very clearly be
that - exceptional.
We have already had a lot of discussion and we will see how much further discussion Synod wish to have today. On previous occasions since last July we have voted comfortably each time to take this process forward to the next stage, but this vote is different, today is final approval, and for the Measure and the Amending Canon to be approved there must be a two-thirds majority in each House.

Coming to today we have had, as Synod encouraged us to, an unusual Steering Committee process and a revision stage in full Synod. The Committee has been larger than normal, has encompassed a broader range of views and has engaged in a different kind of facilitating process which has at times also encompassed the whole Synod.

As has been made clear, not all members of the Committee have in the end been able to give the legislative and other elements their support, but all have contributed to their shaping. Here I want to thank all members of that Steering Committee and, with them, the officers and facilitators who have been with us for their work and their commitment to each other and to the task. It has been hard work but it has been at times quite remarkable.

A clear majority of that Committee commend the Measure and the Canon to you today as the best way in which both to make the provision that the Church clearly wants for women to be bishops on exactly the same terms as men and, at the same time, to enable those who take a different view to continue to flourish and have a full part within the life of this, our Church of England. We believe that what we have before us today does that.

The five guiding principles enshrined in the House of Bishops’ Declaration, already affirmed by this Synod, provide the foundation for what is before us and shape both the spirit and the processes by which we will live our common life in the future if we give final approval today.

What we have has been put together by human beings, albeit surrounded by much prayer and guided by your spirit. Because we are human it will not be absolutely perfect. However, I am convinced that what we have now is significantly clearer than what we had in November 2012 and, more importantly, is expressed in a very clear tone and manifests a very different spirit. I think and believe that this is the moment for us to vote “yes” and to move forward to receive with thankfulness and joy the gifts of women in episcopal as well as priestly life.

It is the moment thereby also to vote “yes” for arrangements to be put in place in the House of Bishops’ Declaration and the dispute resolution procedure such that all may continue to belong fully and to flourish within our fellowship.

I fully recognise that there will be those who with conscience cannot vote for one or both of the Measure or the Canon not least because of the simplicity and clarity of their statements about episcopal and priestly ministry being open both to women and to men. Some of those people will have no option in their conscience but to vote against and I respect that, though others may, I hope, find it possible to record an abstention or indeed not to vote.
The Church of England has spoken very clearly through the voting of our diocesan synods and we today have, I believe, a responsibility to show that we are listening. Wherever each of us stands on the spectrum of views, I want to suggest that today we have a responsibility to be guided, yes, by what we ourselves think and feel to be right but also by what we assess to be the settled view of the great majority within the Church of England. That means weighing carefully what the consequences might be for morale within the Church and for our witness in the nation if this legislation were once again to fall and we were seen as thereby frustrating the view and will of our wider Church community.

So to all who in conscience can do so, and to those who may still have reservations and yet know in their hearts that this is the moment, I say please join me in voting positively, thankfully and freely to enable women as well as men to be ordained to episcopal office. This is about Church order but it is also about the flourishing of God’s mission for our nation and for our world. It is our opportunity I think, among other things, to show the world how we can embrace what most of us believe to be right, good and of God while at the same time affirming the honoured presence in our midst of those who take a dissenting view. That is a lesson that our wider world could do with learning in many instances.

Sisters and Brothers, let us please give final approval to this Measure and then to the Canon as well. Then let us vote together in receiving God’s rich and varied gifts of Grace, responding to God’s amazing and humbling call, forming our lives out of the pattern of Jesus and showing forth the wonder of God’s Grace in Christ for a world waiting to be transformed. I am pleased to move the motion at Item 503 which stands in my name.

The Chair: Item 503 is now open for general debate and those wishing to speak should stand in the normal way. I remind members that under Standing Order 61(a), the motion for the closure, the speech limits on next business are not in order in this debate. But I retain a discretion under Standing Order 31(c) to alter the normal speech limit of five minutes. Let me before you start to speak, remind you that under Standing Order 17, I will exercise my power to call members to order for tedious repetition, either of their own or arguments already rehearsed by other members. So what I will do, I will direct such a member to stop speaking and resume their seat. I call upon Dr Paula Gooder, to be followed by the Chair of the House of Laity.

Canon Dr Paula Gooder (Birmingham): Many of you will know that I am a member of the current Steering Committee. Many of you will also know that I have been a member of other committees as well on this subject. In fact, I have been doing this for what feels like a rather long time. My first meeting in 2006 on this subject sticks very vividly in any mind, not for the meeting itself but for the circumstances that happened before I left the house. My youngest daughter on that morning learnt how to take her nappy off, with the inevitable consequences. That daughter, we are now exploring her secondary schooling, just to give you a sense of the length of time that we have been contemplating this. And in that length of time I have learnt many things, many many things. But one of the things that I have learnt that sticks very clearly in my mind is what law can do and what law cannot do. What I want to talk about this morning is, actually, the recognition of what law cannot do in this instance. Because law cannot really do anything about trust, the word that we have used so
often in this debate; nor can it actually do much about flourishing, the word that has come in more recently in this debate. What it can do is indicate intention. What it can do is make a space, but actually trust and flourishing are down to us. Trust and flourishing can only be lived out in how we live our lives, each one of us, all of us here and all of us in the rest of the Church of England. It seems to me that if we are able to pass this legislation today, what we will be doing is acknowledging the space the legislation gives but also signing up to a challenge. The challenge that we will be signing up to is to live a life of trust in which we can then enable other people to flourish. This seems to me to be vitally important because it is one of the highest of our callings and allows me – and as those of you who know I do like to talk about 2 Corinthians given half a chance and this feels like slightly more than half a chance – to come in with 2 Corinthians. This allows us to live up to that great calling of 2 Corinthians, and 2 Corinthians 5. 2 Corinthians 5 is one of the most glorious of the Pauline passages, in which Paul lays out his vision of what it really means to be a Christian. Right at the heart of 2 Corinthians 5 is that beautiful verse: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come.” New creation has broken into the world because of who we are in Christ. What is really fascinating about that verse is then Paul goes on in 18, 19, 20 and 21 to tell us what he thinks new creation looks like. What is absolutely fascinating is Paul thinks new creation looks like reconciliation. It looks like living out the reconciliation that God has done to us in our lives. He uses those beautiful words: He has given to us a ministry of reconciliation. Then in the next verse: “God has placed within us, literally, the logos of reconciliation.” So as Christians our greatest calling is to be people who show forth into the world the glory of God and show forth that we have within us that logos of reconciliation. What I believe is that this legislation allows us to do that. It gives us the space to do it, but it cannot make us be that living out of the logos of reconciliation, that must be down to each one of us. So it will not surprise you to know that I will be voting in favour of this motion and I will be doing it joyfully. But as I do it, I will be taking it upon myself, and I would like to invite the rest of Synod to think about doing the same, to take upon yourselves that great challenge, the glorious challenge of Paul, to live out the life of reconciliation in everything that we say and do, so that we can do what Paul then says when he shapes his whole ministry in verse 20, where he says: “We are ambassadors for Christ. Since God is making his appeal through us, we entreat on behalf of Christ. Be reconciled.” The really key thing there is what Paul is saying is, we do this so that we can then go out to the world and entreat because we live the life of reconciliation. Join us in this glorious life of reconciliation. Brothers and Sisters, I hope you will be able to do that and to take up this challenge today.

Dr Philip Giddings (Oxford): Your Grace, since November I have been seeking to put flesh on my assertion that we could find a better way of achieving what we want. I believe we have done that, we have found a better way. But we still face the question: Does it meet the needs of all sections of the Church? Now the answer to that is, frankly, that it does not meet the needs of everyone in the Church. Does it follow from that, that this package and this Measure is not good enough to approve? That is the question before us this morning. The key for me is that this passage is adequate because it requires adherence by all to the five principles in the Houses of Bishops’ declaration embedded in the Canon. That requirement means three things. First, it means that we must respect the fundamental differences that fall within the ambit of our Anglican formularies. It means, therefore, that we should not seek to
unchurch those whose views on these fundamental questions differ from our own and, clearly, within this Synod and within our Church they do. It means allowing those who do not share our views on this question to flourish within this Church and to continue to teach and practise what follows their conviction. So the question is, your Grace, can we rely on one another to observe these five principles? Not just today in order to secure the passage of this legislation, not just this year in order to explain it and in a sense to sell it to our colleagues in the dioceses and parishes, but in the longer term for the flourishing of this Church and the sake of our nation and the Kingdom of God. I know that for Traditional Catholics and Headship Evangelicals, this legislation does not give the statutory protection for which they ask, and to me that is a very crucial point. But it does seem to me that in the Canon and the Declarations, this package offers a better way, picking up on what Dr Gooder has just said, a better way than statutory protection. It offers a new culture underpinned by an independent reviewer whose remit is to ensure that these principles are observed. I have tried to play my part in the shaping of this legislation in accordance with my own convictions and those who have sent me here, and those who will, I hope, continue to contribute to the flourishing of this Gospel in this land, and I will vote for this legislation today.

The Bishop of Ely (The Rt Revd Stephen Conway): At my introduction to the House of Lords a week ago I was referred to on several occasions as a young man - I realise that everything is in context. But still in my 50s I have a further dozen years or so to commit myself, along with my colleagues, the Bishops, to ensure that these five guiding principles, which Dr Giddings has just referred to, are embedded in our life so that if we do pass this legislation today, we live then joyfully and with a real honouring of the integrity of the other. It seems to me one of the most important theological choices that we make today and beyond today is to accept the discipline of "we" rather than "them". Living the five guiding principles after today means that we are very clear that living those principles is not open to crossed fingers or to sleight of hand revision. I have spent a good deal of the three years so far in Ely reflecting on the Johannine language of abiding, and this is primarily rooting us in nature of the mutual indwelling of the Trinity, and out of that comes the invitation of Lord Jesus to abide in him. This is a habitation of unity which will go on being home for all of us. Of course, I acknowledge that for some of us today may create a rent in the fabric of that habitation. Please forgive me for believing that we should, nonetheless, proceed with joy. But, part of that joy, beyond easy outcomes, is that we shall still be one body afterwards and I pray that we shall aim to do better than past language of impaired Communion and look for positive language of co-abiding in the saving love of Christ. But I am committed to the practical out-working of this over the next generation. I am sure that as we try to live in the hope rather than just in hurt with each other, there should be opportunities for working out as Anglican Catholics some kind of customary for our common life. I also meet regularly with my Headship Evangelical colleagues in the diocese, and I am committed to maintaining a culture in the diocese of Ely in which both they and women clergy flourish as well as a young man like me. I also serve as the Chair of the House of Bishops' Development and Appointments Committee and we have responsibility for the oversight of the identification and development of clergy with high potential who already do and will make a significant impact on the mission of the Church. I repeat now that we are completely committed to continued nurture of clergy with such potential who happen to be Traditional Catholics and Headship Evangelicals. This is
one of the direct outworkings of principles 4 and 5 of the five guiding principles, by which we shall be led, once we have, I pray, moved into the blessing of women and men together in the episcopate. We can make this work, we must make this work, and we shall make this work through the abiding love of God for all of us.

The Chair: Mr Tom Sutcliffe, followed by the Bishop of Burnley, and this will be his final speech before he retires.

Mr Thomas Sutcliffe (Southwark): I note with interest that both the finalists in this World Cup and the host were countries ruled by women. Chancellor Merkel is the most powerful German woman since Catherine the Great of Russia in the 18th century. Women in power are good. We choose them. We need them when the time demands them. In my view, the Measure that failed in 2012 would have led to a lot of unhappiness in that quite substantial minority that cannot accept or has reasonable theological doubts about women in holy orders. It would also have been bad for the rest of the Church of England, for the Church of England as a whole, condemning us to end these disputes with recourse to secular courts to settle those arguments. That would have been a real scandal for the Gospel. I shall be voting for the Women Bishops Measure that is now before us which is a totally different animal because it makes suitable provision for most of those who do not believe women can or should be bishops and priests. But my reason for helping to stop the bus in November 2012 was my conviction that our Church should regard itself as very lucky if those who are uncomfortable with what we are doing now were not just going to leave the rest of us to stew in our own juice, as many sadly did in 1993 and 1994. They will be staying with us now because they believe passionately in the continuing life of our Church, even if they also believe that we who hope now to be the two-thirds majority are making a terrible mistake. The truth, as so often with the power of goodness, which is God, is that we cannot be certain whether what we the majority are doing is right though we trust and believe that it is.

After 2000 years of Christianity, we Christians should be honest and confess that, however we read the signs that we think tell us about what the power of goodness requires, we have neither a monopoly of wisdom nor certainty that we are right, but do believe that we must act on our conviction that the Church now needs the different and special gifts of women in holy orders not because of justice but because of our need as Christians and the Church’s need. This Measure says both women and men may be priests and bishops. It is permissive. It does not claim that women in the ministry are the same as men in the ministry, nor that there should be equal numbers of women and men ministers. The future will show answers to many unanswered and as yet inconceivable questions about where the talents needed will come from, what the proportion of women and men in the ministry need to be. But so long as we have fellow members of our Church who do not accept women as priests and bishops we will be, in one sense, insured against problems of our own making. We will be covering all options. That surely is wonderfully positive, for having women bishops available may well surprise us all with the values and perceptions that it enables our Church to articulate. This whole argument has been about the best way to do jobs the Church needs done; the best way to learn to evangelise; the best way to present our face to the world. The House of Bishops’ statement means that good practice will be based on the experience since 1994 of coping with difference. This all makes me immensely optimistic about the future.
I got elected to Synod in 1990 because I wanted women in the ministry. I wanted them as priests and bishops precisely because women and men are different in all sorts of ways, and women priests have proved to have some special qualities to offer which men priests may not always have. We will learn to what extent women bishops will have a distinctive quality and be episcopally feminine in the way the Church needs. The defeat of the Measure in 2012 was a real moment to savour and it occasioned real re-thinking. As such, it was a rare eruption of commonsense. The Church needs all its conflicting elements to have any hope of doing the job that it is called to do. Let us face the fact that having women priests and bishops is not going to save the Church, that it will very soon become normal and routine, as it has already almost become normal to have women as priests. Women in the ministry will be an unremarkable normality. But the church will also have the advantage of including in its ranks people who do not accept women in the ministry, perhaps forever, and who voted against what we are doing for good reason - their good reason. I fervently believe that we do not all have to be the same or have the same opinions. God needed us to be a different, our differences are not our weakness, our differences rest on the complexity of wisdom and faith and the created human mind. They are our secret weapon.

_The Bishop of Burnley (The Rt Revd John Goddard):_ Thank you, your Grace, for calling me and also my grateful thanks to all those who prepared the ground so well for today. Synod members, we have travelled a long journey together; a journey sometimes of sadness, separation, frustration, disappointment, even anger and that is so for many of us regardless of the way we vote. But now we look forward to this better way. We seek unity and diversity, not my original phrase but drawn from John Macquarrie. We seek this unity and diversity in the five principles, yet we are not agreed, so how do we live with good Christian disagreement moving forward in the trust that all have said before us, with real honour and real respecting of the difference.

Only when we learn to live that way can we then recognise God in the untidiness of our panoramic rather than monochrome church. As that happens we will be renewed and restored by our Lord. So may I make it clear, without question, I fully accept those who vote yes as having full integrity and honesty in the way they vote and embracing the five principles. I do not in any way wish to diminish them; rather, I want to walk with them in the presence of our Lord.

What I do ask is that for me who is unable to vote yes that you treat me likewise. I, in obedience, again not my word in this context but that of Rowan Williams, obedience to God in conscience will vote no because that is the weight of my conscience. I could abstain in the process and forward the process but I cannot now embrace the principle of ordination of women into the Episcopacy. Out of theological conviction I must vote no.

Two weeks ago in a mosque in Burnley I was meeting with two friends. They had asked me to meet with them. One was a Shia, the other was a Sunni - yes, Iraq was on the agenda. They were deep friends since boyhood, now frightened of that friendship. It was only when we began to trust in that small group, to engage in what I call witness dialogue that we discovered that there was enough to build a friendship.
between them for the future. We did not solve the problem but we began to find a fragile way forward. I believe that is now where we are standing. In conscience I will have to vote against. I expect that this Measure will go through and I will commit myself to working with those who disagree with me. I ask them to do the same with me.

So, what manner would this disagreement living together in trust take? First, and please do not take this as a sleight-of-hand but here as an example, earlier in our Synod, on Friday, the provision that was being offered to those who in conscience will vote against was described as “generous”. Can we abandon such language? I think the hard work here is not generous; it is balanced, reasoned, thought through, and as more material arrives from the Archbishops and more clarity appears then the stronger the trust will grow. Only when we are careful of our language, careful not to diminish, but to affirm in that way can we build on trust. Therefore I would want to also take here the opportunity to say that if I have unintentionally failed to diminish any member of Christ’s Church in these debates, I do apologise. I respect your “yes” just as I hope you respect my “no”.

So we will live in disagreement and we look forward as we move in disagreement to working in a way in which, as we participate in the Lordship of Christ, participate in his Grace together, we will find ways of above all engaging in mission together. That will set the agenda. As we engage in mission together, we will be transformed and we will know then what God will do with us. Thank you.

Miss Jane Patterson (Sheffield): Archbishop, thank you for calling me to speak. I do so gladly as a conservative evangelical who holds what has come to be known as a complementarian view of headship in the church and in the family.

Today I want to record my sincere thanks to the Archbishops and to all those who have participated in the legislative process, with the intention of delivering a winning package that would permit women to become bishops and provide for those who have a theological difficulty with this development. Sadly, the Measure itself before us today plainly does not do this, and so with integrity I cannot follow Pete Spiers’ advice and abstain, and will vote against the Measure.

Sheffield is one of nine dioceses whose individual voting figures in the recent Article 8 reference debates did not reflect the more than 90% overwhelming majority described in the Report. The picture is much more mixed. Whilst we acknowledge the theological conviction of the majority here, in the context of worldwide Anglicanism our theological convictions are at least as valid and therefore merit adequate provision.

As part of the overall package, the House of Bishops’ guidance and its five guiding principles gives some grounds for hope, at least in theory. Let us consider the evidence so far. It has been acknowledged that there now is no Bishop who holds a complementarian view of headship in the College despite 69 appointed since the publication of Talent and Calling. In their recent note the Archbishops stated that it had not been possible to appoint one through the normal appointments processes. An announcement before today might have made an abstention a possibility, so we must wait and endeavour to trust and hope.
Since 2012, I have served as a central member of the Crown Nominations Commission and have had the opportunity first-hand to witness the difficulty in nominating such people as diocesan bishops. Dioceses in their published statement of need now state the desired position on this matter of potential candidates. Surely mutual flourishing must include as discarding the diocesan equivalent of NIMBYism.

The six central members of CNC reflect the spectrum of theological traditions within the Church of England but we have learned to serve together, I think in a manner which models at least the basics of mutual flourishing. We greet one another genuinely and warmly. We pray together. We have eaten around both Archbishops’ tables, we look out for one another and choose our words carefully because we acknowledge we disagree about some of our theology. Reflecting on the Archbishop of York’s words in his recent address “Choosing life”, sustaining the life of the five guiding principles is flawed with difficulty. In some dioceses they need urgent resuscitation or even resurrection. Talk of the complementarian view as “un-Biblical” and “un-Anglican” effectively sabotages these principles and undermines the leadership of our Archbishops and Bishops.

So, what about the future? Can I hope in the face of this evidence? Yes, I can, because I believe in Jesus Christ who in John’s Gospel describes himself as “the resurrection and the life”. I commit to serving him in his Church whatever the result today.

The Chair called the Revd Canon Andrew Godsall for a maiden speech.

The Revd Canon Andrew Godsall (Exeter): Thirty-seven years ago at aged just 18, I joined another Great British institution, the British Broadcasting Corporation, and during our induction process a number of things were explained to us. One of them was that everybody in the organisation was called by their Christian name, no matter what their rank. Another was that we should not make any distinction in our work between women and men. Angela Rippon had only been, for a couple of years, the first woman newsreader. It is impossible to go back to those days, it seems. But there was a new mood of inclusivity in what had always been a pretty egalitarian organisation. It was something of a surprise then when I joined the Church and was ordained 26 years ago to find myself in a church where everybody called me Godsall or Mr Godsall and where the distinctions between women and men were institutionalised. In the BBC where I worked, the Department of the World Service, we had as our motto “nation shall speak peace unto nation”. The Common Good was very evident. The shift leader was called the “clump mummy”, even if they were male and their oversight was pastoral and encouraging, enabling people who were just young apprentices like me to come on and be really part of the shift and the team.

In the Church oversight was and still is patriarchal and hierarchical. Although it may have changed a bit, I am sorry to say I found the BBC in many ways a far more Christian organisation than the Church of England, and Lord Reith would have been very proud of that. My ex- BBC colleagues consider the C of E to be about as on the ball as a dead seal!
Another thing that my previous employer was very good at was teamwork. Teamwork in the C of E still tends to be in a group of people who want to help the vicar out, and it will not do. Teamwork is about different things making a difference. Teamwork enables everyone in the team to flourish. Teamwork means that you look out for the other members of your team even if they do things very differently to you and if you were in their position you would do them differently from the way they are doing things. That is why I find enthusiasm for this package. It brings together opposites even though they are not the most natural partners in a respectful way. I do not want to be voting for women bishops. I want to be voting for bishops who are able to make connections between the Good Book and the Good Life. It is a calling and a vocation to do that, and it seems to me and most of the Church of England that such a vocation is not to be confined to 50% of the human race. Neither is it just recognised by those who are in favour and those who are against but in the spaces between. This package enables, if you vote for it, not for women bishops but for bishops who are 100% rather than 50% human as well as enabling space between opposite points of view. I say yes to that and what a remarkable witness it would be to our nation, I think, in mission today if we were all able to say yes to that, because we are not voting about the principle; we are voting about the package, and it is time for some unity.

The Bishop of Blackburn (The Rt Revd Julian Henderson): Those of us in favour of women bishops who voted against in November 2012 know that many struggled to understand the decision that we took that day. That pain caused and felt on all sides in the days that followed has been expressed in lots of ways not least affecting certain previously very good relationships. Today, some will be glad to hear whereas other will be disappointed and saddened to hear that some of us who voted against 18 months ago will be voting enthusiastically in support of the current legislation. I shall be one of those, and consequently a different set of relationships are going to be affected.

My support is for a number of reasons, but primarily because of what has already been mentioned by a number, the framework of the five guiding principles, for me a clear commitment to those in favour and those unable to accept this development is a key plank on which this legislation moves forward. Not that everyone is comfortable with all aspects of what could be called the “famous five”, but today we are accepting that the way to proceed ahead on this issue is to make that commitment to one another. This is not unlike the situation some of us would have read about in Joshua a short while ago where the two and half tribes of Israel who were granted their space on the east side of the Jordan built an altar to the Lord on the west side as a sign that they were true Israelites and were to be treated and remembered as such. It was an action that was totally misunderstood by their fellow Israelites but when they explained, “We did it for fear that some day your descendants might say to ours, ‘what have you to do with the Lord, the God of Israel’?” It was accepted that the altar did in fact serve as a witness that the two and a half tribes were indeed fully Kosher members of the people of God.

The five guiding principles are like that altar, to remind those in favour and those against that both are full members of the Church of England. I want to say a few words about how those five guiding principles need to be worked out if this motion is accepted and passed today. Broken relationships do need to be restored and
rebuilt. That means a certain amount of forgiveness between us as members of this Synod. It always means that we have got to find a way of respecting those we differ with in the way we speak to one another. I think we should stop talking about extremes as if those against are a bit odd and will increasingly be written off and in the other direction as if those in favour are insensitive and not taking Scripture seriously. This change of language and approach to one another requires quite a shift in our dealing with one another, and we should avoid those critical and snide comments.

In Blackburn, we recently held the first ordinations of women priests by the Diocesan Bishop for the first time. I described this in the welcome at the start of that service as a change of direction which causes some to rejoice but which others reject and regret. There was no triumphalism and it was a simple acknowledgment of those in the family who retain an honoured place at the table. I am pleased to say that up to three incumbents against women’s ordination as priests and bishops were present, and one of those three even took part in the laying on of hands. We as a diocese are seeking to model the five principles, with respect flowing in all directions, and despite the reputation of the diocese, I have inherited four Headship Evangelicals as excellent area deans, all of whom are doing a really good job in very mixed deaneries. I think the five principles mean the promise of a Headship Evangelical bishop sooner rather than later, and if that does not happen, words will be felt to be hollow. I think it also means that there needs to be a level playing field for those selected for training and for recommendations to training institutions and for our appointment processes. So the five guiding principles are about how we need to treat one another.

When we talk about promoting the Common Good in society generally, here is a call and a commitment to work at the Common Good within our church. May it be so today and in how we live with the consequences of our voting. Thank you.

The Revd Dr Emma Ineson (Bristol): I have recently become the Principal of a theological college, an excellent one called Trinity College Bristol (other training institutions are available!) I would like to tell you about ten reasons why saying yes to the package before us today would be very good news. Those reasons are called: Sarah, Bev, Anika, Jo, Debbie, Donna, Kim, Rachel, Joy and Sarah. These are ten young women, most of them under 30, who have offered themselves for ordained ministry in the Church of England and who are now training at Trinity. They are committed, enthusiastic, clever, creative, mission-minded women who have responded to the call of Jesus in their lives and have offered their gifts, their time, their very selves to serve him in the Church of England.

These are women who could have chosen to do almost anything else with their lives, but this is what they know God is calling them to do, and they have said yes. A clear vote in favour today would send a very strong message to Sarah, Bev, Anika, Jo, Debbie, Donna, Kim, Rachel, Joy and Sarah that the Church to which they have offered themselves says yes to them, values them, sees their potential, says to them, “This is a church where women and men can minister equally in every office. We welcome you. We are really glad you are here.” After the vote in November 2012, the women ordinands at Trinity and I expect other colleges and courses were dismayed, confused, discouraged that the church to which they had been called did
not appear to value a future in which they could minister equally with men. Please can we not do that to them again. Theological colleges and courses must be places which model trust and commitment to mutual flourishing.

If we pass this Measure today, Trinity (other colleges are available) will continue to be a place where people from different theological viewpoints learn to live and work together in accordance with the five guiding principles. Can I say particularly to evangelicals who hold a headship view that ordinands from this tradition will continue to be most warmly welcome at Trinity: “We will commit to nurturing an atmosphere of mutual trust and understanding, to bearing with each other in love”. I would love to go back to college on Wednesday with good news of great joy for Sarah, Bev, Anika, Jo, Debbie, Donna, Kim, Rachel, Joy and Sarah. I do not know if they will become bishops one day, but I hope and pray with all my heart that after today there will be nothing to prevent them from being whatever God calls them to be, including bishops. Please vote for that to become a reality.

The Revd Canon David Banting (Chelmsford): When Final Approval is given, it will create a new minority and perhaps institutionalise its own potential division, but we have committed ourselves to respect each other, and to respect each other means to work hard at understanding each other; not to agree with each other, we recognise we cannot do that, but to understand each other. I am grateful for what has happened in my own diocese, that we have reached a level of respect and understanding which keeps us in dialogue and real friendship, I believe. It enables my Bishop to tell me publicly that he believes I am wrong, and for me to say to him in the words of Cromwell to the Scots in 1650: “… in the bowels of Christ, I think it possible that you be mistaken”.

A word about understanding of a conservative position. It is the reference within the five principles to the removal of any reference to gender; I believe that to be a hostage to fortune. I accept it because the Church in her councils has agreed it, while I retain the understanding from the Articles that councils may err in that they be not governed by the Word of God or the Spirit of God. We live in a world that wishes to remove or minimise or disregard gender. The Government has done so in regard to marriage already and now the Church appears to be doing so in regard to the orders of ministry and, more precisely, the oversight of the Church.

Quite the contrary to what we have heard today, the Church is not a business; it is a family, and the ministry is not a job or jobs to be done with all the associated gifts and talents. That is simply not what ministry is about; it is a calling, it is a vocation and from the Scriptures I have trembled at the high calling I understand I am given as a man, in marriage, and in the oversight of the Church. I am called to model and leave an image of none other than Jesus Christ himself. To remove any reference to the significance of gender suggests ministry is a job and the Church is simply a business like any other, and it seems like it undermines or removes my unique calling to be a man.

If the role of oversight can be fulfilled interchangeably by a man or a woman, what might be the implications for marriage? The Bishop of Dorchester in an earlier debate referred to a girl asking if a woman could be a bishop. “Very soon”, he replied. But what if the girl had asked if a woman could be a husband or a father?
Thank you, Synod, for the assurances and promises that you or the House of Bishops have made to what will and is now the traditional conservative integrity. You have affirmed that our position has integrity and is to be respected, that it has legitimacy as theology and as teaching; it is loyally Anglican and we are going to belong fully and be full members in the life of the Church. You have assured us of support and help that we should flourish. You have made a promise that we should be recognised in the episcopal order. Now I am an optimist because I am a man of faith, but I am not naïve and I will be disappointed if I continue to hear that this position or theology has “no place in the Church”, it is “toxic” or “heretical” or “non-Anglican” or “outdated”, and there is to be no Conservative Evangelical bishop. If full approval is given, this will not be win or lose; it will be a judgment call, hard won and perhaps close at that, but we go forward calmly, maturely, without triumphalism with two integrities, respecting, trusting, looking out for one other, in the spirit of Romans 14 that we are reading in our Evening Prayer at the moment. Thank you very much.

Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford): I was one of the members of the House of Laity who in the words of Tom Sutcliffe in November 2012 helped to “stop the bus”. Today, although I still have reservations about the principle of women in the episcopate, I intend to abstain because I believe that we have arrived at a solution which the majority of people in all parts of the Church can at least live with, and I would have no desire to block that. I do believe that today, as every day, is a day for looking forward and not for looking back. I hope therefore members of Synod will indulge me just for a moment if I do cast my mind back to November 2012. In the aftermath of that vote, it is hard for me to forget the amount of bile, vitriol and disapprobation that was heaped on the heads of those of us, particularly those of us in the House of Laity, who defeated that Measure. If I stick my head above the parapet, I expect to have rocks thrown at it. I have never minded that, but what I did mind was the implication that somehow if we were grudgingly allowed to hold those opinions, we were not allowed to express those through our votes in the legitimate processes of this Synod, and that our exercising of a proper Synodical process had been a tragedy for the Church. I am afraid some of this tone was implied from some episcopal ad clerum downwards.

When, as I hope and expect, this legislation is passed today, it could be said that those of us who voted against in November 2012 have been vindicated because we have arrived at a much better point than the point that we were at then. Part of me thinks that it would be nice if the acknowledgement of that could be as public as was the disapprobation we received in November 2012, but I do not ask for that because I do genuinely believe that this is time to look forward and not back, so what I do ask your Grace and members of Synod, is that today and every day, going forward, members of this Synod will be allowed to vote with our consciences and will be respected for doing so. Thank you.

The Ven. Annette Cooper (Chelmsford): During 2012 I undertook some research into the well-being of ordained women in the Diocese of Chelmsford. Each priest I interviewed at length shared their delight in the vocation of the ministry and were clearly flourishing in many ways, and often with a great affirmation from a local congregation and the wider parish, but each one of them had also encountered lack of respect and comment. Sadly, I know from colleagues that it is not only women
who have suffered; for those with theological convictions that are different to theirs have taken the pain too. To put it bluntly, we have hurt each other and today we can start to rectify this. We have not until more recently found a way to do things differently. We have not until today seen a way forward to commit ourselves to this. We have not, in a nutshell, fully committed to loving our neighbours, which includes ordained colleagues.

We are, I believe, from today now on a journey of change; a journey that involves us in seeking with humility and grace to honour those with whom we disagree; a journey marked by the confident humility described by the Bishop of Leeds at the Eucharist this morning. So today we are able to commit ourselves to mutual flourishing. We are today able to put behind us the past and to seek to create a church where we can all re-imagine and create new ways of relating and working across our differences.

I am glad to be part of a Synod that can take this lead. There is so much that we can teach the world as we live out this commitment when we get back home.

Was it the pain and shock of the last vote on the matter of women in the episcopate in November 2012 or is it that we are discerning the Spirit at work and have really come to value each other as uniquely made and loved by God and called to be one in Christ. Can we now really listen to each other and stop heaping up the conjectures we have loaded onto those who disagree with us. The answer, I am convinced, is surely “yes” because we have started to live out this transformation.

I cannot give in numbers how many people have said to me that Synod now feels different when we meet and I cannot number either those who have said they want to make this new legislation work because it is the will of the greater part of our Church. It seems then that today we have an opportunity to say yes to a package that places firm foundations for mutual flourishing and respect and maintains the highest possible degree of communion. Today we could commit ourselves once again to seek the flourishing of those who do not agree with us. Today we also rejoice and delight in the gifts of women, God GIVEN gifts that will bless us all. Today we have the opportunity to tell the world that the Church is a place that takes seriously the ministry of women and men ordained at every level and of lay people, and in doing so can model a truly faithful way of living, living differently with all our differences.

I am glad that we are now in this place ready to move forward together, to strengthen each other as we seek to make Christ known in our world. Let us vote “yes” for the package before us.

Mr Adrian Vincent (Guildford): The majority of those who elected me want me to vote for women bishops. My reading of the Bible, where Jesus appointed 12 male apostles and the early Church who followed that example, is that the Church does not have the right to make this change, but I accept that others interpret the Bible differently. So I said to those who elected me that I will vote for women bishops if there is enough provision for traditionalists to enable them to remain in the Church of England within theological integrity. The November 2012 package did not have that
and I voted against. This draft, with the five principles in the House of Bishops’ Declaration, has just about enough provision.

However, I also represent the minority for whom this change is wrong and who say that I should vote according to my conscience. I am a member of the Catholic Group of General Synod and as the journal New Directions says this month: “To vote in favour of the measure is not a Catholic option and would betray the trust of this constituency”. So what do I do? I could abstain. That may be an honourable choice for some but personally I would see it as a cowardly way out for me.

Perhaps I am in a 1 Samuel Chapter 8 situation: the people of Israel demanded Samuel appoint for them a king. Samuel says to God, “But that’s not right” and God replies, “It’s not right but give the people what they’re demanding”. Samuel does though and God is merciful: He calls people as kings and He blesses Israel through them.

So I shall be voting in favour today. By doing so, I am betraying what I believe and I am betraying those who trusted in me. I hope that the promised commitment of mutual flourishing is not a commitment that will run out of steam in a few years but is a commitment that will continue for 50 and 100 years.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

Mr Tim Hind (Bath and Wells): Chair, when we kicked off the first attempt to get final approval I remember saying to Synod, “The train has left the station” - not a bus - “The train has left the station” and my brother said to me as I left the chamber on that day it was not fair because he had not yet bought a ticket. Now, I am reminded of the last General Election where Tony Benn was advertised as talking about what the Houses of Parliament were like for him, and he said, “I’ve been there for a long, long time. The thing that I’ve noticed is that when I come back time and time again there are two different types of people there, one are signposts and the other are weather vanes”.

I actually want to pay tribute to Philip Giddings and to my brother, John Hind, because they were signposts, they were loyal to their constituencies and they helped us to get to a better place through their opposition to what was going on and I thank them for it.

The other day we were talking about the Baptismal Commission and how important it was that it was not too formal and it was an opportunity to have a face-to-face conversation. The other people I think that have helped us on our way to get to where we are today that need special mention today are Christina Rees and David Houlding. They took us so far through their conversation, tirelessly going round together, knowing that they were in opposition to one another but talking to each other and becoming friends, and it is in that spirit of friendship that I want to say to John Burnley, “Thank you so much for your friendship on Synod and we wish you well in your retirement”.

The Revd Canon Dr Dagmar Winter (Newcastle): As a member of the Steering Committee I would like to pay tribute to Bishop James and his outstanding chairing
of us, to David Porter and his colleagues for their excellent facilitation, to all the amazing Church House staff and to my fellow Committee members who I am sure will chime in with what I have just said.

It seems quite a while ago, and it is, but what an experience it was when we were all working there together. It is quite difficult to communicate what it was as we worked together. For me the highlight was, and I hope this will be repeated in years to come, when we were initially at loggerheads over something but did not stop there but sought to understand why this unacceptable thing was so important to the other, discovering the deeper reason rather than the presenting one, and then working together on a way round this so that we could move forward together.

I shall resist quoting Voltaire because we are human and this legislation is not the best of all possible worlds but it is jolly good, especially because we seem to be getting away from the need for seeking to nail down - and there is Biblical precedence for this - what is to happen in every eventuality. Perhaps it is no coincidence that the Community of the Cross of Nails has helped us to get here. Instead of the nailing down, with the five guiding principles we are invited to commit ourselves to a spirit of working and walking together, which is befitting a Christian community that is animated by the spirit of the risen Christ.

Of course, you only need to open the pages of the New Testament to see that such a community never fails to find reasons to fall out with each other - we are human - but crucially the package allows for that too with the resolution of disputes procedure. I urge you to support this package with your vote and commit to its spirit in your dioceses and in your parishes. Thank you.

Mrs Christina Rees (St Albans): I expect this will be the last time we get to do a double act. I want to thank Tim for his words and to say that, yes, some of us have been having unfacilitated discussions for decades. I think one of the big changes that so many of us have sensed in the Synod is that the facilitated discussions here have made a genuine difference to us as the General Synod. We can feel it and I have heard that from people holding all different opinions about women in the episcopate, and I am very grateful for those facilitated discussions, for Archbishop Justin in initiating them and David Porter for making them happen.

I have listened very hard to all the speeches so far and been intrigued, compelled, irritated, as I thought I would be, but the speech that took me by surprise was Adrian Vincent’s. Adrian Vincent has made a sacrificial decision today for the sake of the Church. He has shown his loyalty as an Anglican, as a member of the Church of England and as a responsible member of this body. He is making a sacrifice. I was not prepared for what he was saying and it has absolutely stunned me, and I thank you for that, Adrian.

Why I hope we can vote for this package is that it has moved us from the legalistic into the realm of the relational and it will better enable us to live out who we believe we are as members of the Body of Christ with that great mission Paula talked about with both the ministry and the message of reconciliation; reconciliation amongst ourselves, amongst ourselves and other Christians, and amongst ourselves and
people of all faiths and none. Reconciliation is not confined to our Church and us, it is for the world. I think this attitude, this way of doing business, enables us to do it.

I hope those who might be able to abstain will or will even vote in favour. I cannot ask that but I do believe the time for this is now. This is not the time for “no”.

The Revd Preb. David Houlding (London): Your Grace, if I may just say to Christina that, yes, this may be the last time that we speak together on this subject following one another, and I do hope it will be, we have a lot more opportunity for fun together in the future!

I want to thank Tim Hind for his kind comments too. I do not deserve them because I want to identify with Bishop John Goddard with his apology. When we argue amongst ourselves we are in danger of losing sight of the purpose of religion to love God and to seek to serve our neighbour, and I feel that I have colluded with that all too easily and, therefore, we should all be approaching this debate in a sense with a spirit of penitence for the way we have conducted things in the past.

Walking the Porter way, as I want to call it, I think we are in a much better position, but I must move on quickly to my main point because Catholic order and evangelical mission go together. So frequently we affirm our belief in one church because Catholic order and evangelical mission go together. So frequently we affirm our belief in one church, any division is a scandal because we know it is against our Lord’s own will that his disciples should be divided, so we have to learn to trust and to go on trusting, however much it may cost. Christian unity, the goal of full visible communion between the churches must not be lost, it is not an optional extra. That there should remain within the life of our Church something within our understanding and practice in relation to Holy Order with which the wider part of Catholic Christendom can identify is crucial to furthering our quest. It does matter. It is vital for the sake of mission in the future.

There will be an ecumenical price to pay with our Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox brothers and sisters. We are proceeding without wider Catholic consent in this matter as Archbishop Justin reminded us during question time on Friday evening. Of course, the dialogue will continue and we will continue to live together in the life of the Church of England but we are proceeding without Catholic consent. Nonetheless, we must not lose sight of the aspiration that we set before us in the great chorus of the Christmas hymn, “One Church, one Faith, one Lord” and to that end we must continue to pray and work. Thank you.

The Suffragan Bishop of Dorchester (The Rt Revd Colin Fletcher): When the results of the vote in November 2012 were played out on the television screens, my face was caught in the spotlight. My son, a master of understatement, said when he saw it, “Dad, you did not look like a very happy bunny” I said, “That’s because I wasn’t”.

Looking back, I too would want to say thank you to those who stopped us at that point. It was extremely painful. I went to an after meeting, it was an extremely painful time, but I am glad that we did not go ahead at that point because I think the conversation we have had since then has created something much more creative and productive. As I said in that debate, when I taught at Wycliffe, and it is now about 35 years ago, I argued strongly at that point for a Headship view and understanding of Scripture. I argued that as a faithful, I hope, and loyal, true
Anglican. Since then I have changed my mind, partly because I have reread Romans 16 which I think is an extremely important text to see how Paul actually worked things out in practice in the churches of which he was a part.

I do so today support this motion as I believe, and hope, a faithful and true Anglican but although I hope and believe that my understanding of Scripture is more accurate than it was then, I very, very much want those who hold a different understanding to my own to be honoured and fully included in our Church. They are faithful and true Anglicans. I want them, as I want Traditional Catholics, to flourish. What lies before us today gives us a far, far better chance to achieve that, which is why I will be voting with still greater enthusiasm for what is before us today.

The Revd Canon Rosie Harper (Oxford): This has already been a remarkable and, actually, very moving debate but it has also all been about us I think we need to look at this from the outside in. So I would like to focus for a second on the situation of women around the world. Ten years ago, I sat in a taxi in Cairo with an amazing Egyptian woman. She was a doctor and also on the World Council of Churches and she warned me strongly that things were getting worse for women in many parts of the world, including Egypt, and that the churches in the West were failing their sisters by their reluctance to speak out. As we know, the plight of women is, indeed, far worse than ten years ago. This remarkable, well-educated and well-travelled woman can no longer walk the streets of Cairo in safety. The schoolgirls in Nigeria, for example, are still hostages, and so much of this is done in the name of religion. Once we have passed this legislation, which I sincerely hope we do, we will at last have the legitimacy to speak clearly and strongly about the desperate discrimination that is going on without being accused of hypocrisy. This is not just our private little C of E challenge. How we vote matters to women around the world. Please vote yes on their behalf.

The Ven. Rachel Treweek (London): Some of us were joking yesterday, suggesting that we should do this debate in a “Just a Minute” style, each speaker having just one minute without deviation, hesitation or repetition. Today we are gathered together as individuals and yet as members together of General Synod and members together of the Body of Christ. Of course, one of the paradoxes of discipleship is it is about a personal relationship with Christ, personal accountability before God, whilst also being called to be corporate members together of one body. I want to be part of a Church which values every individual member. I also want to be part of a Church which is corporately committed to living with difference and, in so doing, is a witness to a world which does not know how to disagree well. Here, now, in this present moment, we live that tension of each being individuals whilst seeking faithfully to be Christ’s Church together as people of good news living a corporate narrative of hope; not as those who belong to a particular constituency or who owe allegiance to one group or another, but as individuals who belong together because we share in Christ’s death and resurrection and in all that today we share a common task. Amidst all our different theological perspectives, we are called today to reach a corporate decision on behalf of 42 dioceses as we continue to live the Kingdom of God here and yet not yet.

We have corporately affirmed our commitment to simplicity, reciprocity and mutuality, but we have not yet crossed the bridge to the place where they can be truly lived.
We are still gathered in a place of uncertainty. That means that the song of hope is at risk of being drowned out by fear and assumptions which result in that low level of trust. So how are we going to live with the paradox of the individual and the corporate in how we vote today? Yes, each of us as individuals must vote with integrity. I hope and pray that in so doing we vote together for the corporate narrative of hope.

There will be a day when bishops will be both male and female. So let us not linger any longer with deviation, repetition or hesitation. Let us use our vote to ensure that corporately we embrace this package so that we take the risk of living what it offers and ensure we sing the Kingdom’s song of hope together.

Dr Elaine Storkey (Ely): There are two pictures that we get of what we are doing at the moment. One is the one that is fed constantly by the media, that we are a Church at loggerheads on the point of splitting up, misogynous and actually we cannot get together. A truer picture, which I think is fundamentally true, is that we are a Church seeking to be guided by the Holy Spirit. I can understand and forgive secular people for not understanding the Holy Spirit. Many of us in the Church, other than the charismatics, do not understand the Holy Spirit. The speaking in tongues, prophesy, religious fervour, having discernment words and so on. Do not worry about that. Even charismatics know that these things have to be tested and they are very wary of those people who are very close to the spirit but only in an advisory capacity. I think the Holy Spirit more often guides the Church in actually much more ordinary ways. Because the spirit is a spirit of truth, the spirit of wisdom, the spirit of power, the spirit of reconciliation and the spirit of conciliation and discernment. The spirit speaks to the whole Church not simply to individuals. It is the responsibility of the whole Church to discern the mind of the spirit.

So what happened in 2012? One person at the end of that debate told me quite clearly he believed this was the work of the Holy Spirit. I was irritated and annoyed. I thought this was a sop for stubbornness and bad theology. I went away and prayed about it. I repented. I realised he was right. I believe that God wanted greater unity in the Church, the greatest security for the minorities who are feeling very uneasy even now as we are having this debate, greater clarity about the way forward, a greater sense of peace in the Church as a whole. I believe we have got that. We have got the result of 43 out of 43 dioceses. There has been an increase in reception and an increase in affirmation, returning a vote of more than 90% in favour of the Measure. We can believe that this is a leading of the Holy Spirit. There has been a greater desire for inclusiveness, a greater sense of optimism, new statements from the Archbishop, a clearer sense of where we are going and how to take this forward, greater patience and hope, more love among us. The spirit speaks through the processes, through the work of people late into the night, through revision processes, through facilitative discussions, through exchange of views. The gifts we have in the Church are gifts of the Holy Spirit given to the whole Church and not to individuals. They are gifts of teaching led prophesy, healing and so on and, most of all, they are gifts of love.

What is love? It is not just that cuddly, kissy, touchy-feely kind of thing that we can do to one another. I love that. I mean, I am all for that. But, actually, that is not what biblical love is about. It is not sentimental. It is actually about being kind,
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gentle, faithful, trusting, believing, non-resentful and all things. When the Church is looked at from the outside, what do we need to exude to people? That we believe in the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit enables us to love one another. This is how people will see that we are Christ’s disciples.

The Revd Canon Joyce Jones (Wakefield): I want to offer you perhaps a small example of perhaps what it might look like moving forward, how we might be able to move forward together. At the last Wakefield Diocesan Synod, which was the final Wakefield Diocesan Synod, the main item for debate was this package. I had been asked to speak in favour of it and my fellow Proctor, the Revd Paul Cartwright, had been asked to speak against it. However, as we thought about it and talked together at the last Synod in February, we decided that this was not an appropriate way forward. We felt that in the spirit of the five principles it would be better to do something radical and do a joint presentation. I think the diocesan secretary and the diocesan bishop were rather surprised we said that was what we were going to do. We met together and we talked about what we would say and who would say what and, as we did that, we grew in a greater appreciation of the compromises that we both made. Each of us felt that we took something positive from the five principles, but also we made some compromise for the sake of working together and we were both able to say with integrity what we felt and what we believed. So we made our presentation.

The effect was to stun the Synod into silence. The only speech was made by the Diocesan Adviser of the Women’s Ministry who welcomed and echoed what we had said. This meant we had an early tea break. We had to wait a bit because the tea was not ready yet! But we all went home for lunch early. We would have liked to have done this speech today together, but I do not think the Synod rules allow it. I have asked Paul about what I was going to say, he knows about it so it is together in one sense.

I hope and trust that this is the shape of things to come and we all may be able to move forward and value one another as fellow members of the Body of Christ and I would encourage you to vote in favour of this measure.

Mr Keith Malcouronne (Guildford): I am also one of those who in 2012 voted against the proposals as they then stood and will today be very happily voting in favour of this new package, which is better for all. As Elaine as kindly said just a moment ago, and in our own diocese of Guildford Synod, many others said the Holy Spirit actually has been at work in that difficult time, guiding us and answering the prayers that we had for guidance then. Today is all about looking forward and, as we look forward, what of value can we take with us from the recent past, from the pain that we have been through, from the several years potentially in the wilderness? I joined Synod in 2004 and I think at almost every meeting we have had discussion about this matter in one way or another. I think we could have achieved a positive outcome earlier and let us think just for a moment what we could do differently in the future.

Firstly, we have had the experiment of a broader based Steering Committee for drafting and then taking forward legislation, and that may be a model that will be serving us well in the future. We have adopted facilitative conversations and my amendment you kindly adopted last summer promoted that idea. I think Bishop Pete
also agreed with that as well.

In 2004 we had the Rochester Report which masterly laid out the very different but well-researched, argued positions right across the theological spectrum. What did we do with that piece of work? We took note and then we moved straight into trying to legislate, to resolve and come up with something that would work. We did not do the hard thinking, the hard theological spadework of really understanding those differences, really working at, well, how could we put something together and then turn that into legislation. At other times, in 2008 we had tea which apparently was supported by 364 to 1, but was then taken off the table. The House of Bishops had to think about that. The Archbishops put forward an amendment in 2010, which was lost by five votes in the House of Clergy. In 2012 I was kindly called first on the package of the July Synod and pleaded with you then to vote for what I felt was an acceptable compromise for those who felt they needed provision, but the Appleby Amendment took away reference to theological convictions, which actually have now made an appearance again. I do believe that we are in a much better place, not just for technical reasons about this legislation but because we have been through this trial and this pain and this fire together. I believe we will be a better Synod and a better Church in the future and I am looking forward to it.

The Bishop of Gloucester (The Rt Revd Michael Perham): It is evident, is it not, Members of the Synod that in every diocese in our Church of England the ministry of women priests is vital, deeply valued and, I believe, has been transformative. For them, for the well-being of the Church of England and for our mission in this nation a “yes” vote today is to my mind, crucial, and the opposite a disaster. There is much else at stake, but part of what we do today is to honour 20 years of fruitful ministry by hundreds of women priests whose ministry God has blessed.

What I want to suggest above all else is that we need to say yes today in order that the Church of England may flourish; not just some part of it, not just those for whom this package is designed to protect, though certainly them among them. It is the whole Church that has been disabled by the arguments, strife and discord among us as we have struggled to resolve this issue. All my ministry I have believed in the comprehensiveness of our Church, its breadth and its variety. I happen to have been informed in all sorts of ways by its more Catholic tradition. But I love the Church also because there are evangelicals, liberals, puritans, charismatics and more, and people who reject all labels and who are just Church of England. I want us all to flourish, all contributing distinctively to the overall culture and life of the Church. If we can embrace this package today we can, once again, begin to embrace one another. Evangelicals who have been divided on this issue can stop falling out over women in the episcopate. Catholics can recover a unity that they have lost and, once again, focus on that wonderful incarnational, sacramental theology that has enriched us in the past. If we will let God make it so, today can be a day when the Church flourishes afresh and those who have been divided can once again be friends. This package gives us space for renewing friendships and for flourishing for all.

The Archbishop led the Synod in prayer.

(Adjournment)
The Chair: Members of Synod, we resume the debate began before we went to lunch. Just to let you know, for those who were not doing the calculation that I was, out of the 85 people who signalled they wished to speak, 24 have spoken so far, and, friends, may I also congratulate those 24 people who have spoken. I did not have to use my powers under Standing Order 17 for tedious repetition either of their own arguments or arguments already rehearsed. I did not hear any repetition and that was a very, very good thing and you should all be congratulated, those of you who spoke. We return to our debate. The speech limit of three minutes is still in operation.

The Revd Canon Jane Charman (Salisbury): You will see in a moment why I am glad I did not have to make this speech just before lunch. During the 18 months that we spent working together as a Steering Committee the thought crossed my mind more than once that what the Church of England could really do with is a well-formed theology of the bring-and-share lunch. Perhaps after today we may be in a good position to create one. Bring-and-share lunches are a simple and gracious form of hospitality in which three things happen: everybody is invited, everybody contributes and everybody is fed.

The package before us is similar: it has been prepared for the benefit of everybody, it provides for people with very different views about ordained ministry to continue to be sustained and nourished within one Church, and for its success it relies upon what each of us is willing to bring to the party.

This is not a speech to try and persuade anyone to vote in a different way. We all understand the situation and I know that you will do what you feel to be right just as I shall.

I want to make a more general point. What is happening here today is hugely important for the Church and also for the world, not just what we are doing, as significant as that is, but the manner in which we are doing it. In a world which has never been more riven by seemingly irreconcilable differences, many of them religious in origin, we are doing our somewhat hesitant best to model a different way, not victory of one side over another, not even the democratic prevalence of a majority over a minority, but genuine respect for diversity, commitment to power sharing and the will and the imagination to continue to seek a life together against the odds. I think we should be proud of that attempt and that God will bless us in it. We do it not out of expediency but as followers of the one who Himself invites, welcomes and nurtures us all.

It is in the spirit of a bring-and-share lunch that people are thanked for what they are able to bring and generosity is assumed. I like that and I commend it to you. I know that there are people on all sides of this debate who are feeling that they have contributed a magnificent trifle to the feast while others have only managed a packet of Cheesy Wotsits, or that some of our offerings are, shall we say, only partially defrosted! If we, as lay and ordained leaders together in Synod, can assume generosity, trustworthiness and commitment in one another then others in our parishes and in the wider community will also take heart and something profoundly significant will be understood. Thank you.
The Ven. Douglas McKittrick (Chichester): Thank you, your Grace. I was not standing but thank you for calling me! I do not need three minutes. I need to say very little because the Bishops of Ely and Burnley and David Houlding made most of my points. I just wanted, if I may, to say that as a Traditionalist Catholic I need to vote against this motion. I would just like to draw your attention to the icon in the chapel where we have been praying, worshipping this week of the risen Jesus dragging the dead from their tombs. This issue has entombed us for too long. We are disciples of Jesus Christ, we have a gospel to claim to this nation and we need to move on. If we do not I shall lose the will to live and I do not think that I am alone. Let us not lose sight in the joy and light of the gospel of Jesus entrusted to us all. Let us leave the Synod together, wherever we are on this issue, seeking to engage in a new encounter with the risen Christ and with one another and together move forward in trust, that is crucial, “in trust”, as partners of the gospel for the sake of serving our nation, as the Bishop of Gloucester rightly said, as a comprehensive Church of England, Christ-centred. Let us be known by how we love one another and how we long to seek to serve Christ in our neighbour together, whatever our views on this issue, as our common calling be that new creation as Paula Gooder rightly reminded us. Thank you for calling me, I am extremely grateful.

The Ven. Cherry Vann (Manchester): Chair, members of Synod, much has been said of intentionality recently. We hear of it in relation to mission and growth and we have heard it used more than once in our debates here thus far. We will need to adopt that same principle of intentionality not just here but in our parishes and our dioceses if we are truly going to remain the broad and diverse church that we aspire to be.

Our Diocesan Bishop in Manchester has publicly committed himself to having the breadth of traditions represented, in long lists for senior appointments and on interview panels for such posts. That spirit needs to be replicated at parish and deanery level too. There remains a fair way to go as we seek to help those back home in our dioceses to live out those principles of reciprocity and mutuality. We, Synod, have had the benefit, if that is what it can be called, of years of discussion, debate and unpacking of the issues, but most people in our churches back home are completely unaware of them. All of us here today have a responsibility to model those qualities for they challenge us all, not just to put up with or to grudgingly acknowledge each other but “to rejoice in each other’s partnership in the gospel, to do all in our power to avoid giving offence to each other and to cooperate to the maximum possible extent in mission and ministry at diocesan, deanery and parish level”.

Synod, God calls us to love one another as he loves us, to embrace one another as he embraces us. Let us not just pass this legislation today but go on to model to the world how it is possible to live with difference, to remain united even in our diversity and to have good disagreement, and let us do it intentionally. Thank you.

The Revd Preb. Roderick Thomas (Exeter): Like other members of the Steering Committee I found the process very engaging, even when we had to eat turnip curry at Bishopthorpe. Sorry, especially when we had to eat turnip curry at Bishopthorpe! It was a very good process, one we all enjoyed, even if the taste was, you know,
different from what you normally had. I think it was typical of not necessarily our food but certainly our discussions.

One of the reasons we enjoyed the taste was that the work we did was a genuine attempt to engage, not simply to engage but also to accommodate one another. I personally feel that there were not enough areas where we were managing to do that and that is one of the reasons why I will not be able to vote in favour of this Measure later on, quite apart from the issues of conscience.

I do want to say that that very process in which we were engaged is one that I very much hope we will be able to take forward into the future if, as I suspect, Synod decides to vote in favour of this Measure. The attempt not just to listen but to accommodate, is certainly one that I will do my best to seek to achieve, to try to generate the trust so that those parishes that pass resolutions are encouraged to play a very full part in diocesan life and if there are things that I can do to assist that I will certainly seek to do it.

From the other side of the coin, it is very important indeed that, in generating the trust that we are talking about, we recognise that it is going to be hard work to accommodate one another, and that hard work is seen in one or two examples. I have only got time for one.

Take the issue of the oath of canonical obedience which some Headship Evangelicals have a problem with saying if it is to a female bishop. If a Conservative Evangelical was to say to them, “Bishop, in taking this oath will it be all right with you if it is understood that this will never require me to be obedient in an area of church life that I would find in conflict with my theological convictions?” and that bishop, despite the fact it rankled, were to say, “Yes, that is all right by me”, that would be the exercise of trust and it would mean the end of the problem so far as Conservative Evangelicals were concerned on that particular issue.

That is just one example of many where practical steps to accommodate one another will lead to the delivery of this Measure, not just the vote that we are taking today. Thank you.

Mrs Lorna Ashworth (Chichester): I am very grateful to Paula Gooder’s opening speech because I think she set the tone in a wonderful challenge to us. It was helpful and she was very right to say that we cannot legislate for something like flourishing. We cannot legislate for matters of the heart.

However, there remains a sense of vulnerability for me because of the reality; the reality that we are indeed a diverse church and with diversity comes different agendas. So when words are spoken over the course of this Synod and outside of this Synod like “narrow-minded”, “out of touch”, “unbiblical”, “wrong”, those words to me are incompatible with trust and flourishing.

It is also incompatible to associate this debate with, or to suggest that somehow we are complicit in, the suffering of women around the world because we have yet to have women Bishops and somehow we are sending this negative signal. What is happening to women around the world is because of sin in the most disgusting form
and so I resist that suggestion. I think it would also be naïve of us to think that therefore this proposal offers confidence to someone like me. So I will have to vote against today because I do not have the confidence in words like “flourish” and “trust” when other words are being thrown about.

What I know you can agree with me is that we have an unshakeable confidence that rests purely on the hope that we have in the Lord Jesus Christ, so that is where I will claim. Thank you.

Dr Philip Rice (London): I was a no voter in November 2012. I went back to London and was asked, “What did it feel like?” I said, “It felt like a funeral”. Today it is certainly not a funeral.

I pay particular tribute to the work of the 14 members of the Steering Group, the Cross-Party Group who found a way forward. If I am completely honest, I was amazed at the ability of the group to find its way forward. I know it has been said several times but I think this went down very well in London.

Speaking of London, I went back and spoke to my constituency and asked for opinions from deanery, from the HTB and other church-planting networks in the Diocese of London, and I do have to say that since 2012 the sense of crash, the sense of the awesomeness of the near funeral I experienced in 2012, I think parts of London have moved and I think I have to say I find this determinative in the way I am going to vote.

I have to report that particularly in the evangelical constituency that is active in planting, that has got a growth agenda, got a growth vision, they have started to appoint the first female church leaders in the network. I have been particularly invited and moved by this group and I will therefore declare that I will now be voting for.

Might I just add one other thing. In this group it would be very helpful if as a matter of seeing a flourishing Church of England that looks across the piece, that is particularly strong in wanting to encourage growth in the Church planting agenda, I think it would be good if we had a very sensitive and appropriately chosen Conservative Evangelical suffragan bishop that could be somewhere in the centre that could help us see and flourish as part of bringing this all together. So I will therefore be voting for.

The Revd Janet Appleby (Newcastle): Thank you, Chair, for calling me. First of all, I have to start by defending myself and pointing out that despite what a former speaker said, the Appleby Amendment actually did very much respect theological objections: I think that was the whole point of it.

On that subject, I also want to say that I think I could be rich now if I had a pound for every time I have had to respond to someone saying, “I’m really sorry your amendment did not pass”, with this riposte, something like, “Please don’t be sorry; I’m not because what we have got now is just so much better.” I think it is thanks to the facilitative process we have had and all the people who have been thanked already.
I want to speak also as an ecumaniac— or ecumenist is probably better to say! - because I think these five principles could offer us a paradigm for working with other churches, not just about how we work within our own Church. In fact, I sometimes think that as an Anglican I am more in dialogue with some other churches than within my own Church, but that is another story. If we can do this, I think we can find a way of using an analogous process to help us in our dialogues with other churches and would that not be wonderful. I think the principles give us a way of saying, “All right, I can’t agree with you, but I recognise your right to exist and even flourish despite our incompatible views.”

Something else I take from these principles is humility, perhaps after this morning’s sermon, even confident humility to recognise, yes, I could be wrong, and that it will only be in the light of God’s judgment that any of us will finally see clearly, because St Paul says, does he not, in I Corinthians 13:12: “For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known”. So I believe these five principles are just what we need at the moment to honour the diversity of our Church and take it forward and also dialogues with other churches.

I also want to say to those who are not sure how to vote yet - there may be one or two - I want to encourage you to think, even if you cannot in conscience support everything in the Measure, if you like where the package is going, to think of at least abstaining, because an abstention is not a wasted vote; it is a principle that says, “I cannot vote for this, but I want the package to pass because I see in this the creative power of the Holy Spirit leading us into God’s future, which might be very different from the one that any of us envisage.” So please at least think of abstaining because the vote is very close. Despite what some people think, it really does matter what everyone votes, so please if you think of that for the diversity not just of the Church of England but of all our dialogues with other churches too. Thank you.

Dr Chik Kaw Tan (Lichfield): Chair, I have three reasons for voting against. One: theological. I have been in the General Synod since 2005. There has never been a strong or robust theological case made for having women bishops. On the contrary, hard as I try, I still cannot ignore the uncomfortable and politically incorrect teachings in 1 Corinthians 11, 1 Corinthians 14 and 1 Timothy 2. These teach about the complementarian view which is grounded in the events of the Creation and its Fall. Therefore we cannot view his instructions as merely Paul’s response to a purely local and temporal problem. The witness of the universal church through the ages, and still today, affirms that men and women are equal but their roles are not interchangeable.

Two, the reasons used for having women bishops are primarily based not on theological grounds but on cultural mores. What I constantly hear is that the Church must make itself more acceptable to the world. In so doing, we have surrendered to secular understanding of justice, equality and rights rather than asking what the Bible actually means by such terms. Instead of the church in the world influencing it for Christ, we are letting the world’s dogmas into the church and shaping it. As William Inge, former Dean of St Paul’s put it, “He who marries the spirit of the age soon becomes a widower”.

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Finally, I have an additional fear. A taste that the very same arguments used to promote women in the episcopate are the very same arguments that are being used to redefine marriage from that which is between a man and a woman to that which is between two persons of the same sex. If we concede that the Church be guided by secular dogmas and developments rather than orthodox Biblical theology, our doctrines and teachings and discipline will very soon unravel. We are above all a people of the Book. I have always made my stand in General Synod on the uniqueness of Christ, on Christ being the only way of salvation, on marriage as that between a man and a woman in a lifelong relationship, on the logic of the Christian faith and the fallacy and stupidity of atheism and against the persecution of Christians here and abroad. This is because I believe firmly in the teachings of the Scripture. To have integrity I must also affirm what I believe are the clear scriptural teachings of the differing roles of men and women in the Church. I will therefore stand by my faithfulness to this understanding and on this foundation, Chair, I will vote against the draft Measure.

Mr Samuel Margrave (Coventry): I have been struggling with this for weeks. In the world out there I am involved in politics, I am a politician, so often I look at decisions and I weigh up what is the best decision overall. I have been doing the same thing, but obviously when faith comes into it, when conviction comes into it, when confidence comes into it - not that it does not in politics - but when it comes into it, it is right there in our hearts. For me it has been a real struggle because this morning I feel almost I have been sitting in a well-oiled show that is for the media really, with people being nice to each other, everybody saying, “I am going to vote in favour of this even though I do not agree with it,” when actually when I speak to people, people say to me, “I have been bullied. People have had a go at me. I am worried about winning my seat. I am doing this for political reasons.” That really worries me because I am going to vote no and I know that I have already had a great deal of abuse after that November and I continue to have a great deal of abuse.

One of the reasons I am going to vote no is that Lindsey Irwin just wrote on my Facebook - something to do when you are sitting in here in the warm - that his concern is that because of the change to appointing diocesan bishops in that dioceses can decide the preference of the bishop they will appoint, that we will not get traditional bishops, whether it is Catholic or Evangelical bishops, so actually this is really the end of the church as we know it. To speak to the comment made by my colleague, Adrian Vincent, the member for Guildford earlier in referring to 1 Samuel 8, yes, it says give the people what they want, but it goes on to say that God warns them that God will not be there when they call, that they will call, that they will call out and they will wish they had not made that decision. I just say we need to take the Bible holistically. We need to take our decisions holistically and I just feel today for many people - and I may be wrong and it may be conscience, and I apologise if I come across that way - but I feel that people are thinking far too much about re-election or about what other people will say when they go back to their dioceses. I do and people tell me that, so what I ask is however you vote, let the Spirit move and vote with your conscience. Thank you.

The Chair: Could I just remind members of Synod when somebody says something you do not agree with, could you keep it quietly in your heart because that does not
help the atmosphere. People need to express things. This is not the House of Commons or Lords; this is a church which is gathered in the name of Jesus. Could we just hold it in our hearts.

*The Revd Canon Jennifer Tomlinson (Chelmsford)*: As we approach this vote, let us remember why many of us want to admit women to all three orders of ministry. I say it is because of Scripture. It is because in a very different time and culture God chose to use women in his purposes, woman like Deborah and Esther, like Rahab and Ruth. The God of Israel broke through the conventions around nationality, accepting the service of foreign women and the God revealed in Jesus broke through the conventions around gender. St Mark records an unnamed woman pouring perfume on Jesus’ head and how the group of female disciples remained watching as Jesus died. John’s Gospel is particularly rich in presenting women in key roles. Mary is the model disciple at the Wedding at Cana. “Do whatever he tells you.”

Then we are inspired by the evangelistic leadership of the woman at the well. By the time we get to John 11, Bethany is actually defined as “the village of Mary and her sister Martha”. Were not those women in leadership? Generations later, as the position of women in society has slowly developed, we have read scripture afresh. We have rediscovered those women disciples, role models for woman today. And of course we have to read the difficult passages too. We have to think about 1 Timothy 2, about the call to women to learn perhaps as a means to avoid deception and to face in that time and that place restrictions on their teaching role, but the weight of scripture surely shows us God doing something new, something radical, calling the new Eve in Christ who Mary Hayter wrote about over a quarter of a century ago. Today we have the possibility of opening Episcopal ministry to women. If we say yes, then ministry in our church will I, believe, be still more Biblical as we show the world that in Christ there is neither male nor female. Thank you.

*Mr David Kemp (Canterbury)*: A story. God was sitting by the lake again, on a rock. In the distance the Heavenly City sparkled in the sun. A lively stream chattered over its pebbles, while in the trees at the water’s edge the breeze invited the leaves to dance. God’s toes dangled in the water and it was not long before the familiar V-shaped ripple could be seen heading towards the bank. The otter scrambled on to the rock and shook himself vigorously. God raised a wry eyebrow but the water droplets were cool and welcome. “Hello my friend,” said God gently as the otter settled himself. “Synod again?” said the otter. “Erm,” God nodded. “Thought so,” said the otter, “I noticed the worry lines. “But why are you worried; you know what’s going to happen anyway being outside time and all that.” There was a pause, “It’s not quite as simple as that”, replied God. The two old friends sat in silence for a while and eventually God spoke again, “You know, there is quite a lot of wisdom in the Church of England. They have got this idea of three doors, doors into knowing me. They call them ‘Scripture’, ‘tradition’ and ‘reason’, but sometimes some of them find that one of the doors gets shut and they stop exploring me, which is a pity. The trouble is that although I have made stars and daisies and fleas and whales, I have never mastered the art of making a door that opens but can’t be shut, just like I have never been able to make an up without a down.”

Above them an eagle soared effortlessly and impossibly slowly on the invisible
etherals. “Isn’t he magnificent?” mused God, “One of my best, I think”. “Hmm”, the otter sounded unconvinced, “I just wish he didn’t seem to be looking down at me and thinking ‘Lunch’.” “Reminds me of the Spirit,” said God, “Not the lunch bit, but the thermals. You can’t see them, only the effect they have. She has been working for years to free women, to empower them, to get them the vote, helping them to be the best they can be, but no-one thinks it is the Spirit at work. They talk about feminism, about the spirit of the age. “She is perfect of course, the Spirit, just a bit too self-effacing at times.” “Not something you suffer from then, God?” asked the otter. “Oh, I don’t know” came the smiling reply. I play a mean game of hide and seek when I am in the mood. Fancy a game?” “Don’t think so”, replied the otter, “You would know where I was hiding before I did. How about a swim instead. He slid off the rock and was away through the water. Standing up, God called, “Wait for me”, and, with that, she picked up her skirts and jumped.”

The Revd Canon Robert Cotton (Guildford): In the presentation on the Archbishops’ Council Annual Report I quoted some wise words that our facilitator helped us with in one of the Archbishops’ Council’s meetings a few years ago which I have treasured ever since. We talk a lot about subsidiarity there, about trying to make sure decisions are taken at the right level, but she said it is the tone of subsidiarity that matters. That is what I quoted last night. But actually she went on to say it is the tone of subsidiarity that matters because if you get the tone right, you reveal latent value. My experience, and I checked this out at lunchtime, was the tone of this morning’s debate was so precious and important and positive because it was revealing latent value, value that is there. Value that is there in many different traditions and different perspectives, but while it remains latent it cannot be enjoyed by all. So I just want to name and treasure that tone of our relationships that will reveal latent value. To some extent that is close to what I experienced in the Steering Committee. One of the phrases there that kept me going was the phrase “the dignity of difference”. You will know this probably as a title of one of Jonathan Sachs’ books “Difference is not a danger but it is an opportunity to dignify”. Dignity works so much better if I put the energy in to see the dignity in you rather than standing aside and leave you to protect your own, not only dignity but identity: The dignity of difference. You will probably know that the next book that Jonathan Sachs published was The Home We Build Together”. I just want to reaffirm what many people are saying that this legislation must be a platform to future transformation. It must be a platform towards the home we can build together. So I believe the package is based on dignity and confidence, confidence that we can build a home together that honours all and honours the God that made us all. Thank you.

Mrs Sarah Finch (London): Many of us will be voting against this legislation today. I want to offer first an explanation and then secondly a thank you.

As to why many of us will be voting against, I want to clarify that this will demonstrate that we retain our theological convictions. We believe as the Church has until recent times I believe, that the pattern for church life we find in Scripture points to a God-given male leadership. Although they are equal, men and women have different roles to play. Consider the parallel with ballroom dancing. The man and the woman have different steps but they dance together.

Some of you may have seen this booklet by Dr Ben Cooper, “Positive
Complementarianism” and on the front cover is a photograph of a couple dancing in evening dress. They are glamorous, they are joyful and they are different but they are working together. In our constituency of Conservative Evangelicals, there are many vibrant growing churches in which this principle has been lived out, worked out, in which men and women work together successfully, abiding by the pattern they find in the scripture of complementarity. But, secondly, I want to express much gratitude to the House of Bishops for their declaration; for the Steering Committee for devising the five guiding principles, especially the fourth, that the Church of England remains committed to enabling us to flourish within the lives of structures; and to the two Archbishops for their recent assurances, as a bishop who holds the conservative evangelical view on headship will be appointed within a matter of months. We do need such a bishop or, I would say, bishops, because for precisely the same reason that women clergy desire women bishops within an episcopal church, our constituency, and especially I would say those in training now for ordination, they need episcopal leadership. We will do our best to co-operate, thankful that we have a project of flourishing within the Church of England.

The Revd Clare Herbert (London): Thank you for calling me to speak, and I speak for this Measure. Between 1998 and 2008 I was the Rector of Soho. I loved this post for its opportunities for community building and of engaging in mission in this country. But what made it very difficult for a woman to pursue was daily living with degrading images of women displayed in shop windows, in doorways and on the streets. Among the joy and the fizz and the fun of living there, there were these images to contend with hourly. Images of subservience, of punishment and of violence. Despite St Anne’s Church having an illustrious past into which Iris Murdoch had spoken and in which Dorothy L Sayers and Rose Macaulay had worshiped we must set this Church in an environment in which the dominant image of women was a sex object to be desired and used, then punished and humiliated.

When I first began to work with prostitutes in Soho, this debased imagery was missing from their talk. They were there, they said to me, to provide for their families. They were hardworking. They protected those who should not be there and they protected each other. An awful sadness arose when I asked after their children. Never, never, never would any daughter of theirs end up like this. For some years my pastoral work continued quietly but then, fighting a common cause of harassment they demanded a meeting with me as a group, and it was with profound shock that I saw them walking 20 strong towards me down Dean Street. They were all dressed in black and their heads were completely covered by animal masks. These animal masks spoke volumes about shame and guilt, about threat and fear, and about understanding themselves as sub-human. That women can be treated thus and understand themselves thus is partly due to ancient philosophies and to the theologies which have been coloured by them, that women are unequal to men and created inferior, useful only for yet tainted by the sexual act; or that women are equal but fundamentally different and made for humbler, more subservient, less assertive roles within society and family. Of course, we in this chamber may not believe that, but by what we do as Church we send out signs which are lived out in the lives of others less fortunate, less well-off, less free than ourselves to choose, and we need for their sakes to loosen the ties that bind us to such demeaning philosophies and theologies. I ask you to support this measure.
Mr Gerald O’Brien (Rochester): Chair, I do not think I have ever stood up here before and been faced with quite so many members of the House of Bishops present. I do not kid myself that they have come to hear me - they have got more important things to do but, as it happens, what I have to say is of particular relevance to the House of Bishops, so I am glad quite a number of them are here to hear me say it. The basis of the proposal before us today has been called "legislation light". Alongside a single clause Measure, we are asked to accept that minority views will be sustained under the terms of the House of Bishops’ Declarations.

Now I am a scientist and I was asked a question: What evidence do we have? What evidence do we have to encourage us to believe that the Bishops will deliver? Actions speak louder than words. I hope that a positive vote today will not be a triumph of hope over experience. Let me tell you what I mean. We want people to flourish in the Church.

Now some years ago the Pilling Report concluded that conservatives were severely under-represented in the House of Bishops. But, since then, no Conservative Evangelicals have been appointed as diocesans, and if like me you have been a member of the Crown Nominations Commission it is not difficult to work out why. But there has been no attempt to reform the way the CNC works. Now when suffragan bishops come to be appointed, the diocesan bishop takes advice, but ultimately the decision is his. Most of the diocesans here have had an opportunity to appoint a suffragan in the last few years. In all these years not one diocesan bishop has appointed a Conservative Evangelical. Then we hear rumours that the Archbishops may contrive to appoint a Conservative Evangelical to a currently unfilled see, and the Bishop of Rochester in his opening speech this morning assured us that this was under very active consideration indeed. Well-meaning though this may be, is it not a case of too little too late? When Pilling reported, there was just one Conservative Evangelical bishop, Lewes, who has since retired and if this new initiative materialises, we will simply have returned to the status quo which Pilling urged should be radically changed. If there are a dozen Conservative Evangelical bishops the constituency would still be under-represented. Well, he has sort of sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. I fear that Conservative Evangelicals are being asked to give theirs away with not a lot in return. Thank you.

Mrs Jane Bisson (Winchester): Thank you for calling me, Archbishop. I am wanting our Synod to take a breath and really think about the step we are taking. Now I am sure you are all saying, “I have thought plenty about it so what is she going to add?” But what are we actually saying about this precious document? Just at this last minute I want to ask you: Have we said that the Bible does not matter any more and it is the world that we now follow? For a good reason, and I think Adrian Vincent mentioned it this morning, Jesus did not have any women apostles. He did have women prophets, women praying, people calling for justice but no apostles. The apostles were there to lead and teach the church. People say that the reality in our world is that this is an issue of equality and that by not having women bishops we are being unfair to women. Do not get me wrong. I believe that women have incredible gifts, some of them that realistically leave men standing. The empathy that we as women are able to bring to women’s ministries challenges men. But are we being so unjust to women? Would Jesus not have appointed women formally to help him in his ministry? He was the pinnacle and advocate of values, valuing
everybody in ways that we have not even begun to grasp. Some will say that Mary Magdalen was the nearest that we had to a woman apostle, but she did come second. She was there after his death so surely, we should take some lead from that. Jesus did not want her in the role of leadership. Personally, I think that Mary Magdalen was as important as one of the apostles, but she just was not one. I feel for Mary Magdalen. She does not appear to have been one at the Last Supper, nor was she one of the ordained apostles to lead the church forward. Many believe that she was there first and she was the one who crowned Jesus’ feet with oil and cried over him and dried his feet with her hair. And she is also, let us not forget, the first to see him at his resurrection. But let us not give her a role that Jesus does not seem to award. Surely, his direction should be the final direction that we should take and this debate is exactly about this reality. So why do we feel that the world’s values are so much better than Jesus’? I trust you all and I love you all and however you vote, but if you have the smallest doubt or concern please vote against this, or at best abstain. I hope that, however, the vote goes you will be as magnanimous as you have said you will be; and if the Church splits, as I think it may, you will encourage my part of the Church to continue to thrive. Thank you. (Applause)

The Revd Philip North (London): You look a bit tired so I would like to invite you all round to my house in Camden Town for a lovely couple of tea because in my house I have got a cup decorated with the 1945 Labour Party Election poster. It bears the motto, "Now win the peace." That, surely, is the vital challenge before us today. Once this legislation is passed, which surely it will, the challenge to all of us will be to find a new way to live together in peace for the good of the nation.

For many of us this long argument has been the backdrop to our Christian lives. We have allowed it to define us. For many of us the conflict has been deeply and profoundly and personally hurtful. Can we really now let go of it? That surely is the challenge before us today. Can Traditional Catholics leave behind the years of apartness and begin to engage afresh with the Church at every level possible and constantly push at the boundaries of a torn Communion. Can those who support this move genuinely delight in the growth and flourishing of those with whom they disagree with, for example, no pressure on parishes who wish to take advantage of the provision. What about the mood in Synod? I am afraid I love Sam very much, but I do not recognise his description in this morning’s debate. I have not heard any cynicism or electioneering, just honest people honestly struggling with their consciences. It has been lovely to hear, but let us not fool ourselves that the mood we have had in this chamber is easily going to trickle down to impact and transform the wider Church. It is going to be difficult. Can we win the peace and start to live together properly at last because if we cannot the consequences are unthinkable. For decades we have allowed our common life to be determined by an internal hermeneutical argument, and the consequences are plain to see. Young people turning their back on the Church; parish life in many areas struggling to survive; a haemorrhaging in conversion, with many dioceses having fewer confirmations each year than they have stipendiary clergy; the steady erosion of the Church’s place in our national life. We need to change the language from internal hermeneutic to external apologetic. Our dialogue must no longer be primarily with each other, now it must be with a post-Christian nation in order to recapture imaginations with the saving news of Jesus Christ. That is where our energy must be. Only together can we allow our own vocation to proclaim the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Only together
can we uphold and defend the dignity of the poor. We need each other for the Gospel to flourish in our land. It cannot be a case of grumpy tolerance or continued guerrilla warfare. We need each other. Today I pray that the war will end, so now let us win the peace.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of two minutes

Miss Sally Muggeridge (Canterbury): What a fabulous service we had yesterday in York Minster. We were all together, together, together, and was it not fabulous to see so many men, women, children and the worship, and the sermon, I liked Jim’s sermon very much. Was it not an absolutely wonderful experience. We need more of those. We are all together now in this room. I was starting to feel depressed I was not going to speak. I thought I would not stand up. But there is so much opportunity that we have. I have always been in favour of women in the episcopate and I was elected for General Synod on that very basis. I think it is time for us to be together, stay together, live together and work out our problems together. So I am absolutely determined that we shall vote together positively.

I do have one message that came through from Archbishop Desmond Tutu which I feel I should share with you. He says: "I am thrilled to hope that our Mother Church, the Church of England, will do the right thing today, that is to say to allow women to become bishops, as we have in Swaziland and in Cape Town. "Wow" he says, "You are in for a great surprise and treat should you do this. Your church will be enriched no end and you will ask yourselves why were we so timid for so long. Just look at what we have denied ourselves. God be praised. Yippee."

The Revd Angus MacLeay (Rochester): My speech has gone. I am left with just a few questions, four questions to ask, perhaps especially for the House of Bishops but perhaps to all beginning with C.

The culture: in what ways will diocesan bishops ensure that the culture of the five points will get embedded in their diocese to ensure mutual flourishing? Two, conscience: how will sensitivity be shown to those who will find it difficult in conscience to swear an oath because of this legislation? Three, a concern; how will we prevent the sort of argument that says scripture applied then but it no longer applies now when we come to other sorts of arguments and situations? Four, convictions: are you aware that as Conservative Evangelicals we are not seeking in any way to be prejudiced but our views are based on an on-going, thorough engagement with the biblical text, with lexicons, with commentaries, with a desire to live joyfully for the Lord Jesus Christ.

So those are my four questions and I have one final point also beginning C, and it is simply Christ. As we go forward, our aim as Conservative Evangelicals, as indeed part of the whole Church, is that we would have our united passion to preach Christ crucified, to declare him as the only Lord and Saviour and that we would see this nation saved for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Mrs Susannah Leafe (Truro): Thank you for calling me. So we have heard of facilitated talks. We have heard about trust. We have heard about reconciliation. We have heard about trifles and Wotsits and something curry - turnip curry, thank
you. But we learned from South Africa that truth is also needed, so here is the truth of my story.

I am going to share three stories of my experience of facilitated talks. A year ago on the eve of the “I agree with Pete” vote, I was told clearly and loudly by one of the facilitators that it was ridiculous for me to expect the deepest concerns of Conservative Evangelicals to be taken into account, that they were off the table, because I was wrong. The Church thought I was wrong, he thought I was wrong and I just had to suck it up. Is this a taste of flourishing?

I was then persuaded to join the facilitated talks for the Steering Group and found that they did not gather to discuss a new way forward but to edit a document that had already been written. It is true that we talked, true that we discussed, true that we listened, but the outcome was that the majority ended up telling the minority what was good for them. Is this a taste of flourishing?

Then on the eve of the debates we are told not complain, not to risk the Measure being defeated. There have even been veiled threats not to risk the dissolution of the General Synod. Is this a taste of flourishing?

We are going to need a change of culture. We are going to need a real respect of conscience and conviction and I hope and pray that we will have a united passion, as Angus said, to preach Christ crucified because there is a world out there that needs to hear the real gospel.

Mrs Judith Ayers (Exeter): This is my first speech. Thank you. I urge you to support this Measure. As a teacher at a girls’ grammar school in Torquay, the young women that I teach have high ambitions and can aspire to be anything they feel called to do. What they cannot do at present is be a bishop in the Church of England and this idea to them seems ludicrous, they want to know why not. I try to explain the workings of the Church of England and put both sides of the argument, but this just further contributes to making our Church look outdated and irrelevant. In the students’ modern world there is no place for gender inequality and there should be no place for inequality in the Church. I believe this package would help make this idea of women in the episcopate possible.

I know as Christians we are sometimes called to be countercultural but this should not be one of those occasions. There should be a mirror held up to the Church of England in which women can see themselves reflected back in. The waiting in working out our ideas has been a long time coming and maybe that has been a good thing. We and our whole community have waited long enough, and it is time to vote “yes”.

Mr David Ashton (Wakefield): I did not intend to speak. I have been on Synod since 1973 and I want to congratulate Synod, I think this has been one of the best debates I have heard in all those years I have been here and I think you should congratulate yourselves. I will be voting for this motion.

The Revd Thomas Seville CR (Religious Communities): Trust: we have had some comments on trust, an excellent contribution from Paula Gooder, which will be with
me for a long time, but trust is meaningless without actually doing something. One of the things if we are to flourish together, and I hope we will - very exciting and lots of new things may happen - is we are going to have to do things we cannot dream at the present of doing.

At a practical administrative level it will mean female archdeacons fostering a parish which wants to choose a headship vicar. Conversely, if Conservative Evangelical complementarian style are appointed to archdeacons and to Sees, which I hope, they will have to do the same with a parish which definitely wants a lady vicar and with perhaps some unusual domestic arrangements to boot. Those kinds of things we are going to have to embrace.

If we are serious about flourishing and about flourishing together, feeling good is not going to do it, and that is quite a challenge to us. In my constituency many people are just a little wary of the trust thing. We are deeply grateful for the change in atmosphere, and the atmosphere has changed and that is fantastic, beyond what any of us deserve, but we do not want to slide back into a situation that when we hear “trust me” it actually means “agree with me”. I do not think that is where we are at the moment, but unless we do things, and do things in a different way, we are going to get back into that awful mess.

On ecumenism, this does change things quite significantly. For our Methodist brothers and sisters it is a great day and it will have been a step forward for the reconciliation of the Methodist Church of Great Britain and the Church of England, that is a good thing, but for those churches with whom we have pretended and claimed to share polity - churches in the east, the Orthodox Church and the like, and the Roman Church, not everybody’s favourites but we are bound with them a long time in ecumenical endeavour - this is a sad day. I know this from friends in the Rumanian Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church in Germany.

*The Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford):* We have before us an amazing package. None of us would have dreamt that such a package was possible a couple of years ago and that is thanks to the Steering Committee, to this amazing body of people and the amazing facilitation they have had. Others have thanked them and I want to thank them too. I think what we have learnt from what they have been able to do has spread out to the rest of us, and let us hope we have many more facilitated discussions.

What I am hoping is that the Steering Committee, or probably something like it because the lawyers will rightly say that we cannot go on with a Steering Committee once we have passed this legislation, something like it can continue. We are going to have the independent reviewer and any particular case can of course be referred to the independent reviewer. It seems to me the way in which we develop genuinely with this new legislation, this new package, needs to be monitored by something like such a group where they can continue to disagree, disagree well, and talk to each other and have a facilitator or facilitators helping them to talk to each other, so that we go on learning how to live together because that is what is before us and let us vote for it.
The Revd Professor Richard Burridge (University of London): I am not going to repeat tediously all the wonderful expressions about what has been happening today, I agree with it, I just want to make two new points.

There has been a lot of discussion about labels as we go forward. I am somebody who considers myself both a Traditional Catholic and a Conservative Evangelical, but two new labels have been mentioned by Father Tom just now and in the papers, “complementarianism” and “Headship Evangelicals”. Now as an academic I have consulted Google, and it tells me that complementarianism was invented by the Southern Baptists. If there are academics around who can correct me on that, see me afterwards. On the word “headship”, a more accurate search of the thesaurus Linguae Graecae of all Greek texts between the 8th Century BC and 4th Century AD, contains 2,336 examples of the word “kephale”, often translated as “head”. After a survey of 80 books on the subject, Tony Thistlethwaite, the great evangelical scholar, on 1 Corinthians, concludes: “Neither headship nor order nor equality alone conveys the complexity and wholeness of Paul’s theology”. Again, multiple meaning holds the key. As we go forward let us not use labels, multiple meaning holds the key.

Dr Graham Parr (Chichester): Archbishop, thank you for calling me to speak. I want to say something very briefly about trust and about how trust can change and has changed. I had the privilege a few weeks ago of proposing a motion to support this package at our diocesan synod in Chichester. As I am sure you aware, Chichester did not support the Measure proposed several years ago but on this occasion voted to support the current package which is now before us for final approval.

What was different? What has changed? The first thing to say is that the debate was thorough, it was good humoured and it was very positive in tone, all things which were absent to some extent a few years ago. Several people who cannot for reasons of conscience support this development nevertheless are clear that they do not wish to stand in the way of the package being approved, as many people have said here today.

One of the most important reasons, I believe, for that change in tone and outcome of debate is because trust in our clergy leaders and in one another has been transformed over the last two years. There is now discussion, decision and, most important, it is followed by action consistent with decisions.

I am used to being in the minority. You cannot be a Yorkshire man in deepest Sussex without feeling to be in the minority! I also spent much of my career as a head of R&D in an American pharmaceutical company. I frequently had to tell my marketing colleagues that while I knew why they wanted to make a particular claim, I could not in all conscience let them do it. The most important part of that relationship though was always trust, mutual trust.

I am in the majority supporting the ordination of women to the episcopacy but I am also aware that the majority has a real responsibility. The House of Bishops’ Declaration provides a sound opinion which I believe will allow us all to flourish. Flourishing applies just as much to those who support the package as it does to those who do not. I urge you therefore to vote in favour of the package and put our
trust in our Bishops and one another. We might all be surprised how this can liberate us all. Thank you.

The Revd Dr Hannah Cleugh (University of Durham and Newcastle): The Lord Bishop of Ely might be a young man in the House of Lords, I am a young woman in this Synod, and because I am a young woman in this Synod there is something I expect you all know that I only discovered a couple of weeks ago, which is in Scotland there never was a movement for the ordination of women. There was instead a campaign for whole ministry.

This seems to me a very helpful way of us reflecting on the package that we are faced with deciding on in the next, hopefully, few minutes. What we are promised by this package, grounded on those five principles, is the opening up of a whole ministry. Yes, the opening up of the episcopate to women, thus allowing the gifts and vocations of those women to be freed to serve the Church. Yes, by ensuring the flourishing of our Traditionalist Catholic and Conservative Evangelical sisters and brothers who in conscience find this development difficult. Wholeness, healing and salvation are words with powerful theological resonance and they are the business of Christ and through Christ the business of His Church.

Approving this package is about the wholeness of the Church and her ministry, so mindful of the challenge “Physician heal thyself” let us see healing enable wholeness so that we might better bring the medicine of the gospel to Christ’s wounded world. I agree with Fr Philip North, we need to win this peace. Please support this Measure.

The Revd Jonathan Frais (Chichester): Thank you, Synod, for your patience. Selectively countercultural? No, always countercultural. The media often more Christian? Well, not in their programmes. Yes, I see God playing with the otter and God turns out to be female, I spot the trajectory that gets us there. If you are a Headship Evangelical like me, you must teach women as inferior, no, we teach the Trinity as the New Testament example of how you can have leadership and those who acknowledge it not being inferior. My lexicons are out of date: well, I no longer use the 1968 Liddell & Scott which defined “kephale” as “source” because when the comments came in from other scholars they said you were looking at things such as rivers, so they redid it and they came up that when used with people “kephale” is always “authority over”.

Chair, one please for the Bishops to consider and come back at a later time: on their very helpful Declaration, page 4, arrangements for parishes, might there be forthcoming at some time a supplementary paragraph on arrangements for clergy who in conscience cannot endorse this development but we fully anticipate this happening and want to work with it, whose PCCs do not have a majority behind them. They seem to be kind of in a vacuum. Advice welcome, thank you very much.

Mrs Mary Durlacher (Chelmsford): We are nearly there. Today is going to be first day that we put these five principles to the test and thank you for those five principles. It is a necessary framework. Bishops, you should sit at the back sometimes and then you would see the range of emotions when people like me saying that they cannot support this get hurt. There is a lot of shuffling and sometimes groaning and then we hear remarks on the way to lunch and back that
our theological has a “residual possibility” but the trouble with it is 25% of it is true and now multiple Google meanings.

Be that as it may, today is not voting about the package, even though Andrew Godsall said it was. Today is about the principle. I think the reason we are voting against it is so that you realise the extent of the minority for whom this has caused problems. That is why Adrian Vincent was so poignant and moved Christina Rees, he decided to go with the flow. That is fine, but I got elected on the basis of a statement that said I wanted to see full provision for those who could not accept women bishops. I have to speak for them; very few others are, so I will be loyal to them, I am sure there might be a cost but that is not the problem by God’s grace.

Finally on covenants, back to Professor Burridge; covenants came with a sign. They were signs of trust that we could believe and so I do say please, Bishops, if you cannot easily appoint one for our constituency, let us re-think episcopacy, we are re-thinking how we do Synod, let us also think about we do episcopacy, so it does not cause such a problem. Thank you.

The Ven. Gavin Collins (Portsmouth): I want to consider the question of whether the legislation before us has enough safeguards built in for those of us who are Evangelicals. Yesterday afternoon while walking back from the Minster a group of us came across the York Mystery Plays; several roving troupes of actors and musicians pulling wagons through the city streets, stopping in the different squares to perform scenes from the Gospels. It was powerfully and compellingly done. The scene we saw involved a woman caught in adultery and the raising of Lazarus from the dead. The actors engaged the crowd superbly well and at the climax of the first scene I found the lead actor pointing directly at me and declaring, “You, Sir, surely you are without sin; you can cast the first stone.” As an archdeacon I did not feel able to agree with him but I cannot describe how challenging it felt to have to declare to a city centre crowd, “Not I; I am not without sin; I cannot cast a stone.” As Evangelicals we do have a theology of taint, but surely it is this, that not I, you or any one of us is perfect; not one of us is untainted, and we need first always to examine the plank in our own eye before we presume to comment on the speck we perceived in someone else’s. I do think the College of Bishops as a group should fully reflect the wonderful breadth and diversity that we have within our church. I welcome the Archbishops’ commitment to ensuring the appointment of a sufficiently Conservative Evangelical, although even in saying that, I do feel I am giving an unwarranted kick in the teeth to many, many fine Evangelical bishops. PCCs writing parish profiles during Interregnums are often accused of wishing for the Apostle Paul, but we would do well to remember how much the Church in Corinth grumbled about the way that St Paul acted as their overseer. Be careful what we wish for: no Bishop is perfect but each Bishop is called to be a focus of unity for the whole of their diocese. Those of us who consider ourselves to be evangelicals need to start taking scripture seriously and heed Christ’s prayer that the Church would be one. This legislation has enough safeguards and I commend it to us all for our approval. Thank you.

Mr Jacob Vince (Chichester): I want to speak up for the talented young ordinands that were able to come into the ministry under the previous legislation in 1992, but feel unable to do so now and the loss of talent as a result. In the debate in November 2012, in this debate, two Bishops have indicated that this was their
position when they came into the Church as an ordinand and both of them have said they have changed. If we do not allow young ordinands to come into the Church, we will lose a breadth of people that are talented, that would otherwise have been coming through the Church, give their life in ministry and serving faithfully and growing the Church. I personally benefited from one of those ordinands that I know would not come into the Church with the legislation we have before us, so I feel that we have to - myself in conscience - vote against this legislation and to quote Jonathon Sachs in another book *Future Tense*. Thank you.

*The Chair* imposed a speech limit of five minutes.

*The Bishop of Chichester (The Rt Revd Dr Martin Warner):* Thank you, your Grace, for calling me. I shall try to use very little indeed. I simply want to talk about two celebrations. The first was the wonderful celebration in St Paul’s Cathedral, a national celebration marking the 20th anniversary of the ordination of women to the priesthood. I went as a Pastor, as a Bishop and to make a statement of solidarity with women priests from the Diocese of Chichester whose ministry is, I know as a Traditionalist Catholic, so valued and fruitful across the diocese as a whole, and the expressions at that celebration of generosity, of honesty and hope for a more trusting future together were memorable and humbling, and they helped me to see that we do have it within us as a Church to live out in the detail of how this legislative package is put into practice, the good qualities that were evident in St Paul’s Cathedral back in May.

But, that is not the only celebration that happened in May, and that gave me great hope. I was also hugely encouraged to read the account of the meeting of Pope Francis and Patriarch Bartholomew in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem. This was a different sort of celebration, marking hopes that operate in an altogether larger time-frame in the healing of divisions between ancient churches of the East and the West. It was a celebration of prayer at the Empty Tomb, in the light of which all our divisions - our divisions - will be judged. It was also undoubtedly a celebration of faith and hope and one that I believe should enliven the quality of our sense here in England of apostolic mission and inheritance of faith, keeping alive our profound desire for the Church’s own healing in order that she can be the agent of reconciliation and hope in the world today in the power of the Holy Spirit. This was a celebration to deepen the enrichment of our theological and moral vision beyond binary notions of East and West into something that presents an altogether richer global account of Christianity in the freshness of its early evangelicalism in proclaiming Jesus Christ as the one, in whom God is revealed as Trinity, and the source of how we understand ourselves in the experience of our human desire and identity as made in the image of God. It would, I think, be a gross misjudgment to dismiss that Jerusalem celebration as simply a footnote from a neglected module on Church history. No - I hope with humility and respect that we might be able, within the traditionalist catholic wing of the Church of England, to contribute something that helps us to reflect that Jerusalem vision and to embody it within the spectrum of our own Anglican tradition as we exercise a strand of discipline that admits to ordained ministry that discipline that is also exercised in those other churches, and as gaining that recognition of commonalty we seek to make to them a contribution from our own store of experience and insight as we hope and believe it is now about to be enriched.
Jerusalem, the location for the drama of the pastoral mystery of our salvation speaks powerfully about the need for reconciliation and peace, not only in our own church but in the world today. May those precious gifts which God gives through the Holy Spirit be at the heart of all our celebration of “our communion in legitimate diversity”, as Francis and Bartholomew put it, and may it be the source of all our humble, prayerful service to a fractured and tormented world. Thank you.

The Archbishop of Canterbury (The Most Revd & Rt Hon Justin Welby): To pass this legislation is to commit ourselves to an adventure in faith and hope. Like all adventures it carries dangers. We have been reminded of that eloquently today, uncertainties, and for success will require perseverance, integrity and courage. Speeches today have been good examples of the adventure: costly, painful, but generous and hopeful. That is a cause for genuine gratitude and even much admiration. They have not been culture versus theology, but genuine theological arguments which differ.

The five principles at the heart of the House of Bishops’ Declaration are fundamental to how we proceed. It will be hard work. Progress will be all but impossible to achieve without a fresh embrace of one another in the love that Jesus Christ gives us by his Spirit. Re-imagining and spiritual growth are inextricably entwined if we are to demonstrate the reality of Jesus and serve the Common Good. Today this legislation allows us to move forward together, all of us, all as faithful Anglicans, and all of us committed to each other’s flourishing in the life of the Church. We must mean it. That has been said again and again, not just in what we say but in how we now live and work together in the months and years ahead. That is as true of those who find this difficult to accept as it is for those who rejoice in it, and vice versa.

An independent process to hold us to account for the promises we have made to each other allows us to take the risks necessary to build trust. The House of Bishops must act on our words. We do know that. I expect and hope the vote to go through and I rejoice in that but I also rejoice that we are promising to seek the flourishing in the Church of all those who disagree. If I did not think that was likely I could not support this legislation. You do not chuck out family or even make it difficult for them to be at home. You love them and seek their well-being, even when you disagree.

The House of Bishops means what we say. If this passes, especially in the light of the debate, we are going to deliver, but to make these principles real will require practical steps of training and development and a long period of culture change so that we learn in practice what it means to love, to struggle for truth and to do so in the mists and sometimes darkness of disagreement that derive from our fallible humanity. Even if at times in the past we have been overwhelmed by the tortuous path we have taken, we must not understate the significance of what we can do now. Today we can start on a challenging and adventurous journey to embrace a radical new way of being the Church. Good and loving disagreement amidst the seeking of truth in all our fallibility, a potential gift to a world driven by overconfident certainties into bitter and divisive conflict. Jesus invites us to radical belonging to one another so that all the world will know we are his disciples, not that we are perfect but that we love one another as he has loved us. Thank you.
**Canon John Spence (Ex-officio):** There is nothing like pulling the short straw! I am a new boy to this and I have no new theology to bring but then who would expect a former banker to have any theology at all? There are two things I will not talk about after today. One is being a new boy because I will not be a new boy any more and the other is about my blindness. But let me tell you a story. In 1987 I was told that my eyesight was failing and that I would have tunnel vision by the time I was in my 50s. In 1990 I could no longer see print on a page, no longer see images on a screen at the age of 38. Things felt bleak. I have the love of a wonderful wife Yvonne and three great children, but at that time people who lost their eyesight were consigned to lose their jobs, to man telephone switchboards or to work in disabled factories. There were no technological aids and there was no support. There was an expectation that I would be cast on the wayside. Even my group personnel director told me that I could not be promoted because I could no longer manage people. So life felt bleak. But I had three things. I had my faith. I focused always on the lilies in the field. I knew I had to trust people. I had to take a leap of faith with people I knew and those I did not to help make life possible for me, and I knew I had to adapt.

What happened? In the event, I went on to be Managing Director of Lloyds Bank and was able to move that personnel director into early retirement! I have been able to occupy a number of significant roles including the privilege of this role on the Archbishops’ Council, but much more than that; I discovered that my trust was more than fully repaid, that my leap of faith was given back in abundance. The trust was repaid not just from those I expected but from those I did not. Having adapted I found other people adapted to me, those with whom I worked, my organisation, the world in which I live, and today we have an understanding that those who are disabled are merely those who jump another hurdle in the race of life. Above all, I discovered a rich new world of possibilities. I chaired national disability charities and understood just how much people had to give and what this rich diversity can bring to all of us in mutual understanding.

So what do I say now? If there are any of you who are still in all conscience struggling to decide whether you dare press the abstain or even the positive key? Your faith is my faith is all of our faith. Every one of us has a vital role to ensure that that searing vision of the risen Christ is taken out into this troubled country. If you can place your trust where there is not yet evidence, your trust will not be misplaced. You, like me, will discover just how kind and beautiful people can be. You will come to see that promises will be delivered, just as I have done. You, having adapted will find that adaption is mutual. You can be confident of that; that we have to adapt to others just as others adapt to us, because in that way you create that whole new world of possibilities. Today for me is not about two-thirds and one-third. It is about the celebration of the coalition of consciences around the risen Christ. I just feel that the stronger the vote we can give today, the greater the credibility we have in the outside world but, more important than that, the more confidently we can walk hand-in-hand to return this Church to numerical and spiritual growth and to return Christ to his rightful place at the centre of this country, its conscience and its culture. God bless you.

**The Bishop of Rochester:** Thank you, Archbishop. I am assisted in keeping to your
timescale in that I can thank John Spence and the Archbishop of Canterbury for between them giving most of the speech that I had prepared as my closing speech. So that is very excellent and I am sure you will be grateful for that, as I am too.

There are traditions in these closing speeches that one, as it were, mentions a number of the speakers and what they have said and responds to them. I am sure you will forgive me for not doing that today, because seven minutes would be impossible if I did. But I just want to acknowledge the tone of the debate which we have had. People have not pulled their punches, but the debate has been considered, it has been generous, it has been at times moving, and there have been occasions when people have offered apologies and such like, and that has been really important. That tone, I think, is something clearly a number of people have commented upon and for which we are, indeed, grateful. If I may just mention a couple of people. I think Adrian Vincent’s speech clearly was given at some personal cost, and we acknowledge that. Prudence Dailey, though she did not use this phrase, advocated, if you like, the option of principled abstention, and I think that was a helpful contribution. I thank those two for their particular contributions.

There have been many people who have said themselves that they are unable to vote in favour of what is before us but, nonetheless, they have acknowledged what has been done and the elements of what is here and have indicated that they will be able to live with it if it is passed. There are, of course, a number of issues which have been raised: the issue of bishops of particular persuasions, the issue of oaths, questions about whether we are moving away from scripture. I think, just picking up on a point just made, that actually what is happening is that we are sharing different interpretations of scripture and understanding the scripture. Perhaps we have begun to do that in a different way to the way that we have done in the past and, pray God, we may continue to do so in a serious and faithful way.

There have been expressions of concern about how bishops are appointed and how people are identified for senior appointment, and the Bishop of Ely gave us a little hint of work which is being done which is addressing some of that. There is stuff in the House of Bishops’ Declaration about ordinands and our determination not to be partial in the discernment of vocations, and that is really, really important there.

The issue of clergy who are in parishes where their PCC takes a different view to themselves which can cut both ways, these will be some of the things we will need to work on in practice if we go forward as to how all of that works out in the context of the environment set by the five principles.

Those five principles have been mentioned by a lot of people. It is interesting how something that emerges out of a process then acquires the potential to be something which may become of considerable significance for the life of the Church in all sorts of other matters than that for which it was originally intended. I have this slight fantasy that even now somebody is preparing a Canon to include the five principles in the Declaration of Assent, and have it printed it in the back of all our service books and such like, but maybe it might be no bad thing if that were the case because if it is, as it were, a gift to us for other things, then that will be a gift worth receiving.

The possibility around those principles is that we might find ways of living together
with difference in a way which is positive and respectful and honouring of one another. Some people have talked about the dignity of difference. Somebody even talked about our differences being our “secret weapon” and, maybe if we can actually find a way to do this on this issue, that will help us on other issues. It will also, actually, help us, as many have said, in our mission and in our, as it were, prophetic witness to the world about how it is possible to live in fellowship, one with another for the Common Good of Church and world.

The key of relatedness and trust of friendship, fellowship and flourishing. We have not been able to guarantee those things by legislation. That is the change that we have made and, therefore, we are asked to trust one another. I know that is difficult sometimes, but that is what we are being asked to do. Archbishop Justin has powerfully spoken of the determination of the House of Bishops to continue to work at this and to deliver where we have said we will deliver, and that is part of the trust pattern which we are seeking to establish. A number of people have said that we need to keep looking forward; look forward in fellowship, in prayer and mission, in hope, in joint work for the flourishing of the things of God’s Kingdom within our world. The language of “winning the peace” has been used and, yes, we want to do that. We want to make it work, I trust. I think it was the Bishop of Ely who used the phrase about “co-abiding in the abiding love of Christ”. That is that in which we want to move forward, and I believe that we have here the means by which we can do so.

However, we still have to put our fingers on the buttons on our voting gizmos. We will not move forward unless we receive that two-thirds majority in each House of this Synod for 503, which is the motion to approve the Measure. Once again, I commend that motion to you and I ask you, if you can, to support it with your vote. Thank you.

The Chair: It is practice, as always, to spend a moment in silent reflection and quietness. I will end that with a prayer. I think the best way to do this, as we have all been sitting for a long time, is to please stand and spend about two minutes in utter silence.

(Silence and prayer)

The Chair: Point of order.

A Speaker: Your Grace, having had the period of silence, I wonder whether you would agree that we might alter the convention of receiving the vote in silence because, however we are going to vote, there is something very real to celebrate, nothing today short of a miracle I think, in this debate. Whatever your judgment may be on that, I think we should all thank you for the way you have chaired us throughout the day.

The Chair. The Prebendary wants us to break our usual tradition, which is to receive the results in silence. The trouble is we have a series of votes to be done. Should the first one get through, immediately we will go to the Canon; when that is done, we have got the proclamation and then the Act of Synod so there is still business to be done. The Africans always say in a meal let the big dish be at the end so when we have done it all and there is a big dish, I will tell you what to do! But I still want to stay in the sense that when we receive the result, we can receive it with restraint and
sensitivity. The other reason is this: we have people in the gallery who may see this as an opportunity to make us not look like the Church of Jesus Christ, but some political gathering. So, for that reason, much as I hear that, I am not going to allow any celebration until the whole thing is done, and I hope you are going to join me when that happens.

So we come now to vote on Item 503. The effect of both the Bishops and Priests (Consecration and Ordination of Women) Measure 1993 and the Synod’s Standing Orders is that the draft Measure must receive the approval of a two-thirds majority in each House at Final Approval. I accordingly order a Division by Houses.

The motion

That the Measure entitled “Bishops and Priests (Consecration and Ordination of Women) Measure” be finally approved.

was carried after a division by Houses. The voting was as follows:

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1 abstention was recorded in the House of Bishops, 4 in the House of Clergy and 5 in the House of Laity.

The Chair: The Bishops and Priests (Consecration and Ordination of Women) Measure now therefore stands committed to the Legislative Committee.

We move on seamlessly because the next item also requires a two-thirds majority.

WOMEN IN THE EPISCOPATE

DRAFT AMENDING CANON NO. 33 (GS 1926B): DRAFT AMENDING CANON FOR FINAL APPROVAL

I call upon the Bishop of Rochester to move Item 504 that the Canon entitled “Amending Canon No. 33” be finally approved. You may speak for up to ten minutes.

The Bishop of Rochester (The Rt Revd James Langstaff): The Amending Canon which you have as GS 1926B, Amending Canon 33, the first two clauses refer to the changes in Canon C 2 and Canon C 4 which I referred to in my previous speech.

There are then some further clauses, 3, 4 and 5, which make other amendments to existing Canons, and clause 6 which inserts the new Canon C 29, which is that which establishes the regulations for the resolutions of disputes and thereby the independent reviewer and so forth. So that is the import of this amending Canon and I am pleased to move Item 504, that the Canon entitled Amending Canon No. 33 be finally approved.
The Chair: As required under Standing Order 92, I declare on behalf of the Presidents, the Prolocutors of the Convocations and Chair and Vice-Chair of the House of Laity that the requirements of Articles 7 and 8 of the Constitution have been complied with in respect of the draft Amending Canon. The Bishop has spoken to it and moved it. Is there any debate? Yes, Sir?

The Revd Nigel Irons (Lichfield): A man went to visit his doctor feeling extremely ill. The doctor diagnosed him with a rare and contagious disease and told him he would have to live in a room for the next two months and eat only pizzas. The man asked: “Will the Pizzas cure me?” The doctor said, “No, but it will be the only thing we can fit under the door.” For too long, women’s ministry in the Church of England was kept behind a closed door and had to survive on the scraps that could be slid underneath it. Twenty-two years ago the door was unlocked and set ajar and today, by approving the draft Amending Canon before us, we have the opportunity to legalise the full opening of that door. Indeed, it could be argued we have the opportunity to remove it from its hinges and dispense with its services altogether. The draft Canon makes no distinction between the exercise of the office of bishop or priest by a man or a woman. It is drafted in the simplest and most straightforward manner and provides a framework which affords true equality.

The approval of this Canon requires two things of us as members of Synod: trust and respect. Those who still have genuine difficulties with the concept of a woman bishop or priest will need to trust that the Bishops’ Declaration will be interpreted in ways which provide appropriately for their concerns. Those of us who enthusiastically welcome this step need to show respect for the positions of those who cannot accept the ministry of a woman bishop or priest. Society around us is waiting to see what we will do. Trust and respect should be endemic in any Christian community. If we, as the people of God, cannot demonstrate these qualities to the watching world, how can we authentically proclaim the Gospel to the communities and to the nation in which we live? Let us willingly embrace the duty of trust and respect that we owe to one another under God and let us give full and unfettered effect to the Measure we have just passed by approving this Canon, taking the door off its hinges and preventing its closure by throwing it away. Thank you.

The Chair: I see nobody else standing, therefore I call upon the Bishop of Rochester to respond, please.

The Bishop of Rochester: Do not tempt me, Archbishop! I do thank you for that contribution. It underlines the fact that the Canons are now written in such a way that there is no distinction in Canon between men and women in ordained ministry.

The Chair: Thank you, Bishop. The effect of the Bishops and Priests (Ordination of Women) Measure 1933 is that the Amending Canon must also receive the approval of a two-thirds majority in each House by Final Approval. I, accordingly, order a Division by Houses.

The motion
‘That the Canon entitled “Amending Canon No. 33” be finally approved.’
was carried after a division by Houses. The voting was as follows:

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1 abstention was recorded in the House of Bishops, 3 in the House of Clergy and 8 in the House of Laity.

The Chair: The draft Amending Canon has been approved.

WOMEN IN THE EPISCOPATE
DRAFT PETITION FOR HER MAJESTY’S ROYAL ASSENT AND LICENCE (GS 1926C)

We now come to item 505, debate on the motion for the approval of the petition for Her Majesty’s Royal Assent.

The Bishop of Rochester: Synod may be glad to know that we now move out of the realm of needing two-thirds majority and, unless someone dangerously asks for a vote by Houses, it can be done by a show of hands.

This item follows on from the previous one because the Canon, now having been passed by Synod, this is the means by which the Canon is submitted to Her Majesty for Royal Assent before then being able to come back to us for promulgation. I am therefore pleased to move Item 505: “That the petition for Her Majesty’s Royal Assent and Licence (GS 1926C) be adopted” by this Synod.

Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford): I have today exercised a self-denying ordinance, having intervened on this issue over a year ago. However, now that the decisions have been taken I would simply like to say this. I am a passionate believer in the human potential of every individual and I believe most sincerely that all individuals are equal in the sight of God from whatever their background, whatever their gender, whatever their circumstances, and I am just so happy that we have completed this business. Thank you, Synod.

The Chair: I see no one else standing. What we are voting on, friends, we remind ourselves, is this: a petition to Her Majesty for Royal Assent and Licence to make and promulge and execute the Canon to be adopted. This is a simple majority in all Houses and it will be by a show of hands.

The motion

‘That the petition for Her Majesty’s Royal Assent and Licence (GS 1926C) be adopted.’

was carried on a show of hands.
WOMEN IN THE EPISCOPATE
DRAFT ACT OF SYNOD RESCINDING THE EPISCOPAL MINISTRY ACT OF SYNOD 1993 (GS 1934A)

We now come to Item 506, “That the draft Act of Synod rescinding the Episcopal Ministry Act of Synod 1993 be approved.” Since this is also Article 7 business, as required by Standing Order 92, I declare on behalf of the Presidents and Prolocutors of the Convocations and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the House of Laity that the requirements of Article 7 of the constitution have been complied with in respect of the draft Act of Synod. I call upon the Bishop of Rochester to move this item. He may speak for up to ten minutes.

The Bishop of Rochester (The Rt Revd James Langstaff): The Bishop of Rochester does not have the energy to speak for up to ten minutes!

I am conscious that the Episcopal Ministry of Act Synod 1993 has been a piece of our Church life over these years which has evoked different kinds of responses. For some it has been really important; for others it has been something of a problem and has come to symbolise things which have been difficult. It has been part of our life for these last years.

In order to undo an Act of Synod, we need another Act of Synod. Only an Act of Synod can undo an Act of Synod. We had preliminary consideration of this back in February and we now need to bring it back at this stage and therefore the motion is very simply: “That the draft Act of Synod rescinding the Episcopal Ministry Act of Synod 1993 be approved”. You have had sight of GS 1934A, which is the text of the new Act of Synod which rescinds the old Act of Synod.

I am pleased to move the motion which stands in my name at Item 506.

The Chair: Item 506 is now open for debate. I remind members that under Standing Order 61(a) the motions for closure, speech limit or next business are not in order in this debate, but I retain discretion under Standing Order 21(c) to alter the normal speech limit of five minutes. I hope that in the debate we can focus on the detail of the draft Act of Synod and not repeat the debates on the Measure, the Amending Canon that actually we have just had.

Mrs April Alexander (Southwark): It is a funny old world. I never thought I would approve of another Act of Synod and here we are! We have waited 12 years in Southwark, it’s a great day. Thank you.

The Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn): There has been much talk about going forward together. It seems to me this is the first test of whether we are serious about going forward together, the first test really of the five principles. The Act of Synod is not part of the package, it is no longer needed, therefore we need to get rid of it. It has served us well for 20 years but in the House of Bishops’ Declaration it is replaced and it is actually replaced by something stronger for there is a mechanism for making sure that the provisions of the House of Bishops’ Declaration are followed in some way - the independent reviewer. The old Act of Synod had nothing like that, it was entirely on trust.
Secondly, the House of Bishops’ Declaration has the requirement that to alter it needs a two-thirds majority - more security. I say this as much to those outside Synod who may still be listening as to those inside because I know there is great fear and concern about this Act of Synod going, but I think we are in a stronger place with it being revoked.

Finally, of course, just to assure those outside, the Act of Synod remains in force until the Canon comes into force, so nothing changes to date, so I will be voting in support of this motion.

Mr Peter Smith (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich): I was elected on a by-election and I came first onto Synod in 1993 and in the first set of sessions I was presented with the Act of Synod, which we are now proposing should be revoked and replaced with an Act of Synod that takes us forward in the 21st Century. I am very, very pleased to be in full support. It is interesting to see how one Synod member has gone through in 21 years the developments in the ministry of women and I feel very privileged to have had a very, very small part in the decisions on the way through.

Can I also just echo what David Ashton said earlier. I thought the standard of debating on the floor, and specifically before lunch, is some of the best that I have ever heard in 21 years on Synod. I would also like to reiterate my thanks for your chairing, Archbishop, because your light humour this morning and this afternoon I think has helped us very, very well indeed. I fully support the rescission of the old Act and the new Act that I hope we are going to pass now. Thank you.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of two minutes.

The Revd Canon David Banting (Chelmsford): Chair, I shall not need two minutes. I agree that this is stronger for the two reasons certainly that Paul Benfield mentioned but this is an example of the first occasion of trust. The fifth bullet point of the five principles specifies “will be made without specifying a limit of time”. The Act of Synod which we are being invited to rescind said that it would be in place for as long as it was needed, and it has become symbolic of one of the promises that was broken, whether that is entirely fair or not, but it has become symbolic of one of the promises that was broken, so I will be supporting this, but I do want to draw attention to how significant it is because we have got another time factor, but it says without specifying a time limit in bullet five. Thank you.

The Chair: The Bishop of Rochester, please reply to the debate.

The Bishop of Rochester (The Rt Revd James Langstaff): I am grateful to Paul Benfield for pointing out the greater strength of the new arrangements that are being put in place and indeed to underline the point that David Banting referred to about that phrase “without limit of time”. That is there in the document now in terms and there it rests. So I ask you please to support this motion in order that we may, as it were, move clearly from the former arrangements to the full set of the new arrangements. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you. In this case the motion only requires a simple majority of
those present and voting. So I put the question to Synod on a show of hands.

The motion

‘That the draft Act of Synod rescinding the Episcopal Ministry Act of Synod 1993 be approved.’

was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair. The draft Act of Synod is accordingly approved.

We come finally to Item 507. I accordingly move, with the concurrence of the Archbishop of Canterbury and of the Business Committee, “That the Act of Synod rescinding the Episcopal Ministry Act of Synod 1993 be solemnly affirmed and proclaimed an Act of Synod”.

The motion

‘That the Act of Synod rescinding the Episcopal Ministry Act of Synod 1993 be solemnly affirmed and proclaimed an Act of Synod.’

was carried on a show of hands.

The motion having been carried, I shall now ratify and confirm it for the Province of York and shall invite the Archbishop of Canterbury to do the same for the Province of Canterbury. (Form of Proclamation signed)

I now call upon the Registrar to read the Synod customary Form of Proclamation.

The Registrar: “Whereas the Archbishops, Bishops, clergy and laity of the General Synod of the Church of England, assembled at their Synod in York, did, on the Fourteenth day of July in the Year of our Lord 2014, solemnly affirm and proclaim as an Act of Synod the Act of Synod rescinding the Episcopal Ministry Act of Synod 1993. Now therefore, we Justin Portal Welby, by Divine Providence Archbishop of Canterbury, and John Tucker Mugabi Sentamu, by Divine Providence Archbishop of York, do hereby ratify and confirm the said Act of Synod in our respective Provinces and do hereby proclaim to each and every of our Dioceses the Act of Synod rescinding the Episcopal Ministry Act of Synod 1993 as an Act of Synod. And do instruct the Clerk to the General Synod to transmit a copy of the said Act of Synod to the Secretary of each Diocesan Synod requiring that it be formally proclaimed in the Diocesan Synod at the next session. Dated this Fourteenth day of July in the Year of our Lord 2014.”

The Chair. The Act of Synod will now be transmitted to the Diocesan Synods.

That concludes our business relating to Women in the Episcopate. I think the Synod will agree that we should pause before moving to other business. In exercise of my power under Standing Order 14(g), I therefore adjourn the sitting until 5.15 when we shall resume our business, in the form of a debate on Item 27, the Guildford Diocesan Synod Motion on the Magna Carta.
Brothers and sisters in Christ, we have not let go of each other until we have blessed each other so we are going stand and sing “We are marching in the light of God” and then we can go out singing!

(Adjourned)

THE CHAIR The Bishop of Birmingham (The Rt Revd David Urquhart) took the Chair at 5.15 pm

DIOCESAN SYNOD MOTION
MAGNA CARTA (GS 1945A and GS 1945B)

The Chair: I am glad to say that I am satisfied there are enough people in the room to start our debate - congratulations for coming - which, as I said earlier, is on Order Paper VI, the Diocesan Motion on the Magna Carta. You may also refer to GS 1945A and B, which add some background information on Magna Carta. I notice also there are a couple of proposed amendments which I will take during the course of the debate. Could I ask Keith Malcouronne so speak to his motion for up to ten minutes.

Mr Keith Malcouronne (Guildford): I am the lay Chairman of Runnymede Deanery, quite fortuitously, and also Vice Chair of St John’s Egham, which is the parish in which Runnymede sits and is locally known as the “Magna Carta Church”. We have the coat of arms of the 25 barons around the entrance to our church.

We read in 2 Corinthians 5: “If anyone is in Christ they are a new creation. The old has passed away; behold the new has come.” All this is from God who, through Christ, reconciled us to himself and gives us the ministry of reconciliation. That is, in Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation, so we are ambassadors for Christ; God making his appeal through us.

Your Grace, your predecessor but 60, Cardinal Stephen Langton, was both gifted remarkably and used remarkably by Almighty God. Stephen was born around 850 years ago to Henry de Langton, who owned land both in Lincolnshire and also a small manor house and farm in Friday Street on Abinger Common near Leith Hill, which is now in Guildford Diocese, where ancestors from Denmark had likely settled about 200 years earlier.

In my humble opinion, conclusive proof of Stephen’s birth in Surrey is the Stephen Langton Pub on Friday Street, and I would be very happy to debate this point with any members who have other views - so long as we take some refreshment there of course! Around Lincolnshire there were several famous monasteries and abbeys and Stephen came of age during a period of strife between the Church and the Monarch in England. Thomas à Beckett, who was given refuge by the Gilbertine Monks in Lincolnshire, was murdered by supporters of Henry II in 1170, during Langton’s childhood. Both Stephen and his brother Simon opted to take religious orders which, he later wrote “scandalized” his father. Quickly promoted to serve as a Prebendary at York, in around 1181 he went to Paris, then the world’s leading centre of learning, where he earned a Doctorate in Arts and Theology. He began delivering
what were termed *quaestiones*, which are lectures on theological or moral problems, and wrote extensive commentaries on Books of the Bible. His 25-year career teaching in Paris brought him such renown that he became known as “Stephen with the Tongue of Thunder”. He worked on the important Vulgate or Common Edition that emerged from the University of Paris theologians in the 13th Century and is credited with the division of the texts of the Bible into the chapters that we still use in this chamber and throughout his and our Church eight centuries later.

During his student days he befriended an Italian cleric, Cardinal di Conti, who later became Pope Innocent III. In 1206 Stephen was summoned to Rome by Innocent who co-opted him as his ally in his struggle with King John over the right to appoint bishops.

Following the death of Archbishop Hubert Walter in 1205, the King and the English clergy failed to agree on a successor. Having promoted Langton a Cardinal, when the monks of Christ Church Canterbury came to Rome in 1207, Innocent proposed Langton, who was duly elected by the monks in the Pope’s presence. This deepened the crisis between the Church and the King, who now barred the new Archbishop from England, and started demanding revenue from churches, monasteries and other Church institutions. Innocent ex-communicated John and placed England under an Interdict prohibiting mass, marriages and even church bells ringing. Hoping to end the stalemate, Langton sailed to Dover and in 1209 sent word to the King that he would negotiate there, but John refused to travel into Kent. He was encountering growing opposition from his barons who resented increased taxation to pay for his failed wars in France, and he was worried that the French would ally with the Pope and invade England, so John then decided to make peace with him, and in May 1212 recognised Stephen as Archbishop of Canterbury.

Called to fill the see of Archbishop of Canterbury while memories of Anselm’s banishment and Beckett’s martyrdom were still fresh in people’s minds, Langton’s position became even more difficult when his reconciliation work between John and his rebellious barons, which became embodied in the Magna Carta, then put him on the wrong side of Pope Innocent, who was duty bound to support his new vassal John against his barons and rebuked and suspended Stephen for his troubles.

I recount this historical cameo to highlight the true calling of reconcilers, to some extent rejected by both camps as a representative of the enemy. Our own interests must be subjugated to the interests of those we are called to serve.

In this constitutional conflict, Langton was labouring for the liberties of England and seeking to check the royal tyranny, but it was also the chief danger to the Church of England at that time. In this conflict he was a bishop fighting for the Church as well as an Englishman fighting for the liberty of his country. It must be remembered that many issues were involved in the struggle. There were dangers of excess on either side. Nobles as well as kings have been guilty of oppression and injustice and the common people often suffer more from many tyrants than from one.

Turning to the Magna Carta itself, whilst it was crafted in a particular moment of crisis, it was a remarkably far-sighted and far-reaching document. As well as the key freedoms which are highlighted in the background papers and are still in force today,
of religious freedom, of judgment by peers and of justice not denied, delayed or sold, it also embodies the principle that the executive (the Crown in this case) is also subject to a higher power, then and now we believe to divine authority, but equally validly to the rule of law, which undergirds all good governance around the world today.

If like me your medieval history does not extend much beyond 1066 and all that, and you have not read the full text, an English translation, you may have found, is available on the Church of England website, and there is also a link on the Fourth Notice Paper. In that text, you will find in clause 61 an embryonic Parliament: 25 barons elected by their peers with powers to enforce and uphold the performance of the Charter by the Crown. Whilst this far-reaching provision was contested over subsequent decades, it is several centuries before the Enlightenment, modern democracies and the body of human rights that some people imagine was only recently created.

So recognising the fundamental importance and value of the Magna Carta, when its 800th anniversary is celebrated on 15 June next year, the Church can and should rightly play a leading part in the celebrations. We can highlight the Church’s pivotal role in reconciliation across society and securing some very fundamental human rights. We should also look around us today and into the future as we continue to live out that vocation; serving the Common Good, defending the weak and powerless and seeking freedom from those facing modern day exploitation and deprivation. The heart of the Guildford motion in its second clause urges us as the national Church of England to revive and extend our community engagement and service in so many different ways, and very clearly in the name of Christ and as a living testimony to his grace and mercy.

Serendipitously, at this Synod we have devoted the best part of a day or our work and worship together to expanding and deepening our commitment to serving the Common Good. Jim Wallis expounded our calling to change the story of our nation, its values, ethics, way of life and work, its justice system and its care for its most vulnerable members; its overall destiny. By our living out these principles, we can hold our society accountable. We as a Church can provide a theology of vision and hope and for our Church itself we can seek to live, teach and worship in complete religious freedom guaranteed by our Magna Carta.

In embracing our common heritage and promoting our national ministry, we are blessed to be led by another Archbishop of Canterbury who is known for his personal commitment to and exploits in negotiation and reconciliation in many and varied contexts. I am honoured and humbled to move the Diocesan Motion standing in my name.

The Chair: Thank you very much. I would like to hear two or three speeches and then I will call for the Bishop of St Alban’s to move the amendment.

Mr Robert Key (Salisbury): The Magna Carta is about Christian values. It is not a grand constitutional document, yet it is the best known and most influential medieval document in the world. The fact is it is a grubby little peace treaty. It is an explosive mixture of special pleading by feudal, judicial, economic and political interests. It is a
triumph for Archbishop Stephen Langton’s campaign to guarantee the power of the Church in the land but, unfortunately, was repudiated by the Pope six weeks later after Runnymede and the whole thing fell apart. There was very nearly another 1066 after that.

In 1216, the French were invited in and it is a little known fact that they controlled half the country in 1216. They got as far as Winchester which caved in; Salisbury did not!

King John died and the French went away and did not come back for a long time.

So, what is all the fuss about this extraordinary document? Fuss? Try Jay-Z. When he wanted to launch his latest album, which he called *Magna Carta Holy Grail*, he had his American launch and then he came to London and then he came to Salisbury to be pictured next to, well, I am not sure whether it was the Dean that was more important or the *Magna Carta*, but both said it all: that this was a world document.

It is also proof of our continuing Christian heritage in the world today. It is a UNESCO “memory of the world” document amongst a handful that really are held by UNESCO to record the development of mankind down the centuries. There are of course lots of other “originals” apart from the Salisbury, Lincoln and British Library ones, but there are only four “real” ones of 1215. There were 13 of them sealed and there are 13 facsimiles of the Salisbury Magna Carta. We are going to be lending some of those facsimiles next year. One of them will go to the National Cathedral in Washington and I am delighted to say that another of them will be loaned by the Dean and Chapter of Salisbury to the Dean and Chapter of Guildford, which seems highly appropriate.

I have the honour to be Chairman of the Salisbury Cathedral Magna Carta Board and to have worked with Lincoln and the British Library for some three years now on our joint presentations of the original four. We will be reuniting those original four in February 2015 at the British Library. I also serve on Sir Robert Worcester’s Magna Carta 800th Committee, which is the national co-ordinating committee, ensuring that we have a balanced programme across the country. Please visit the website MC800th. There will be scholarly, academic programmes and many, many celebrations at every level of national and local life.

In Salisbury, the Cathedral is leading our diocese in a two-county celebration. First of all, we will be redisplaying it and reinterpreting it in an accessible 21st Century way. We will be encouraging schools through a massive education programme across all 198 Church schools (42,000 children a day attend our Church schools) plus all the other local authority and independent schools in the two counties.

We will of course be giving thanks to God for all it stands for, so there will be a Festival Eucharist and we will have a pilgrimage and we will have a gala weekend. His Grace, the Archbishop of Canterbury, is very warmly invited to come to Salisbury that weekend and help us celebrate in style on behalf of the national Church.

So we will celebrate it, we will sing for it, we will dance for it, we will have pageants,
we will have children's concerts and we will welcome visitors. We have over 300 volunteer guides in Salisbury Cathedral. They are all going to be retrained in the Magna Carta. We have an academic historian who will be training some of them. We have an academic lawyer who will be training our guides in constitutional aspects of it. We will be having a parish history project for Magna Carta. Already over 60 of our parishes are signed up to that. We have social justice projects to celebrate Magna Carta and have a legacy of programmes working with offenders and vulnerable young people.

But why is the world interested in Magna Carta today? Well, it is a fact that in Salisbury some 40% of our visitors come from overseas and 60% of them come to see Magna Carta as well as the Cathedral. In my personal observation, it is people from the United States of America and from Germany who seem to know more about the Magna Carta than most of the people in Salisbury.

However, what was great about Magna Carta? I could go on, Bishop. I do not need to. Come to Salisbury, see the real thing and support the motion!

The Bishop of Coventry (The Rt Revd Dr Christopher Cocksworth): As a former University Chaplain in Runnymede Deanery and a regular member of St John's Egham and a successor to William, Bishop of Coventry, one of the Reverend Fathers who advised King John, I congratulate Keith Malcouronne for bringing this motion to Synod and for his excellent paper and very informed speech. I wholeheartedly support the motion for a host of reasons, three among them.

First, the Magna Carta is a theological document. It enshrines a vision of humanity, governance and society in which God's commitment to the dignity of human beings and to that which we have been calling over these days the Common Good, relativises the rights of the state, requiring its authorities to accept its responsibilities to its people under God.

Second, it is an ecclesial document. It acknowledges the transformative effect on human life of Christian wisdom and it promises that the Church shall be free.

Third, it is a humanitarian doctrine. It embodies principles that embed freedom and justice in the lives of the nations. Despite its troubled history that Robert Key has just described, the Magna Carta is an incalculable gift to the world, as relevant today as it was 800 years ago.

As Keith and Bob have indicated, a line can be traced between the document, certainly clauses 38 and 39, clauses that protect the individual from unfair trial and denial of justice, a line from those to the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948. It is one Article in that Declaration of Human Rights on which I would like to focus my remaining comments. Article 18 states with majestic clarity that everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others, and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance. Just as the Reverend Fathers insisted that the King declare the English Church to be free with its rights undiminished and liberties unimpaired, so drawing upon this same deep Christian
wisdom, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, places inviolable responsibility on all the rulers of all the nations, regardless of their own religion or lack of it, to protect and promote the right of individual people to believe their faith personally, express their faith publicly and, if they so wish, change their faith permanently.

Again 75% of the world’s population live in countries where the Article’s rights are denied them. From Shia Muslims in Bahrain, to Baha’is in Iran, from Sufi Muslims in Somalia to Buddhists in Tibet, members of religious faiths suffer a catalogue of appalling abuse. Among them are the people that Angela Merkel described as “the most persecuted religion in the world”, the estimated 250 million Christians suffering from persecution in one form or another that may lead to torture and execution.

May this motion before us motivate the English Church of our own day, declared to be free in 1215 in our land, to work for the full implementation of Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in all the lands of the world. May we do so by commending our Foreign and Commonwealth Office for its commitment to the freedom of religion and belief as one of the key human rights priorities and calling for it to be resolute in its actions; and by working with individual parliamentarians who are showing remarkable zeal in this cause, including Baroness Berridge who spoke excellently at a fringe event on Sunday. May we also support the work of agencies who work, often at great risk, for religious freedom and may we also heed Mary Judkins’ call for Synod to debate the scandal of persecution of Christians around the globe. May we pray for the millions of people who are denied the rights of Article 18, especially among them the household of faith, our brothers and sisters in Christ, of whom the world is not worthy, but to whom the world owes the right to live out their faith in the Son who indeed shall make us free.

The Revd Dr Hannah Cleugh (University of Durham and Newcastle): As a Church historian, albeit not a medievalist, a church bell ringer and a committed tea drinker, this motion ought to be my ideal Synod motion. It brings joy to my heart. However, I want to draw out some things that the Bishop of Coventry has just said and ask us to think together about what we are actually doing when we remember historical events, such as the great events that are already planned, and of which Robert Key has already spoken, for the celebration of Magna Carta. If I could put in a local plug for the Northern Province, I am sure if the Archbishop of Canterbury wishes to visit his former diocese in 2016, he will be most welcome at Durham Cathedral’s Open Treasure events, also displaying copies of Magna Carta and the Forest Charter, which are held by the Cathedral.

Back to the point. When we remember something, we are doing more than commemorating, we are making it real in our lives, in our Church and in our nation today. When we remember the Last Supper we are saying that Christ is somehow present. When we remember and celebrate Christmas, we are acknowledging the importance of the incarnation in our lives and faith today. So in our celebrations and commemorations of Magna Carta, as the Bishop of Coventry has said on Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, I want to challenge us to reflect on what it means to have freedom. To have freedom in this land and to challenge our political leaders about freedom of movement, about the power of the state to detain people and particularly to engage with those in our criminal justice system and those asylum seekers and immigrants who are detained in detention centres across the
land. If we are going to make these celebrations real, we need to be doing more than holding wonderful pageants, bell-ringing events and tea parties. I will be voting in favour of this motion but, please, let us make it real in our lives today. Thank you.

The Chair: You may want to speak to both your amendments, but we need to move the first one first.

The Bishop of St Albans (The Rt Revd Dr Alan Smith): I certainly would be very happy to speak to both of them. Members of Synod, as 2015 approaches, many parts of the country are laying their stake to Magna Carta. We did precisely that last year, because the first meeting of Stephen Langton and the Bishops took place two years earlier before it was sealed in the Abbey in what is now the Cathedral in St Albans, and so we had our own celebrations, with lectures and services and so on. I support this motion that is before Synod but I do want to broaden it and strengthen it a little, if I may.

The legal principles established in 1215 were a codification of a change in the balance of power in society, a change in rights and responsibilities. It was as Robert Key said, a rather grubby agreement. It was not actually about democracy at all. It was about the bishops and the barons wanting to get hold of some of the power. That is what it was actually about. But, of course, it was one step in a long process that eventually led to the forming of the Lords Spiritual and the Lords Temporal, eventually into the House of Commons and eventually into giving vote to women and so on. It has been part of a long process. It is important, I think, that we acknowledge the huge role that the Christian faith, through Stephen Langton and the bishops, played in that. I do observe that in this motion, in section (b), there is a concentration on the voluntary work that we as Christians should do. I am hugely supportive of that. It is very good that we are going to want to feature food banks and debt relief and community kitchens and so on, but what about the political dimension? We are living at a time of deep suspicion and scepticism and cynicism about politics, and it does not help when we, unthinkingly, join in always assuming the worst motives to politicians. It is a time when fewer and fewer people are engaged in the political process and are actually voting in elections. It is actually a deeply worrying development. My first amendment is to remind us that there is an imperative for Christians to engage with elected politicians and the political process. It links in clearly with the work that we did on the Common Good, which Keith referred to and it is particularly Item 9 on Jim Wallis’s ten points that we could develop to work for the Common Good, where he talks about knowing who your political representatives are at local and national level, studying political decisions, examining the moral compass and so on and making them accountable.

It is the old business about when you keep pulling people who are drowning out of the river, you eventually pause and think: I had better walk up the river and find out who is pushing the people in in the first place. What are the causes of some of these things in our society which are causing concern? The reason I have separated it out into two parts though is I am really very keen on my second part, encouraging churches to host hustings, this happens in our own Cathedral. It is one of the great opportunities, I believe we can serve our nation by offering neutral venues and a neutral chairperson to do that. I also wanted to commend the National Voter Registration Day. It is a campaign which is non-party political, it is simply trying to
encourage people to register and to get involved in the political process by voting. I do realise though that some members of Synod may be a bit suspicious, they do not know what this organisation is and I would not want to lose my fundamental point about politics because you are unclear about that and so I have separated it out and, therefore, if I may say, I hope you will vote for both parts.

I think it is absolutely crucial that we, in quite simple ways, simply putting adverts up in church halls, encouraging youth groups to think about engaging in the political process, will actually be an important impetus as we play our role in our nation and in the processes that are ahead of us. I need to move my first amendment, which I gladly do, and hope you will vote for it.

Mr Keith Malcouronne (Guildford): Thank you very much to the Bishop of St Albans for the points he has made and I would actually like to accept the first amendment because I think, as you quite rightly say, we need as a Church to be engaged in all aspects of community life and knowing who our representatives are, engaging with them and creatively playing our part in that process is one of the ways in which we can outwork this. I just would, in defence of the motion, say it started life in St John's PCC and then our local Runnymede Deanery and we have been very focused on our community engagement at a local level and see that as part of our outworking. As we now take this motion to a national level then, obviously, engaging with politics nationally is important. However, Jim Wallis did say yesterday that the Common Good will not start with politics and that it has to be a grass roots movement. I am reminded of the hymn, "I Vow to Thee My Country", and that is a second verse about another country, "And soul by soul and silently her shining bounds increase." I do not want the second of the Bishop's amendments to --

The Chair: I will give you a chance to speak to that in a moment.

Mr Keith Malcouronne (Guildford): Oh, thank you. I will gladly accept the first of those amendments.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

The Revd Canon Richard Mitchell (Gloucester): Thank you, Chair. We cannot lay claim to the Magna Carta, I am afraid, but we did host the Coronation of King John's son, Henry III, shortly after, the only Coronation to take place outside Westminster Abbey since 1066. I just thought I would mention that one there.

In Henry III's long reign, the agreements and parameters of Magna Carta began to take more shape and be consolidated; freedoms and rights, but always within limits. It is in this sense I would like to support the first amendment from the Bishop of St Albans, in the sense that in whichever ways we mark this anniversary we do take the opportunity to broaden out the discussion into the area of the limits of liberty, because I think it is significant in where we are in the number of our national concerns and debates. We pride ourselves on our developed and developing rights and freedoms of our citizens, many rooted in the Magna Carta but I think we are at a point where some of the boundaries and limits of what people can consider to be their rights are in question. The law is crucial in setting these limits, but new challenges are appearing. Discussion and fears around the radicalisation of
Islamists, the wearing of veils and challenging the political settlement to religious expression. Tax evasion is raising questions about how far the financially astute can use and abuse the system. In other areas of our life, also our economic life, the questions are there. How far are parents entitled to have a right to have their child in their first choice school? How far can we extend and spend on caring for older people who wish to be secure in their own homes but are requiring an intensive level of provision? To what extent are individuals free to choose their daily diet or to smoke when there are health consequences challenging the resources that are stretched for our nation? Are we all entitled to own our own homes when the demand raises prices into unaffordability for many and drives tenancies beyond the poorest?

I just want to say that I support the first part of this motion particularly. We have our freedoms and we flourish under those freedoms and rights, but I think the whole debate about the current political situation, I hope this motion and this first amendment will enable us to enter into some discussion about the limits to liberty.

*Canon Peter Bruinvels (Guildford)*: Thank you very much, Chair. Obviously, I am very much in favour of the original motion. I just really want to make a point. The Bishop of St Albans is encouraging us to support it on the fact of getting engaged positively and creatively with local and national politics. I just want to say, if you take the example of Runnymede, on November 17 last year there was a military Covenant, a local Covenant signed, which engaged all the local politicians. It engaged the Secretary of State for Defence, Philip Hammond, the local church leaders were fully engaged, the Leader of the Council was involved, cadets and all the other community. I am just wondering if it is really necessary, and does the Bishop of St Albans really mean engage with local politicians and national politicians, or is he meaning in the politics of debate? The Magna Carta has lasted a long time. 800 years is a great success. I am really querying whether there is such a need for it. Repeating what I said this morning, the Covenants are doing all this. They are engaging with the local communities. The church leaders are very much there, along with the congregations, so I think this could be unnecessary.

*Mr John Freeman (Chester)*: On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

*This motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

So the motion before us is that at Item 50 that we add in the clause after clause (b), new clause (b), "(-) urge members of congregations to exercise their civic duty by engaging positively and creatively with local and national politics."

*The amendment was carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair*: The debate is now on Item 51 to insert a new paragraph, "(-) encourage churches to seek to increase the number of people voting in elections, for example, by hosting hustings and supporting National Voter Registration Day (5 February)." Do you want to say anything more about that, Mr Malcouronne?
Mr Keith Malcouronne (Guildford): I would just like to make three points in response to this particular amendment. The first I was just opening up was perhaps it might weight the motion overall too much towards the political fulfilling of our vocation as a national Church, seeking to bring justice and seeking to take forward the Common Good. I would say in relation to political participation and the dwindling of voting activity, is it not, first, the politician's job to address the reasons for falling participation, keeping their promises and lightening the burdens on the nation? For the Church to perhaps seek to be a recruiting officer for politicians may not be that helpful. If I look across the Atlantic, voter registration has become one of the ways in which churches have been quite active there. Although the amendment is not intended to be party political, both the Republican and Democratic Parties have seen voter registration as a way of advancing their churches' objectives. I am actually rather cautious of that second amendment and I am inclined to ask Synod to resist it as weighting the motion overall too far towards a political fulfilling of our vocation, which is mainly focused on our direct ministry and our direct work for the Common Good and our recalling of the nation to the principles of living out the principles of Magna Carta generally.

The Chair: The floor is now open for the discussion on this amendment.

The Archdeacon of Lincoln (The Ven. Timothy Barker): I was grateful to Dr Cleugh for her speech earlier on when she was talking about how remembering helps to make something real. There was a throwaway line in the summary minutes of the Lincoln Cathedral Chapter circulated to the College of Canons the other week about the Lincoln 1215 Magna Carta preparing for its visit to the United States of America. This led to all sorts of strange pictures of the Magna Carta preparing for its holiday, but it did make the point that it is a living document.

Langton, who I think I have to claim as a Lincolnshire man rather than a Surrey man, I think he probably was born at Langton-by-Wragby, not so very far away from Lincoln, there is good evidence that he studied the Old Testament Commentaries in Lincoln Cathedral where he seems to have absorbed the teaching about the good kings and the bad kings and the consequences of both, which seems to have informed his input to Magna Carta, that reminder that kings are accountable to God as are all in authority. There seems to be a vital continuing message of Magna Carta, and which is why I welcome both Items 50 and 51, the amendments from the Bishop of St Albans, because it is one of the important messages, it seems to me, of Magna Carta that we have a right to hold people in authority to account only when we ourselves are engaged.

Mr Philip Fletcher (Ex officio): Despite Keith's reservations, I would like to urge Synod to pass this second amendment, Item 51. It is tremendously important that we use our votes and encourage others to use theirs. Failure to vote has a very important political effect. It is very obvious, for example, that more weight is attached to those of us of pensionable age because we tend to use our vote more than those in need, often in poverty, who so often do not use their vote because they do not think it is worthwhile. That is my serious point and, therefore, I think we should pass this amendment. Keith has referred to a very important, seminal indeed, historical work which has not yet been quoted and which I think, in jest, makes the point that I want to make. I refer, of course, to, "1066 and All That,"
whose summary of the great Charter runs as follows: "No one was to be put to death, save for some reason, except the common people. Everyone should be free, except the common people. Everything should be of the same weight and measure throughout the realm, except; and that the barons should not be tried except by a special jury of other barons who would understand." Please, Synod, let us have this amendment too.

Mrs Penelope Allen (Lichfield): I am a local councillor and I have to work with our MP sometimes and, before I came here, I was working with him to try and find some suitable housing for a family in distress. Let me encourage those of you who are feeling rather sceptical about politics to please engage with this. I heartily applaud Alan Smith’s amendment because, if we are going to increase the Common Good, we have to hold people to account, we have to take part in discussion, we have to seek to influence. You are all capable people and you are all able to do that. If we ignore opportunities to engage with our local communities, you will lose the opportunity to speak, as I do, about affordable homes for the young people in your community. We have just been looking at that in our community and in the whole of South Staffordshire actually, and so we have been actively engaged as councillors. We need to hear the opinions of the public. We need to hear your opinions. We also need you to galvanise others. We need politics to become legitimate again as an activity for the Common Good. You can assist with this and I hope some people will think very seriously, if you are seeking for the Common Good, about standing for councils yourselves. Let me encourage you to do this. My church is already seeking those who wanted to come and use our building to address us and others about what they see for the Common Good. Thank you.

Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford): I too would like to ask that we accept this amendment, please. I believe it is a great privilege to be able to cast our vote to influence the way that our country is governed. There are many, many people in the world who do not have that privilege and we should use every opportunity to make sure it properly reflects people’s views. At the last European Elections, if you can imagine 100 people, 12 voted Labour; 11 Conservative; 6 UKIP; 5 Liberal Democrats; 2 other parties; 64 did not vote, 64 out of 100. That is a really serious problem and I think, if I had my way with this amendment, I would say that it should go further by actually asking for a survey of people who do not vote to find out the reasons why they do not quote, because we should not guess at the solutions, which we are slightly doing in this amendment. We ought to find out the reasons. You can ask these people, we know who they are, they do not vote, we can ask them these. We have got things like YouGov to do the sorts of polls for us. I very much feel we should do a lot more work on this.

While I am actually talking to this issue of voting, there is one other great electoral deficiency which I believe ought to be addressed. That is, we all know that we have hundreds of thousands of people from all across Europe who are now living in our country. We have nearly 400,000 French people alone in London. I do not know if you realise but they can vote in local elections, they can vote in European elections but they are not allowed to vote in General Elections. Many of these people actually live in this country for year after year after year. They are out of touch with their home country were they have their nationality, they would dearly love to vote in this country, but the way European law is phrased at the moment they are
disenfranchised. I believe that that is wrong and it needs addressing on behalf of hundreds of thousands of people who could very much shape our politics, so I hope we would do something about that in the future as well. Thank you.

A Speaker: On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

'That the question be now put.'

The Chair: Thank you very much. That has my agreement. Is it the will of the Synod that we take this amendment to the vote?

The amendment was carried on a show of hands.

We now return to debate on the motion as amended.

The Archdeacon of Bath (The Ven. Andrew Piggott): Thank you for calling me. This has been a really interesting debate. We have had history, we have had theology, we have had ecclesiology and we have had some passionate reminders of the importance of the issue that we are discussing. I am delighted that both the two amendments proposed by the Bishop of St Albans have been received positively by Synod. The word that I want to bring to our attention is the word, "legacy." Around 2012 when the Olympics were on, the legacy that those would leave in our country was one of the key buzzwords. It is around in Brazil at the moment. I believe that by passing this motion this afternoon not only have we the opportunity to influence individual lives, through the kind of things that Mr Malcouronne proposed in his original motion, food banks, debt relief, community kitchens and so on, we not only have the opportunity to have great celebrations in our cathedrals, our churches and our communities to mark 2015 but, as the Bishop of Coventry has suggested in his very moving speech, to invite people around the world to think very seriously about some fundamental core issues to our very humanity. I am sure Synod is very grateful to him for bringing his speech to us.

The legacy that we may be able to pass on is one which all of us are very committed to, having heard Jim Wallis speak and our Archbishops too, and many other speakers about the Common Good. This will be for our good and for the good of our nation and I encourage Synod to give this a glowing approval when it comes to the vote shortly. Thank you.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of two minutes.

Canon Janet Perret (Ely): I have heard a lot about the Church and the rights of the individuals and how the Church has been affected. One clause in particular, 40, seems to me to strike to the heart of what we have been doing today in doing away with a form of discrimination. To no one will we sell, to no one will we refuse or delay right or justice. Almost all of the other clauses speak of the Church, they speak of freemen, they speak of barons, they do not speak of everybody, and this particular clause does speak to everybody in the country at the time and still does. I think that should be great cause for all of us to rejoice in the Magna Carta.

Dr Philip Giddings (Oxford): Referring to paragraph (a) of the Motion and the line
which refers to “all our citizens shall live in freedom”. Why is Magna Carta so seminal, so foundational across the world: because it begins the process of establishing how to achieve that living in freedom with two extraordinary and very important principles which apply to a whole range of governance processes. The first is the Rule of Law, that we are subject and should be subject to law and its due process however high or however low we are. It is obvious to us now but it is actually very precious and not observed very fully across our world.

Secondly, and perhaps even more importantly, it establishes the principle of the accountability of those who rule to those they do rule and especially to those who pay for ruling. While we as a Church celebrate this and offer it to our community, just remember that we need to apply those principles to ourselves.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

The Chair: Thank you very much. That has my acceptance. Those in favour of a Motion for closure at this point?

This motion was put and carried on a show of hands.

I now invite Mr Malcouronne to reply to the debate. You have just about three minutes.

Mr Keith Malcouronne (Guildford): Thank you all very much for your contributions and for the amended motion which I would love to see us pass with strong support. I could only pick out a few contributions. Thanks again to Bishop Christopher Cocksworth for emphasising the dimensions of Magna Carta, theological, ecclesial and humanitarian and drawing in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the shocking statistic that 75% of humanity are living in societies which lack this right at the moment and how many within those suffer persecution.

Hannah also saying that as we remember, as we celebrate, we also need to challenge the state. Philip Giddings has just reminded us as well that we have to hold accountable those who rule. In the amended Motion, one of the ways we are doing that is to encourage us as individual members of the Church but also encouraging our communities to be active participants in the political process holding our own leaders to account but also seeking to assist our sisters and brothers around the world as they seek to establish the same rights and the same humanity.

Many other speakers again with a strong focus on a fair deal for everyone across society, particularly those less able to help themselves, again that is part of our calling. That is really the purpose of our Motion for Guildford and I am delighted to commend it to you again, it is really to take up the opportunity of next year, do not let this be airbrushed out by the press or politicians or whatever just focusing on their agenda, let the Church be central, playing a key part in this to advance not just our cause as an institution but rather that the cause of those that we stand for, that we seek to minister to and that we feel called to serve, we be agents of reconciliation, we be agents of good news. Let us take this opportunity that is really being offered
to us on a plate, the bishops before us 800 years ago, Stephen Langton and the others from Lincoln and wherever else, who opened this door, let us push it wide open. Thank you.

The Chair: The Motion as amended at Item 27 is on your screens.

The motion (as amended)

‘That this Synod:

(a) recognise the 800th Anniversary, on 15 June 2015, of the sealing of the Magna Carta at Runnymede as an important opportunity to celebrate the Charter’s principles – which established that the English Church and all our citizens shall live in freedom and have contributed to human flourishing in this country and around the world;

(b) urge dioceses, deaneries, parishes and other church bodies to affirm the significant part played by the Church through Archbishop Stephen Langton and the Bishops in the Charter’s formulation and implementation and warmly commend the continued engagement of the Church in transforming community at national, regional and local level – which might include projects such as food banks, debt relief, community kitchens and other ways of caring with Christ’s love for those in need or facing exploitation;

(c) urge members of congregations to exercise their civic duty by engaging positively and creatively with local and national politics;

(d) encourage churches to seek to increase the number of people voting in elections, for example, by hosting hustings and supporting National Voter Registration Day (5 February); and

(e) welcome with enthusiasm the events throughout 2015 already being organised by dioceses, deaneries, parishes and local authorities to mark the Magna Carta and encourage dioceses, deaneries, parishes and other church bodies to undertake further local initiatives around the Anniversary – which might include street parties, community fairs or pageants, and the ringing of Church and Cathedral bells.’

was carried on a show of hands.

Thank you very much for very good debate. I am sorry to those who were prepared to speak but there was not time for you to contribute. Thank you particularly to those who quoted accurately Magna Carta, of which I have a copy here, which you can get from the British Library for a few pennies in case you need it for the year ahead, in both the original and the English translation.

The Revd Canon Gavin Kirk led the Synod in act of worship.
THE CHAIR Canon Ann Turner (Europe) took the Chair at 8.30 pm

CHARM RENTAL SCHEME FOR RETIRED CLERGY

The Chair: Good evening, Synod. We come now to Item 28 and we come to a presentation on the CHARM Rental Scheme for retired clergy. This presentation will be given under Standing Order 97. It will be given by Dr Jonathan Spencer, Chair of the Pensions Board, and he will be supported by Mr Alan Fletcher, who is Chair of the Housing Committee of the Pensions Board. After the presentation I will be taking questions. I invite Dr Spencer to give his presentation.

Dr Jonathan Spencer (Ex-officio): Thank you, Chair, and thank you for the opportunity to make this presentation. I am afraid we cannot quite match up to the excitement of earlier in the day and I have been advised I ought probably not to use the phrase “graveyard slot” about this one.

Alan Fletcher and I are delighted to be here to tell you a little bit about some quite significant changes that we are about to make to the Pensions Board retirement housing schemes and the rental limb in particular. The aim of these changes is to make the scheme fairer and better. We are not in the business of cost saving, we are in the business of improving what we have within the envelope of available resources.

I am going to say a little bit about the wider background and the context to the review we have undertaken, Alan will then take you through the specifics of the changes that we are going to make and how we got there, and then I will conclude by saying a little bit about the wider implications and what happens next.

The Pensions Board does two main things by way of providing retirement services for retiring and retired clergy. The one you all know about is that we are responsible for the payment of pensions and we also manage the pension liabilities incurred since 1998, before that it goes back to the Church Commissioners. That costs the Church at large about £70 million a year at present, that will fall eventually when the deficit is paid off. We also provide a range of housing schemes for retiring clergy: a rental scheme, a shared equity scheme, supported housing and collective facilities at a nursing home.

The difference is, of course, that pensions are an entitlement; the housing arrangements are discretionary and they are there principally to provide help for those clergy who at the point of retirement do not have a foothold in the housing market. We know that this is a highly valued part of the total deal for clergy. We are committed to sustaining it, so the question for this review is not whether, it is how to do it better.

The largest of the schemes we run under the Church’s Housing Assistance for Retired Ministry - I am going to call it CHARM for the rest of the evening. We provide help for about 30% of clergy as they retire. As the previous slide said, we currently house through our various schemes about 2,500 people; of those just under half in the rental scheme, which is now by far the most widely used by clergy newly at the point of retirement.
The cost of the rental scheme at present is about £12 million a year, of which just under half is met by rents, the other half partly by the Vote 5 subsidy that you approved again last night and the balance by our own charitable fund resources.

In reviewing the scheme, which has not been reviewed in fact since it started in its present form 30 years ago, we have had a number of objectives in mind where we have felt for a while that we ought to be able to make the scheme better and more attuned to the needs of clergy retiring now than the scheme was when it started. This arises because of course the housing market has changed in the last 30 years and the circumstances of clergy as they retire has changed over the last 30 years: we have women, which there were not then, and clergy have come into ministry in hugely more diverse circumstances than was typically the case a generation ago.

Our goals have been to make the scheme fairer and more transparent, fairer between beneficiaries, more transparent in the sense that people know more clearly what is on offer at the point that they start thinking about using the CHARM Scheme and are clearer about the criteria that we have to operate. We are also concerned to make clergy feel and be more in control over what happens to them at what is inherently a stressful point in people’s lives, particularly I think for clergy who not only are making the transition from, as it were, conventional paid work, or unconventional paid work, into at least a form of retirement. Normally people are advised not to move house at the same time; clergy by the nature of their tied housing have to. Our objective is to make things less stressful if we can.

We are also conscious that the current housing stock that we have is not in as good state of repair as it really should be. We are spending quite a lot of money on upgrading the housing stock: new heating systems, better insulation, new kitchens, all of that sort of thing; that will continue. We need to make sure that we devote resources to houses that we will keep in our ownership for longer as well as giving the tenants a better quality of accommodation than some of them currently enjoy.

Obviously we have to be good stewards of the Board’s money, both our own charitable resources and the money we get from Synod under Vote 5, and we need to make the changes in a way that will be sustainable for the long-term. This is a scheme that needs to be around for many years to come and we need to manage it in a way that allows that to be possible.

I am now going to hand over to Alan Fletcher who will talk to you about what happens next.

Mr Alan Fletcher (Chair of the Housing Committee): Ladies and gentlemen, given our belief, as Jonathan has explained, that we can do this better, we have engaged in a thorough review process, the outline details of which are on that slide. This has been a process which has gone on for the last two years or so. The York study involved questionnaires being sent to all clergy who were 15 years away from retirement, so those of 53 and on, and there was a terrific response to that, something like 2,700 questionnaires were returned.
What those questionnaires showed us, some of the points Jonathan has already mentioned, is that clergy had a variety of concerns that they wanted us to be sure that we addressed. The stress point associated with retirement combined with the forced move away from the locality where you had previously been was strongly emphasised and clergy wanted us to ensure that the offer that we made to them was not going to increase the stress and ideally was going to reduce it, and that was an important point.

Another important point was that clergy wanted to know the deal. They wanted to know what was on offer so they could look at it and compare it with other possible opportunities. They wanted to know the cost of the accommodation. They wanted to know what sort of accommodation was available to them and of course they wanted it to be affordable. Those were extremely important issues. Jonathan has also mentioned clergy want to feel, perhaps for the first time, that they have some control over where they are, which has not been the case for many of them.

That consultation process was very helpful to us indeed in identifying what people wanted. As the slide refers, we then looked at other housing providers for some benchmarking, what did they do? We did a significant amount of financial modelling, and this then produced a consultation document and we launched the consultation at this Synod last year. It ran for four months, we reviewed it and we now get to the point where we are able to make recommendations to you, we are able to make changes to the scheme because we are completely confident that this is a better scheme within the same financial parameters.

I think it would be very useful for you to understand the problems that we have identified over many years in fact, and certainly as a result of the review process, with the current scheme. There you have in that picture on the slide a member of the clergy looking in an estate agent’s window for a property. This is the first point I would like to make about the current scheme. What the current scheme does is it says to clergy a maximum of 12 months before they retire, but very often less time than that, what we would like them to do is select a property that they would like us to buy within our financial parameters so as we can then go and buy it. That, in principle, sounds to be a very good idea and sometimes this process does work well, but generally it creates a significant number of problems.

Looking around the hall tonight I am quite sure that, like me, there are many people here who have got war stories associated with the difficulties they have had in buying property in the UK market. So our clergy, a person, who is probably not very experienced at looking at properties, has to go and find a property in a location which is probably miles away, then they have to come to us and say, “This is the property I’d like to buy”. It has to fit our criteria. There may well be no properties in the relatively short window that they have got in the area that they want that are appropriate for us. If there are such properties we are then in a situation where we have got to negotiate to buy those properties and, again, I am sure we are all aware of the difficulties of negotiating in the property market.

You may get to the point of having an offer accepted but, of course, under UK law that does not mean that a deal is done until contracts are exchanged, so there is the exchange of contract process. Of course, we have got to have a survey done on the
property and the survey may reveal that the property is not acceptable and is not suitable. You then get further down the line and we have all had problems with the chain breaking or with people gazumping you so as you cannot actually get that property. So what are we doing? We are imposing significant stress on clergy in that situation.

The other issue, of course, as that fourth bullet makes, is that the rent is based on income and not on the property. Now, we are not able, therefore, to tell clergy at the time when they are looking at the property what the rental costs will be because they cannot be advised of what those rental costs are until much closer to the date of their retirement, so they do not actually know what the rent is going to be.

There are various other problems with the rent being based on income and not being based on property. For example, of course, there are some people who are paying more rent for a property than the market rent would be. If your income goes up then so does your rent. You are required to advise us every year about your financial position, filling out a quite complicated form which is intrusive and unpleasant both for the clergy and for our people who have to administer that system. If you move to a smaller property your rent will stay the same. There are various problems with that.

What we have concluded based on a lot of evidence, a lot of input, is that this system is unacceptably stressful and does not really work.

So what are we going to do with the new scheme? Well, there you are, in that picture there is an example of one our properties - we have nearly 1,200 properties - there is one of our rental properties. A key objective for us going forward is to ensure that all of our properties are maintained to a very high standard.

What we are going to do in future is we are not going to operate the system I have just described, but instead of that we are going to have a significant pool of good quality properties around the country in places where we know clergy want to live, so there will be an existing range of properties. We will contact clergy from five years in. Five years away from their retirement date we will come to them and we will discuss with them what their requirements are. If it turns out to be the case that their requirement is that they wish to get into the CHARM rental and they qualify for CHARM rental then we will give them access to our pool of properties that are available. They will then know what properties are available for them and they can make a choice of those properties.

The other key issue is how much will these properties cost them to rent? They will know because they will know what the council tax is. We will give an estimate of utility bills so that they will know that.

The other major change is that they will know what the rent is because we are moving away from the income-based approach in favour of target rents. Target rents have been widely used for the last ten years or so in the social housing sector and what target rent does is it produces a rent which is approximately 60% of commercial rent, so it is a lower rent than the commercial rents, not the market rent, and that is the rent that we are going to go forward with, approximately, as I say, 60% of
commercial rent. So people will know at the time when we talk to them what is available to them.

Once they have selected a property, that property will be removed from our portfolio, rented commercially and then a few months before the retirement date the commercial tenant will be removed and we will make sure that the property is of a very high quality for the clergy person to move in at the time of their retirement.

We put these proposals out to consultation. There was a very strong response to the consultation, very good numbers responded, very good hits on the website that we had and a strong number of people replying. I have to say that there was very strong support for these proposals.

Perhaps as we might have expected, the main concern came from people who are currently in the scheme about what would happen to them particularly in circumstances where they suffered a significant reduction in their income arising from a life-changing event. Now the most obvious life-changing event, of course, is the death of a spouse but there are other such examples. In those circumstances under the current rules, of course, because it is income-based there will be a reduction in income, hence a reduction in rent. That was a major concern for people and going forward we are going to retain that undertaking.

What will the scheme look like going forward? We are going to make the change from 1 April 2015 to target rents and to a system where people do not come to us, are not required to find a property, they choose a property from our portfolio. In effect, anybody who is currently one of our tenants or becomes one before 1 April 2015, the situation for them will basically be pretty well the same as it is now. The existing properties will be put on to a target rent basis and so people who are currently in properties, some of them will be paying less than the target rent at the moment, some of them will be paying more than the target rent.

We are going to converge those people to the target rent very, very gently indeed. If you are paying more than the target rent then your rent will come down by £60 a year; if you are less than the target rent it will go up by RPI plus £60 a year, so very, very gentle convergence. We have got some figures that show that for many people it will be ten, 15, 20 years or more before they actually get there both ways.

If there is this life-changing event to which I have referred, such as, as I say, the death of a spouse, we will adhere to our previous promise, we will reduce the rent to what it would have been on an income basis and then converge from there, so existing people will be protected.

New customers who come to us after 1 April will join on the new arrangements, they will join on the new scheme, so for them the property will be chosen from our portfolio, costs will be completely clear at the outset, it will be based on target rent, and that is the approach we are going to adopt. Those are the main changes.

Dr Jonathan Spencer: I am going to talk a little bit now about the implications of these changes for the funding of the scheme. At present, the total cost of running CHARM rental is just over £12 million a year, that is last year’s data, of which rental,
as you see, accounts for just under half. We contribute from our own charitable funds £2.5 million and the balance, £3.8 million this year, just over £4 million next year, comes from Vote 5.

We anticipate that that balance of cost or expenditure will remain broadly the same going forward. This is not a cost saving exercise but neither is it an increased subsidy exercise at the level of the individual tenant, so we expect rents to continue to account for about half the total expenditure on the scheme going forward.

We will need the Vote 5 support to continue and to continue to increase, not because of these changes but because we have a bulge of retirements in prospect, we have the prospect that interest rates will return to more normal levels over the next few years which will tend to push up our financing costs. We have some work to do, as we have mentioned already, on bringing the property up to a better standard and all of that will cost. In the very long-term the funding on the basis we now have should enable the cost to the wider Church to begin to fall away. I think that we should see this in the context of support from the wider Church, from the dioceses, at around £4 million. It is a small supplement to the cost of pension provision.

Since the Church Commissioners stopped funding new purchases in 2010 we have been utilising a £50 million loan facility from Santander which will last us another two or three years at current rates of utilisation. We are beginning to explore what that will be succeeded by. It could be another loan facility on broadly the same basis or we might issue a bond. There are various things that we are exploring without yet having reached a decision; we do not need to quite yet.

What next? The decisions on the future of the scheme and the response to the consultation, which Alan has just outlined to you, that will be published tomorrow in this document. If you want a copy to read in slower time there will be some available outside afterwards. We are writing to all current residents tomorrow to give them an outline of the changes and over the next few weeks a more detailed letter telling each tenant whether their rent will over time go down or go up and the rate at which that will occur for them. We obviously need to make sure that those clergy coming up to retirement who are already in our system, who we are already working with, that they do not suffer any delays as a consequence of these changes. We will need to make some adjustment around the 1 April changeover date.

We will also be talking increasingly to clergy further back away from retirement so that we can plug them into the system in good time so that the system that Alan described can work effectively for them. That said, we will need to go on buying properties to bring the portfolio up to the kind of size that we need and will need in the future, which means that we will need to take account of individual clergy wishes as to the general area where they want to live as opposed to the precise property for some few years to come. As I say, no changes before 1 April.

To conclude, the first point I want to emphasise from all of this is that this is a scheme that is here for the duration unless Synod tells us that you no longer want it. I am not anticipating that any time soon. Second, I need to thank the Association of Archdeacons, the Association of Retired Clergy and many other individuals who have helped us in developing these changes through survey responses, through the
York research that was described earlier. I also want to thank the Board’s Housing Committee, ably chaired by Alan Fletcher, and the dedicated staff team led by the Chief Executive, Bernadette Kenny, who is sitting behind me, and Maria Jacobs who has done a lot of the detailed work on these changes. My thanks to all of them for all the work that has gone in.

Finally, to say despite all the work that we have done we are bound not to have got things quite right and we will need, I am sure, to fine tune these changed arrangements over the next few years and in that context not only do we welcome questions from you here tonight now but we will also welcome feedback from you, from users of the scheme, from dioceses and others as to how the changes are bedding in and where, if anywhere, we need perhaps to make some adjustments. Thank you all very much.

*The Chair:* Synod, I am now going to take questions and I shall be calling groups of three. I have full confidence that Synod will restrict themselves to questions and not use this opportunity to try and make a speech.

*The Revd Mark Barker (Rochester):* My father retired from a parish ministry about 25 years ago and with my mother they were able to enter into a shared ownership through the CHARM scheme. They ended up buying a pigsty that was in the process of being converted into a lovely bungalow, and my Mum still lives there and it has been a wonderful home for them throughout their retirement. I do not believe my parents would have been able to purchase their own home without the support of the CHARM Scheme and so I am very grateful to the Pensions Board for the scheme.

Many of the proposals being put forward I strongly support, although I am concerned because I do encourage parishioners who are moving away to a new place because of work or retirement to first of all find a Church community which they can be part of, and I would hope for the same for my retirement. I wonder how this scheme, if we are looking to move to a specific Church community and be part of that community, particularly if you are getting older and cannot travel, whether that is going to be possible.

Secondly, on the shared ownership, there is no mention this evening about that and whether that is still going to be possible under the new scheme. I would like some clarification on those two aspects, please.

*Mrs Christine McMullen (Derby):* This is not a question on behalf of myself, because I will never be a retired cleric, it is on behalf of members of Broken Rites, the support group for divorced and separated wives of clergy. Some aspects of this scheme seem really a big improvement: transparency, fairness, affordability and good value. I was wondering if there is any way in which those principles could be applied to the very small numbers of divorced clergy wives from the 1980s and 1990s who very gratefully accepted value-linked loans given by the Church Commissioners but at that time interest rates were high and some of them now in their extreme old age are still paying rent because they cannot afford to buy the place where they are living. I know that responsibility for that has gone to the dioceses but still I wonder if there is any way in which those criteria of transparency, fairness, affordability and good value
could be stretched a bit to include that very small number of mostly women. Thank you.

Mr Justin Brett (Chichester): I am concerned about the move towards rents based upon property, cost of rented housing, as opposed to the scheme members’ income. Bearing that in mind, and given that the people for whom this scheme is designed are clergy with very limited resources, can you explain to me how it is that you expect to offer choice at the same time as pegging your rents according to the value of the property and not according to the scheme members to pay. This seems to me to be logically inconsistent.

Mr Alan Fletcher: Thank you. Just in relation to the first question which actually slightly links with the second question, the Value Linked Loans Scheme ended in 2008 to be replaced by the Shared Ownership Scheme and the Shared Ownership Scheme is currently available and will continue to be available. The point about location is an interesting one. We have, as I say, a range of properties and we will be buying more properties as we develop the portfolio, so that there will be as many properties as possible in areas that clergy show us they want to move to. Because of the difficulties of the current system, it is really quite challenging to actually get exactly the property that you want in exactly the location that you want, but we will certainly do our best to ensure that there are as many properties as possible where people want to be. I think that is the most we can promise.

Dr Jonathan Spencer: As to Christine’s question, as I think she recognised, the Scheme that she is talking about is not one which the Pensions Board operates. I think the most useful thing I can do is to draw to the attention of the Church Commissioners and of the Dioceses the details of the changes that we are making, but I think they will have to draw their own conclusions about the extent to which the principles that we are seeking to operate on can be translated. As to Justin Brett’s question, we have started from the observation that the present arrangements for setting rents are themselves not very satisfactory. We have had a number of complaints in recent years from retired clergy who find, typically after being in a particular property for a number of years, that their rents are higher than the market rents. Clearly, in principle, we could say to them: Well, in that case, by all means go and take a property at a lower rent nearby in the private sector, but we felt that that was not a terribly helpful answer to someone who is well-established in the house where they are. I would challenge the premise that the present system is perfect and needs no attention. I think our view is that, bearing in mind that on average rents will be no more than they are now, bearing in mind that there will be a substantial continuing element of subsidy here, we ought to be able to work the Scheme in discussion with incoming tenants so that they understand well the options that are available to them, the choices that are open to them, do you want to spend a greater or a lesser proportion of your income in retirement on housing or on other things, do you want a flat, do you want a house etc. I think there is probably more scope for real choice that can be delivered under the new arrangements than the present arrangements actually enable people to exercise.

The Revd Stephen Trott (Peterborough): I would like to say thank you, first of all, to the Pensions Board for the work that has gone into this. As we have heard, it is 30 years or more. It has been a very important safety net for many of the clergy coming
up to retirement and it is immensely valued. I have had quite a number of communications from colleagues in the Diocese expressing anxieties about the Scheme and anxieties about tonight’s discussion, and I think that is perhaps a measure of the importance of it and of this discussion. I think, by and large, people would be very pleased to move from an income based calculation to the Target Rent Scheme that you are proposing. Particularly where both partners in the marriage have an income, the present Scheme is calculated on their joint income rather than the income of the retired cleric, which seems to some to be a manifest unfairness because it is provided in respect of that retired cleric’s pension arrangement, and so the Target Rent Scheme I think would be welcomed and seen as an improvement.

I would like to ask, looking at things more broadly, it must be ten years ago since General Synod discussed the Turnbull Report and set out a list of aspirations for meeting the future needs of clergy and for changing the whole picture of the way in which clergy approached retirement. There were proposals at that time to try to find ways to help clergy to get into the housing market at a relatively early stage in their career, so that they would not actually need the CHARM Scheme when the time came to retire. It would be advantageous for individual clergy to be able to move into their own home on retirement. It would be advantageous for the Church nationally because precious funds which could be used elsewhere if we were not needing to subsidise it to such an extent. I wonder whether it is worth suggesting that you enter into negotiations with some of the major financial institutions, banks, one of the building societies perhaps, the Nationwide offers a very wide range of mortgages to buy-to-let buyers, for example. Can we explore possibilities like this?

I have to declare an interest as a Church Commissioner, we are going to have Williams and Glyn’s bank coming into being, perhaps you could even have a gentle word with Mr Whittam Smith to see whether the Church itself, through that, could offer mortgages to clergy in retirement as an alternative to the CHARM Scheme, which, as I say, is good and valued, but there may be better and more satisfactory alternatives as possible alternatives.

The Bishop of Bath and Wells (The Rt Revd Peter Hancock): The provision of adequate and appropriate housing has been something which has concerned Bath and Wells recently, but it is not that I want to talk about. Until recently I was a member of the Pensions Board, and I want Synod to know that I could not have been more inspired by the quality and the professionalism of all those who were Pensions Board members. It is another area of the Church where we are extremely fortunate to have the services and the expertise of some extraordinarily qualified and committed people and the work they do was caring and sensitive. My question, on the basis of that, is you report has been particularly about the acquisition of property and about the provision of property, can you tell us something a bit more about the maintenance of property because, as retired clergy get older and their spouses get older, the maintenance of property is a particular concern for them?

The Revd Canon Dr Simon Taylor (Derby): Like Mark Barker, my parents retired to a Shared Ownership house. Unlike his father, I fear my parents had a less good experience. Two questions, if I may. Firstly, will there be a continuing consultation with clergy involved in the CHARM Scheme to monitor its success? Secondly, are there plans for a proper consultation along the lines of the one that has just been
done on the CHARM Scheme for the Shared Ownership Scheme, because I certainly would be very interested in seeing that given a similarly thorough treatment?

Dr Jonathan Spencer (*Ex officio*): On Father Trott’s question, the Pensions Board is concerned with the provision of housing to the clergy at the point of retirement if they have not already got a foothold in the housing market. I think the question, which goes back to Turnbull or one of the earlier reports, as to should some help be given to clergy in the course of their stipendiary ministry to help them get a foothold in the housing market before retirement probably lies outside our scope. David Walker, the Chairman of RACS, is here and I think this is probably more RACS territory than Pensions Board territory. I would offer this observation though. If you go back ten years and more, the old Value Linked Mortgage Scheme that the Pensions Board then ran and the Rental Scheme were taken up in roughly equal quantities by retiring clergy. The position under the Shared Equity Scheme (which I suspect is a little bit less attractive intrinsically) is used by a much smaller fraction of retiring clergy than the old Scheme was. It is mostly the Rental Scheme that is taken up today. I think it is quite possible, though we have not surveyed this, that clergy, in fact, have made their own arrangements, given the more liberalised housing market and housing finance in the last 20 years, to get footholds in the property market through buy-to-let mortgages or whatever without needing to come to us. I think this is something that we might want to look at with David and with RACS to see how exactly things have evolved over the last few years and whether there is a gap that it would be incumbent on the Church authorities collectively to fill. Alan will take Peter Hancock’s question.

Mr Alan Fletcher (*Chair of the Housing Committee*): Thank you for that question. I do not want this to sound like a love-in, but I did have the privilege for a short time of chairing the Housing Committee whilst the Bishop of Bath and Wells was a member and that was a jolly experience. I thank him for his kind comments. In relation the quality of our properties and keeping them in high quality going forward, that is an absolutely key objective. When you establish a portfolio of properties and you keep the properties as opposed to buying and selling properties in the same area, as we do at the moment, that churn was estimated to cost £750,000 in 2011, we are going to have a portfolio of properties and we are going to be extremely good stewards of them and we are going to keep them in a high state of repair. We have outsourced this to the Sanctuary Operation and that has been going on for a few years now. We have been very satisfied so far with the way that Sanctuary has operated. Inevitably, sometimes there are problems in the nature of what they do but there is a very high success rate there, and so that is a very key objective.

Dr Jonathan Spencer: On Simon Taylor’s two questions, will we undertake continuous consultation on the implementation of new arrangements? Yes, certainly, as I said, these are quite big changes. There is bound to be a question of getting them to settle down and embed them and we will want feedback from users of the Scheme, both established and new ones, as to how it is working out in practice. We will encourage that. We will also, I have no doubt, set up some monitoring arrangements once we get stuck in.

As to a review of the Shared Ownership Scheme, yes, we will do that in due course,
but I think the priority for the housing team's attention over the next 18 months is to get the new arrangements for the Rental Scheme which, as I said, is much the bigger in terms of current operations. The priority must be to get the new arrangements for the Rental Scheme properly settled down and embedded before we conduct another review, but we will in due course.

Canon Elizabeth Renshaw (Chester): I want to return to a question that Stephen Trott had in his when he spoke. That is what, if any, is your proposed relationship with the Williams and Glyn Bank and might their facilities be better value for money than Santander?

The Revd Stephen Coles (London): I just want just to push you a bit harder on Justin Brett's question, because I want to know perhaps in a little more detail how you plan to work out the figure for rent based on the value of the property when in so many different parts of the country some properties, certainly where I come from, are very very expensive indeed and, if people want to live there, then the Church will have to buy property in an area which is extremely expensive. If you are going to work out the actual rent on that, for example the Mayor of London has just tried to control it, the question is very simple, can I have the detail on how you are going to do it, given that in some areas charging even 80% of the market rate will be unaffordable by most members of the clergy.

The Bishop of Manchester (The Rt Revd David Walker): I am conscious that, Dr Spence, you mentioned that quite a lot of people are retiring at the moment and, even with the best will in the world, it seems there will be more people coming into the properties and you will be buying more properties. By the time it gets to my turn, and I am still fairly new in my job and hope to be in Manchester for a good many years to come, is there a danger that you will not be able to afford to buy any more properties for my particular generation to retire to? Can you give us any reassurances that you will be able to continue to buy further properties to meet increased demand as there are still lots of people alive in the properties that you already have?

Mr Alan Fletcher: In relation to the first question about Williams and Glyn's, which I think is still part of RBS, and the comparison with the Santander facility, I actually have an extensive involvement, both past and present, in housing finance. At the time that the Santander facility was offered to us I did get slightly impatient, actually, with the debate in the Board because this was such a terrific facility. I was anxious that we got hold of it before they realised how good it was and withdrew it, frankly. It is a terrific facility and far better than anything that would be available from RBS. As Jonathan has mentioned, we are looking at financing going forward. We have got a Project Board in relation to that, which is running at the moment, there is a meeting next week. We are looking at the whole subject very carefully so that we have finance going forward, but certainly Santander is an extremely good arrangement.

The question about Target Rents, there is a number of aspects to this. It is quite a complicated subject for which there is not time to go into detail now, although we can supply significant further information if you would like. Basically, Target Rent, of course, is not just based on the value of the property. It starts with the value of a property in 1999, it increases it by RPI and then there are various other factors that
are added, all of which are designed to produce a rent which is affordable. Clearly, there will be some properties in some areas where the Target Rent will be very significantly too high for clergy because the capital values will be too high for us to buy the property in the first place. I think that is the best way to answer that question at this stage, but certainly significant information can be supplied about Target Rents. There is some information already in the consultation document and we can supply more.

Dr Jonathan Spencer (Ex officio): I would just like to underline the last point that Alan was making. For example, we do not now buy any properties, really, in the London area. They are too expensive. We have a capital limit on any individual purchase of, I think it is £225,000, which will buy you a small flat in an outer borough and that is about it in London. There are other hot spots of property where, if you are you in the CHARM Scheme, we do not buy your house there. That does not change because that capital limit remains unchanged from the old to the new. As to David’s hope that there will still be space for him when in 20 or 30 years’ time he comes to reach retirement age, it is one of the balancing acts that we have to perform to make sure that the number of tenants we take on year by year remains in balance with the long-term funding capacity that we in the Scheme have. The charitable funds of the Pensions Board run to some £100 million for these purposes. That, in effect, provides the capital base or the deposit, if you like, on all the houses that we buy. We will need to make sure, going forward, that we do not exhaust that capacity before everything gets into broadly steady state. Clearly, we can make some kind of guess now about demand for the Scheme in five and ten years’ time. Whatever that estimate is, it will be wrong and we will need to carry on observing and monitoring and adjusting the Scheme to make sure that it remains in reasonable balance but over a medium term. This is not a Scheme where there is either any intention or any need to turn the tap on and off suddenly at short notice. I hope that gives you sufficient assurance, David.

Mrs Mary Nagel (Chichester): Following on Justin Brett’s question and Stephen Coles’s Target Rent includes other factors as opposed to income based rent, there are many people in the South East who are very very worried. You have said £225,000 is your cap so you cannot do London, are you aware that you cannot even do it in the area in which I live, in Chichester, in Bognor, Brighton, Hove or Worthing? That does actually mean that people in the South East will not be able to retire in their own area.

Mr Ian Fletcher (Bradford): I know that clergy have been very appreciative of the CHARM Scheme and the income based element of that. It can be thought that that income based element provides some sort of provision where both parties to a marriage know that if somebody dies, the other one will be taken care of because of the reduction in the rent. I am wondering about the transitional position for people who perhaps have based their finances on that thought, that if one of them dies the other one will be okay on it. I do not really understand the Scheme perhaps as well as some of the clergy do, but my other thought was about the fact that when a party to a marriage dies there is often a thought of moving from one property to another perhaps to be near the surviving family and, now that families tend to be spread around the country rather than more than used to be the case, that can mean moving from one part of the country to the other. Again, if you are on the income
basis the rent will remain the same, but if we have moved towards a more market based rent, albeit a percentage of market rent, I am wondering what the position might be there? The transitional position perhaps is what I am talking about and perhaps also the position if a house needs to be adapted; because, as we live longer and longer, we find more and more people who do need adaptations to properties in order to continue to live at home.

Dr Jonathan Spencer: On Mary Nagel's point, I am well aware of the situation around Chichester which I think has the highest density of Rolls Royce ownership of anywhere in the country, but there clearly are a number of other parts of the South East where property prices are high. One of the things that we do periodically, and will continue to do, is to review the caps on the maximum amount that we will spend on any property. But there is a trade-off there between raising the caps, which we do do and we will do no doubt again in future, and the number of properties that we can afford to own and, therefore, the scope of the Scheme. We will have to keep those in balance. We do already own a number of properties along the south coast in the South East. Part of the point of the changes that we are making is to make sure we keep those properties so that they can be re-let rather than finding ourselves with too big a mismatch between where people would like to live and where we can make it affordable to live and the actual balance of the portfolio. There always have been, and will continue to be, some limits on where exactly the CHARM Scheme can afford to buy houses for people.

On the other question, there were a number of points. In terms of the situation that arises when a partner or a spouse dies, we do already and we will certainly continue to facilitate moves for the surviving partner to be closer to other members of the family and possibly in a smaller property, if that is what they want. I think the fundamental change that we will be making here is that when a clergyman approaching retirement comes to us in the first place, we will want to have a conversation with him and with his spouse, or the other way around, about the whole range of possibilities that they need to think about in choosing their arrangements for retirement. It is partly a question of the location, it is partly how big a property they want and how much of their income they want to spend on property as opposed to other things and thinking about the longer term and what the options there might be in relation to access to family and all the rest. I think the switch is not so much to a market based rent, it is a social housing rent that we will be moving to. It is not purely a market driven phenomenon. Have I addressed all the points that you raised? You raised a number.

Mr Ian Fletcher (Bradford): I think I was trying to get at the transitional position, perhaps for somebody who is already in the income linked Scheme.

Dr Jonathan Spencer: We are very clear on the transition. People who are already tenants in the Scheme, they will remain on the income related basis but with a very slow transition to the target rent. If one of them dies, when we will make the same sort of adjustment that we always have done because it is an income based rent and then they will begin to move towards the Target Rent again. New entrants into the Scheme will go onto the Target Rental based system from the start.

The Chair: I would like to thank Jonathan Spencer and Alan Fletcher for answering
your questions. That concludes this item of business. Thank you, Synod.

THE CHAIR Canon Professor Michael Clarke (Worcester) took the Chair at 9.30 pm

AUDIT COMMITTEE’S ANNUAL REPORT (GS 1961)

The Chair: Colleagues we now come to Item 29 on the agenda, the Annual Report of the Audit Committee. For this item you will need GS 1961. The Chair of the Audit Committee will make a short presentation on the Standing Order 96, we will then move into question and answer mode and adopt the pattern we have used before in this set of sessions, that is to say three questions at a time and allow Audit Committee members to comment as they will.

Mrs Mary Chapman (Ex-officio): Thank you, Chair, and thank you members of Synod, particularly members of the House of Bishops, for your fortitude and commitment in enduring to the last item on the agenda for today.

Our business cannot compare with the momentous business of the rest of the day, but it is important for the good governance of the Church institutions and the Archbishops’ Council in particular.

I am very pleased to present this report of the work of the Archbishops’ Council’s Audit Committee. I have chaired the Committee for the past two years, but, as our Annual Report comes in oral format to Synod only every three years, this is my first opportunity to present it to you.

We are a very compact Committee of six people and I am very grateful to all of them for their commitment. Since we last reported to General Synod in 2011, the number of Council members on the Audit Committee has increased from one to two and, under our revised constitution, the Chair must be a Council member. Those changes have helpfully increased the connectedness with the Council’s work. Independence is ensured by having four non-Council members on the Committee, including two elected by you, the members of General Synod, our Vice-Chairman Keith Malcouronne - who is with me on the platform - and also Susan Cooper.

The Committee has a range of responsibilities. It reviews the Council’s annual report and accounts in detail and it is the main member level contact with the external auditors. We commission internal audit reports on activities in Council and in shared service departments. We critically review whether the planned management actions to address any weaknesses identified are sufficient and we regularly check whether these have been satisfactorily completed within the agreed timescales. We also have a significant role in the risk management framework, whilst recognising that it is the Council as the trustee body that has ultimate responsibility for identifying risks, assessing their potential impact and likelihood, reviewing whether the mitigations are sufficient and then endorsing or setting future management actions. In fact, you are going think me very sad, but today, amidst the tremendous joy and gratitude for the decision that we took, there was a tiny part of me that flickered through my brain the thought, “That’s a major risk we can take off the Council’s risk register.”

I have three examples to give you a flavour of our work because I am sure you have
read the report and there is no point me going through it word by word.

Since April of this year, the national Church’s shared service departments such as finance and resources and HR have been part of a new charitable company - the Church of England Central Services Limited. We reviewed the emerging proposals for this new entity to help refine them. We also ensured that the paper on the subject to the three joint owners of the company - the Council, the Church Commissioners and Pensions Board - included a very clear explanation of the business rationale and the proposed governance arrangements.

Second, last year we oversaw a competitive tendering process which resulted in the reappointment of BDO as the Council’s auditor at a reduced fee. Working with them and management we have refined the process and presentation of the Council’s annual report and the accounts. Through a combined effort the Council received the final 2013 accounts two months earlier this year than in the previous year. We also sought to improve the clarity and transparency of disclosures in the financial statements and will carry this principle with us under the new accounting guidelines for charities which are expected to be published soon, and they will need to be followed by the 2015 accounts.

As a final example, in most meetings we focus in detail on the risk management of a specific area. At our most recent meeting a fortnight ago we considered the area of safeguarding. This is a vital area and one where there is much work to be done at national and diocesan level and, as we have already seen in this group of sessions with draft legislation being given First Consideration, and the additional resource at national level that is included within the Council’s budget for 2015, this is likely to be a continued area of focus for the Committee in our regular general reviews of risk management.

I would like to thank the Archbishops’ Council and the Church of England Central Services’ staff teams in finance and in internal audit for their support. They do an incredible amount of hard work on our behalf and it is largely down to them that you will have noted in the report that we had an unqualified report from the auditors again this year.

To conclude, whilst I think our Annual Report reflects good progress, an audit committee’s work is never done, we will continue to challenge management to make further improvements. I would very much welcome any comments that members may have on the report, the Audit Committee’s work or indeed the wider governance and accountability of the Archbishops’ Council as the trustee body that we serve. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mrs Chapman. Now we will move into questions three at a time. The emphasis should be on questions and my instruction tells me to watch out for anybody who tries to make a speech. On the other hand, Mrs Chapman has made the point that it would be useful to the Committee to have comments from members of Synod so I shall be a little more liberal than I might have been.

Professor Tony Berry (Chester): In the introductory paragraph of this excellent and very helpful report, it says that agreed practice is for the report to be debated every
three years and that this year’s report is scheduled for debate. We appear not to be having a debate. Am I misreading the report or has the Business Committee slipped up? Which way round is it? Do give a ruling and I will follow whatever you say.

The Chair: I think you and I may have had a misunderstanding. I had not actually called you to make a contribution at this stage.

Professor Tony Berry (Chester): It was a point of procedural order instead of business that I was raising.

Mrs Mary Chapman (Ex officio): The requirement under Standing Orders is for the Audit Committee report to come to Synod in the same way that the Archbishops’ Council annual report and accounts, or indeed the Church Commissioners’ annual report and accounts come, and that is usually by way of presentation. That is what we are required to do. In actual fact, three years ago, it was done as a debate and it can be requested as a debate. This year after this report was written - not everything is written at the last moment, this report was written a little while ago - it was decided that the best route to enable people to ask questions was to have a presentation with questions, which is completely within the Standing Orders and that is the way it was scheduled by the Committee.

Professor Tony Berry (Chester): The question I would raise is: are you satisfied that the risk appetite of the Council is at a high enough level? I understand all the stuff about mitigation but it is the risk appetite. In other words, is the Church taking enough risk in mission and how it spends its money in mission, evangelism and development?

The Chair: You have moved from your point of order to asking a question. I will call you into the debate in due course. Could the two colleagues over here ask their questions?

Mr Ian Fletcher (Ripon and Leeds): Thank you to the Audit Committee for all the work that they do. It is obvious from what has been said that the work of the Audit Committee is continually expanding, and Jane referred specifically to safeguarding as an issue there. There were three things in the report that just struck me. One was at paragraph 13 where we talk about weaknesses in the IT system. I did note from the budget that we were spending a fairly hefty amount of money on additional IT equipment, et cetera, in order to go Cloud-based. It seemed to me that that of itself might constitute some sort of risk that perhaps could be commented on.

I also noted in paragraph 17 that we refer to specific departmental risk registers without talking about an overall risk register. I just wonder what the position there might be.

At paragraph 23 we talked about the interaction perhaps between the Archbishops’ Council, the Church Commissioners and the Pension Board, but we talked about it in an informal way, an informal meeting. I just wondered whether there was anything perhaps on the stocks about making that a more formal arrangement because there obviously is commonalty between the three. Thank you.
Mr Robin Lunn (Worcester): Thank you for your report. Two very straightforward questions. The first one refers to paragraph 13 as well. I am interested to know what the plans are in place to address the issues you refer to. In paragraph 14, you are talking about the implementation of the new IT systems and upgrading of the Crockford system. Has that full implementation taken place yet? I seem to think I have read something about this in the last couple of weeks.

Canon Lucy Docherty (Portsmouth): Thank you for this report. I sit on many audit committees in the public sector as well as for the Church House Corporation and I actually find they are not as boring to read as some people think they are. I sympathise with your earlier comment, Mary, that you made. I think you are right about the issue of governance, how important they are for governance, and in particular I would like to ask a question about risk registers. I would be interested to know if it is possible to know this time a little bit more about how you put your risk register together and whether you have any advice to offer dioceses about how they might construct a risk register that might add value to the work that they do in terms of controlling their risks.

Mrs Mary Chapman: There were two different questions from different people related to IT so perhaps I could take those together, if I may. Perhaps a little bit a background first of all. In recent years, the Archbishops’ Council, and indeed this applies to the NCIs generally, has been moving from dependence on legacy systems, and I think anyone who has worked in any organisation will know the implications of that, and to try and move and install propriety systems. I think that has, frankly, been at the expense of investment in the basic infrastructure, so now we are in the game of playing catch-up. But we have moved quite a long way and a full review has been done of NCIs’ IT strategy, that has been completed and that has been done with the assistance of external consultants and the changes that were recommended are now being implemented. We have established an IT governance group to ensure that the future IT strategy continues to meet the business needs of the NCIs. I keep saying NCIs because of course IT is now one of the areas that is managed by Church of England Central Services in which each of the three major NCIs has an interest, and so the audit committees look very closely at the work that goes on there as well.

Our IT infrastructure is being refreshed to ensure that it is robust and able to support new ways of working. Following the appointment of a new IT director there is also a major review of the structure and roles within the IT department. I think you will understand from that that it is mid-change. You mentioned specifically Cloud and of course there are risks associated with Cloud. One set of risks related to IT on the risks register will inevitably be replaced by another set of risks related to IT as we move forward, so those will be properly considered and integrated into risks.

The system requirements for both Ministry Division and Crockford’s proved to be more difficult to address than what might be considered the more straightforward payroll requirements and so, consequently, they have taken longer to sort out than was originally planned. The system provider has been working hard to meet those requirements and we hope that the outstanding issues will have been addressed by the end of this month so we are nearing completion. However, that is obviously not the end of the process and there is a transition team in place to oversee the project
as it moves from the implementation phase to business as usual.

If I move on to the questions about levels of risk within the risk register, yes, there are different levels of risk in that the departments and divisions within the Archbishops’ Council develop their risk registers, but that is related to, both in advance and following, a discussion that takes place annually at the Archbishops’ Council about what its strategic risks are, and so there is both a cascade downwards and in a way a feeding upwards as well, because risk might be identified anywhere, but of course clearly it is important first and foremost to think about it in the light of the objectives that we have set ourselves. I will maybe talk a little bit more that in answer to a question that I suspect might come later.

The informal meeting was essentially a “getting to know you”. I was relatively new as Chairman of the Archbishops’ Council Audit Committee and so I was quite keen to meet my fellows in the other NCIs because it is useful to share and there are things we can learn from each other, and it helps if you know the person concerned. There are much more formal ways of doing this. There has been a central services arrangement for a long time and now that it has been set up in particular as a separate company and charity there is a coming together through the chief officers of the three main NCIs, and the member of the board, in two cases the Chairman, in the Archbishops’ Council’s case it is John Spence as Chairman of the Finance Committee, and so there is an increasing reflection as a group of people involved in governance and audit and risk to think about these things collectively. I would say that that is emerging particularly in a piece of work that is being done at the moment to look at what we have under the umbrella of strategic risks for the Church of England. That is a very big thing and, of course, I am sure everybody in this room could name some of those. It would be foolish to think that any single part of the Church of England could take sole responsibility for mitigating and managing the mitigation of those risks. We do need to co-ordinate thinking somewhere and so we have decided to co-ordinate the thinking through the Archbishops’ Council bringing together the others.

Lucy, your question about risk registers, I think some of what I have already said goes to that direction, so it is work by the trustee body on risk identification and agreeing priorities. Increasingly, because I think the Archbishops’ Council is improving in terms of its risk management maturity, although we still have some way to go, that is being done in the light of objectives that are being set and then there is a cascade and each part of the Archbishops’ Council thinks about the operational risks that emerge from those. They are reviewed by the staff teams clearly and they come to the Audit Committee for review at each of the meetings where we note changes and particularly actions against the mitigations that have been agreed.

Mr Keith Malcouronne (Guildford): One of the questioners asked specifically about risk appetite which is a slightly technical term. It was maybe the lady who serves on other audit committees. That is where an organisation determines the healthy level of risk that it would like to adopt or is prepared to operate at, in other words, balancing the trade-off between how risky is your behaviour against the benefits you would sacrifice in terms of having completely risk free environment to build. Mary mentioned the developing risk maturity of the organisation. The Archbishops’ Council has not yet got to a stage of formally laying out its risk appetite but in
developing its overall risk register it rates all the areas of risk initially in terms of their likelihood and the impact if those things were to occur, then considers how good the mitigating protections are that have been put in place and that leads you to what is called residual risk.

You have a metrics of the major areas of operation, the major risks you are facing and what residual level of risk you are accepting if you do not make any further changes. The Council looks at that each year now and is able to say whether or not it is comfortable with that. It is making a form of assessment as to whether as trustees they feel able to go forward with that, but it is not as yet a formal assessment of and spelling out of risk appetite.

The other point that someone raised was about advice for the dioceses from the work the Archbishops’ Council’s Audit Committee is doing and also the management team. There I would say that a few years ago the internal audit team at Church House did actually offer a service of internal audit to a few other dioceses in the South East, but that over time proved not to be easy to manage and it was better to concentrate the resource just on the needs of Church House. The national NCIs have a very different business, frankly, to dioceses, and dioceses’ audit committees would be well advised to talk to their own auditors. In my own diocese of Guildford we use a firm who also audit several other dioceses and they are likely to be able to advise, help and assist develop risk maturity within dioceses where you have a totally different workforce you are employing and you have totally different objectives as individual bishops’ councils to what the Archbishops’ Council is doing nationally. It probably would be more sensible for diocesan audit committees and audit managers to work together to collaborate and talk with their auditors at that level.

Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford): You may be aware from my questions last night about my interest in integration across the Church. I am wondering whether you could tell us a little bit about how the new IT systems are going to integrate with dioceses and also where we already do that, such as the extremely helpful parish statistics gathering scheme, what findings you have had in terms of penetration testing and cyber crime for people getting in on our web systems into our mainstream systems?

The Revd Dr Patrick Richmond (Norwich): Paragraph 18 talks about work on strategic, Church-wide risks. What is the biggest risk that you are facing and what are we doing about it?

The Bishop of Durham (The Rt Revd Paul Butler): Mary, I am delighted that you have begun to do some internal work on safeguarding. Could you be clearer about whether or not is that number one on the list and, if not, why not and what mitigating provisions there are? Also what interconnections there are between national Church and diocese in terms of safeguarding, because most victims and survivors do not see the distinction?

Mrs Mary Chapman: Quickly on the first one which, if I understood correctly, was related to sharing services with dioceses. At the moment Church of England Central Services is not looking specifically to provide these services to dioceses. This is a very new situation and who knows what opportunities might open in the future. On security, from cyber crime and the like, we do regularly test, and the most recent
test gave us a clear bill of health.

The biggest pan-NCI risk? Well, safeguarding is right up there. I can say nothing more than that. It is an enormous issue for the Church of England and the whole cascade of everything from the highest level policy and thinking through to all the processes and training and development that have started to emerge and are being cascaded through dioceses is one of the things that we will need to take tremendously seriously in ensuring that the monitoring and evaluation of that is properly done. So, yes, it is right up there.

As someone alluded to earlier, we have a couple of other very big risks. One is our declining and ageing congregations and the challenge, if you like, that we have to achieve numerical growth, particularly amongst the young, and in thinking about resource utilisation that risk is also up there as very, very big.

Then that leads on to the third one which is the issue of resources, and I think you all heard John Spence when he presented the budget send some very clear signals about the very tough decisions we are going to have to make in the light of the research and the strategic thinking that is being done at the moment about where we invest money for the future. So resources are also a key risk issue.

I think I have covered it as best I can in the time.

_The Chair._ You have done very well. You have got us there within a minute. Can I on your behalf, ladies and gentlemen, thank Mary and her Vice-Chairman for the contributions to answering your questions I have a suspicion that if we had a bit more time we could have gone on asking a lot more questions, but we are delighted to have had the opportunity. Thank you very much indeed.

_The Archbishop of York dismissed the Synod with the blessing at 10 pm._
Full Synod: Fifth Day  
Tuesday 15 July 2014

THE CHAIR The Bishop of Birmingham (The Rt Revd David Urquhart) took the Chair at 9.40 am.

The Revd Canon Simon Butler led the Synod in an act of worship.

LEGISLATIVE BUSINESS

DRAFT AMENDING CANON NO. 32 (GS 1902B); CONVOCATIONS (ELECTIONS TO UPPER HOUSE) (AMENDMENT) RESOLUTION 201 - (GS 1903B); CLERGY REPRESENTATION RULES (AMENDMENT) RESOLUTION 201 - (GS 1904B); CHURCH REPRESENTATION RULES (AMENDMENT) [(NO.2)] RESOLUTION 201 - (GS 1905B): DRAFT AMENDING CANON AND INSTRUMENTS FOR FINAL DRAFTING AND FINAL APPROVAL

THE CHAIR: Welcome to our last morning of business on this session of Synod. I hope you will forgive your Chair for being pale and male, but it is up to you to decide whether he is stale. We have Order Paper 7. We have the final drafting stage. Point of order, Mr Sugden.

The Revd Canon Dr Christopher Sugden (Oxford): Chair, under Standing Order 9(a), may I ask is the Business Committee prepared, should time allow, for Synod to be able to address the very important Diocesan Synod Motion on the Spare Room Subsidy as part of this morning’s agenda, as part of our demonstration of commitment to the Common Good?

The Chair: I call on the Chair of the Business Committee to address the question put.

The Revd Canon Susan Booys (Oxford): Thank you very much, Mr Sugden. Those of you who have paid close attention to your agendas will be aware that this is a Diocesan Synod motion which is scheduled for contingency business. I suggest to you, members of Synod, that this matter is, therefore, in your hands. We always take contingency business if there is time, but I would just say that we have not prepared those who have brought this Diocesan Synod motion to us. They are not expecting this. People bringing contingency business need to expect that it will be brought in at any time and all of you will have heard both halves of what I have said. Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you very much indeed. We will proceed with our business as scheduled and the pace of that will depend on whether there is time left at the end. Thank you very much, Chair of the Business Committee. We now come to the final drafting stage for the draft Synodical Government Legislation. For this, members will need the Report of the Steering Committee, which is GS 1902-5Z; the draft Amending Canon No. 32, GS 1902B; and the three draft Resolutions before us, GS1903B, GS1904B and GS1905B. I now call on Canon Simon Butler, who is Chair of the Steering Committee, to move Item 512, “That the Synod do take note of this Report.” Simon, you may speak for up to ten minutes.
The Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): Thank you, Chair. In the spirit of trying to facilitate contingencies, I will be as brief as I can. With your permission, Chair, this is the only time I intend to speak in the course of these motions before us. Just to recap for you, this work arises out of all that we have been doing beginning with the Business Committee’s Election Review Group and the legislative work that has been going on since the end of last year. We had a debate on Saturday and, in that, the Synod resolved to maintain the universities constituency but also to extend it to those who are employed to teach and research in theological education institutions, including courses and colleges. Now the Steering Committee has met, the lawyers have done their excellent and swift work and we have before us the final legal instruments to approve and this is the final drafting stage. You will also notice, members of Synod, that there is in Item 558 a special amendment from the Steering Committee, which my colleague Canon John Mason will propose in a minute. If you wish to speak on that Item, I suggest you simply wait until he has moved that motion, rather than pick it up in the take note debate because that will enable him to explain what we are trying to do rather than me trying to haphazardly do it because he is better prepared on this than I am.

What we have then is the draft Amending Canon, which includes now some references to theological education institutions and some various consequential amendments on the numbers in the Provinces of Canterbury and York. We have the Convocations’ elections to the Upper House Amendment Resolution which has happily remained unchanged throughout this process. We come to the Clergy Representation Rules at GS 1904B there are two or three things I just ought to draw to your attention from our Report which make reference to the fact that we have explicitly included in the legislation now that a person from a theological education institution or a university must be authorised by a bishop. In the original legislation that was left unclear. Anyone now who wishes to enter this Synod through this constituency will need to be either in possession of a licence from a bishop or permission to officiate from a bishop. We are fortunate to have among the legal team people who studied at a university just west of London. In that place they have various strange arrangements. I know there is a phrase in Norfolk called “normal for Norfolk,” but normal for Oxford is decidedly abnormal! So there are a couple of drafting amendments to make that clear. We have had to take a decision about what to do with the Dean of Christ Church. We have decided, because it is the simplest thing to do in the short amount of time we have had, simply to exclude the Dean of Christ Church from eligibility in the election to the University and Theological Education Proctors, because the Dean of Christ Church is also eligible in the Dean’s constituency. We have decided to exclude him in that way and, so far, I think that is probably the simplest way of doing this, but you may wish to express a view on that in a moment.

We have also made it clear that the head of a college, who may not be a fellow of a college in Oxford or Cambridge, may also be eligible in this constituency. They may well be a very eligible candidate. The rest of the Clergy Representation Rules are consequential amendments.

Finally, there was a mistaken reference in the Church Representation Rules. I stand before you as well just to point out to you that under Standing Orders, believe it or
not, the Church Representation Rules have the highest majority required to pass changes to them. You need to give that a 75% majority this morning to give passage to the Church Representation Rules. What of the future from this point? Well, once this legislation is passed, assuming that you give it a fair wind today, work will be done later in the year to prepare for the elections next year. Those with responsibility for it will produce guidance for the election process, so that all the nitty-gritty stuff about publicity and the other things that we referred to in our earlier reports will be done. Hopefully, that will provide greater transparency and a greater sense of participation in the Synodical elections next year. In every Quinquennium there is an Election Review Group, so if any of these things turn out not to be the best idea ever they can always be changed. Indeed, things that may have arisen in your mind since this process started about reforming Synod elections can also be addressed in the next Quinquennium. I think that is all I want to say at this stage and I want to listen to what you have to say. Chair, I beg that Synod do take note of this Report.

The Chair: Thank you very much indeed. The floor is now open for debate.

The Revd Professor Richard Burridge (University of London): Chair, may I take your advice before I start on however many minutes in that Canon Butler just explained that in order to save time he is only speaking once to the whole raft of amendments that are coming, may I, in taking note of this, also, therefore, comment on the amendments coming so that will save time as we come on?

The Chair: I am sure the Synod is wise enough to be able to divide up the remarks accordingly. Thanks very much.

The Revd Professor Richard Burridge (University of London): I want to begin by a huge thank you to Canon Butler, to the Steering Committee, to the Revision Committee and especially to the lawyers, who I know have been working hard to get this to the final stage. As I tried to say on Saturday morning, we have been working on this I think at least as long as we have been working on women bishops and I am hoping this will be the last time I will have to raise this matter to Synod. It is a huge thanks to that. In the spirit of yesterday, not only am I going to try to speak a little less quickly, I want to say that I will be commending these amendments to you, even if they are not necessarily the result that I was myself personally hoping for.

In the report we are asked to take note of, 1902A-5Z, it helpfully explains that these Resolutions and so on are now to do with a constituency which is described by the shorthand, "Universities and theological education institutions." I raise the name of the constituency with the Steering Committee, Revision Committee and the lawyers because, as a result of Canon Sugden’s amendments which you supported on Saturday, we can no longer call this constituency the, "university representatives." The opening of it to the theological educational institutions and the numbers that we were given in the questions on Friday night, there were 145 of them, obviously changes to the nature of the constituency away from representing universities. In 1902B and 1904B you will see that it says, "elections of proctors for universities and theological education institutions." That is the first significant change and I support that strongly. The second is regarding the purpose of these constituencies. The purpose for these constituencies originally was that ordained clergy working in
universities are extra diocesan. That has been taken care of in the sense that, as Simon said, people will now be expected to hold a bishop's licence or permission to officiate. However, it remains the case that of all the ordained clergy teaching in the University of Oxford and, if you add in now, all the theological colleges, we are all in Oxford Deanery or, ditto the same for Ely, they would swamp them completely.

You may remember what I thought was a very supportive speech last July from the Bishop of Southwark, who explained that though he was grateful to have me as a permission to officiate in his diocese and for all the things I did in his diocese, he did not want me standing to take one of the seats that were there for the parish priests and that is why we have got this special arrangement. The purpose was not just to represent that, but also to bring theological expertise arising out of research. In which case, I want to draw your attention to the amendments on paper 1904B. When we did the drafting with the Revision and Steering Committee the condition was, when we were then just talking about universities, that the person was employed to teach and research. This was really important in order to make sure we were talking about academics who were doing frontline and peer research, and you heard Mr Capon talk about that the other day, rather than just those who were self-supporting ministers in university admin and so on. A lot of people have said why did you not define it as theology? The point is I am not a theologian. I am a biblical scholar. If you had defined it as theologian, I would not have been able to stand; Judith Maltby is not a theologian, she is a church historian and she would not have been able to stand. All the legal advice we got, that every time we attempted to define theology they could not do it legally. The point was, therefore, to allow the constituency would recognise the difference between, say, a professor of mathematics who has never written anything on theology and, say, somebody like John Polkinghorne, who is a Professor of Quantum Physics but has an awful lot to say about the Creation. It is important that these people do teach and research. I have been told that they are doing research to prepare and refresh their teaching. That is not research in an academic sense, I do hope that that will be as in paragraph 10 page 2, there will be a need to say that they are involved in research. In the spirit of yesterday, ladies and gentlemen, I commend these proposals to Synod, even though personally I find them difficult and painful.

The Revd Prof. Mark Chapman (Oxford): I will not say anything about the Dean of Christ Church and whether he should be eligible to stand or not. Just one very quick question. I seem to remember on Saturday we said something about being half-time employees for people in theological education institutions and I cannot find that anywhere in the documentation, did that find its way in? I think we did vote in favour of that, did we not? Yes. I could not find that in there. Is it there in paragraph 9?

Speaker: Page 2 paragraph 9.

The Revd Prof. Mark Chapman (Oxford): Excellent. It is the not having very long to look at the thing. Anyway, thank you very much, Sir.

The Bishop of Oxford (The Rt Revd John Pritchard): I just want to say a thing about the Dean, the new Dean of Christ Church is an excellent man, very well-trained at Cranmer Hall at a time when other senior churchmen were also trained at Cranmer Hall but I will not go into that, Archbishop. I do think that we have got a very good
appointment. It was bizarre that actually I was hardly involved with that appointment at all. Here, as the senior priest of the diocese and, yet, all I could do was put in names and look at the long list to see if there was someone I could not work with. However, that is normal for Oxford. We have a very good man there in Martyn Percy and I think he will be a very busy man and will not be looking for extra jobs, but I do hope that in some way this talented priest will make his skills available to the Synod at some stage. Martyn Percy is a good guy to have around.

The Chair: I see no one else standing so I will ask Simon Butler to reply.

The Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): Thank you everybody for those comments. To Richard Burridge, I would simply add my own thanks (which I should have done in my opening speech really) to the enormous amount of hard work, sometimes very swiftly, that the lawyers have done over the last year or so on this thing. I have seen for the first time what a debt of gratitude we owe them by being allowed to peek behind the curtain of Church House. I would like to add my thanks to them and, indeed, to their whole team.

We do talk about the university reps in Synod as though that is their actual name, but actually in the formal legal situation that is not their name in any of the documents and so that is worth just pointing out. Richard mentions the speech of the Bishop of Southwark last year. The Bishop of Southwark was talking about people standing in a proctorial election in the diocese. Of course, what we are doing in this legislation is saying that anyone who wishes to stand in the universities and theological education institution must have a licence or PTO so that they are under the same theological, doctrinal, ethical, legal and safeguarding discipline as the rest of clergy of the Church of England who might represent people on this Synod. We have had the answer about the location of paragraph 2 Section 9.

Of course, to the Bishop of Oxford, I would say that the Dean of Christ Church is very welcome to stand in the Dean’s constituency and, who knows, he may well appear in years to come.

The Chair: Item 512 is before us for decision.

The motion

‘That the Synod do take note of this Report.’

was carried on a show of hands.

The motion having been passed, the drafting amendments referred to in the Steering Committee's report are deemed to have been made. Now we move on in the final drafting stage to the special amendments. The Steering Committee's report explains that the Committee proposes a special amendment to draft Amending Canon No. 32, which appears on the Order Paper as Item 558. I, accordingly, call Canon John Mason to move that amendment. John, you may speak for up to ten minutes.

Canon Dr John Mason (Chester): Thank you, Chair. On Saturday morning Synod voted in favour of Item 530 on Order Paper 2. Synod voted, amongst a great many
other things, to create a reformed and expanded constituency for proctors employed at universities or TEIs. The new constituency will replace the current smaller, more specific, university constituencies. In those current constituencies the elected members count towards the maximum number of directly and specially elected proctors in each Convocation. Those various constituencies have a fixed allocation of places in each Convocation. By contrast, the new constituency will be a single constituency covering both Provinces. There will be a constraint to ensure that at least one of those elected by the new constituency will come from each Province, but the number in each Convocation will not otherwise be fixed and so the number of members elected to it will potentially fluctuate between one and three. As I explained at the time, without the amendment at Item 530, having a variable number of specially elected proctors from this new constituency would have created a difficulty when it came to determining how many places to allocate to directly elected proctors from the maximum number for each Convocation provided for in Canon H 2.2. The amendment at Item 530 resolved that issue by removing the proctors elected by the new constituency for universities and TEIs from the category of proctors specially elected, which are included in calculating the number of proctors to be allocated to the Lower Houses of the Convocations, moving it to the same category as the proctors elected by the Religious Communities and the Armed Forces Synod, which are not included. However, as I also forewarned the Synod, the matter does not rest there and we need also to do something with the overall numbers. Because of the way that that proviso (a) to paragraph 2 of Canon H 2.2 is drafted, taking the four proctors elected by the new constituency for universities and TEIs out of the number of specially elected proctors, in effect, adds those four to the number of directly elected proctors in each Convocation. That outcome would be inconsistent with the principle of maintaining close parity between the sizes of the Houses of Clergy and Laity, reflected in the fact that in the current Quinquennium there are 206 places in the House of Clergy and 207 in the House of Laity.

The special amendment, therefore proposes, that proviso (a) to Canon H 2.2 should be further amended so that the maximum number of proctors directly and specially elected in each Convocation is reduced by four; that is, by the same number of proctors to be elected in the new constituency. The effect of the amendment will, therefore, be that, first, the current size of the House of Clergy will be maintained; and, secondly, because of the reduction from six places to four, an extra two places will be available for directly elected proctors. As far as how the allocation of this reduction of four should be made between the Provinces, we propose that the maximum numbers in each Convocation should be reduced as closely as possible in proportion to the current 70:30 split between the Convocations. That would mean, with a bit of rounding in either direction, reducing the maximum number of proctors directly and specially elected in the Convocation of Canterbury by three from 136 to 133, and in the Convocation of York by one from 59 to 58. I would like to move this special amendment stated in your Order Paper, Item 538. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

The Revd Sister Rosemary Howorth CHN (Religious Communities): It has been mentioned that Religious Communities are in a similar position in that we can be elected from either Province. At the moment we have one from each Province but that would not necessarily be the case. I am afraid I do not at all understand what
the effect of these calculations is in relation to the Religious Communities' Proctors. Thank you.

The Revd Neil Patterson (Hereford): If there are two additional seats in the clergy created because there are fewer university seats, now I realise it is not part of the Canon but has the calculation been done simply to say which dioceses those would now be assigned to? Thank you.

The Chair: I see no one else standing, so could Canon Mason please reply.

Canon Dr John Mason (Chester): Thank you, yes. First of all, I would like to reassure Sister Rosemary that, yes, it will have absolutely no effect on the Religious Communities. This is purely a change to nullify the effect that would have happened by the change in the university constituencies. No effect whatsoever. With regard to the other comment, the question on the numbers going into each diocese, that will actually depend on the exact clergy numbers that there are in each diocese and the apportionment which follows from that, which would happen at the next Quinquennium.

The Chair: Thanks so much. Item 558 is now open for voting.

The special amendment was carried on a show of hands.

The Steering Committee not having proposed any special amendments to the three Resolutions, that completes the final drafting stage for all four pieces of draft legislation. We, accordingly, now come to the Final Approval stage. I call upon Canon Butler to move Item 513, "That the Canon entitled 'Amending Canon No. 32' be finally approved." You may speak for up to ten minutes, Simon.

The Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): I do so move.

The Chair: Motion 513 is now open for debate. Can I remind members that under Standing Order 61(a), the motions for the closure, the speech limit or next business may not be moved in this debate, but I retain a discretion under Standing Order 21(c) to alter the normal speech limit of five minutes. It is open for debate. I do not see anyone standing and I suspect that Canon Butler may not want to exercise a right of reply.

Under Standing Order 36(c), we have a Division by Houses at this point for the vote for the Final Approval of a Canon. It is important to have accurate voting figures and, therefore, I order a Division by Houses.

The motion

'That the Canon entitled “Amending Canon No. 32” be finally approved.'

was carried after a division by Houses. The voting was as follows:
IN FAVOUR AGAINST

Bishops 18 0
Clergy 121 0
Laity 140 0

No abstentions were recorded in the House of Bishops, 1 in the House of Clergy and none in the House of Laity.

The Chair: We now come to Item 514, the motion ‘That the petition for Her Majesty’s Royal Assent and Licence to the promulgation of the Canon be adopted.’ I call upon the Chair of the Standing Committee to move Item 514.

The Chair of the Steering Committee (The Revd Canon Simon Butler): I do so move.

The Chair: Thank you very much. This is open for debate. I see no-one standing, so the motion Item 514 is open for voting.

The motion

‘That the petition for Her Majesty’s Royal Assent and Licence (GS 1902C) be adopted.’

was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: The petition will accordingly be submitted for her Majesty’s Royal Assent and Licence.

CONVOCATIONS (ELECTIONS TO UPPER HOUSE) (AMENDMENT) RESOLUTION 2014 (GS 1903B)

The Chair: We now come to Item 515 ‘That the Convocations (Elections to Upper House) (Amendment) Resolution 2014 be finally approved.’ Canon Butler, would you please move that item.

The Chair of the Steering Committee (The Revd Canon Simon Butler): I do so move.

The Chair: Thank you very much. The matter is open for debate. I see no-one standing and therefore the item under 515 is open for voting.

The motion

‘That the Convocations (Elections to Upper House) (Amendment) Resolution 2014 be finally approved.’

was carried on a show of hands.
CLERGY REPRESENTATION RULES (AMENDMENT) RESOLUTION 2014 (GS 1904B)

The Chair: Then we move on to Item 516 ‘That the Clergy Representation Rules (Amendment) Resolution 2014 be finally approved.’ Canon Butler?

The Chair of the Steering Committee (The Revd Canon Simon Butler): I do so move.

The Chair: The matter is open for debate.

The Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford): I just want to raise a small point which I tried to raise earlier in the debates on this motion, but for various technical reasons I could not. A very important bit of what happens in elections is that the Legal Office sends out to dioceses notes for guidance on how those elections should be run. That is a very important help to everybody and it only happens every five years. The problem is that very few people see this. Somebody in the diocese sees it obviously that is running the elections, but members of Synod do not, and candidates often do not, so what I am hoping is that they cannot easily get into these Regulations and perhaps it should not be regulated, but that members of Synod and all the candidates in the next elections will be shown or sent or emailed these notes for guidance so they are aware of what the guidance is. Thank you.

Dr Elaine Storkey (Ely): I have just one question which refers to paragraph (10) and that is the whole issue of research. Research in a university is very carefully monitored, it is supervised, it is actually what one can evidence as research. As someone who has worked in a theological college, in fact two theological colleges, and visited many, many others, I know that research there is not quite the same, so I want to safeguard the understanding of what we are doing when we are talking about research that it is properly scholarly and meets university standards.

The other query is if someone is at least half-time, how can we ensure that that half-time really does cover research and teaching? Again, the demands in the theological colleges are very huge in terms of teaching. Demands often in a university department mean that people are allocated to research so they have a space to do this. It is just a query. We have to be sure in our own minds that we are not watering down in any way.

The Chair: I see no-one else standing so Canon Butler can you reply please.

The Chair of the Steering Committee (The Revd Canon Simon Butler): To Hugh Lee, yes of course Synod will have heard your remarks and I am sure members will want to play a part in making sure that the guidance is picked up by people in the dioceses who are responsible for these things. It is also available on the Synod website and I do draw members’ attention to that as well. Keep looking out for it.

To Elaine Storkey, obviously the way that this has been structured and the way that Synod has expressed its mind we are going for a self-certification system and those who intend to stand in this election will have to explain to the returning officer how they meet the requirements of the legislation. We have moved away from a system of, as it were, the returning officer doing all the work and having to make a judgment
to people having to self-certify.

In the debate on Saturday I did raise some of these questions about the risks involved in extending to the theological and educational institutions because of the demands of other responsibilities in the training and formation world. Synod has expressed its mind, so we are where we are and we have to trust that this will work, but of course it will be kept under review by the Election Review Group next time.

The Chair: A vote by Houses is not required for the approval of this resolution. I therefore put Item 516 to the vote.

The motion

“That the Clergy Representation Rules (Amendment) Resolution 2014 be finally approved.’

was carried on a show of hands.

CHURCH REPRESENTATION RULES (AMENDMENT) [(NO. 2)] RESOLUTION 2014 (GS 1905B)

The Chair: We now move on to Item 517 ‘That the Church Representation Rules (Amendment) [(No. 2)] Resolution be finally approved.’ Canon Butler?

The Chair of the Steering Committee (The Revd Canon Simon Butler): Just one word of apology to you and to Synod. I did in fact mislead members. A two-thirds majority is required, not a 75% majority in this vote. I do apologise for that. I move Item 517.

The Chair: Thank you very much. It is open for debate. I see no-one standing this time. So I put this under Standing Order 35(d)(i)(4). A majority in each House, as we have just been reminded, of not less than two-thirds of those present and voting is required for the approval of this Resolution, so a Division of the House is therefore required.

The motion before us at 517 is ‘That the Church Representation Rules (Amendment) [(No. 2)] Resolution 2014 be finally approved.’ This is a Division by Houses.

The motion

“That the Church Representation Rules (Amendment) [(No. 2)] Resolution 2014 be finally approved.’

was carried after a division by Houses. The voting was as follows:

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<th>IN FAVOUR</th>
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<td>Bishops</td>
<td>18</td>
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<td>Clergy</td>
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<td>Laity</td>
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No abstentions were recorded.

The Chair: The motion is carried and I am glad to see that members of Synod are not as mathematically challenged as I am. This Resolution will now be laid before both Houses of Parliament and that completes this item of business. Thank you very much.

THE CHAIR The Bishop of Manchester (The Rt Revd David Walker) took the Chair at 10.34 am

DRAFT CHURCH OF ENGLAND (ECCLESIASTICAL PROPERTY) MEASURE (GS 1921A): DRAFT MEASURE FOR REVISION

The Chair: Synod, we now come to Item 521, a report by the Revision Committee on the draft Church of England (Ecclesiastical Property) Measure. For this you will need the draft Measure which is GS 1921A and the report by the Revision Committee with is GS 1921Y. I am going to call on the Chair of the Revision Committee, Mr Robert Key, to move the motion ‘That the Synod do take note of this Report.’ Mr Key may speak for not more than ten minutes.

Mr Robert Key (Salisbury): Members of Synod will remember that this Measure will give effect to the Archbishops’ Council’s proposals for a relaxation of the regime which applies to parochial church councils’ property, particularly, although not exclusively, their land. Those proposals represented a response to the call for a change expressed in Mr Christopher Hobbs’ Private Member’s Motion passed by this Synod at the July 2012 Group of sessions. The proposal did not implement it in terms in which it was expressed. In particular, the Archbishops’ Council could not support the removal of the requirement that the legal title to interests in land and personal property held on permanent trusts be vested in the diocesan authority, normally the Diocesan Board of Finance. The Council explained the reasons for that and for the alternative set of proposals it would be bringing forward in GS Misc. 1060, which was circulated to members in July 2013. The Archbishops’ Council did not receive any comments at all from Synod members on these proposals.

In essence, the Archbishops’ Council’s modified proposal for deregulation came about because it did not consider Mr Hobbs’ original proposal to distinguish between PCCs which are on the Charity Commission’s register of charities and PCCs which remain unregistered to be workable, nor did the Council think it wise to deregulate the PCC’s property transactions altogether, as it was concerned that some smaller PCCs would not have the capacity or the willingness to deal with them themselves without the support of the diocese. The Archbishops’ Council was also concerned to protect assets for future generations.

The proposals contained in the Measure therefore retained the requirement for the title to property to be vested in the diocesan authority but will remove the need for the authority’s consent in any case in which the consideration paid on the transaction falls below a threshold specified in an order made by the Archbishops’ Council with the Synod’s approval. In such a case, the diocesan authority will be required to take the necessary legal steps to give effect to the transaction. The Measure will also enable the PCC to bring legal proceedings or enter into a lease for under seven
years without any requirement for consent, regardless of the value involved.

Members of Synod will have noted that most of the Measure before you today is printed in bold, implying that it has changed very significantly since First Consideration. Most of these changes are simply drafting amendments which were proposed by the Steering Committee in order to simplify the amendments being made to the Parochial Church Council (Powers) Measure 1956 and to remove the need for consequential amendments to that and other Measures. In substance and effect the Measure is virtually identical to that which was before the Synod in November.

However, there have been one or two small changes of substance which are flagged up in the Revision Committee’s report. In particular, that the power of the Archbishops’ Council to make orders specifying the thresholds of transactions below which the consent of the diocesan authority will not be required has been amended so that it is more flexible and could be used, for example, to make different provision for different areas of the country.

In addition to the amendments proposed by the Steering Committee, the Revision Committee also received two significant proposals for amendment from members of Synod, both of which it rejected after discussion, including a long meeting with one of the proposers.

The first of those proposals would have removed the requirement for land to be vested in the diocesan authority and replaced it with a requirement for the consent of the diocesan authority to be given before land could be disposed of. That consent would be automatic in any case where the archdeacon had certified that she or he did not object to the proposal. The majority of the Committee were unhappy with this proposal because it would remove the safeguard of vesting in the diocesan authority and all members of my Committee agreed that it would impose substantial new burdens on archdeacons, most of whom were not professionally equipped to make such judgments.

The second proposal involved an amendment to clause 2 to ensure that a trust to which the Incumbents and Churchwardens (Trusts) Measure 1964 applies, obtains full value for any disposal of land through a requirement for a surveyor’s report. The Committee were advised that the Charities Act 2011 already adequately covers the need for professional advice on the valuation of land and therefore decided not to make any amendment in response to this proposal.

Chair, I move that the Synod do take note of this report.

The Chair: Thank you. This item is now open for debate. Can I remind members that under Standing Order 54(c) it is not in order to debate any matter at this stage which is the subject of an amendment that appears on the Order Paper, so those who would wish to speak in this debate.

Mrs Julie Dziegieł (Oxford): I have mentioned to this Synod before that my main role and joy in this Church is being a parish treasurer. My large parish includes property-wise six church buildings, a few integrated and separate halls, two owned
houses, two licensed or rented houses, a scout hut and a field, and as parish treasurer it has fallen to me to do the legal work regarding our property transactions. There is not a willing lawyer; an accountant is the next best thing!

I have seen the parish do a lot of property transactions, some of them big, some of them painful - property is a very emotional issue - and some of them irritating and some of them minor. I am well acquainted with the PCC (Powers) Measure 1956.

When I was asked to be a member of the Steering Committee for this Measure I was careful to read it through before agreeing. I have enjoyed the support of my diocese in completing these tasks and I was, frankly, wary of altering our Measures so support did not have to be provided. However I found this Measure entirely supportable and I am delighted that after the revision stage it remains essentially in the same form. It retains diocesan involvement for the big and sometimes more painful transactions. I would not have liked to have not had access to support when I realised on midnight that our local scouts had failed to complete a legal hoop and I needed the next morning to ensure it had just become "our" scout hut and I needed to know what else I needed to do about that situation.

But it does remove the need for diocesan involvement in the more minor and potentially irritating transactions. Although in my time as treasurer we have only bought one house, bringing the number we own to two, we have issued licences to occupy to staff using them and let them out on leases many times. These things will no longer need diocesan involvement under this Measure. Further, we will not need to involve the diocese when there are legal proceedings regarding our properties. We had an interesting situation when we let a house to an American woman, who spotted some mould under the sink and reacted by taking up the undersink cupboard and accusing our buildings manager of exposing her to carcinogenic substances. I am sorry to say that the general reaction within our parish was very British and unsympathetic to our American cousin's very different cultural reaction to mould. I do remember our ministry trainee threatening to tape up his fridge because of a decaying sprout! Sadly, the relationship between our tenant and our buildings manager deteriorated to the degree that at the end of her tenancy he refused to repay her deposit, so she took us to arbitration and the work was handed to me. Every single item of correspondence had to be sent through the diocese, to the great irritation of all. This Measure will, of course, not deal sympathetically with the mould, it will not deal sympathetically with the deposit, but it will, by removing the involvement of the diocese in the legal proceedings, at least speed up final resolution of the situation, which in case you are interested we had to repay the whole of the deposit except for £25.

This Measure provides a good balance of protection of Church property, support for parishes for larger transactions and the removal of the unnecessary red tape with the more numerous and occasionally irritating smaller ones. This Measure is really a sensible step and from my position of experience, I really recommend firstly taking note of this report and then supporting the Measure. Thank you all.

Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark): I was one of those who voted enthusiastically for Christopher Hobbs' Private Member's Motion back in July 2012. I did so based on my experience as a qualified lawyer who specialised in land law and as a
churchwarden who had served two periods of office of nine years each in the 1980s and the 1990s. I am very happy to say that I always enjoyed very good relations with our archdeacons and the registry and the chancellors and we were able to do a lot of good stuff.

I note that Robert Key has said what I believe to be the case that the Measure that we have before us is a substantially watered down version of the spirit of what Christopher had originally proposed, and I think that needs to be repeated, but I also do understand the processes through which we have gone in order to get to that position.

I do not know if this will be taken as a cheap point, but it would be interesting to know how many members of the Revision Committee and the Steering Committee voted in favour of the original Private Member’s Motion compared with those who did not.

I think the point that perhaps needs to be clarified, and this is where I might get a bit rusty on my land law, but it would be worth having it clarified, is that notwithstanding in whose name the title is registered or vested, it is absolutely clear and always has been that the beneficial ownership of the property remains wholly with the PCC. There is absolutely no question about that in my mind, but it would be good if that could be clarified.

Finally, members might be aware that I asked a question about this on Friday night, about what will be happening with the Archbishops’ Council and the question of where the threshold should be set and received a very positive answer from Christine, sitting behind me, that there will be consultation, and I look forward very much to that. I think after all this effort we need to make sure that the threshold is set high enough for this to have been a meaningful exercise. I am very happy to support the Measure. Thank you very much indeed.

The Revd Neil Patterson (Hereford): Synod, this is a complicated issue, in fact. I think being on the Revision Committee it emerged that we could have spent months or years possibly discussing this. I think I heard yesterday that there are members of Synod who were on Synod in the 1970s, before I was born, and who may remember the Glebe Measure and the length of time that took, and in some ways many of the vast issues there are revisited, but I just want to pull out three elements that I think are possibly in danger of being confused and just in the interests of better understanding.

The first one which does puzzle me is about the question of support for parishes dealing with land. I do not really see why this is an issue. Dioceses are able to support parishes in all sorts of other ways with property, with liturgy, with church buildings, which after all are vested in the incumbents. Does anyone really believe that if you change the vesting that will mean that the diocesan office will suddenly say, “We cannot do anything for you”, to parish officials who ask for help. That does puzzle me a little.

The important thing, which I think will be discussed further when the amendment comes but I will refer to it as a general issue, is about control; who can decide what is to be done with parish property. The amendment in a way is about that and I think
Synod will probably agree in the end with the conclusion of the Revision Committee in believing that the diocese needs to make sure that property cannot be alienated from a parish too easily, in the same way of course though, as property which belongs to the parish cannot be at present, in the sense that parish property belongs to the incumbent. I come back to this question of vesting and emotion, as Julie said, which I believe was probably part of what Chris Hobbs was trying to express in his original motion. It does matter to whom property belongs, we feel something about it. There was after all, was there not, an enormously long debate about the vesting of parsonages, and the enormous importance, in spite of the very small practical difference it makes, that they should still be vested in incumbents. This is similar. It does make a real difference to parishioners to know whether their buildings, their lands, and in the case of my parish a field which is rented for £150 a year, really belong to them or does not. It affects people’s attitudes certainly to bequeathing property to the Church. Although the Measure is good and is helpful and helps parishioners get on with their life, I hope that question and all it means can be re-visited in the future. Thank you.

Mr Paul Hancock (Liverpool): I could not resist coming up. I was not planning to speak but after the last speaker I feel I have to tell Synod that while in my parish we value the diocese greatly, they are not a fount of wisdom on all things. In a long interregnum when we were looking for a House for Duty priest, they let the vicarage for three years. It is very difficult to get a House for Duty priest when you do not have a house to show them. We pointed this out and very kindly they said, “We will provide the finance for a new house.” We found a house at a price of just over £220,000. The diocese very, very kindly took on the whole negotiations and managed to “beat the price down” to £233,000!

A word of caution. We do value the advice and help of the diocese but sometimes when they are a long distance away, not particularly in miles but certainly in vision, then it is not always as simple as it seems. Certainly we do value the intercession of the diocese but we temper it slightly.

The Chair: Actually I see nobody standing so I think that brings this matter ready for Mr Key to reply to the debate. Mr Key, you have up to five minutes I think.

Mr Robert Key (Salisbury): Thank you, Chair. I am very grateful to Julie Dziegiel from Oxford for her support in this, support for what she describes as “sensible deregulation”. The fact is that it illustrates, I think, that the present arrangements are working very well right across the country. Really, I am very grateful to the people like Julie and the common sense of so many hundreds of others on our PCCs around the country who manage our PCCs so well and this modest deregulation should be helpful.

Adrian Greenwood is indeed extremely experienced in these affairs. I am afraid I do not know the voting figures for the Committee - that is a point of great interest which will need some research - but he is correct to say that beneficial ownership remains with the PCC. As for the thresholds which the Archbishops’ Council will decide upon, that will be after consultation so I dare not hazard a guess what they will be, but of course it is important. We know that prices will vary across the country, which is precisely why this Measure is proposing that the Archbishops’ Council should be
able to take that into account and no doubt will come up with suggestions which will come back to us.

The Revd Neil Patterson also was quite right to say that people feel a very proud sense of ownership about parish property and that will not change under this Measure. I can assure him and his parishioners they really will continue to belong with parishioners.

Paul Hancock raised the situation that arose in Liverpool, I am very sorry to hear about that, however I am very glad to be able to say to him that it would not be affected by this Measure. Thank you, Chair.

The Chair: Thank you. I now put Item 521 to the vote, “That the Synod do take note of this Report”.

The motion

'That the Synod do take note of this Report.'

was carried on a show of hands.

We are now going to move on straight to the revision stage. A bit of explanation. Where no notice has been given of amendments to particular clauses and no members have indicated in advance they wish to speak, I do give my permission under Standing Order 55(c) for those clauses to be taken en bloc. We do have a number of amendments to consider and we produced the Eleventh Notice Paper, which I hope most of you have managed to get sight of. Because it is a long item we cannot really put things up on the screen to show what the effect of the amendments we are considering this morning would be, so if you can get hold of copies of the Eleventh Notice Paper you may find that helpful in addition to the papers you already have.

Because it is the revision stage we will be using the 40 member rule. I will not explain that again this morning because we have been using it throughout this Group of sessions. It does mean that when an amendment is moved by somebody other than the Steering Committee they have not more than five minutes to speak to it and then a member of the Steering Committee will respond and at that stage we will see whether 40 members are standing to take the matter any further.

I take us on to 552 and, Mr Clive Scowen, I would like you to speak to and move your amendment, please. You have up to five minutes.

Mr Clive Scowen (London): Thank you, Chair. This first amendment seeks to end the requirement for PCC property to be vested in the diocesan authority. As you have already helpfully pointed out, although the form of the amendment may look a little opaque on the Order Paper, the Eleventh Notice Paper I think rather more helpfully enables you to see what its effect would be.

It does not affect the requirement for consent from the diocesan authority to acquire or deal with property unless it falls within one of the exceptions already in the draft Measure. However, it would mean that property acquired by a PCC after this
Measure came into force would be vested in the PCC rather than the diocesan authority and there would be a power for that authority to transfer any property currently vested in them to the PCC if the PCC requested it and if there was agreement about who was going to pay the costs.

What is the point of making this change? Well, it is in the spirit of the simplification process since it will remove a layer of complexity and expense. At present, when a PCC buys or sells property there are often two sets of solicitors working for the Church, one for the PCC, one for the diocese, or the PCC feels that it has to use the diocesan solicitors itself even though they might be more expensive than the ones that they would have chosen. Not only does this involve unnecessary expenditure, it also often occasions unnecessary delays.

Back in 1956, when the PCC Powers Measure was passed, there were still large tracts of England where there was no compulsory land registration and with unregistered land vesting in the diocesan authority and their physical possession of the deeds was the only way of enforcing the requirement of consent. However, things have changed since 1956 - you may have noticed. Now, 100% of the country is covered by compulsory registration, so any land vested in the PCC after this measure came into force would have an entry on the Land Register with a caution that the land could not be sold or charged without the consent of the diocesan authority and any land that is currently not on the register that is held by a diocese would automatically be registered if it were then transferred to the PCC. Thus, even though the land would under my proposal be vested in the PCC, it could not sell it or charge it without being able to show to the Land Registry that the diocesan authority had given consent to the transaction under the Measure.

In the world of 2014 rather than 1956 a requirement to vest property in the diocesan authority achieves nothing but unnecessary expense and delay, neither of which parishes can afford. Such protection from ill-advised dealing, if that is needed, is provided through the requirement of consent. This vesting requirement is no longer needed so let us get rid of it. I beg to move.

The Chair: I now invite a member of the Steering Committee to respond. Again, five minutes.

The Ven. Clive Mansell (Rochester): Chair, thank you to Mr Scowen for his latest proposal to amend the draft Measure. The Steering Committee recognises the keenness of Mr Scowen to see changes in the draft Measure but we will resist his first two amendments at 552 and 553, but at the appropriate time we will accept his amendment at 554.

Turning to the amendment at 552, this particular one, this again seeks, perhaps albeit gradually, to remove the need to involve the diocesan authority which we believe retains important safeguards. Involving the diocesan authority gives consistency to practice across the land, it overcomes difficulties of smaller PCCs who may not have the capacity or the willingness to deal with such transactions themselves, it helps to protect assets for future generations and it should ensure that proper legal consideration by those knowledgeable in charity and ecclesiastical law is given to the relevant transactions.
The first part of Mr Scowen’s amendment amending subsection (2) of Section 6 of the PCC Powers Act 1956 would have the effect that only property held by the PCCs before the coming into force of this Measure would remain vested in the diocesan authority; all property acquired after the commencement of this Measure would be acquired in the PCC’s own name, and thus we have two types of PCC property ownership. Why, apart from the registration issue which is not necessarily quite as straightforward, there is still land which is unregistered though land already in PCC ownership.

The next limb of the amendment amending clause 1(2) of the draft Measure amends the consent requirements so that the requirement for the diocesan consent would apply whether the property is vested in the PCC or the DBF and this in part will link in with Mr Scowen’s next amendment at 553.

The final limb of his first amendment relates to consent and provides that a diocesan authority may transfer title to land or property held on permanent trust to the PCC that indeed owns the beneficial interests. However, the amendment as drafted does not require the diocesan authority to do this, it only gives it a power to do so. This produces the slightly odd position that PCCs will acquire all new property in their own names but will not be able to compel the DBF to transfer title of their existing property to them if the DBF is unwilling to do so.

Mr Scowen’s amendments would leave us with a very mixed bag of circumstances. There needs to be clarity and coherence and assurance in what we do. We do urge Synod to resist this amendment and to allow the draft Measure to proceed. That Measure, as currently drafted, already eases things for PCCs in lesser matters, as we have heard already from Julie Dziegiel, but it retains consistency and assurance in larger matters, which we believe is important for PCCs right across the land whatever their size, whatever their circumstance. We ask you to resist the amendment.

The Chair: Thank you. We have heard that the Steering Committee wish to resist this amendment, therefore the 40 member rule applies at this stage. For debate to continue there need to be 40 members standing in their places otherwise this amendment will lapse. There are 40 members standing in their places so debate on this item is now open.

Canon Timothy Allen (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich): Chair, coming as I do from a predominantly rural diocese made up largely of very many small village parishes, I initially approach Clive Scowen’s amendments, this and 553, from the point of view of the small rural PCC which is not well endowed with legal or property expertise. Most of them, Chair, sadly do not have a Julie Dziegiel.

The proposals which Clive would like to amend keep PCCs on an appropriately tight rein by strict safeguards on how they deal with Church property retaining robust checks and balances in the hands of the diocesan authorities. While I very well understand the irritation of some PCCs at the slowness of some diocesan authorities, it seems to me that the remedy is for such parishes, through their representatives on deanery and diocesan synods, to press their dioceses for greater
efficiency and speed of response. It would be unwise and dangerous to remove these diocesan checks and balances in relation to such small PCCs which lack the necessary expertise to handle directly their own priority.

But, you may ask, Chair, what about the bigger, richer and commercially more expert PCCs in suburban and urban areas, which I guess Clive has primarily in mind? In their case my anxiety is rather different. I am concerned that even after yesterday’s commitments some such parishes might be tempted to use the greater powers to control Church property, which the amendments would give them, to loosen the ties which link them to their diocese and to the Church of England. I note from the last paragraph, that is paragraph 21 of the Revision Committee Report, that Clive proposed to remove the words “Church of England” from the title of the Measure. It seems to me that this amendment would potentially make it easier for parishes to remove the label “Church of England” from Church property, so I hope that we shall not adopt the amendment. Thank you, Chair.

Mrs Ruth Whitworth (Chelmsford): I was a member of the Revision Committee for this legislation and I do just want to draw Synod’s attention to two things which surprised and concerned me about the process.

The first was that the Committee was put in the position of revising something which was almost the exact opposite of what the original Private Member’s Motion had asked for, namely that PCC should be able to hold property in their own right. That seemed to me, and to others on the Committee, to be a rather perverse way of proceeding. I am aware that the signing of a PMM signifies only that one would like to debate that subject but in this particular case I imagine most people who signed did want the change that Mr Hobbs was requesting; I certainly did. If you wanted to keep the status quo, why sign the Motion? So it seemed odd in Committee to be discussing the exact opposite.

The second surprising and concerning thing was that most of the discussion on Mr Scowen’s proposals for vesting in the PCC appeared to be based on anecdotal possible worse case scenarios in which small or incompetent PCCs would have got into difficulty had it not been for the property being vested in and therefore controlled by the diocese. I do not think that sounds like most PCCs. I am sure that the vast majority are capable, competent to manage their own affairs, property as well as finance and staffing and mission, for example, and quite ready to take appropriate professional advice when necessary, and we have already heard from a previous speaker that the diocese may not be that appropriate professional advice.

To restrict the freedom of action of many PCCs in view of the putative incompetence of a few seems out of proportion to the possible risk. No PCC would be required to hold property in any case, the provision is completely optional. I therefore support the present amendment which restores the original intention of the Private Member’s Motion and I hope Synod members will vote for it. Thank you.

The Ven. Christine Hardman (Southwark): I am also a member of Archbishops’ Council. Mr Scowen’s amendment sounds, as is often the case with Mr Scowen’s amendments, on the surface of it reasonable and part of the simplification project, for
which I for one am very enthusiastic. However, can I ask you to resist this amendment and let me explain why I am asking you to do that.

For 11 years I was an archdeacon in south-east London and the archdeaconry was comprised of some very poor inner city parishes and some very affluent urban parishes, so a real spread of parishes across the range. Most property transactions that involved PCC property went through smoothly, happily, no problem at all. I thought about it hard and about five of those transactions during my 11 years would have resulted, if the PCC could have forged ahead, in the PCC acting in breach of trust. That would not have been because the PCC wished to act in breach of trust, it would have been, certainly in four out of those five cases, because they just did not realise that would have been the situation.

The vesting thing is strange and when I became an archdeacon I was quite puzzled about it all at first, but in fact it is a very elegant and useful solution. Anybody who works in this field, ask any archdeacon, I think all archdeacons will say, “No, don’t leave it up to us, please keep the vesting in the DBF” because that vesting means that at an early stage a parish who wishes to acquire or to dispose of property has to work in partnership with the diocese. The diocese will not seek to be thwarting the parish’s desire for growth and flourishing; the diocese will be seeking to help the PCC achieve what they want to achieve. That partnership is very important and very good.

Mr Scowen’s amendment, whilst requiring legal consent, would mean that the diocese’s knowledge of the transaction would come at a very late stage and, if anything, the requirement then for the diocese to exercise scrutiny could delay rather than speed up those transactions which are being proposed.

It is really important that any PCC seeking to manage its property in any way whatsoever receives the benefit of advice on charity law and, indeed, on the complications of ecclesiastical property, which are many. Julie, in the last debate, spoke very eloquently about how most people in parishes value that resource.

I urge you very strongly to resist this amendment. It is for the benefit of PCC members who deserve our support. I also support, incidentally, the Measure where we deregulate on smaller transactions, but please resist this proposal to change the vesting.

The Chair imposed a three minute speech limit

Mr Gerald O’Brien (Rochester): I really could not disagree more with the last speech, it is quite amazing really. Three short things to say.

One is we have a simple proposal from Clive Scowen which will actually simplify procedures, remove unnecessary bureaucracy and cut out doing things that do not need to be done. Ruth Whitworth has very helpfully pointed out that this is an option, a small country PCC without any expertise can simply leave things to the diocese. A large, thriving congregation packed full of lawyers and accountants and goodness knows what else would probably far prefer to do the job themselves more efficiently, more quickly and more effectively. Some of the other speeches we have heard
appear to be from members who are sponsored by the Society for the Protection of Jobs in Diocesan Officers. Chair, let us just cut out the unnecessary bureaucracy that ties our churches in knots and free people to get on with the job that needs to be done.

I do urge you to support this very simple, sensible amendment. Thank you.

The Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford): I am worried by a particular clause in this amendment, which says “without the consent of the diocese”. You cannot do it unless you have got the consent of the diocese. In many legal documents that I have seen there is a bracket after “consent” which says “which shall not be unreasonably withheld”. Now, I agree in this one it does not have that bracket but I suspect what is going to happen if we pass this is that the diocese is going to say, “Look, we don’t give our consent because we’re worried about this or that” and then the PCC will take the diocese to court and say, “You should have given your consent, it shouldn’t have been unreasonably withheld”, and then we will be into all sorts of costs and silly arguments and so on. Let us keep it as it is and not have this amendment.

Mrs Debrah McIsaac (Salisbury): I would urge Synod to resist the amendment particularly as to the vesting of title of property acquired in future in the PCC. It is not necessary to achieve the sensible deregulation which Synod has approved of in the previous sessions and I cannot see personally how it is desirable. I do not think it satisfies the tests of simplicity or indeed of clarity to in effect have two systems running side-by-side where a title is vested in some cases in the diocesan authority and in others, simply because the transaction took place after a certain date, in the PCC, that, to me, makes no sense at all. There are risks, they may be remote but they do exist. To bring the diocese in at a very late stage is going to be more complicated and it is going to be more costly.

If there are difficulties with the efficiency of the solicitors who act on behalf of the diocese, well maybe that needs to be sorted, and it is never sorted by legislation to find either cost-effectiveness or efficiency in pursuing property transactions. Thank you.

The Revd Dr Robert Munro (Chester): I would encourage you strongly to support this amendment for a couple of reasons. I am persuaded that what we are trying to do often in leading churches is to work efficiently and with the gifts and talents of people, that is part of God’s vocation to us, and where those resources are accessible within parishes it seems foolish not to access them and use them most effectively and efficiently. Actually the missional intention of the original bequests was properties were often given to parishes for their local mission and the beneficial interests remain with them, but it does seem foolish to then doubt whether vesting them back in parishes, should they so request, is a threat. Often in most circumstances that reflects better the original intention, which was often missional. Certainly the properties of my parish that were bequeathed for use of mission within the parish are perfectly appropriately vested and, as has been indicated, it is only an option should you wish to take it.
But also I am concerned about the missional intention of encountering Church bureaucracy when you are dealing with an outsider in other circumstances, so if you are trying to reach a letting arrangement, for example, and you have to deal with two sets of solicitors to enable a purchase or a sale or something like that, that does seem to not only duplicate a waste of time and resources but actually is an extremely bad witness that we should not be working as efficiently as we may.

The option is there, the skills, if they are available, can be used, and this amendment seems to me perfectly reasonable and I encourage you to support it.

The Revd Amanda Fairclough (Liverpool): I just wanted to respond to Gerry O’Brien’s suggestion that professionals among the congregation could quite cheerfully handle the transactions in property that would otherwise be handled by the diocese. I am a non-stipendiary minister and in my day job I am a chartered accountant. I would not dream of trying to take on the job of managing the resources of a congregation in that way. In my day job I have a business, I have professional indemnity insurance in place and I operate in a very business-like manner. I had to stop being a church school governor because it was so scary going to meetings and having budgets placed in front of me and having my opinion asked on the fly. It is not our job as professionals to be giving advice in a voluntary capacity in that way, and I would resist the amendment for that reason.

Mrs Penelope Allen (Lichfield): I am speaking as a member of a diocesan board of finance. Unfortunately, as you know, diocesan boards of finance have to unravel and have to do devote a lot of office time to some problems that are presented by PCCs who have set about projects without proper consultation. I can assure you that a lot of diocesan time, money and expertise is spent in trying to assist parish councils who have got into a mess because they simply have not checked their own legal documentation before embarking upon projects. We have a very large church hall at the moment that cannot be used because the PCC involved did not properly check, when they were erecting this building, both the cemetery regulations and the regulations governing the use of this land. I am urging you to resist this amendment because diocesan expertise is often required at moments when, really, it should have been sought in the first place. I hope that those of you who are on PCCs (and most of us are) will, if you embark on projects in the future, do consult with the diocesan office. The expertise is there and it is very, very costly afterwards to try and unravel these problems. Please resist this amendment and allow the diocese to assist from the beginning.

I think the comments that are being made about being asked if you are sitting to a project committee to help to arrange funding, to help to make arrangements about the land registration and so forth, those burdens should not really be falling on people who are volunteering to help at PCC level. So please resist this amendment. I am afraid, if you do not, diocesan offices will have much more work to do.

The Chair: Colleagues, in view of the nature of the debate that we have been having I am going, after Dr Giddings has spoken, to invite Mr Scowen and the Steering Committee briefly, if they would like, in turn, to respond for no more than three minutes to the debate. We have to do that before we have a motion for closure.
Dr Philip Giddings (Oxford): Daringly, hoping to help. I think there are two, at least, debates running here. One is about how we can best enable parishes and dioceses to do their respective work properly - properly in the full sense - quickly and efficiently. Everyone seems to agree that that is what we want. It needs to be done quickly. The argument is about how is it best done. One of the arguments is about whether that needs to be tied to ownership, or whether regulation by some appropriate body (and, remember, there is the Charity Commission in the background as well) best achieves it.

But there is another debate running which is more difficult and it is about the significance of ownership. What goes with ownership? Why are we so attached to ownership? Why are Christians so concerned about the ownership of property? It often helps on these occasions, I find, to try to think of a parallel situation in which one occupies the other seat. I am always interested to see how differently chairs of diocesan boards of finance operate here from how they do in their diocesan synods. Let us consider the possibility that it was suggested that before dioceses could sell property they had to get the consent of the Archbishops' Council or the General Synod. Who owns the property on behalf of the Church of England? Let me reassure you, as far as I am aware no such proposal is around. But the sorts of thoughts which will start running in our minds are wholly relevant to the question: what goes with ownership and how we, in a disaggregated but united Church, manage to live together with those emotions?

The Chair: Thank you, Dr Giddings. I now invite Mr Scowen to respond. He has up to three minutes. After which, the same will be afforded to the Steering Committee.

Mr Clive Scowen (London): Thank you, Chair. It is extremely helpful to be given this opportunity. I am also very grateful to Dr Giddings. I probably was not as clear as I should have been, because nothing in this proposal affects the need to get the consent of the diocesan authority. That requirement is already in the 1956 Measure. This amendment does not affect that at all, although, of course, as we have heard, the Measure we are considering does relax it in some circumstances. All this issue around getting advice, about consulting the archdeacon and consulting the diocesan office, which is all very important, none of that is affected by this.

I am afraid I do not accept Christine Hardman's view that if they only require consent that they will come late. They know they need consent. There is no provision about not to be unreasonably withheld. It is not in the 1956 Measure and it is not in this either. There is nothing new here about the consent. It is just as it has always been. What my amendment seeks to do is to de-couple ownership from consent. You can do it now because of compulsory land registration. I do not believe that there is a risk of parishes improperly alienating property because they will require consent - be able to demonstrate the consent of the diocesan authority - in order to be able to register the land in another title.

Please take this amendment as what it is and not as what it is not. It is simply about the ownership of property and where it is vested and whose solicitors need to be involved and all those things. Parishes will not be able, if this amendment is passed, to be able to go ahead willy-nilly without advice, without doing all the due diligence they should do. So please vote on this and what it is actually about. Thank you.
The Chair: Would the Steering Committee wish to make a response?

The Archdeacon of Tonbridge (The Ven. Clive Mansell): Thank you, Chair, and thank you to those who have contributed to the debate. I think one or two technical points just to correct. Clearly, if Mr Scowen's amendment goes through and the PCC acquires property, there is not an option, it will acquire property in its own name. It is not optional; it will be in the PCC's name with all the potential responsibilities, possibilities, risks and otherwise going with that. If you are as a PCC acquiring property it may be a straightforward matter. It may not be because there may be implications to do with ecclesiastical law and trust and charity law because of the circumstances of your parish, and your lawyer needs to be aware of that. Believe me, not all lawyers on the high street are aware of those things. This involvement of the diocesan authority with its legal adviser is really quite important in some circumstances.

I am very grateful to Christine Hardman for her contribution. She makes some very valid points. The whole question of consent, which we will address in the next of Mr Scowen's amendments, is an important one and, when it comes about, if it does come about at a later stage, indeed there could well be problems.

Mr Munro, I think it was, gave us an example of the fuss of having to involve the diocese if you are having a short letting of a property or something. Under the draft Measure before you, a letting of under seven years will not need the consent of the diocese. It will be one of those exceptions. So that particular small level transaction, if you like, is going to be eased up by the present proposals.

These proposals have come to you after the Archbishops' Council has waded through some of the issues arising behind Mr Hobbs's motion. It brought a paper to Synod as miscellaneous papers to consider. There were no negative responses to that. It has brought forward draft legislation. That was passed by this Synod in considerable numbers to go to Revision Committee. The Revision Committee has now done its work. It recommends to you to stay with the draft Measure as now before you and to resist this amendment, please.

The Chair: Point of order, Mr Freeman.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

The Chair: That has my consent, has it the consent of Synod?

The Revd Canon Perran Gay (Truro): I would like to move a vote by Houses on this amendment.

The Chair: Thank you. It has been proposed under Standing Orders that a vote by Houses should take place. That will require 25 members to be standing. If you would wish a vote by Houses, would you please stand. I think that is pretty clear - there are over 25 members standing.
You will be relieved, Synod, I am not going to attempt to read out the words of the motion. You do have the Eleventh Notice Paper to assist you in that regard. This is a Division by Houses.

*The amendment was lost after a division by Houses. The voting was as follows:*  

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No abstentions were recorded in the House of Bishops, 5 in the House of Clergy and 3 in the House of Laity.

We move on to Item 553 which, again, stands in Mr Scowen's name. I invite him to speak to his amendment.

*Mr Clive Scowen (London):* Thank you. I do not want to sound rude, but I hope people will listen very carefully so that you know what this is about and not what it is not. This amendment does not, in any way, affect the requirement to obtain the consent of the diocesan authority, nor does it impose any duties on archdeacons that they do not already have or give them any new roles. It assumes that best practice is, as a number of speakers have mentioned in the last debate, for parishes to consult their archdeacon and the diocesan authority, to have regard to the advice that they receive from the archdeacon principally but also other professionals at the diocesan office, before they seek the consent of the diocesan authority. It assumes that archdeacons and others in the diocese want them to do that.

The effect of the new subsection 4(D) is that where a parish has done due diligence, so to speak, by consulting the archdeacon and having regard to his or her advice, the default position is that they will get consent automatically at the end of a prescribed period, unless the diocesan authority gives written notice of refusal setting out the reasons for that refusal. At present, there is no time limit for the diocesan authority to respond to a request nor any obligation to give reasons. The amendment applies some discipline to diocesan authorities and will mean that, unless they give written reasons for refusing permission within the prescribed period, permission will be deemed to have been given, but only where the parish has done all it should have done in terms of consulting the archdeacon and having regard to their advice. The prescribed period within which the diocesan authority will need to give its notice of refusal is defined in the new subsection 4(F). It will be 28 days, unless the Archbishops’ Council makes an order specifying a different period. I had originally thought of just 28 days but did not want the amendment to fall simply on the basis of an objection that 28 days was too short or too inflexible, but it will be 28 days unless the Archbishops’ Council decides otherwise. Of course, the existence of that period will not prevent the diocesan authority giving consent in a shorter period, and the new subsection 4(D) expressly says that.

Subsection 4(E) is an anti-abuse provision and will prevent a PCC trying to wear the diocesan authority down by repeatedly making the same request. If they do, the
default provision in subsection 4(C) will not apply. I tried this amendment out on the Archdeacon of Hackney, because she is an Archdeacon in my Diocese, and she authorises me to say that she supports it.

This amendment does not radically change the system. It merely provides that, when a parish observes the best practice, they should be entitled to expect the diocese to do the same and get its consent at the end of the prescribed period if there is no justifiable objection. I beg to move.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr Scowen. I invite the Steering Committee to respond.

The Archdeacon of Tonbridge (The Ven. Clive Mansell): Again, the Steering Committee would resist this amendment. If the aim here is to help speed up legal activity and to encourage best practice, then I certainly support the principle of that, but this is dealt with by administrative actions and maybe diocesan protocols, it is not necessary to deal with this by producing a Measure of the Synod. I do think it is right that lawyers and others should act as speedily but also as completely as possible in these sorts of matters. The PCC and everybody concerned needs to have it done properly.

This amendment provides that when a transaction is above the threshold set by the Archbishops' Council, and therefore the consent of the diocesan authority is required to effect a transfer, the diocesan consent is deemed to be given after a lapse of 28 days or such other period as the Archbishops' Council may provide by order, unless the diocesan authority gives the PCC notice that it does not consent and gives reasons for the refusal. This deemed consent process is available, provided that the PCC certifies it has consulted the archdeacon and had regard to any advice received from him or her. Like the amendments brought before the Revision Committee, this amendment would impose another burden onto archdeacons. It would also create an uncertainty for buyers of the property about whether consent requirements had or had not been fulfilled as, by definition, there will be no document clearly demonstrating the consent of the DBF.

There are some very real practical issues here. I am grateful for Mr Scowen's reverence to archdeacons, but this does place another task before us. Not all archdeacons are lawyers. Even if that was their legal background, as was my case, they are nevertheless not current practitioners in the law. They would need to seek the advice of the diocesan lawyers so as to ensure that all legal issues, including those relating to charity and ecclesiastical law, are observed. It may well be that the archdeacon will give his advice saying, “You must go to the diocesan lawyers.” We are back where we started from that point of view. When would the archdeacon's advice come into play in a way which is sufficient to meet the needs of the parish and to satisfy the requirements of the legislation and to ensure that proper regard be had to what the advice is in a way which can achieve what has to be achieved? Is it going to be before the PCC first sets its foot along the legal journey? Is it going to be part-way through the legal journey? Would it before a contract is signed, when perhaps not all the documentation to do with title is fully available? Would it be just before a conveyance is signed?

Deemed consent also risks problems, though I accept that is going to be a rare
situation. There may happen to be no archdeacon in post, no particular diocesan official in post, somebody may be off sick or on extended leave at the relevant time. There may be a delay which occurs which then leads to deemed consent taking place, in which case there may not, indeed, be proper specialist legal consideration of what is being done here. This seems to be an unsatisfactory and uncertain way of addressing the issues which the usual involvement of the diocesan authority seeks to address.

I do urge you to resist this amendment but, equally, I do urge that those who are giving legal help and support in dioceses, whether in the office itself or through their lawyers, operate as efficiently and smoothly and positively as possible to avoid undue delays. But the work does need to be done properly. I urge you to resist the amendment.

The Chair: Synod, we have heard that the Steering Committee are resisting this amendment so, as with the previous one, this amendment will lapse unless 40 of you are standing in your seats now in order to allow debate to continue. Would those who wish to do so please stand. There are not 40 members standing, therefore this amendment lapses.

This brings us on to Item 554. Again, Mr Scowen, you have up to five minutes.

Mr Clive Scowen (London): This is a technical matter. At the moment, subsection (5) of section 1 says: “That the consents required by subsection (3) of this section are additional to any other consents required by law, either from the Charity Commission or the Secretary of State of Education and Science, or the Secretary of State for Wales or otherwise.” Now in the version of the Measure that came for first consideration those final words, "after required by law'", had been removed because they are just not necessary. It is just sufficient to say, "required by law." For some reason, when the drafting approach was changed, those words seemed to creep back in. As I understand it, it is accepted that this is an unnecessary bit of surplusage. It is made worse by the fact that the Secretary of State of Education and Science has probably never existed and certainly does not exist now. The current title is Secretary of State for Education. Of course, Secretary of State titles change frequently and so it is daft to have them in legislation like this. Chair, I move that we remove those unnecessary words and make for greater simplicity.

The Chair: I call, again, on a member of the Steering Committee to respond.

The Archdeacon of Tonbridge (The Ven. Clive Mansell): I am happy to be able to support this amendment. This is where each of us can say, “I agree with Clive.” It is not often you will get two Clives talking to each other across this chamber. This is a drafting amendment removing a reference to a title which is no longer current and, indeed, a type of consent which is no longer required in law and, also, removing the reference to the Charity Commissioners, since (a) the body is now called the Charity Commission; (b) the Commission’s consent is now rarely required because an alternative procedure is prescribed by the Charities Act, which does not require the Commission to consent but lays down certain steps the Charity must take; and (c) the reference to the consent of the Charity Commission is already covered in cases where consent is needed by the phrase, “by all other consents required by law.” The
Steering Committee, therefore, accepts this amendment and recommends it to the Synod. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you. Our Clives are in agreement, but it is still open for debate if any member wishes to speak. I see nobody standing. Thank you. I therefore, put Item 554 to the vote.

The amendment was carried on a show of hands.

Item 554 is clearly carried. That brings us on to Item 555. Again, I invite a member of the Steering Committee this time to move that motion.

The Archdeacon of Tonbridge (The Ven. Clive Mansell): As the Chair, I move Item 555, "That clause 1 [as amended] stand part of the Measure."

The Chair: Thank you. I see no one standing to debate the item. I, therefore, put Item 555, "That clause 1 [as amended] stand part of the Measure," to the vote.

The motion

‘That clause 1 as amended stand part of the Measure.’

was carried on a show of hands.

Item 556, I invite the Steering Committee.

The Archdeacon of Tonbridge (The Ven. Clive Mansell): Chair, I move, "That clauses 2 and 3 stand part of the Measure."

The Chair: Thank you. This is open for debate. I see no one standing. Therefore, I put to the vote Item 556, "That clauses 2 and 3 stand part of the Measure."

The motion

‘That clauses 2 and 3 stand part of the Measure.’

was carried on a show of hands.

Item 557, Mr Mansell.

The Archdeacon of Tonbridge (The Ven Clive Mansell): Chair, I move Item 557 ‘That the Long Title stand part of the Measure.’

The Chair: Once again I see no one standing and therefore put 557 to the vote.

The motion

‘That the Long Title stand part of the Measure.’

was carried on a show of hands.
**The Chair:** That completes the revision stage of the draft Church of England (Ecclesiastical Property) Measure. The Measure now stands committed to the Steering Committee in respect of its final drafting.

THE CHAIR Mr Aiden Hargreaves-Smith (London) took the Chair at 11.52 am

**DRAFT AMENDING CANON NO. 35 (GS 1964): DRAFT AMENDING CANON FOR FIRST CONSIDERATION**

*The Chair:* We come now to Item 522, draft Amending Canon No. 35 which is before the Synod for First Consideration. For this members will need the draft amending Canon GS 1964 and the Explanatory Memorandum GS 1964X. I call upon the Ven. Alan Jeans, Archdeacon of Sarum, to move Item 522 ‘That the Canon entitled "Amending Canon No. 35" be considered for revision in Committee.’ The Archdeacon may speak for not more than ten minutes.

*The Archdeacon of Sarum (The Ven. Alan Jeans):* I am sure many members of the Synod recall that amongst the other business conducted at the November 2012 group of sessions we supported a move to amend Canon Law to welcome and embrace children more fully as part of the Body of Christ. It is important to understand what it is that the Synod is being asked to vote on today. That is to agree to take a necessary preliminary step which will pave the way towards implementing the Southwell and Nottingham Diocesan Synod motion passed by this Synod at that Group of sessions.

That motion called for an amendment of Canon B 12 and the Regulations made under it in two main respects. First, the Synod agreed that it should be possible for authorisation to be given to any regular communicant including baptized children admitted to Holy Communion under the 2006 Regulations.

Secondly, the Synod also agreed that the present position could be changed so that, provided the bishop agrees, decisions about who is authorised to distribute the Sacrament can be taken by the local incumbent, priest in charge or (during a vacancy) the rural dean, with the support of the PCC, and in the case of a school Eucharist where it is desired to authorise a child to administer Communion, with the support of the head teacher.

This Amending Canon makes a small change to paragraph 3 of Canon B 12 to facilitate the second of these objectives by removing the reference to lay persons being specially authorised by the bishop to distribute the Holy Communion.

Without this amendment, any new Regulations made by the Synod would have to make provision for the granting of authorisation by the diocesan bishop or by his (or hopefully her) commissary because there would be no power to make Regulations conferring the power to grant authorisation on anyone else. Therefore, if it is the will of Synod that Regulations should be made in due course implementing the Southwell and Nottingham Diocesan Synod Motion, passing this amendment is a necessary first step.
So, I invite the Synod to agree that the draft Canon goes forward for revision to that end, reminding members that if the draft Canon falls, the changes called for by the Southwell and Nottingham DSM cannot be made. In agreeing that the draft Canon should go forward to a Revision Committee, the Synod will not be tying its hands as to the form of the provision that will eventually be made. The position in that respect will fall to be determined in due course if and when Canon B 12 is amended by Regulations made by the Synod under the amended Canon. The form that these Regulations should take will be a matter for debate at a later date, but the Explanatory Memorandum includes in the annex an illustrative draft of some Regulations which demonstrates how they might be expressed to give effect to the Synod’s decision in 2012. These draft Regulations do not represent the only possible way forward and the Legal Office will therefore be very happy to receive comments on them. However, they are not the subject of today’s debate, which is on the principle of the proposed amendment to Canon B 12 itself. So far as that is concerned, I invite the Synod to agree that the draft Amending Canon can go forward to revision in Committee. I commend the Amending Canon to the Synod.

The Chair: The motion is now open for debate. I remind members that under Standing Order 51(b) speeches must be directed to the general purport of the Canon rather than to points of detail. May I also remind members that the Regulations set out in the Explanatory Memorandum are a draft provided for illustrative purposes only and are not the subject of today’s debate.

The Revd Prebendary Stephen Lynas (Bath and Wells): I was delighted to read GS 1964. It was in November 2012 that Bishop Paul Butler first brought his Southwell and Nottingham Diocesan Synod Motion to Synod and in the 18 months since then things have moved on a lot. He has moved on for a start and so has this proposal.

In our diocese we have a cliché we quite often use that people never read the minutes of the last meeting, and it is maybe the same in meetings that you go to. So I sat down and re-read the November 2012 Report of Proceedings. Thanks to the joys of electronics, it is very easy to do because they are all on-line. I moved an amendment at that session where I wished to try and widen the scope of the Southwell and Nottingham motion to cover all permissions to carry patens and chalices at Communion services because that currently requires the bishop to agree under Canon B 12.3 and as a bishop’s chaplain I have to help administer this paperwork. I made the point that then we were being offered a hybrid Measure which had a specific aim, a worthy aim, of making it possible for children who are admitted to Communion to assist at Communion in certain circumstances, but there was also a general dimension to the thing about the bishop’s permission and the existing Regulations.

I am sorry to say that having read the minutes of the last meeting I discovered to my pain that my amendment was not successful and you voted me down. So imagine my surprise to discover that once the lawyers had got to the Southwell and Nottingham motion, they had produced this draft Amending Canon which is before us today in the draft illustrative Regulations. Imagine my joy to discover that the whole package does exactly what I asked you to do 18 months ago. I very much welcome it and I hope that the people voted against me then will vote in favour now, or at least bring themselves to abstain.
As the Archdeacon has said, the Regulations that are set out in the paperwork are illustrative and if, as I know some people will be, you are uncomfortable with their scope or the detail, then the constructive thing to do is to vote in favour and then write in. There is a Rolling Stones song which is always terribly popular: “You can’t always get what you want, but if you try some time you’ll get what you need.” Thank you, Synod.

The Revd Canon Christopher Lilley (Lincoln): I am strongly supportive of this draft Amending Canon, but one problem or potential problem does occur to me and that is to do with safeguarding. If people are authorised to distribute the Communion, in practice they often will also not just do so in church but take home Communions either to individuals or group dwellings, and it is very difficult for the diocese to control that and to make sure that everybody who needs one has a DBS if the bishop is not aware, if the diocese centrally are not aware. Could that point be considered, please?

The Chair: I see no one standing so I call upon the Archdeacon to respond to the debate.

The Archdeacon of Sarum (The Ven. Alan Jeans): Thank you very much indeed to Stephen Lynas. Thank you very much for the affirmation and I too hope that people vote alongside you.

To Chris Lilley, that is a matter for the Regulations and the safeguarding team at Church House in Westminster are very much aware of that and have taken note of that and we will make sure that is built into the consideration on drafting those. I am very happy to move the motion.

The Chair: So I now put Item 522 to the vote.

The motion

‘That the Canon entitled “Amending Canon No. 35” be considered for revision in committee.’

was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: The draft Amending Canon is now automatically committed to a Revision Committee. As stated on page 18 of the agenda, any member who wishes to submit proposals for its amendment should send them in writing to the Clerk to the Synod to reach her no later than 5.30 pm on Friday 15 August. That concludes this item of business. Thank you.

THE CHAIR The Revd Canon Dr Rosemarie Mallett (Southwark) took the Chair at 12.02 pm.
The Chair: Good afternoon, Synod. It is just afternoon. We come now to Item 523, the motion for the approval of the Church Representation Rules (Amendment) [(No.1)] Resolution. It is the debate which was adjourned at the February Group of sessions. Members will need the draft Amendment Resolution GS 1940A and the Explanatory Notes GS 1940Y which explain the effect of the amendments made to the Resolution in February.

I am going to call Canon Robert Cotton to move Item 523, ‘That the Church Representation Rules as amended Resolution 2014 be approved.’ Canon Cotton may speak for not more than ten minutes.

The Revd Canon Robert Cotton (Guildford): I am quite sure I am not the only person who feels deeply troubled when, instinctively, I want to agree with two people who themselves disagree. We had that experience in the Archbishops’ Council fairly recently when we were discussing the governance of the Board of Education and the National Society and the changes that are required to help that process forward. The first person that spoke up I admire greatly and listened to her very carefully and she said we must approach this gently, and especially on a topic that people feel very sensitive about, a gentle approach helps. The second person who spoke said we must approach this boldly, especially on a topic that people feel is very important. I admire both those, but they themselves were disagreeing. That I believe is relevant to this topic that we started in the last group of sessions and is in front of us now.

Many voices in February were saying we must approach this gently. A number of the speeches then on various of the amendments as well as on the main motion named ways that parish governance can go wrong, and there was distinctly a feeling of what later somebody has named to me as “democratic deficit”, that sense that we are taking away and under-valuing the importance of local democracy. To turn that and phrase that positively, we all know that transparent, regular PCC meetings, where people feel fully engaged, where there is good communication not only within a PCC but with all the relevant stakeholders outside, we know that when that goes well, parishes can really flourish. But, the voice that was less heard, I believe, in February was the bit about approaching things boldly, and the recognition that the driver on this hand was saying is that when we had done consultation, there were a number of parishes who find the rules as they stand now a serious burden. Part of my way of holding this together is to recognise, as we have done in a number of debates over this weekend, how there are different styles and expectations between PCCs and parishes that come suburban or rural, some that are solid with expertise and some where you have to be improvising because of the people and resources you have at your disposal.

I just want to give a little more room to what it would be like to approach this boldly. I wonder. I wonder what it would be like if we scrapped all the Church Representation Rules? It might send the General Secretary’s hair white, but I wonder what it would be like if we said to all parishes, “No rules, but of course you do have to uphold the Nolan principles of public life.” You know what they are - anyone in public life must
act selflessly, with integrity, objectivity, accountability, openly, honestly and so on. That is individually for PCC members. Corporately, we would say, “No rules, but what you have to do is uphold the Cadbury principles of good governance: consult your stakeholders, clear roles and responsibilities for board members, ethical behaviour, transparency.” I am not proposing that, but I am wondering because good governance and good parish management is not achieved by obeying the rules. Good parish management is achieved by establishing those things which the rules point us towards: transparency, taking people with us, making sure there is good understanding, ethical behaviour, accountability. All parishes and all PCCs and all PCC members should be aiming for that, that with the way of trying to hold these two approaches together the rules point us towards.

So what is in front of you now is an attempt to hold those approaches together. In terms of legality and rules, we are approaching this gently. In terms of spirit, I hope we can approach this boldly, because if we cannot approach a matter such as this with a certain amount of courage, how will we ever show the courage and faith that is required when things are more important? So that is I think where we are.

I have been giving a speech that will outline more the effect of what is in front of you, but again I trust that you have read it, you do understand it, and if questions come up in debate we will react to that, but let me just say again that the proposals that are in front of you came out of an open consultation for PCCs across the country and what we are laying before you is a request to lighten the burden of administration for some PPCs and parishes. My hope is we can say yes to that and ensure that our whole Church flourishes. I beg to move the motion standing in my name.

*The Chair:* Synod, the item is now open for debate.

*The Chair* imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

*Mr Philip French (Rochester)*: A very quick point. One of the amendments that was carried when this business was previously considered was to relax the suggestion of having only one PCC meeting in the year and setting a minimum of two, and that has been carried forward on the face of GS 1940A today, but the Explanatory Note on page 3, technically not part of the Resolution, has not caught up with it. That reads: “Paragraph 3 makes new provision for the minimum number of meetings that each PCC must hold in a year from four to one.” There is a verb missing, but also the number is wrong and, as that may lead to confusion, I wonder if something might be done just to tidy that up.

*Canon Timothy Allen (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich)*: Madam Chair, simplification is an extremely important objective since our Church law and procedures are so over-complex that they discourage mission, but it is not sufficient to be bold alone. For successful simplification, it requires very careful research, taking advice, debate and judgment in advance. The simplification Measure on faculty procedures, which we universally welcomed on Saturday morning, was exceptionally carefully thought through before it was brought to Synod and so it deserved to succeed, as it did. In contrast, the debate here in February on the original proposals to simplify the law on PCCs made very clear that the February proposals, bold though they might have been, were inadequately prepared. To take the prime example, to propose that a
PCC need meet only once a year not only conflicts with the statutory requirements, and with even the most basic requirements to keep parish life going, but also offers utterly undesirable justification for sleepy PCCs to doze on even more deeply. Not so much bold as rash. They were derided by Synod. Happily, those responsible for these revised proposals in the important area of PCCs have now seen sense by complying with Synod’s advice and I hope we will now support them. Thank you, Chair.

Mr Ian Fletcher (Leeds): I am not sure how bold some of these proposals are, but certainly at the February meeting I think many of us were quite confused by the debate which took place regarding the number of meetings that PCCs should have during the year. PCCs are, I think, bound by the normal rules on governance which are laid down by the Charities Act and by the Charity Commission. My worry is that what we are left with seeks to override those rules and I am not sure which takes precedence, if you like. Certainly in the minds of some Chairmen of PCCs, they may well think that holding two meetings a year is sufficient. I accept that in some contexts two meetings a year will be sufficient. I do not accept that that will apply in all instances, but I am aware that some Chairmen will think that it does.

For me I would much rather that we did not lay down a minimum and that we relied on the good sense of PCCs to actually hold the number of meetings that were appropriate to their situation. I do not want to force people to have meetings for the sake of having meetings, and certainly I am aware that some rural PCCs probably have 52 meetings a year, all on a Sunday!

I really do not like what is put in front of us. We were unable to amend it at the later stage and therefore I would say let us reject it and try it again next time around and do a better job of it, which may remind of us of other debates in this place. Thank you.

The Revd Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich): St Edmundsbury and Ipswich Diocese is predominantly suburban with a large rural fringe. I just wanted to say basically two points. The first is I do welcome these rules as they are revised. It is very difficult to pare four down to two or three. There is not much room to manoeuvre but basically what we have got now is an annual general meeting plus two, which for some struggling areas I think is wise, because you do need time to receive your accounts and do safeguarding properly, but more significantly, we do need to leave space for people to protest and ask awkward questions. As the Archbishop said last night, some people not are nice, some PCCs are silly, some PCCs are controlling and some people on them are downright nasty. These guides are supposed to be, as I understand it, a guide for wise people and a rod for fools. The wise and intelligent will take the drift and do it properly, but every once in a while probably an archdeacon or maybe even a bishop has to come along with the rod and give a little poke, and you have to have that otherwise people will become more and more slovenly and in that slovenliness things will go wrong.

There is a bigger issue here. It is about Synod itself. I am one of those that is rejoicing in the new positive spirit that we have here, a spirit of gentleness and understanding and wanting to work together. In the past Synod has been something of a watchdog. If we smell weakness or blood on the platform we growl and we bite
and we draw blood. That is not a good way of doing business. We do need robust debate, we do need careful listening, but in the end, we want to come out of the process whole and not wounded. I think there has been wisdom shown here and, therefore, I feel in good conscience I can commend them. I must say some of the Explanatory Notes and other comments produced do not seem to hang together, so a bit of syntax explanation from the platform might be helpful there. On the whole, I think we are going in the right direction. It is very difficult to be both bold and cautious at the same time, but we are going in the right direction and I commend this to you. Thank you very much indeed.

Archdeacon of Rochester (The Ven. Clive Mansell): Could I just speak briefly to page 5 of GS 1940Y and of the Standing Committee proposals there where the presence of the provision will mean that a standing committee can consist of the churchwardens and the minister but the council can appoint other members. I am aware of one parish in my patch where for particular reasons there are no churchwardens, and I suspect that is not the only parish in the country in that situation.

If these proposals go through and they are issued and there are any guidance notes to go with them, I just wonder whether it is worth pointing out that particular provision to parishes who find themselves in that unfortunate circumstance of no churchwarden and encourage them to appoint two more people to serve as a Standing Committee. It is likely to be a parish which has infrequent PCC meetings and they may need people who have got authorisation to act on their behalf and people will normally assume wardens will do but if wardens are not there then the minister is left a bit alone. I just flag up the vulnerable situation of a parish like that.

Mr Peter Haddock (Southwark): Very quickly. I may very easily be wrong but I am inclined to vote against this particular Measure precisely because of my experience of PCCs, both of which have had people on them with extensive experience of governance in the private and in the public sector. Nonetheless, the Church Representation Rules, to the extent that they have been followed, have been a great blessing to us. I am one of those few people who follow in the order of Clive Scowen in that regard. I just do not think that out there there is enough acceptance and knowledge of the role of the Charity Commission and the responsibilities of governance. Power finds it way and is expressed in some very strange manifestations and people with very good intent, some very ardent individuals, do run things in some very strange ways. I just think with the framework such as it is that we are proposing - and this debate is so very different from the one that we had on church property - that I am inclined to vote against the Measure. Thank you.

Mr Paul Hancock (Liverpool): On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

The Chair: Mr Hancock, that has my permission and consent. Does it have the consent of Synod?

This motion was put and carried on a show of hands.
May I now call upon Canon Cotton to respond.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of five minutes.

The Revd Canon Robert Cotton (Guildford): Thank you, Chair. There is a recognition for those who have been working on the simplification agenda that it does need to be tackled sensitively. In response to Peter Haddock in the last speech, I think were we able to run the last six months again we would have put this through a Revision Committee and used a more extensive procedure. That said, I do need to say both to you and to Tim Allen again what I have said now and in February, that the ideas that came forward were very clearly and definitely without any major disagreement that came out of a consultation that was run from November 2011, so it was based on listening to the parishes. Next time, and I fear to say that there will be a next time, I think a different route would be used.

The other thing I need to say is that the Legal Office has already recognised that even these papers are not easy to understand and that they are already preparing guidance notes to make it clear as to what they mean and how they impact, and that I think was appropriate to Clive Mansell’s point about trying to deal with some of the odd situations that may not be covered there.

Along with the guidance note, Philip French in the first speech rightly pointed out a mistake that was indeed corrected on the Seventh Notice Paper. You may have been doing other things over the last few days so you may have missed the Seventh Notice Paper, but on page 8 of the Seventh Notice Paper, Philip, you are absolutely right, and I apologise there was not more prominence to the correction that you rightly made.

To Ian Fletcher I think I need to say that there is no inconsistency between what has been proposed here and charity law. The responsibility of trustees, if I understand charity law right, is that there is no specification of the number of meetings but you do have to hold however many meetings are needed to discharge your responsibilities properly. That is why I was trying to refer you to Nolan and Cadbury because that is the heart of the matter. The amendments here are all about minimum number of meetings rather than saying how you discharge it properly. That is for each PCC, incumbents and PCC members, to work out between themselves and it is not our job to specify that.

I will come back to Jonathan Alderton-Ford’s comment. I spoke about gentleness and boldness which I valued, you gave us two slightly different words about a guide and a rod. My hope is that this paper tries to combine these two different approaches, two different words, and I ask for your support in passing this motion now. Thank you.

The Revd Canon Simon Killwick (Manchester): Point of order. Would it be possible to move that this item be sent back to a Revision Committee in view of the issues that have been picked up today, eg the membership of a Standing Committee if there were no churchwardens? This item was deferred from the previous sessions in order to allow for reflection but I have not seen any evidence that reflection has
taken place. I think it would be best served if we went back into Revision Committee and had another go at it rather than risk losing the whole lot.

The Chair: I will take advice on that, Sir. (After taking advice) I have been advised that unfortunately that will not be possible because this item is not following the procedure for a Measure and the only way to go to that stage is to vote for or against now. Under Standing Order 35(d)(i)(iv) a majority in each House of not less than two-thirds of those present in voting is required for the approval of this resolution. A division by Houses is therefore required.

The motion

‘That the Church Representation Rules (Amendment) [(No. 1)] Resolution be approved.’

was lost after a division by Houses. The voting was as follows:

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No abstentions were recorded in the House of Bishops, 9 in the House of Clergy and 6 in the House of Laity.

Having declined to approve the resolution it will not proceed further. This concludes this item of business and we now move on to the next item.

THE CHAIR The Ven. Karen Gorham (Oxford) took the Chair at 12.33 pm

FAREWELLS

The Chair. we are almost there now, Synod. We come now to Item 30 on our agenda, Farewells, and I call upon the Archbishop of York for a farewell to the Bishop of Burnley, and to the Archbishop of Canterbury who will give a farewell to the Bishop of Oxford.

The Archbishop of York (The Most Revd & Rt Hon. Dr John Sentamu): Madam Chair, members of Synod, we are breaking with the tradition that we only say farewell at this Synod to diocesan bishops. I have something to say about Bishop John Goddard, Bishop of Burnley, who, as a member of the House of Bishops, has served on Synod more years than he will care to recall.

Born in Somerset, and son of a priest, Bishop John grew up in Swindon. He and Vivienne met at university and they are a strong team. He has the rare honour of having been ordained at York Minster as a deacon, priest, bishop, and collated canon, and canon emeritus. I call that a really true distinction. Bishop John was ordained into the Parish of Southbank in Middlesbrough in 1970, where he lived in a tower block in a very deprived area. He served a second curacy in Scarborough. At 28, he was made vicar of The Ascension Middlesbrough on a large council estate
parish and in 1982 he became vicar of the town centre parish of All Saints, becoming Area Dean at the same time. Six years later he was made vice-principal of Edinburgh Theological College in the Episcopal Church of Scotland before returning to England to be rector of the Team Parish of Ribbleton in Preston in 1992, before being made Bishop of Burnley.

His curate at Ribbleton recalls the warmth of the welcome he received from Bishop John and his family. Vivienne and their children, Michael and Gareth, were the source of much nurture, laughter and fun, usually at the expense of Fr John and his many eccentricities. One of his many endearing characteristics was his passion for DIY and there is apparently nothing he will not turn his hand to. You saw him just knocking off that microphone a little while ago!

The new curate was well chosen - he had very successfully trained as a plumber before ordination. Fr John asked him to install a heating system in the house he and Vivienne had just bought in North Wales. He agreed and duly went to lend a hand. When he had finished and everything was up and running, he left his training incumbent to nail the floorboards back down. Needless to say, by the time his curate got back to Ribbleton Fr John was on the phone calling him back to mend a leak. Not funny at the time.

Another time, rector and curate both went to Blackpool Tower Ballroom for the annual Mothers’ Union Dance. Yes - the Mothers Union Dance! They were selling real ale at the bar and Fr John, being fond of such things, had a glass or two before tucking into a sumptuous supper of pre-packed sandwiches and pork pie. The following day was not a happy one in Ribbleton Rectory as Fr John was suffering considerably. The pork pie, apparently, was to blame!

The same former curate tells me that to say Bishop John is careful with money would be an understatement, ‘tight’ would be more correct, but only ever with himself and those closest to him. In the Rectory heating was not overused, giving rise to heated family arguments about the temperature of the family home. Bishop John Goddard is always after a bargain. He has an uncanny ability to barter and cajole until he has exactly what he wants and the unwitting salesperson is out of pocket.

Bishop John has always been identified with those in poverty in the most deprived areas of our society. He has a passion for the Gospel and a real heart for those with whom our Lord would identify. He has been an inspiration in this and in many other ways. He has always spelt out - and lived out - the social and economic implications of the Gospel. He loves Christ’s Church and has been fearless and tireless in its defence.

On his consecration and appointment to the See of Burnley, Bishop John built, in the garden of the then bishop’s house, what the papers called a ‘garden shed church’. Dubbed ‘one of the world’s smallest places of worship’, the chapel, with its altar and its icons, was a house of prayer for the bishop and his team on many occasions. He was sad to leave that behind.

In the House of Bishops and at General Synod, Bishop John has been a trusty champion for those Traditional Catholic theological perspectives. But he is far from
being a ‘single issue’ bishop, he has been a persistent advocate for those in poverty, for reconciliation, and for building interfaith bridges right across the community. He has the authority of someone engaged at the grass roots.

During the Burnley riots in 2001, the newly-appointed bishop received death threats, both through the post and over the phone, as he explored the causes of the unrest. He was deeply distressed. The police were asked to intervene. Despite the intimidation, Bishop John took on a role within a task force to investigate the cause of the riots and improve the interfaith relationships in the town - an achievement he is rightly proud of and many of us in the North.

Recently he relished the role of acting diocesan bishop, then stepped aside with characteristic good grace on the appointment of the new Bishop of Blackburn.

Bishop John will, I am sure, be kept busy in retirement, in their new home in Tarleton. He will always be up to something, you can be sure. He has long been famous for his barge - there will be plenty of tinkering to do on his canal boat - and I am told he has just bought a bargain of an old bright blue Morris Minor which will need some attention.

John and Vivienne, I salute you, and I thank you both, and we wish you happiness and all God’s blessings for many years to come. And this Synod will continue to be blessed by the presence of Vivienne Goddard, as she is not stepping down from the Synod. May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, continue and be with you both in your future ministry. God bless.

_The Archbishop of Canterbury (The Most Revd & Rt Hon. Justin Welby):_ John Pritchard. It is very seldom in life that 22 years after someone was one’s supervisor and director of pastoral studies that one has the opportunity for an extended period of reflection on their ministry. But, with admirable foresight, much more than my own, I happen to be aware that one of his most remarkable family, one of his daughters, holds a very senior position at the hospital to which I have to go if anything ever goes wrong, and if I am to avoid endless enemas every time I go in for an ingrowing toenail I suspect I need to stick to my script.

There are a number of mafias lurking in the Church of England. I have to confess one of them is signified by those who wear crosses of nails. Of course, it is a very reconciling mafia, we make you offers you cannot refuse of reconciliation. But there is another one which is of those who were taught by John Pritchard and that is one that we count ourselves privileged to be part of. I will come back to that in a minute.

When we say goodbye to bishops in General Synod, we tend to think of their contribution on this platform or some of the national tasks but John has been distinguished not only - and I will come back to that in a minute - with his remarkable work in education but also in his demonstration that the core of a bishop’s ministry is within his diocese. It is quite clear from all that we hear that John has become a very much loved bishop within the Diocese of Oxford and will be greatly missed. Just for the avoidance of doubt, being Bishop of Oxford, speaking as someone who went to a place a little further east and then a lot further north, is a really difficult place to be. They are funny folk in Oxford. To be a loved bishop and an effective bishop there
shows skills that in any other diocese would qualify you for near immortality. It is a large diocese, as we know, with a well worked area system and it takes great skill to bring it together. John’s colleagues pay tribute to him for the way he has tied them together but without shackling them. How he changed from his time at Cranmer!

Time and again all his colleagues talk of the Living Faith programme that was instituted under his care. It is a programme which emphasises the centrality of Jesus in individual lives but also in the boards and councils of the dioceses. That passion for communicating the good news of Jesus Christ has not changed from his times at Cranmer or before. In line with that, he established a Board of Mission and appointed a Director of Mission and that has led to mission being the context for the activities of the dioceses from stewardship to vocations which are numerous, from social responsibility to safeguarding which is effective, from children’s and youth imagining faith, to days for the clergy and local lay ministers and the grand day out for the whole diocese.

Above all, John is a man of immense courtesy and grace and patience, qualities that were amply tested at a theological college, certainly by me, but never seemed to run out. They are also qualities that have been demonstrated in his diocese and here and in the Board of Education.

Although the diocese wish him and Wendy well, they make no secret that they will miss him greatly.

John discovered his vocation reading law at Oxford University - do they do law at Oxford University? - and then went on to train at Ridley Hall in Cambridge - repentance!

Ordained deacon in 1972 he served his titles at St Martin’s Birmingham which had a lasting effect on his ministry, because I remember him talking about it a great deal, but also I have no doubt a lasting and beneficial effect on St Martin’s. Then he moved to the Diocese of Bath and Wells as assistant director of RE and youth chaplain, and then the parish of Wilton.

After that his academic abilities came to the fore as he went to be first director of pastoral studies at Cranmer and then warden, where he had a huge variety of people answering their call to serve God in ordained ministry. At that time Cranmer was still a fascinating mix of the Wesley Study Centre for Methodism as well as a theological college of an evangelical tradition but also the theological college of the North, and so there was a hugely diverse pattern of relationships to handle and he did that extremely well.

Among those who you may know of, Martyn Percy was there at the time and Emma, his wife, Jo Wells, my chaplain, and Robert Innes, who will be consecrated next Sunday as bishop before being installed as Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe. All of us remember with warmth and affection, and a little amusement, John’s style, the silences when he was waiting for you to say something - he could outwait anyone in silence - the just one hand up to the glasses and both hands extended to give you an invitation to play a more active part in the interview.
He then went as six years as Archdeacon of Canterbury before becoming Suffragan Bishop of Jarrow in the Diocese of Durham, one that I knew very briefly, where he oversaw the vacancy between bishops, the previous one, and after that became Bishop of Oxford. It is striking that, as with Mark Bryant now, John then was known across the diocese with extraordinary affection as someone of endless hard work, great hospitality with Wendy, enormous warmth and great effect in his ministry. That does not touch on many of his other areas of ministry. The Diocese of Oxford has many and varied overseas links and John himself took pilgrimages to Israel and retains an abiding and passionate concern for the Holy Land.

By now you must be beginning to think we are talking about someone who can walk on water. I wonder if the technology is going to help us here. Here is a picture of John developing a new policy for the national Board of Education and new education policy for the Church of England. He is, in fact, able to walk on fire. He tested the theory that it is possible to walk on coals heated to 1,200°C and proved that you can do it by doing it twice.

However, walking on hot coals was probably as nothing to being Chair of the Board of Education. It is a very high profile post, as we know, which inevitably courts media headlines. It is also probably one of the most significant roles in our public life. John had interesting things to say about admissions policies in schools and, indeed, the whole emphasis on the Church of England serving the nation in its education. He attracted endless criticism from secularists but more than anything held his own during a time of extraordinarily rapid change in education which required immense flexibility, and also in a transition from schools when he arrived which in some dioceses definitely were much more the sort of fashionable places to go in the more middle class areas to, by the time he left, a sense of education being at the very sharp end of the mission of the Church of England and a conviction that good religious education was essential in all the curricula that is offered to our children, including the new baccalaureate.

He is a writer who has written many books of immense support and comfort and education. His book on prayer is widely read and known. He was a great teacher on prayer, one of those who has influenced me most; I am deeply grateful to him personally. He is an accessible author explaining the Christian faith clearly to enquirer and longstanding Church member. I have already mentioned his courtesy and patience. This can be tested. He long remembers the time when in visiting Cape Town on one of the diocesan link visits he found himself being prayed for fervently by a woman and her prayers became so fervent that she began to bang her Bible on John’s head. It is unusual that any of us can call ourselves the literal victim of a Bible basher. But even that is said not to have strained his courtesy.

The House of Bishops and the Synod are going to miss his profound attention to detail, his passion for what he does, his good humour, his kindness, his pastoral skills. He is entering a richly deserved retirement and we hope that he and Wendy enjoy that to the full.

John, thank you and we bless you with all our hearts for what you have done for Church and for us. Thank you.
The Chair: That concludes our business for this group of sessions and I therefore call upon the Archbishop of York to prorogue us.

The Archbishop of York prorogued the Synod at 12.55 p.m.
### BISHOPS' ADVISORY PANELS
RESULTS BY DIOCESE FOR CANDIDATES 2009

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