

Report of Proceedings 2016

**General Synod
February Group of Sessions**

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The Archbishop of York

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Full Synod: First Day Monday 15 February 2016

THE CHAIR *The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd and Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby)* took the Chair at 2.30 pm.

The Revd Michael Gisbourne (Chaplain to the General Synod) led the Synod in an act of worship.

Introductions

The Chair: May I refer to those who today are leading the continuous praying presence? They are the Community of St Anselm, St Matthews, Westminster and 24-7 Prayer. We are very grateful indeed to them.

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 so that we can greet them all with applause at the end.

The new members are: the Ven Martin Gorick, replacing the Ven Karen Gorham (Oxford); the Revd Steven Wood, replacing the Revd Sue Groom (St Albans); the Very Revd Tim Barker, Dean of Guernsey; Mr Timothy Fleming, replacing Mrs Sophie Vickers (St Albans); the Revd Sr Anita Cook (Religious Communities); Sr Catherine Harvey (Religious Communities). May we greet them all?

There are two bishops attending during a vacancy in See: the Rt Revd Colin Fletcher, Bishop of Dorchester, for Oxford; and the Rt Revd John Holbrook, Bishop of Brixworth, for Leicester. They have the right to speak but not vote, and do not form part of the quorum for the House of Bishops, so when you are enjoying that particular bit of the sport, do not count them. I think it is worth saying - though it is not in my script so I will probably get into trouble - that Colin Fletcher has borne a long interregnum with great patience, and when you see him I hope and trust that you will welcome him warmly and demonstrate how much we appreciate how he serves the diocese of Oxford and the Church during this time.

Presentations

The following were presented to the General Synod and the greeted by the Archbishop of Canterbury:

The Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark), Prolocutor of the Lower House of the Convocation of Canterbury; the Ven Cherry Vann (Manchester), Prolocutor of the Lower House of the Convocation of York; Canon Dr Jamie Harrison, Chair of the House of Laity; and Canon Elizabeth Paver (Sheffield), Vice-Chair of the House of Laity.

The Chair: I think you have done the next bit which is that you welcome them with a round of applause. That concludes this formal item of business.

THE CHAIR *The Revd Canon Dr Rosemarie Mallett (Southwark)* took the Chair at 2.46 pm.

The Chair: Good afternoon, Synod. I am going to begin this afternoon's session by inviting the Chair of the Business Committee to propose a variation in the order of business under Standing Order 9.

Revd Canon Susan Booy (Oxford): Thank you, Madam Chair. Synod, you are seeing me slightly earlier than you expected. I refer you to the Fourth Notice Paper. The Archbishop of Canterbury would like to make an extended address to include a statement on the Primates' meeting that took place in January. We are requesting that Item 5 be brought forward so that it is taken immediately after Item 3 and before my report on behalf of the Business Committee. In asking for this variation, might I express our appreciation on behalf of the Synod for the work that happened at Canterbury in January. Synod, I request that you support this variation in the order of business. Thank you, Chair.

The Chair: I am minded to vary the order of business in the way proposed by the Chair of the Business Committee, but, to do so, I need the general consent of Synod.

This motion was carried on a show of hands.

Appointment of the Chair of the Dioceses Commission (GS 2012)

The Chair: I now call upon the Archbishop of Canterbury to move Item 3, the appointment of the Chair of the Dioceses Commission, for which you will need sight of GS 2012. The Archbishop may speak for up to ten minutes.

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd and Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby): I beg to move:

'That the appointment of Canon Professor Michael Clarke as Chair of the Dioceses Commission from 1 May 2016 to 30 April 2021 be approved.'

Michael Clarke will need no introduction to many of us on the Synod, a body on which he has served with distinction for over 20 years. He has been a member of the Dioceses Commission since it was reconstituted eight years ago, and has been its Chair since succeeding Dr Priscilla Chadwick in 2011. The Commission was then in the throes of a scheme to amalgamate the former dioceses of Bradford, Ripon & Leeds and Wakefield. Michael ably saw this through to the birth of the new diocese of West Yorkshire & the Dales in 2014. I believe that we are richly blessed to have someone with Michael's deep understanding of the Church and society to steer the Commission at this time.

Archbishop Sentamu and I are delighted that Michael has accepted our invitation to serve as the Commission's Chair for a further term, not least as at least four of its other

nine members from this May will be new to it, so continuity is important. Synod's approval is needed as he would serve from May as an *ex officio* member of the House of Laity. Accordingly, I ask Synod to approve this appointment.

Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford): I wish to support Michael Clarke's appointment as Chair of the Dioceses Commission and to congratulate him on his successful first five-year term. My reason for wishing to speak is to ask him to place a new focus on the inefficiency of administration throughout the Church of England. Thus far the Dioceses Commission has looked at change on a wholesale basis, combining episcopal oversight, ministry, mission and administration in its changes, but I wish to ask that the administration is looked at separately, because we can dispense with subsidiarity to stop the duplication of these functions 42 times over. My Private Member's Motion gives us the opportunity to consider this on the floor of the Synod if it gets over 100 signatures, but unless the Dioceses Commission picks this up, it has to be a Private Member's Motion since our financial governance in this Synod is restricted to the Archbishops' Council.

The Chair: Mr Oldham, could you please stick to this point.

Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford): Each diocese governs its own affairs so there is no body bearing down on needless waste by duplication across the Church. With a large potential saving and much time to be released for evangelism, there is a huge benefit from cutting out unnecessary administration. I ask that Michael Clarke makes this a high priority in his second five-year term so that people at all levels of the Church will be released from administration to join in the renewal and reform we are trying so hard to achieve.

Revd Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich): Until recently I was a member of the Dioceses Commission. I feel at liberty to speak as I am no longer a member of this body. Can I say that the eight years I have been on has been a wonderful experience and a great deal has been achieved. We have had two superb chairpersons, and Michael Clarke has done an absolutely brilliant job. The reason for my speaking is this. The frame of reference in which the Dioceses Commission works is clearly set out by papers and documents set out by this body. It is wrong for the previous speaker to make such suggestions at this time.

The Chair: I see no one else standing, and so I call upon the Archbishop to respond.

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby): Thank you. I am sure that the Dioceses Commission will have noted the points being made and I beg to move the motion.

The motion

'That the appointment of Canon Professor Michael Clarke as Chair of the Dioceses Commission from 1 May 2016 to 30 April 2021 be approved.'

was carried on a show of hands.

Presidential Address

The Chair. We now move to Item 5 on the agenda. I now call upon his Grace, the Archbishop of Canterbury, to make his Presidential Address to Synod.

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd and Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby): The Primates' meeting held in Canterbury between 11 and 15 January 2016 occasioned much comment, and even more misrepresentation. It has been spun more than Donald Trump and you would be well advised to set your spinmeters to detect, because I am hoping to say something both about what happened, at least from my point of view, hence the spin, and, more importantly, why and what it says to us. I have no doubt most people will disagree with one or other aspect, or all of them.

The spin included such elements as saying that the Primates had had their phones removed and that they were being treated as children. Even some seasoned journalists believed this and printed it as fact. It became quite a joke amongst us with people waving their phones at me from time to time to indicate that my powers were limited. Neither were they treated as children. Secretary-General, do sit up and keep your hands still and you will get a doughnut with your tea.

My original aim, after wide consultation with the Primates, had been to attend a series of regional meetings of Primates over the course of 2016 and 2017, before having a full Primates' meeting in 2018 as a run-up to the Lambeth Conference, which was aimed for 2020. However, following the General Convention of the Episcopal Church (TEC) in June 2015 and the decision of the General Convention to alter their definition of marriage so as to be gender neutral, I spent last August and early September ringing all the Primates in order to take their advice on the next steps. It became clear that a Primates' meeting was required sooner rather than later. It was also evident that were it to be convened in the normal way there would be very significant absences, as was the case at Dublin in 2011.

Archbishop Foley Beach of the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA), who has a close relationship with many of the Primates who form the Global Anglican Future Conference (GAFCON) and the Global South, was therefore invited. Given the tensions that exist in North America, it speaks much of the graciousness of Archbishop Fred Hiltz of Canada and the then Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori, and her successor Michael Curry, as well as Archbishop Foley Beach that, despite being deeply unhappy, they were still willing to come to the meeting, and we should be duly grateful to all of them.

As you know, it was described as a Primates' gathering, as a meeting proper could only include those provinces which are recognised as institutionally part of the Anglican Communion, as distinct from churches which have an Anglican tradition and identity. To be part of the institution of the Anglican Communion, a province must be in communion with the See of Canterbury. That was upheld, as it had been understood previously at the Lambeth Conference of 1930 and was often repeated, most recently in the Eames Report in paragraph 3.32. A province also has to be on the schedule of

provinces held by the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) and supported by two-thirds of the Primates in one way or another. There is no clear process or precedent for a new province to join, except as an agreed spin-off from a previous province.

The meeting was set for Canterbury because that would recall to people the way in which Canterbury, and especially its cathedral, represents the centre of the Anglican Communion. That the meeting achieved what it did is a great tribute to the extraordinary work done by the Dean and Chapter, and indeed all the staff at Canterbury Cathedral, whose gift of Benedictine hospitality, of calm organisation and whose ability to create a sense of security and safety in the midst of such disagreement are absolutely unparalleled. We owe them a great deal.

It may help to give you a sense of what the meeting was like by describing the final Eucharist in the Crypt of Canterbury Cathedral, the oldest part of the building, and, to keep you entertained, some of the relevant bits I am going to talk about are going to appear around the place - probably behind me if I look round.

We sat in a semi-circle around the altar laid for the Eucharist. On one side of it and a little in front was the Crozier of St Gregory, Pope Gregory the Great, who had sent Augustine in 597 for the re-evangelization of these islands, at least according to the Roman tradition. The Crozier is very beautiful, with inspiration, which I suspect is drawn from the Apocalypse, of a carved ivory lamb rising above an attack by a dragon. I was present when it arrived on the Friday before the meeting began and watched as those unpacking it were moved to tears by its beauty and historic significance. Its loan for the week from the Prior of St Gregorio, with the blessing and active support of the British ambassador to the Holy See and of the Italian authorities, and much support from within the Vatican itself, was a symbol of ecumenical unity that was most remarkable.

On the other side of the altar, and just in front of it, were the St Augustine Gospels, loaned for the day by Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, and brought down, setting off at 3 am, simply for the service. That again was a gift that we gratefully received. They are authenticated as dating from the sixth century and are most beautifully illuminated. Again, they provide forceful symbolism of our call to continuing the tradition started so long ago.

Before the altar, during the ministry of the Word, sat Jean Vanier, who had spoken to us on the Thursday evening after evensong and addressed us here in the Eucharist on John 13, the washing of the feet. He led us in both meditating on that passage and then in washing each other's other feet, so that all Primates washed each other's feet. It seemed to me as we sat there that much of what we are about as the Anglican Communion - as God's people - was symbolised in the way everything was laid out. The ministry of the sacrament recalled to us that through the sacrament we reaffirm our catholicity, our essential unity with all Christians, everywhere and in every time. The pastoral staff spoke to us of the conquest of evil, of the call for unity and of the shepherding of the people of God in simplicity and holiness. The Gospels, the word of the scriptures, unfold to us the life of Jesus, our Saviour; word and sacraments held together. Jean Vanier himself is a living symbol of what true simplicity and discipleship means for the life of the Church today. We washed each other's feet and each prayed a

blessing on the one who had washed our feet, before washing the feet of the other Primates, a great contrast to what is often portrayed as the conflicts within the Communion. Many of us were moved to tears.

I start there because it sets before us the reality of the Anglican Communion. It is the very work of God, inspired by the spirit, full of fallible human beings, who must confess their sins and who require the comforts of the word, the hope of the sacraments, the example of the saints and the shepherding of those called by God, however weak they may be, into leadership, if we are to be to the world the symbols of unity which are our calling and purpose, and which will enable us to proclaim more confidently the good news of Jesus Christ. We here in this Synod are but one very small part of it, both in time and space, and we are called to the covenant of the unity of catholicity with past, present and future. As one part, albeit a small one, we are of infinite value and are held by the grace of God for infinite good.

We were conscious as we met in that week that literally millions, possibly tens of millions, of people were praying for us. I have never known a week in which I have been so aware of prayer, or of pressure. One of the moments in which we voted - and you do not vote often at these meetings according to those who have been to several of them - was on the question of when all seemed lost as to whether we would walk together or separately, and it did seem lost. The vote to walk together, after a warning repeated twice that to undertake to do so meant to take a personal responsibility for it happening properly, was unanimous. It was done by open voting of raised hands and was total. However, the divisions were profound and remain so. We should not have any illusions of the fragility of the process or of the outcome.

A working group then sought a way of turning that vote to walk together into action and decision. I did not expect them to reach an agreement, certainly until shortly before the ACC meeting in Lusaka in April, but thanks to their own dedication and commitment and to the support of facilitators and mediators, they managed to reach an agreement which was put to the meeting the next day and adopted by an overwhelming majority.

The vote was almost immediately spun outside the meeting, having been leaked on the Thursday, the day before it ended, as "a severe sanction on TEC". You will not find the word "sanction" or "punishment", or anything like it, at any point in the communiqué, or the addendum which refers to the decision taken. The word used is "consequence". Provinces of the Anglican Communion have been recognised since its beginning at the first Lambeth Conference of 1857, and as emphasised in 1920 and 1930, in 1978, 1988 and 1998, in the Virginia Report, the Eames Report, the Windsor Continuation Group and in numerous other places, as a collection of autonomous and interdependent churches. That autonomy means that no meeting of the Communion has any authority to give instructions to individual provinces. No province is legally bound by the Communion. There is no synodical group within the Communion. The interdependence recognises what I spoke of when describing the final Eucharist: that we belong to one another through the action of God, as called to be one in Scripture, as having lived as one traditionally, and as reflecting reasonably the life of the Trinity by our unity and our diversity.

Where a province decides to take action that has a profound effect on other provinces, either because it is outside the received doctrine of the Communion, or through its day-to-day impact - in this case both - then there will be consequences. That seems obvious. Actions have results. The decision by the Primates for TEC in this case (it could be for other provinces on other matters in the future) would be that since they were in disagreement with the Communion on a significant issue, they should not represent the Communion ecumenically, or in its principal elected standing committees, nor should they vote on matters of doctrine or polity. This decision binds the Primates as a group but not any province or other instrument of the Communion. It is a “powerful and morally forceful guideline”, to use language from the Windsor Continuation Group in 2008. The Presiding Bishop publicly last week described the Primates’ decision as “a fair outcome”.

The underlying issue is about reception. Both before, but especially since, Lambeth 1920, reception has meant the informal process by which, over time, developments are accepted or rejected in a way that leads to consensus. Thus, issues in 1920 around contraception, in Lambeth 1930 and 1948 about divorce, were at the time seen as threatening the unity of the Communion as seriously as issues of human sexuality now. Reception goes both ways. There has been a consensus against lay presidency, despite significant pressure in the past, but the reception process rejected it. It is not a legal process, but a discernment of the spirit based in relationship. The importance of this is very great indeed.

The Anglican Communion finds its decisions through spiritual discernment in relationship, not through canons and procedures. Those operate at provincial level. All developments must show signs of the presence of the Spirit, not only locally but across the Communion. Primates’ meetings, Lambeth Conferences and ACCs are not a question of winning and losing, but of discerning.

For me, apart from the final Eucharist, which will last with me for ever, the most remarkable aspect of the Primates was the energy that was released when we acted together. For the first time, I experienced the beauty of the Communion when on issues affecting us very widely, often issues of life and death, there was a sharing and an outpouring of mutual support. For example, we shared together around issues of the environment; something we discussed here last July in terms of its future impact. If you are in Polynesia, as the Archbishop of York so vividly demonstrated to us, it is a matter of life and death. To quote the Archbishop of Polynesia at the meeting: “We are drowning”.

We discussed the interaction with Islam in various places of the world, and shared how we could support each other and what are the essentials of dialogue, both for those countries which are in a non-Islamic majority and for those that are in a minority. We spoke of evangelism. I hope that this Synod will take due note, both now and in the discussion we will have tomorrow, of the extraordinarily powerful declaration made unanimously by the Primates in the communiqué. I might add that the Christocentric and passionately evangelistic approach of the new Presiding Bishop of TEC had a great impact on many.

We agreed a Lambeth Conference for 2020. We must pray that the Conference of 2020 itself recovers some of the radicality, even the revolutionary spirit that was shown in 1920 in its call to all Christian people to repent of their divisions; a call that was at the beginning of the modern ecumenical movement. 2020 must enable not just Anglicanism but the whole Church to find fresh ways forward that represent more clearly to the world the hope that is in Jesus Christ.

During all these discussions, those who are theologically in very different places in the Communion demonstrated their profound support for one another. There was a great sense of collective effort, of common vision, of love for one another, and for the service of the world. It is a vision which encompasses rich and poor, north and south, breaking down barriers in the cause of Christ and the Kingdom of God. It is lived out not mainly in the great meetings, but in diocesan links and partnerships, in prayer, in celebration, and in grieving.

We rightly talk of scripture, of tradition and reason, but in the tension in which we live in a global church there is another trio of freedom, order and human flourishing, set out by Tim Jenkins in an article in 2002. As a Communion, and as churches, where authority is found in discernment and expressed in relationship, this trio is of huge importance. It anchors us in the breaking down of barriers, in facing each other, in the beauty of human interaction in love.

Disaster has come whenever one element has overcome the others to an excessive degree. A hunger for power masquerading as order has very often overcome freedom and neglected human flourishing. Order is essential, but it exists to assure foot washing and love, not domination. Certainly after the Reformation and the religious wars that dominated Europe for the following 100 years or more, it was a sense of perverted order that led to the appalling cruelty which is almost without parallel in Europe until the 20th century.

The Church, confronted by modernity, sought power through order rather than human flourishing or freedom. It was out of these tensions that Anglicanism emerged and, from 1857 and the first Lambeth Conference, developed a relational model of authority.

The Church in its order is meant to encourage the freedom in Christ that is promised, and human flourishing that is the vision of the Kingdom of God. When the balance is wrong and, even more so, when we feel threatened, like a ship with a dysfunctional crew heading for the rocks, different groups all strive to grab the wheel so that, as they see it, they may demonstrate that they - and only they - know the way to avoid disaster. The reality is that none of them does know fully, and disaster is only avoided by unity, which relishes and celebrates the diversity of freedom and flourishing within broad limits of order.

That is what many of the discussions in the Communion are about. What are the limits of diversity? Who is in control? British colonial history makes the laying down of edicts by white middle-class Christians from the global north, citizens of the former colonial power in many places, a process that is, rightly, deeply resented. Yet freedom cannot be found without order, and order and freedom are necessary for human flourishing.

If we bring to our Church, and to the world around, the certainty that Jesus came to set us free, and to open the way for true human flourishing in service to each other and to him, if our expectation is that only in foot washing, even of our enemies, is the truth demonstrated adequately, then in beauty of relationship the grace of God will prevail, as that grace did during the Primates' meeting. Life will not be perfect, or even anything remotely approaching it. That kind of over-realised eschatology is nonsense. There are no quick-fixes, magic wands or perfect spells. There is no church order that ensures perfection, nor one in which human sin does not add to the problems of the whole. Yet there is a way forward that reveals the unity that we are given and that celebrates the strength that we can bring each other, that enables us to love those who oppose us and that focuses on human flourishing and on the setting free those who are bound by rules which Jesus could never have imagined nor Paul - let us put that old idiocy to rest - and which have emerged out of a desire for power rather than the expectation of the Kingdom of God. There is, in short, a way forward in which we look like the people of Christ.

The Chair: Thank you, your Grace. That concludes this item of business.

THE CHAIR *The Bishop of Birmingham (Rt Revd David Urquhart)* took the Chair at 3.19 pm.

The Chair: Item 4, Report by the Business Committee. I invite Revd Canon Sue Booy, Chair of the Business Committee, who may speak for up to ten minutes, to move the motion standing in her name.

Report by the Business Committee (GS 2013)

Revd Canon Sue Booy (Oxford): I beg to move:

'That the Synod do take note of this Report.'

Friends, it seems all too short a time since we met in November, but I hope you are all set for another relatively short, busy, and, I hope, perfectly formed group of sessions! We hope that we have scheduled the business that was brought to us to reflect the concerns of the Church as we look toward the governance and management of our own structures as well as outwards towards the Communion and the wider world.

We have welcomed formally the Prolocutors and the Chair and Vice Chair of the House of Laity, and I would like to take this opportunity to welcome William Nye to his first Synod in the role of Secretary General, but I think he went out as I arrived.

In each of our sessions this quinquennium, I anticipate that we shall be bringing forward business relating to the Renewal and Reform programme. I know at first hand of the interest of this in the dioceses, and I hope that you will keep the conversation going in your own dioceses and deaneries as you meet them and report on our conversations. In our legislation later today, we continue to see the fruit of simplification work, and on

Wednesday we have scheduled two significant debates on Resourcing Ministerial Education and Resourcing the Future.

Also, of major significance in our work together is the unfolding of the Shared Conversations and our serious and prayerful endeavour to find out what “disagreeing well” means. As you are aware, we shall be spending a significant part of our time together in July in Shared Conversation at Synod, and I am pleased that we have the opportunity to hear from David Porter, who will speak to us later this afternoon about the process, and answer questions. This is a good moment to remind you that this will impact our Synod meeting in a number of ways, in particular by reducing the time available for conventional business to about one and a half days. We will make every effort to prioritise and include time-critical business, but members should be aware that it may necessary to leave some of the business listed in the Forward Look until this time next year.

Looking outward to the wider Church and beyond, we have scheduled a report and debate on relationships with the Church of Scotland and a Diocesan Synod Motion on the impact of benefit sanctions. In this group of sessions, we have also scheduled a debate on the work of the Evangelism Task Group, and we have planned our group work on evangelism as an introduction to this report. May I remind you that our time together tomorrow begins with worship in groups in rooms either here or at Lambeth Palace, so do check and make sure that you set off in the right direction tomorrow morning!

There are a number of other housekeeping items to mention. I will be brief, as much of this information may be found on the members’ resources pages or the App. First, I would like to apologise for the delayed circulation of questions, the result of an IT glitch that we do not quite understand at the moment.

In a security briefing at our induction meeting in November, you will remember that the Metropolitan Police emphasised the importance of vigilance and of us all working together in the interests of safety, so may I remind you not to leave unattended items in the chamber or around the meeting room area. They will be removed. Not blown up as somebody said to me earlier, just removed. Please do ensure that you are familiar with the security policy and up to date with our arrangements at each group of sessions. I would also like to draw your attention to the Business Committee’s policy on fringe meetings and displays, updated in January and sent to all those organising such meetings.

Our recommended Code of Practice on Declarations of Interest was included in the Guide to Synod sent to you all at the beginning of the quinquennium. For your ease, you will find this as a separate document on the members’ resources page and on the App. Synod members are asked to declare any interest which might reasonably be thought to influence what they say and do, and which is relevant to the issue under debate, at the beginning of their contribution to an item of business.

I want to end with a word or two about dates and timings. First, another apology. We did not intend that this Synod would take place during school holidays and a number of

factors - the length of time ahead that we planned, the early date for Easter and varying half-term dates across the country - have tripped us up. We will try to do better when setting dates for 2018 onwards. We know what a significant commitment you make to be here, especially those who are in full-time work or ministry.

As good stewards, we must seek to organise and use our time as effectively as we can, bearing in mind your time and the significant financial cost of Synod meetings on the Church, nationally and in the dioceses. Each Synod costs about £300,000, with two-thirds of that the cost of our accommodation. Some costs, for example those incurred in staffing Synod, are not included in that figure.

For all these good reasons, the Committee is looking carefully at the timing and length of Synod meetings and, to this end, we have invited you to contribute to a very short consultation canvassing your views on length and timing, as well as the possibility of holding at least part of our London sessions at the weekend. We envisage the end of a week, going on to a Saturday. I am grateful to those of you who have already responded. If you could make further responses as quickly as possible, because we will be considering this for the first time at our Business Committee meeting in March.

Finally, I would like to congratulate and say how much I am looking forward to working with newly elected colleagues on the Business Committee. Mrs Anne Foreman and the Revd Joyce Jones have been re-elected, and we have new expertise in the Revd Graeme Buttery, Revd Simon Cawdell, Mr Robert Hammond and Mr Clive Scowen.

As always, I want to pay tribute to the Synod staff who work with us, and for us, even when we - or maybe here I should say I - are really, really irritating. This may be a good time to say that I know they would rather answer any number of potentially irritating questions in order to get things right, so please do ask for their help, whether with framing an amendment or asking for clarification.

I beg to move the motion standing in my name.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

Canon Peter Bruinvels (Guildford): Declaration of interest: the Surrey Civilian Military Liaison Officer working with the Ministry of Defence. I am interested in the Business Report, but sorry that there is nothing on the military. Last February, 12 months ago, the Church of England signed up to the Corporate Covenant with the Ministry of Defence at Lambeth Palace following on from last year's July 2014 debate on the covenant in York. A firm commitment was given then, and I am keen for a progress report on how we have done.

I should report that both Archbishops and the Defence Minister Anna Soubry signed that Corporate Covenant in the presence of the military, the Ministry of Defence and service charities, including my own ABF The Soldiers' Charity. It is to ensure, as you know, that the military are not disadvantaged in anyway.

In December just gone, we had an away day to keep up the momentum at Lambeth Palace with all the dioceses represented and a number of bishops were there. We had lead service chaplains from the tri-service, who are here. We now need to take that covenant forward to support the armed forces in the dioceses; particularly dioceses who are major employers and also with a large military presence. I am hopeful, if we are not able to have it now, that at least I can fly the flag for a debate in July on the military covenant. In the interim, Charles Read and myself are working within the Mission and Public Affairs division. We need a debate, and we are thinking, incidentally, for the bishops who are members of the House of Lords of hopefully a short debate in the House of Lords as well.

We are very lucky in the work that the service chaplains do, but we now need a progress report so we can share the good news. Thank you.

Mrs April Alexander (Southwark): I wish to ask the Chair of the Business Committee to consider inviting an eminent person to inform Synod on a matter which lies very close to the heart of our Shared Conversations this year, which I understand to be on human sexuality.

This was a matter that must have lain at the heart of a fair amount of the discussions at the recent Primates' meeting, but I have not heard any evidence that they discussed the question that I have in mind.

This is the continued scourge of HIV/AIDS in Russia, China, India, and most particularly, from our point of view, in Sub-Saharan Africa. What all these countries have in common is official and government-sponsored homophobia, which is held by many in the field to be the last barrier to treatment. In the absence of vaccine, only universal treatment can achieve the virtual elimination of the infection in those countries, as we have seen it in Western Europe and in America.

The case being as it is, we have 40 million deaths to date and 1.5 million deaths per annum from HIV/AIDS. A political review of this dire situation was set up by Lord Fowler in 2014, *AIDS: Don't Die of Prejudice*. As Secretary of State for Health, of course, in the 80s, he was the author of the campaign, *AIDS: Don't Die of Ignorance*. I have recently been in email contact with Professor Peter Piot, a microbiologist, who was director of the UN AIDS Programme and Assistant Secretary-General of the UN, 1994 to 2008, and I quote: "I fully agree with Norman Fowler and have written and spoken about homophobia, discrimination and stigma as not only unfair but as the best friend of the spread of HIV. I would be delighted for you to quote me."

I discovered that he has written extensively about frustrations with donor countries who have allowed their sensitivities to impede progress in taking treatment to communities, as well as those local churches who appear to condone the behaviour of the governments that I have mentioned. It would be for the Business Committee to invite whom it chose, but I offer the name of a politician and a very eminent scientist in the hope that Synod will become more sighted about the real issues here that are before us in advance of espousing one course of action or another.

Mrs Sue Slater (Lincoln): I am interested in the number of presentations we have this

time followed by questions. I particularly draw the attention of Synod to Item 6 and Item 16 where they are presentations followed by questions but there is no paper provided in advance. I would urge the Business Committee and those who plan presentations to think about the advantage to Synod members of having a paper in advance. Some people are quicker than others at listening to or watching a presentation and immediately thinking of a relevant question, but most of us would like more thinking time in advance and so I would urge you please not to schedule presentations with questions without some paper in advance.

Canon Pam Bishop (Southwell & Nottingham): First of all, I want to thank members of the Business Committee for their work on our behalf in not only putting together a generally varied and engaging Agenda but, certainly in recent years, striving to make Synod much more user friendly, participative, prayerful and effective. It is in that area of effectiveness that I want to ask a question.

How can we as members of Synod know that our efforts to engage and contribute and to vote will be followed up afterwards and will, hopefully, make a difference? How can we get better feedback? The example I just want to select would be last November, following the Bishop of Durham's presentation on the migrant crisis, there was a very rich and informative debate and overwhelming support, a whole string of recommendations. Great, we have done our bit for this important topic. My question is, so what next? Who takes responsibility to follow up those recommendations? How do we know that there has been reaction and a response? How can we as members perhaps do more after the debate to make things happen?

In this case I have used a recent example, but the question is actually a very general one about follow-up action and the feedback loop on the discussions and the decisions that we make here in Synod.

Revd Preb Stephen Lynas (Bath & Wells): I would like to not just regret that an item is not on our Agenda for this session but that it does not appear on the forthcoming Business Overview in the Business Committee Report. Chair, you will be glad to hear I do not intend to make a speech on the nature of the item but I do want, if I may, please, to draw members' attention to GS Misc 1133 in your pack of papers.

In our diocesan staff meeting we sometimes have a saying that we never remember the minutes of the last meeting and we either forget things or we go over them twice or three times. I want to draw attention to GS Misc 1133 because it relates to something that happened during the last quinquennium, so half of us were not there for that debate because we are new. I encourage new members particularly, therefore, to have a look at GS Misc 1133 because it picks up the matter of inconsistency of practice about what the clergy wear when conducting worship. I am not going to go into the ins and outs.

The aim of the Private Member's Motion that was passed in 2014 was simply to legalise what already happens in some parishes and to clarify the canon law, so that where there are good missional and pastoral reasons a parish can divert from the norm. Paper 1133 from the House of Bishops helpfully goes over much of the ground but there are two specific questions it asks and we as Synod members, whether we were here

two or three years ago or not, are being asked to respond to those two specific questions by a deadline. I am not a conspiracy theorist but it does occur to me that the changeover of Synod membership and the way the House of Bishops is able to take control of this kind of legislation, because of the nature of it, might combine to just kick this into the long grass. We have a Private Member's Motion, passed by somebody no longer on this Synod. It has been through a very long process. The Synod has adopted it. Can I, therefore, urge members, please, to read GS Misc 1133 and to respond as invited by the end of April?

Mr Martin Sewell (Rochester): Few things on the Renewal and Reform Agenda have excited the people I have spoken to more than the idea that the Church of England will finally get into the social media so that people have a tool of evangelism that they can pass on to their children, to the people in their yoga class or whatever. It really does grip the people in the pews who know about it. I was a little concerned to hear a few days ago that, as at now, it still does not apparently have a budget that will enable it to happen.

Paradoxically, for a not enormous budget we could have an operation up and running within a year. If we do not have a budget at this point, my concern for the Business Committee is that we have already got a lot of July organised for the Shared Conversations, quite properly, and many other things will be asked. But if we do not have a Synod in November, we would then be having perhaps a year's further delay before this vital subject gets grasped by Synod. If I can just put a light idea in. I notice that your Grace's Twitter account has 90,000 followers. *Peppa Pig* - do not worry, you are still ahead - has 30,000, but *Peppa Pig* does not have a payroll vote.

My concern is that those sorts of thoughts really tell us - and I am criticising nobody about this - that if we are to reach out to the wider public, social media initiative is absolutely vital and I do not want to see it ploughed into the sand through lack of a budget or at least our chance to call those that are required to account for why there is not a budget for this vital piece of work.

Mr Tim Hind (Bath & Wells): There has been no collusion between myself and Stephen Lynas, but I also want to talk about something that is not on the Agenda. I was very heartened by what the Archbishop of Canterbury has just told us about the way in which the Primates' meeting went and the aftermath in terms of what the press has reported on it. You will notice that in pages 9 and 10 of the Agenda we have three motions that have been standing around since 2012 or 2013 relating to the Anglican Covenant.

It seems to me that it is ripe for this Synod to have a debate about our understanding of our relationship with the Anglican Communion and that those three motions do not fit the bill in any way, and yet they are still on our Agenda as though they are about to be debated at some stage and yet there is no mention in the Business Committee Report this time round about why they are still parked.

I would like to find a way, with the Business Committee Chairman's permission, to quietly bury those three motions so that they do not come before us but that they should find some way in which we can have an informed debate, not only to inform ourselves

and the rest of the Church of England but to inform the press about the distinctiveness between what the Church of England is and what the Communion is.

Revd Will Gibbs (St Albans): I want to begin by thanking the Business Committee for the work that they do and, in particular, as a new member of General Synod to say how much I appreciated the induction programme which I found very helpful. My question is just a simple one to do with the Agenda for this group of sessions and it relates to the business we will be looking at on Wednesday.

There may be a good reason for this but it strikes me as somewhat odd that we have Item 18 which is about Resourcing the Future, a big picture which has been preceded by an important item of business, Item 17, which is one part of that. I would have thought it would have been more helpful to hear the presentation from Canon Spence first and then deal with something specific from that following it, i.e. Item 18 followed by Item 17, and I wonder whether that might be considered?

Mr Colin Slater (Southwell & Nottingham): Chairman, thank you. It is a brief point to which I would ask the Chair of the Business Committee to respond positively. When we look at the Agenda for tomorrow afternoon we have between 2.30 and 7.00 for debate on three important topics but there is no signpost there, which would be customary. We have no rubric telling us how long each of those items may last. I would like to ask that, certainly for tomorrow afternoon and I think to some lesser degree the same thing applies to our Agenda on Wednesday, that on a notice paper a rubric is provided so that we have some guidance about the length of time likely to be allocated to each debate.

Mrs Penny Allen (Lichfield): This is a brief question, please, about the Task Group on Lay Leadership. This Report seems to have been in the long grass for some time and it will have a consequent effect on lay training. I am very interested in seeing this report scheduled and I am disappointed that it appears under the title 'General' for 'February 2017 and beyond'. Is it possible to expedite this, please? Because of its effect on the lay training and the consequent effect on future budgets, I think we need to look at this rather in advance of February 2017.

The Chair: Thank you. I see no one else standing so can I ask Canon Sue Booy to respond, please. You have five minutes.

Revd Canon Sue Booy (Oxford): Thank you all very much indeed for those helpful comments. I will go through possibly at speed and in order. Peter Bruinvels, very helpful to have your update on what is going on and it will be really good perhaps to have an opportunity. I will say this several times probably, we will always do our best to schedule business brought to us but we do not actually generate business on the Business Committee. We order it.

In a way the answer to Mrs Alexander is the same. I am sure that people will have heard her suggestion and if such a contribution is brought to us I am sure we will be happy to try and find a place for it on the Agenda. Sue Slater, thank you for your comment about presentations. I am sure those who are responsible for Items 6 and 16 will have heard what you have said and, if they are giving presentations to Synod in

future, we will hope that some papers come with them.

It is really nice to be thanked and so, thank you, Pam Bishop, for your thanks. We have just begun to offer Synod members a tracking device about what has happened to business that comes before it. You may have missed it. It is in an appendix to the Business Committee Report. You are forgiven for having skipped over appendices to the BC report, but you will there find something which follows up on business that has been done in Synod and shows you what is happening. Mrs Bishop, you were quite right to say that for many of these things it is what we do when we go back to our dioceses to take on things that have been discussed in this chamber that is more important than any amount of tracking or reporting in appendices.

Someone who does read Misc papers and probably appendices to the Business Committee Report is my friend, Stephen Lynas. The matter of vestments, excellent, please respond to the questions in GS Misc. The House of Bishops will be discussing the matter of vesture and any legislation will have to come here following that. Martin Sewell, you will be pleased to know that discussions are taking place on the social media budget and I am quite sure that Arun Arora will have been delighted to hear your support. It is not likely to be kicked into the long grass.

Talking of long grass, Tim Hind, the Business Committee are not in the undertaking business so we cannot really bury things. We can tell you what is happening to them and we have deliberately not discussed the Anglican Communion Covenant motions until now, and we may well do that at our meeting in March. Of course, it is always open to dioceses to withdraw motions that have outlived their usefulness. Maybe there are those here who might like to hear what I am saying.

Will Gibbs, thank you very much for your suggestion about the ordering of business, and also Colin Slater. One of the problems with rubrics is that they constrain as well as give signposts. One of the things that can help Synod, I know, is if members of the panel of chairs who are in the chair for a debate can give a bit of a signpost as they introduce the debate with the way that they are going to chair that. I hope that they might be doing that tomorrow afternoon and I advise you to listen out for it in the introductions to the debates.

Penny, there is absolutely no question of kicking lay leadership into the long grass. There is so much of it happening anyway. I can tell you that one of the reasons it has not reached the Agenda is because the Task Group has only just been formed and it is always good to have well-informed debates on the floor of Synod and we look forward to scheduling a debate, as soon as it is absolutely possible, and maybe even a presentation on lay leadership.

Perhaps I should say about presentations that they are sometimes simply a device to get people who are not elected members of the Synod to speak about things upon which they have some expertise, so do forgive us if you sometimes get something called a 'presentation' because that may be why it is there. Thank you very much for your time.

The motion

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

was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: We move to the next item, legislative business.

THE CHAIR: *The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd and Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby)* took the Chair at 3.49 pm.

Legislative Business: Amending Canon No. 34 (GS 1953D)

The Chair: We come now to legislative business. We begin with the Enactment of Amending Canon No. 34 which received final approval from the Synod at the July 2015 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 68, once the Instrument of Enactment has been read to the Synod, the motion appearing in the Order Paper as Item 500 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 read the Instrument of Enactment.

The Chair: I beg to move:

‘That the Canon entitled “Amending Canon No. 34” be made, promulged and executed’.

The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.

The Instrument of Enactment was signed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Prolocutors and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the House of Laity.

The Chair: The Canon will be sent for proclamation in the diocesan synods in the usual way. That completes this item of business.

THE CHAIR: *Mr Geoffrey Tattersall QC (Manchester)* took the Chair at 3.54 pm

Legislative Business:
Draft Mission and Pastoral etc. (Amendment) Measure (GS 2014)

The Chair: Now we move to Item 501, the Draft Mission and Pastoral etc. (Amendment) Measure, which is before the Synod for First Consideration. Members will need the Draft Measure, GS 2014, and the Explanatory Memorandum, GS 2014X, and GS Misc 1137, I think which was left on the seats. Members will also wish to note paragraph 628 of the Financial Memorandum in the Sixth Notice Paper. I am asked to remind you that, in accordance with the Business Committee's recommended code of practice on declarations of interest, please could Synod members declare at the start of their intervention in any debate any financial or any other interest which is relevant to the issue under debate.

Synod, we have until about 5 o'clock to debate this measure, unless Synod, of course, wishes to conclude it earlier or later than the time allotted. I will, therefore, be looking for a motion for closure on the whole debate at least five minutes before, about 5 past 5 or thereabouts. There is not a fixed start time for the next business, so we will see how we go. I, first of all, call on the Bishop of Willesden to move Item 501. He may speak for up to ten minutes.

The Bishop of Willesden (Rt Revd Pete Broadbent): I beg to move:

'That the Measure entitled "Mission and Pastoral etc. (Amendment) Measure" be considered for revision in committee.'

Chair, simplification is at one level a slightly strange element within the Renewal and Reform process. It is not seeking, after all, to deal with improving the quality of our senior leaders, nor is it about the much needed flexibility in the training of clergy and laity, nor is it at the heart of evangelization and discipleship; but if we are, prayerfully and independence on the work of the Spirit, to reverse decline, to renew our Church and to remove the blockages that prevent a flexible and imaginative approach to grassroots mission and ministry, then something needs to be done to make our framework for legislation a whole lot more fit for purpose.

The Simplification Task Group met again last week and we sought to enunciate with some clarity the principles that underpin our work. Our objectives are to enable ministry and mission and to support growth - by growth I mean not just growth in numbers, but also in discipleship and fellowship and relationship to the community; to help the Church be the Church in every locality, and to be able to build capacity for strategic planning and the management of change. In other words, we are deeply involved in this process. You might like to know we have adopted four values which we believe should govern how we evaluate proposals for change.

We are committed, first of all, to subsidiarity, ensuring that only those functions which need to be exercised at national or local level are retained at that level, and devolving to local level all the functions that can appropriately be left for local decision. We are

committed to diversity, to reflect what it means to be a mixed economy and a mixed context Church. We are committed to flexibility, enabling a 'can do' approach to problem solving and looking for different options to suit context and promoting good practice. Of course, we are committed to simplicity, cutting through provision and complex language to express our legal framework in simple and comprehensible terms. That is the watchword for all the things we are engaged in here. The proposals before you in this draft Measure are the fruit of our consultation with dioceses during Phase 1 of our work.

In essence, the question that we asked was: What legal constraints hinder a flexible approach to mission and ministry? We have actually asked the same question of parishes, and that will form the bulk of our work in Phase 2. It has been fascinating, and actually quite frightening, to hear from the grassroots how difficult and how debilitating is the effect of aspects of our legal framework on our parishes, and Synod will hear more of that in due course.

What, then, does this draft Measure seek to achieve? We reported on these pieces of amending legislation to the last Synod in GS 1980, and the last Synod gave us a fair wind to bring back the detailed proposals to you.

Clause 1 seeks to tackle the problem of what currently occurs when there is a proposal for pastoral reorganisation, namely there is a double consultation on the same scheme or pastoral order. What we propose instead is that there should be much earlier local and informal formulation of proposals, sometimes involving a deanery plan, and that there should then be one, single statutory consultation on the draft scheme or Order. We believe this will make for greater local ownership of pastoral reorganisation proposals because parishes and people in the locality will have been involved in bringing the schemes to birth.

Clause 2 enables the drafting of schemes and orders to be carried out either by the diocese, or, if the diocese lacks resources to do this, by the Commissioners.

Clause 3 is about the way in which we publicise schemes and orders. It requires an announcement in any affected church and publication online by the Commissioners. It would of course be sensible if the parish website or the diocesan website linked those schemes so that the widest possible publicity could be made. There is also an instant provision where, if during consultation a better proposal emerges, the Commissioners are able to amend the draft without going through the whole rigmarole again, and we will all be very glad about that.

The proposals in clause 4 deal with one of those provisions which epitomises the problem of many of our Measures where we have in the past over-stipulated, over-regulated and tried to do all this on the face of primary legislation. Teams and groups operate under a legalistic framework that is almost unparalleled in its labyrinthine provision. This clause removes some of the unnecessary provisions which do not need to be in the Mission and Pastoral Measure. As we noted in GS 1980, the Teams and Groups Measure itself, and its operation, could probably do with a root and branch review as well.

I recognise that clause 5 - the question of compensation provision for clergy who suffer a loss of office as a result of pastoral reorganisation - has attracted quite a lot of interest in the blogosphere and elsewhere. I need to put this in context. Compensation would only kick in if proposals for pastoral reorganisation were to be agreed and the incumbent of the parish concerned had not been provided with a possibility, through the scheme, for another post. Because the package that is currently in the Measure guarantees a lifetime stipend, this provision has hardly ever been used. It is simply too expensive, and it allows a priest to sit tight in a parish until retirement and prevent sensible pastoral reorganisation from taking place.

Paragraphs 25 to 29 of GS 2014X spell out our alternative proposals for compensation payments. They are based on an enhanced version of best Civil Service practice. No doubt we shall subject these proposals to detailed scrutiny at Revision Committee stage, and I think it will be important to listen then to representations on the matter. What I do not think we can do is do nothing, and leave in place the currently unworkable situation where we guarantee a priest a meal ticket for life and ossify the life of the church in a locality. The Revision Committee will need to address a better way of looking at compensation provisions, and we need to come to a settlement that will both provide fair treatment for the dispossessed incumbent, if any, and the capacity to move forward what are stalled proposals for ministry and mission in our parishes and localities.

I need to add that there has been some confusion on the blogs about the way in which the proposed provisions will operate. We have been able to provide you in GS Misc 1137 some worked examples on this, which may just help those who are seeking to make some kind of representation on the matter to the Revision Committee in due course.

Clause 6 introduces the concept of a Bishop's pastoral order. At present, a whole raft of matters have to go through the whole process of scheme or order-making. Here is a way of short-circuiting the palaver and getting things done more simply. The matters we are proposing be included are listed in the draft Measure.

Clause 7 deals with the issue that the Churches Conservation Trust brought to our attention. We have dealt with it.

Clause 8 removes the requirements for consultation on most matters in respect of closed church buildings, and clause 10 does the same in relation to glebe transactions. We have taken the view that local planning authorities will be handling proposals for the reuse of closed buildings and development of glebe land, and that it is merely a confusion of role (and double regulation) for such consultation to take place. Of course, it may well be, particularly in the light of a recent case in the diocese of Gloucester, that we will have to think again about the glebe proposals, although we want Synod to recognise that consultation which does not eventuate in change raises false hopes and expectations on the part of those being consulted.

Clause 9 makes for a simpler process in relation to Bishop's mission orders and does away with the presumption that those new forms of church are necessarily temporary.

BMOs are quite often at the cutting edge of mission and we want the church to flourish and grow, and BMOs can help do that.

Clause 11 makes a small change to the Patronage (Benefices) Measure, both in an attempt to reduce the ridiculous workload of the Archbishops, and to reflect the reality that, in the event of lapse after nine months, the Archbishop asks the diocesan bishop to handle the vacancy anyway.

Chair, I hope that this mixture of provision will meet Synod's excitement and they will want to see it dealt with in Revision Committee, and I commend these proposals for general consideration.

The Chair: This matter is now open for debate.

The Bishop of Ludlow (Rt Revd Alistair Magowan): I want to declare an interest. As well as being a bishop and archdeacon (and unique in that role) I am also a Church Pastoral Aid Society trustee of the patronage board there.

I just want to say that I share with the Bishop of Willesden so much of what we want to do in terms of simplification. I can speak first hand of just how important it is to get rid of so much red tape.

On the matter of the teams and groups element within the Measure I want us to ask that the Revision Committee might seriously consider what they are proposing under Item 10 of that, which will, in effect, mean, through some of the subsequent proposals in clause 11, that subsequent appointments lie simply with the bishop and the team rector. In a number of schemes it is possible that it would remove patronage boards and also team vicars from being able to have a full say in those appointments.

I want to argue that this gains little and loses quite a lot, and is maybe not the best thing to do. The Bishop of Willesden is quite right that the Teams and Groups Measure has all sorts of things that nowadays look to be over-egging it. However, I do think they were right in the code of practice that they put there to say with regard to teams and groups that the more we can have good consultation with regard to those being able to have a voice in appointments, the better the appointments in the end. It works for good mission and ministry.

Patronage is sometimes portrayed as simply a vestige of a previous age and, indeed, that three-way relationship of the patron, the parish representative and the bishop's appointment may, to some, seem anachronistic, but I want to suggest that it is deep in our constitution. We see it in the way that the Crown and Parliament operate, appointments to the judiciary, the bishops and the Forces all work in that triangular relationship. It happens with our own legislation. Synod drafts it, it goes to Parliament and then it goes for Royal Assent. Those triangular relationships are deep within our constitution and I believe this pattern of involving patrons and parishes and bishops in consultation together is very much of that pattern.

What would these proposals lose? I think what they would lose is, quite simply, the

ability of team vicars to have a proper say in the appointment of other team vicars, and it would stop patronage boards being able to have, as it were, a voice through the appointment processes whenever they occur within the team ministries. Therefore, as I am suggesting here, I think on this occasion this is something that is probably worth keeping. I ask the Revision Committee to reconsider and to perhaps withdraw that element of the Measure.

The Chair: Can I make the point that under Standing Order 51(2) speeches must be directed to the general purport of the draft Measure rather than points of detail, and I hope you will all bear that in mind.

Mr Nigel Bacon (Lincoln): I am very much in favour of simplification and welcome this draft Measure which is before us, but I have to express a concern over clause 10. I was intrigued by the Bishop of Willesden's comments about the potential need to revisit this. The dioceses are not always aware of local sensitivities, and, in revision, I would urge that clause 10 be changed so as to require that incumbents and PCCs be at least informed at the earliest opportunity of an intent to sell glebe land. That would give them the opportunity to make the diocesan authorities aware of such sensitivities.

Some years ago in my home parish, the diocesan board of finance wanted to sell off for development a couple of small fields. Viewed from a distance of 40 miles away and looking at a map, it looked to be perfectly reasonable. On the ground it would have meant the loss of an important green space that afforded a direct visual link between our church school and the church itself and would have generated much local opposition to yet more development in the centre of our community. By working with the town council and the diocese, we were able to secure the land's purchase by the council as a recreational space. Yes, the diocese did lose out to some extent financially on that, but that loss has been more than recompensed time after time by the use the community has been able to make of that space, and also by the forging of strong relationships between the church, the town council and the local community.

Access to local knowledge is a good safeguard against us shooting ourselves in the foot. I understand that formal consultation can be wasteful of both time and resource but please, let us at least give the local church the opportunity to raise a warning flag if something is being contemplated that will generate local resentment towards the Church.

Revd Canon David Banting (Chelmsford): I too am a CPAS patronage trustee. The Bishop of Ludlow has just been appointed. I have been privileged to do that work for 18 years, in some cases being part of the appointments three times over of vicars to parishes.

May I begin, though, by thanking the Simplification Committee for doing some work on Bishop's mission orders. We had the privilege of initiating one from our parish three and a bit years ago. It was a very painful and long-drawn-out exercise because of the legislation, and I look forward to seeing simplification in that area taken forward. It is nice to see it therefore as one of the paragraphs here.

I wish also to return to concerns about patronage. Concerns were expressed before and they seem to have been heard, but then ignored. The previous paper GS 1980 gave no intention of removing the securities which are now under GS 2014. In section (4), paragraphs 10 and 11 are now proposed to be removed, so I, too, want to ask that they be revisited and possibly revised back into the Measure. The role of patrons in appointing team vicars is important. The role of team vicars in the process is important, not least because when teams and groups were formed, many parishes and many patrons will have accepted the formation of a team on the understanding that their particular interests would be observed and maintained, not least those for evangelical patrons, so to remove them is to forget previous assurances in the process that were built in. I would like that to be reconsidered. Team vicars, after all, before teams were formed, were vicars in their own right in parishes. They are not simply now curates to team rectors.

Revd Tiffer Robinson (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich): I am a parish priest and therefore I am a turkey trying not to vote for Christmas! Most of this Measure is all well and good, but if we do send it to Revision Committee, as I am sure we will, we must do so realising there is real concern among many clergy about section 5, the compensation for incumbents reorganised out of post, not just because of the amount, but because this change makes it possible, whereas up until now it has been financially prohibitive.

A common question I get asked in my local pub is, "How long can you stay here?" I hope they are asking because they like me, not because they want to get rid of me. My standard answer is something along these lines: "As long as I like, provided I don't do something very naughty, or fail to do my job properly, or until God calls me elsewhere". As a rector that is what common tenure is all about: tenure. That is not the case with suspended livings or time-limited posts, and that is okay because clergy who apply for such posts do so knowing that that is the case, and there has to be a good reason for it to be set up that way.

If this Synod were to vote through this Measure as it is when it comes to that time, within a couple of years I would have to change my answer, and I would have to add, "Well, I could be asked to take on an extra 17 parishes and, if I refused, then I could be seen as standing in the way of progress and be given six months' redundancy to find another post", taking my children from their schools, losing our home and saying goodbye to the wonderful people we are privileged to serve.

Yes, that might be what happens in many, if not most, other forms of employment, but we are not the Civil Service, we are a Church, and we are a Church that asks a lot from its clergy and their families. I have consulted fellow parish clergy quite widely about this change in the last 24 hours and they are, almost without exception, worried about it, because it moves the goalposts and makes us vulnerable. Even where organisations do make redundancies, it tends to be where they are trying to cut posts. We are in the opposite position of trying to attract more ordinands, not fewer.

For two decades, we turned younger ordinands away, telling them to get some life experience and then come back later. It was a disastrous policy which has contributed to many of the problems we face today. We have rightly changed policy to encourage

ordinands to come forward at whatever age and we do need younger clergy so they can become older clergy with experience. Unlike older ordinands, most clergy who start to train in their 20s do not have another career to fall back on. Can I suggest from my own experience of having been a younger ordinand that reducing job security at this stage is going to make the job of attracting younger ordinands much more difficult, and therefore is deeply counterproductive.

Revd Mark Broomhead (Derby): I would like to speak to clause 9.5 relating to the duration of Bishop's mission orders. Part of my role is as minister to the Order of the Black Sheep, which is a new worshipping community based in Chesterfield. We have been working under a Bishop's mission order since 2011, and I am happy to say that, after a period of evaluation and reflection, we have been granted a further five-year BMO beginning later this year. This process has been very helpful to the life and development of our community, and I have greatly valued the interest and support of our diocese and of our bishop in this. You may expect me to be in favour of an open-ended BMO as it goes a way to recognise the possibility of mission initiatives becoming long-term worshipping communities within the Church of England. This is indeed good, and I applaud the generosity and optimism behind the intention to grant open-ended BMOs. My problem is not with the recognition that we need to find a way to make space for new worshipping communities within the Church. My problem is that Bishop's mission orders are not currently fit for this purpose. From my understanding, BMOs were designed for mission initiatives that looked like they could move towards Christian community. They were designed necessarily short in term, with evaluation and accountability in place and, importantly, input from the bishop. This recognises the experimental nature of mission initiatives, the potential vulnerability and, more importantly, the permission to fail, for want of a better phrase. This protects both the leaders and the members of such initiatives and the dioceses in the early stages. However, now we are reaching a point in the life of some mission initiatives where they have successfully formed new worshipping communities that look like they have a long-term place within the CofE. Simply creating or extending open-ended BMOs seems like a logical way forward, but BMOs, it seems to me, were designed for the first stage of growth from such communities and do not offer a seat at the table with the wider Church that recognises the measure of maturity and stability that a more established worshipping community offers.

One key feature that is missing from BMOs is the possibility to create an electoral roll. Whilst this may not seem very important, this means that members of such communities are not really members of the Church of England. Whilst there is provision for members of new worshipping communities to sit on deanery synod, if it considered appropriate, without electoral roll membership, sitting or voting on any other synod is not possible. Also, how can we look at share being calculated and marriages and things such as that?

There are ways to get around it, and I am pleased to say that a lay member of the Order of the Black Sheep was elected to represent Derby on the Synod, but she had to go to a local parish church, which I am sad to say was quite resistant, to join its electoral roll to be eligible to stand. A less determined person would have been put off and potentially not feel welcome as part of the wider Church.

My fear is that in time these disembodied souls may become disenfranchised, and history tells us that withholding the right to vote and a section of the community not having a voice does not foster unity. I am very much in favour of looking for long-term solutions to the varied expressions of Christian worshipping communities that exist outside but alongside the parish system. Merely extending the state of experimental permission that is offered by a Bishop's mission order is not sufficient. If we want to see a mixed or blended economy, we need to find a second stage of recognition that acknowledges the end of the initial experiment and welcomes maturing new worshipping communities into the family of the Church.

The Chair. I am struggling in the interests of balance to call anybody who is female. Nobody has stood up so far.

Mr Angus MacLeay (Rochester) Chair, I would also like to raise the issue with Bishop Pete about clause 4, which I am sure will have other political resonances for him, and it relates to the issue again of patronage. I do not think we should be defensive about this. When we look in the New Testament, we do not see the exact issues of patronage being raised. I think we should be happy for us to think biblically and radically about what is best for mission within the 21st century. In the way that we are going about this, I fear that we are making a decision which actually treads on the rights of other patronage groups without them being involved in the debate. To that extent it is an abuse of our system, and of our powers. Therefore, I would simply reiterate the concerns of others that in the revision process we should carefully consider the rights of others not directly represented within this body so that they are fully consulted, and we should be prepared to think biblically and radically for the sake of the Gospel going forth within our country. I think we want to applaud what is being considered, even if there are some issues, such as this clause 4 issue, where we do need to be careful about the rights of others not directly represented here.

The Bishop of Gloucester (Rt Revd Rachel Treweek): I would reiterate something that the Bishop of Willesden said earlier. I am slightly nervous of saying this, because I really welcome this simplification report, and hope that we do not pull back from everything simply out of fear. However, I think under clause 10, with the Glebe Measure, to respond and say, "Following the situation in Gloucester ...", would be foolish, and I am not sure what we would gain by removing the obligation to actually consult - and I do underline that word "consult" - incumbents and PCCs. It strikes me that is good communication and we do not gain anything by not doing that.

Mr Clive Scowen (London): I want to speak to clause 11, which is headed "Right of patronage to lapse to diocesan bishop". In introducing this, the Bishop of Willesden said that, in reality, of course at the moment when the patronage lapses to the Archbishop he inevitably bats it back to the diocesan bishop, and the Archbishop of Canterbury nodded vigorously, and so I take it that is what happens, almost always. However, there is a real difference between what often happens or very often happens and making it absolutely inevitable. There can be cases where there has been real dispute about the appropriate person to be the new incumbent, where patrons or parish representatives have particular views that they would want the Archbishop to know about before he decided either to do it himself or to hand it back to the diocesan bishop.

There is a particular issue, it seems to me, where the bishop is himself or herself the patron, because once the law provides that they inevitably, effectively, become the patron, without the right of the parish representatives to object, there must be a risk that some bishops - probably none present - would take the opportunity then to revisit a candidate who had already been refused by the parish representatives within the nine-month period.

I think that is a risk which we ought not to take. The fact is that on 99.9% of occasions the Archbishop simply refers the matter back locally. Obviously that is appropriate where it has simply not been possible to appoint the right person. Those very exceptional cases do make it important that the local church, the parish and the patrons, who have a particular interest, should have the right to ask the Archbishop to consider exceptionally dealing with the matter himself. It does not seem to me that an enormous amount is going to be lost by keeping that in place, but I do think, in terms of the balance of rights that our whole appointments and patronage system involves, it is important to have that fallback for exceptional cases. I would ask the Revision Committee to consider whether we really need clause 11 at all.

Revd Canon Jenny Tomlinson (Chelmsford): My attention was drawn to the new section Part 5A, the bishop's pastoral order, and particularly to paragraph 4: "Before making a bishop's pastoral order, the bishop must consult such persons, groups of persons or organisations as the bishop thinks fit."

In the wonderful and laudable attempt to simplify so much of our legislation, it is important that we do not swing from one extreme to the other and risk giving the appearance - and I am quite sure it is only the appearance - of legislation which allows for an apparently arbitrary process of consultation on matters which may be of real concern and local passion about, for example, the composition of a deanery.

A number of us who have been involved in processes of consultation over the years, I am sure will be aware that often agreeing the process by which a decision is to be reached, or a consultation operated, plays a major part in the success, or otherwise, of that process.

I would urge the Simplification Group most generally, as they are bringing forward legislation, not to look, in abandoning cumbersome and duplicated and ridiculous legislation, at leaving the field open in such a way that every time a process happens, the means by which the consultation is going to take place has to be invented each time. Especially for lay people involved in changes, such as are outlined in that section, some outline of a process of consultation would be very much welcomed. Thank you.

Revd Dr Philip Plyming (Guildford): I speak as an incumbent and a member of the Simplification Group.

I want to speak about clause 5, and, in particular, to offer a voice different from Tiffer Robinson, who spoke about that. I have spoken before in this Synod about the implied covenant between those offering themselves for ordination and the Church which

receives and endorses that vocation. I, for one, was disappointed at the change in pension provision. I have spoken about that before.

However, at this point I do want to say that I support the proposed changes to clause 5, namely the change in compensation for those clergy who lose office through pastoral reorganisation. It seems to me that, yes, the Church does have a commitment to those clergy who have given their particular calling and vocation to serve the Church. It is implied that will carry on, not just beyond a particular role but for a lifetime of service and ministry. That is not a zero-sum game. That does not trump other considerations. We carry a role, but also responsibilities to those among whom we serve.

I think the present compensation arrangements are bad in a number of ways. They are bad because they are bad for the laity. It gives the clergy a position of power over the laity that I think is disproportionate, because, effectively, the local church does not have the chance to make pastoral reorganisation because a clergyperson is unable to be moved. They are bad for mission, because they make pastoral reorganisation, when it is essential and important for the missionary needs of the Church, impossible to achieve. That cannot be good for the long-term growth of God's Church. I think the present arrangements are bad for the credibility of clergy, because this suggests we cannot be touched and can lead to a sense, in some places, where we have a job for life, we know it, and, therefore, sometimes we rest on those laurels. I think that does us harm.

I want to speak as a member of the House of Clergy to say I support these proposed changes to compensation. I also recognise that there is a shortage of clergy at the moment and, therefore, the possibilities whereby clergy do not receive another post are very, very unlikely.

I speak as somebody with a family, with children at school, for whom pastoral reorganisation, if I were deprived of my office, would be a very significant sacrifice. But it is not all about me; it is about the church where I serve and the needs of that church. As a member of the House of Clergy, I do have to offer myself to that wider discernment.

Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn): The Bishop of Willesden said that these proposals came about as a result of consultation with the dioceses. I would ask who was consulted in the dioceses. I suspect it was the archdeacons, the diocesan secretaries, those particularly involved with pastoral reorganisation, and not those at parish level, the clergy and the laity. This is the danger with this sort of legislation, although I do support it and will vote that it goes into Revision Commission, but we need to bear in mind in Revision Committee who has actually been consulted on this matter.

Bishop Pete said that it may be that we need to have a root and branch review of the Team and Group Ministries Measure. Maybe we do, but, if so, why are we tinkering around it at this point?

The same could perhaps be said of patronage. Here I must declare an interest. I am a Vice President of The Society for the Maintenance of the Faith. There are a number of

areas where the operation of patronage could be improved. Perhaps we should look slightly wider if we are going to go into this area. I would echo the points made by Mr Scowen about the dangers with clause 11.

I would suggest that this does go through to revision, but there is a lot of work to be done. It is much more complicated than may at first appear with this briefing paper.

Revd Canon Sally Gaze (Norwich): My interests are I am a rural multi-benefice incumbent. I am Chair of the Fresh Expressions rural hub, and I am a Leader of the Fresh Expression for the Bishop's mission order.

I wish to comment on the Bishop's mission order in clause 9, the provisions made for that, supporting Mark Broomhead's comments, which I thought were excellent, and also the reforms already suggested in this paper.

I would like to ask the Simplification Group also to consider that one of the real complications that Fresh Expressions has is the difficulty in achieving charitable status. Many of us have to find our own way round finding charitable status for our Bishop's mission orders because that is not a possibility or an option within gaining either a Bishop's mission order or any kind of status within the Church of England. As Fresh Expressions become more permanent parts of the Church of England, they should have a way of achieving charitable status as part of their status within the Church of England. That would be simpler for us, certainly.

Secondly, I would like to comment on clause 5 and pastoral reorganisation. I want to speculate on whether Tiffer Robinson's concern particularly comes out of being a multi-parish benefice priest. It is the experience of many of us that we feel when we may leave our ministry in the future, what will happen is that our parishes are reorganised into larger and larger units. It is not a good feeling. There is a feeling that if this happens to our group of parishes, it will not be good for mission and ministry. I just wonder whether the reluctance to consider this is actually to do with the other issues that we need to look at and find better options for structuring rural multi-parish benefices in the light of the need to reduce clergy numbers in the countryside.

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): Can I say at the beginning that I am very grateful and privileged to be elected to this role. I want to do my best to serve the whole House of Clergy in the Convocation and the wider Synod.

As I have listened to this debate, I have been reminded of a conversation that I had with my churchwardens when I became a team rector. They appointed me, and on the paperwork it said, "We want someone to lead us into change. We need growth. We need mission. We recognise we need to change". About a month into my incumbency, the churchwardens came to see me and they said, "When we said change, we didn't mean this".

As I have listened to the debate, I think I have heard speeches against about half of the clauses of the Measure. Of course, we need to scrutinise and make sure that we listen very carefully and get the best possible outcome. This is the first real piece of

legislation to come out of Renewal and Reform. I just want to caution against the immediate reaction of putting the brakes on at this stage and setting a sort of mood that what we are going to do over the next five years is very incremental. We all talk about radical change. We all talk about the need to establish a new way of working together.

I will make the speech now I was probably going to make tomorrow, so I will not have to get up then. One of the issues that we need to face in the Church of England, and I am sure we all recognise this in different ways, is the enormous deficit of trust that exists between us. It seems to me that most of the time we think that someone is out to get us, or at least we operate in that mode of thinking. I was very struck in the Shared Conversations by the change of mood and relationship I had with others with whom I profoundly disagreed, because we related to one another.

Perhaps at this stage, at the beginning of this process, I want to issue a caution that we do not rush to put the brakes on because not everything is quite like we want it, because otherwise we are going to end up with doing very little yet again. Thank you.

Mr Brian Wilson (Southwark): I was very surprised when my friend over here mentioned that churches with Bishop's mission orders do not have representation, do not have electoral rolls. I am a member of a church which is not a parish church, it is a proprietary chapel, which is probably the 19th century version of Bishop's mission order places. Under the Church Representation Rules, we have the ability to play a full part in the life of the Church of England, including election to synods. I cannot see that there would be any difference between a proprietary chapel and a church with Bishop's mission orders with no time limit. I think that they could simply be considered as extra parochial places, which is what proprietary chapel is considered as under the Church Representation Rules. I am left somewhat aghast to find that they have no representation at present. I think that things should be changed so that they could be brought in within that scope.

Mrs Penny Allen (Lichfield): I am speaking now as a member of the Board of Patronage for Lichfield and a patron myself. First to say to you that our diocese has a robust appointments procedure now, where the views of parishioners and laity are taken into account, and the views of the staff teams. We have had difficulty as a diocese in finding patrons, and certainly a very real difficulty in convening meetings of them. In fact, sometimes we have been looking for dead people.

When several of us were appointed to our patronage board about two years ago, we found ourselves in some difficulty in finding a meeting, in collecting information about who was within the patronage boards, and some difficulty in agreeing which areas we were to cover. In fact, it led us quite quickly to ask the registrar's advice about the functions of patrons, about the permission lapsing to the bishop, and the practical realities now of patronage in this everyday world.

From my own point of view, I would want to say that I fully accept that, for some patronage boards, I found myself sitting in a group of 16 people who did not agree with each other, and there has been some difficulty when the parish view of the persons who have come to interview has been different from the view of the patronage board.

The practical realities of this are such that we have felt, as a diocese, some considerable difficulties. I fully welcome all the Simplification Group's recommendations for that reason. We have to be reasonable in our appointments procedure now in seeking the wide range of views that patronage in the past sought to gather. I do think patrons sometimes have conflicting interests about different incumbents. I do fully understand the desire, on the Simplification Group's part, to look at this very firmly.

I see all the other Measures that are in this Order as being necessary now. We have had various pastoral reorganisations that have had to wait long lengths of time for people to retire in order to reorganise. We have had various Orders that have had to be put on one side while we have tried to grapple with the legal problems around them.

I am sure our diocese is not unique in finding these difficulties. I think the work of the Simplification Group is to be applauded - and our diocesan secretary is one of its members - in trying to find more speedy resolutions to some of the difficulties. Thank you.

Mr David Ashton (Leeds): On 28 February, my parish, with three others, will become the United Benefice of Batley. It has been a long time in the making, but the parishes now see this as an opportunity to do mission and to work closer together than ever before.

One of the things we have started doing is that the churchwardens of all four parishes have started meeting on a regular basis. We are learning from each other the problems and the difficulties in each other's parish. How we can move forward is better discussed between a number of people than fighting and standing your own corner in your little patch. I would ask Synod, in fact I would plead to Synod, please pass this because there will be a lot of learning curves for everybody and everything is not written in black and white.

Revd Canon Mike Booker (Ely): I speak as a Simeon's Trustee, and therefore involved in patronage, but also as a team rector. It is from the perspective of a team rector that I want to speak to the issue of team ministries and patronage.

One of the main challenges that I face, and which I think I have done quite a good job in countering, has been a tendency to view team vicar posts as something less than fully incumbent status. I have superb colleagues who play a full role at diocesan and national level. Part of the way in which I have done that is to involve patrons in the appointment of team vicars. There is also a significant link between individual parishes and their patron. If the patronage role is lost in the appointment of team vicars then that warmth, that affection, that wisdom, is only available second-hand and people do not, therefore, have their patron available to them.

More importantly, I think I need to come clean. I work within a pastoral scheme whereby team vicar appointments are made by the bishop and myself only. Why have we gone for that option after what I have just said? Well, we have a very large rural group of parishes which I have been involved in bringing together. As part of the negotiation, we had to think through what would be manageable and appropriate in our particular setting. Having looked very hard at the number of parishes, the complexity of

the very large number of people involved in patronage, we felt that in our particular setting it would work best if the appointment were technically made for team vicars by bishop and team rector, but we overtly and clearly invited patrons to be involved in an advisory capacity. It works for us. To have the flexibility to discuss what might be right was vital for me in negotiating with multiple PCCs as to whether or not they signed up to a team ministry in the first place. Had our hands been tied, we might not now be a team ministry, because PCCs would simply say, “No, thank you”.

I want to speak not only on behalf of patronage rights, but simply from the perspective of somebody making it work at local level. This is a plea for subsidiarity, a plea for contextual mission. Leave us the option to have patrons fully involved. That may be the best way of working locally. If that can be done, and it suits a particular setting, that should be retained.

Mr Michael Stallybrass (York): If I may, I want to make a comment about the general method of presentation of these things rather than a specific item within. If I can just take one example. Within clause 10(2), the words are: “In that subsection (2A) of that section, omit ‘Subject to subsection (6B) below and’.” I find unpicking the content of these Measures quite difficult. In fact, I also found great difficulty in unpicking the Canon No. 34, which we passed without the ability to comment on, because that contained a reference to a paragraph 3(b), which, when I went on to the online version of the Canons, did not exist.

I come from a lifetime of working in the railway industry, where accurate information is vital. Forty years ago, railway timetables were presented in the same way that this amending legislation is being presented now, where we had a timetable and a first amendment to the table, and a weekly circular which amended the first amendment to the timetable, and daily notices which amended the weekly circulars, which amended the first amendment, which amended the timetable.

May I make a plea that when we reconsider this Measure, we are actually able to see the full context and we have document which is red-lined showing where the changes are so that it is possible to read the complete Measure in its context to be able to make more accurate sense of what is being proposed. I have a great fear that, just as with Amending Canon No. 34, there may be an amendment to what you perceive to be the original which is not there.

I think it is in the interests of the whole of Synod that when we see complex amendments to Measures, we are actually able to see what the end result of that is going to be and the changes that we are being asked to approve are highlighted within that complete document. Thank you.

Miss Margaret Parrett (Manchester): I would like to echo Mr Scowen’s concern about clause 11. Whilst I welcome simplification of legislation, and have nothing but admiration for the group which has waded through all this and come up with suggestions, I feel that there are instances where we have to be careful not to throw out the baby with the bathwater, to use a very old phrase.

I have personal knowledge of a situation where a vacancy extended beyond nine months, not because a suitable candidate had not been found by the parish reps and the patrons, but because a diocesan bishop did not accept that presentation. At that stage, with the vacancy for nine months and lapse of presentation to the diocesan bishop, that would have sent very strange signals to the parish that had chosen their man, in one sense, and had been told that he was not going to be given the job.

I think it is important that we retain some form of independent assessment of that sort of situation where there is a disagreement, if you like, between the parish, the patrons and the diocesan bishop. Whilst I would hesitate to add to the Archbishops' workloads, because they are, after all, human, I would ask the people discussing this and looking at it, to consider whether there is some way of amending this clause, if not removing it, in order for there still to be some form of independent assessment of situations where there is a lapse because there has been some disagreement. Thank you.

The Chair: After Mrs Lyon I would be looking for a motion for closure, if anyone will be willing to help me out.

Mrs Rosemary Lyon (Blackburn): The gentleman from St Edmundsbury & Ipswich has made many of my points, but I felt that, as a layperson, I wanted to stand up for the clergy on this. This is on the clause 5 compensation issue.

Recently, I received a letter from a priest in our diocese who was very much concerned about her future treatment in light of the proposals included in this clause. She writes that she has assumed that she will serve full-time until what will now be 68 years of age. She regards this as being "offset by God's promise to Peter, and those who would come after him, in Matthew 19:27-29. Then Peter said in reply, 'Look, we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have?', and Jesus said, 'Everyone who has left houses, or brothers, or sisters, or father, or mother, or children, or fields, for my Name's sake will receive one hundred-fold and will inherit eternal life'." She continues: "Whilst, of course, I do not see myself as requiring a reward for the sacrifices, these verses do also seem to speak to the duty of care which has been offered by the Church to those who have made familial and property sacrifices".

I thank you very much for the paper that we have had at our seats, which has fleshed out the bones of the amounts involved. I listened with interest to Dr Plyming, and I do very much see his point, but I have to say the incredibly hard working clergy that I know, including my brother-in-law who served in our diocese for over 30 years, are not on a meal ticket for life.

To me, these new proposals are significantly detrimental to clergy who have already given up so much to follow their vocation, and also their families who very much have to give certain things up too. These clergy have seen their pension age increase and their pension level fall, and as a layperson I am rather uncomfortable with it. Let us err on the side of generosity. To me, this is not simplification, it is a major change of policy, and I would call upon the Revision Committee to look at it again. Thank you.

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

“That the question be now put.”

The Chair: Thank you. Yes, that has my consent, does it have the consent of Synod?

This motion was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: I call on the Bishop of Willesden to respond. Bishop, bearing in mind there have been 20 speeches, we will stretch it to seven minutes, shall we?

The Bishop of Willesden (Rt Revd Pete Broadbent): That would be very kind of you, thank you. We are going to have an interesting Revision Committee, are we not? I am very grateful to all of those who have responded. I think it is important that we have aired on the floor of Synod some of these difficult issues we have been dealing with. Let me just say to you two things about philosophy. One is that our aim is to try to get as much as needs to be overarching and statutory in Measure and everything else into codes of practice and local working arrangements.

Some of the speeches I have heard are still trying to suggest that you have to have things on the face of primary legislation in order to make them work. I think there is a real issue we need to address there and it does touch on the issue of trust and how we work together. The second is that we need, in what we do, to understand what we are talking about when we talk about consultation. What is the difference between consultation and notification? Consultation raises all kinds of expectations that cannot necessarily be met. Notification keeps people in the know. Perhaps we need to do some more work on that in the Revision Committee.

Thank you for those who were helping me on Clause 4, a clause as you will know that is dear to my heart though, unfortunately, it went from the party that I believe in. I think we do need to look again at this question of patronage in the team because Bishop of Ludlow, Mr Banting, Angus MacLeay and others draw our attention to that. We will come back to that question in Revision Committee. I take the point. Similarly, I think we do need to look again at the glebe question. That touches on this question of whether we are talking about notification or consultation. How do we make sure that parishes are aware of what is going on in their locality?

Mr Benfield made the point that on the teams and groups' question we ought to be doing a wholesale revision. He is absolutely right. The point is that we are only, at the moment, putting forward proposals that touch on the Mission and Pastoral Measure. We do need to come back to the teams and groups' legislation in due course.

Bishop's mission orders, I am sorry, Mr Broomhead and Sally Gaze, you have got it wrong. Actually, if you read the existing legislation, section 82 of the Mission and Pastoral Measure, you are able to attach to a Bishop's mission order all kinds of things, including charitable status, the capacity to be represented on the deanery synod, electoral rolls, or at least rolls. You can do what you like. You can actually devise your own governance. There is a very liberating way of doing things. Part of the problem

with BMOs is that people are not using them because they have not been inventive enough.

What the proposal here does is say to you, you can have BMOs to test things out for five years and you can also have BMOs that have a supposition of unlimited life, but there is plenty of flexibility. If we are going to allow new forms of church to grow, we have to suppose that it is equivalent to and as good as parish church and should be enabled to flourish in that context. I am an advocate for BMOs and I think we want to give them more scope and not try and limit them.

On the compensation proposals, let us be quite clear, we are not bringing in something new. There is already compensation provision. In fact, Tiffer Robinson gave it away in his speech, did he not, because what he said was, "Well, if you start changing it so compensation proposals could actually be payable, then you might start using this provision."

There is no point in having provision on our statute books if we cannot use it. Either you say let us abolish entirely any form of capacity to do pastoral reorganisation where someone might be dispossessed and let us be honest about it, or you try and get a compensation package that works. This does not, and, a bit like the Incumbents (Vacation of Benefices) Measure, should be swept from the books because it is actually not operable. Let us have legislation that works, please.

On the patronage and the Archbishops and the lapsed question, okay, it may not be the right moment to do this. We will look at it in Revision Committee. I do want to come back to the Patronage (Benefices) Measure and I do want say to you that, again, it is about how we work in a position of trust. If you actually think your diocesan bishop is untrustworthy on these matters, you will put as much as you can into legislation and we are back to the Father Ted, "Careful now" way of approach to things: Careful now, something might happen, and if we are not careful we will not actually abolish anything.

I am grateful to all those others who spoke. I am particularly grateful to the Prolocutor of Canterbury, when we said change we did not mean this. Do you want, Synod, to make a difference to the way our Church is ordered and the way in which we operate? If you do, you will give this a fair wind, not just to Revision Committee but beyond. We do need to make a different way of doing things.

On the patronage question, can I say we are not changing the Patronage (Appeals) Rules. The speech that suggested that the right of appeal would go under this procedure was, I am afraid, not speaking to the point that we put before you.

I want to come back to the railway timetables because, yes, you are absolutely right, this stuff is incomprehensible to all of us. We have not found another way of doing it. Tracked changes might be possible, but the amount of officer time that would be involved in keeping those documents up-to-date and producing documents for debate would be difficult. I do not know how to present to Synod these legislative changes in ways that would actually make a difference to the way in which we consider them. I am absolutely committed to trying to find a way if we can, I cannot promise you anything,

but I would love to be back here doing legislation much more simply because complicated legislation for simplification just does not work, does it?

I beg to move that this Measure be committed to Revision Committee.

The Chair: So we proceed to vote on Item 501.

The motion

‘That the Measure entitled “Mission and Pastoral etc. (Amendment) Measure” be considered for revision in committee.’

was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: The draft Measure is now automatically committed to a Revision Committee. As stated on page 7 of the Agenda, any member of Synod who wishes to submit proposals for amendment should send them in writing to the Clerk of the Synod, to reach her no later than Monday 21 March 2016. That concludes this item of business.

THE CHAIR: *The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker)* took the Chair at 5.08 pm.

The Shared Conversations on Spirituality, Scripture and Mission

The Chair: Synod, we are moving on to Item 6, which is a presentation on the Shared Conversations and it is going to last for 40 minutes, roughly, we think, because we have got timed business. Yes, 35 minutes, I am warned. We do have timed business at quarter to 6. Broadly, the course will be that David Porter, Sandra Cobbin, Victoria Mason and the team will present for about half of that time and the second half of the time is for questions. I will remind Synod members again, when we get to that, that the clue is in the name, these are questions. This is not a debate on human sexuality. It is an opportunity to answer questions that arise from the presentation that we hear. Can I call on Canon David Porter and his team to make their presentation.

Canon David Porter (Archbishop of Canterbury’s Director for Reconciliation): Good afternoon, Synod. Thank you. First, an apology that you do not have a paper. This is partly due to the fact that the meeting of the design group looking at this process for the July Synod only took place last week in terms of getting our minds around the challenge of facilitating 480 people in a conversation and, therefore, there were no papers ready in time for this meeting for distribution. However, you will see the website address for the Shared Conversations on the slide and various comments that are made today. Various other material relating to July will be posted there as soon as possible.

Sandra and Victoria have already been introduced to you. Victoria is familiar to many of you as the one who has co-ordinated the Shared Conversations throughout the regions, and Sandra is representing the wider design group who have been working with myself and Malcolm Brown in designing these processes for the Church. In proposing a circle or several circles of Shared Conversations, no one was in any way pre-supposing that

people were not already talking about these issues in the Church. Many have been for quite some time. There is also a recognition that not everyone wants to talk. Therefore, we move forward into this final phase of this process conscious of the challenge that we face around these issues and the conversation that is taking place in our midst.

We need to be clear on what we are talking about. Therefore, I want to re-stress the question that has been at the heart of the whole process of Shared Conversations. The question that the House of Bishops agreed that should inform the process is: Given the significant changes in our culture in relation to human sexuality, how should the Church respond? It is, essentially, a missional question and it is a question certainly in the regional conversations in which we have been realistic about the outcome.

No one is suggesting that the process that we have engaged in is one that is aimed at reaching agreement or even consensus. It is a space that has been created in conversation for views to be expressed, for differences to be acknowledged and for exploration to be given as to how we live within our diverse life as Anglicans. There have already been two circles of conversation, one for the House of Bishops at the college some 15, 16 months ago; one, the regional Shared Conversations, of which there are 13, two remain to take place.

When I began this process and presented it to the House of Bishops, I predicted that at least four of the regional conversations would implode. So far, by the grace of God, none of them have and if you are due to take part in the last two we are praying for you. It is a prediction I do not want to have confirmed.

The final circle of conversation is the one that we are focusing on and presenting to you here. It is the one that you will take part in as members of Synod in July this year, conscious, of course, that some of you (in fact, a sizable minority of you) will have already taken part in a regional Shared Conversation. I am now going to hand over to Sandra who is going to share with us some of what will be involved in this process in July.

Ms Sandra Cobbin (Consultant, Bridge Builders): Good afternoon. I wonder if I might start by drawing on some of the elements of the Shared Conversations, both with the College of Bishops and in the regions, that is informing the conversation that we will be offering you in July. We have been really struck by the importance of timing in sessions of space for reflection and of the pace of sessions.

We have heard again and again that people have valued the personal encounters, particularly through the sharing of stories, and also the importance of engaging with scripture, the value as well of taking note of the wider cultural context within which the regional Shared Conversations have taken place, and the importance of hearing from people who have different perspectives. Your Shared Conversation in July will be very different from that of the College of Bishops and the regional Shared Conversations but it will be informed by them.

Not least is it different, as David said, because there are so many of you and so we need a different shape and structure for you. It is also different because you are the

decision-making body of the Church of England and, although you are not making a decision in July, that is the reason that you are convened together. You are also a new Synod, so you are still getting to know each other. Because we are meeting in York and there are some challenges with the space that we are working with, that will also shape some of the process that we offer you.

I want to give you an overview of the Shared Conversation programme for you and then talk in a little bit more detail about each session; just to let you know that as the design team, we are still working on the detail, so this is really an overview for you.

The first session will be the story of our faith; then, moving to the second session, understanding scripture; which leads then into an opportunity for reading the scripture together; and, then, taking note of the changing culture around which this conversation is taking place; an opportunity to listen to the Anglican Communion perspective and, also, to come to a drawing together around walking forward together. The first two of those sessions will take place on Sunday afternoon and evening and the third, fourth and fifth sessions during the day on Monday, with a final session on Tuesday morning.

I will tell you a little bit more about each one. The first session, the story of our faith. In the College of Bishops' Shared Conversation and in the regional Shared Conversations, the personal encounters in threes and fours have been enormously valued and really important. The Sunday afternoon will be spent in small groups of three or four, each sharing your personal journey of faith with the others, listening deeply and non-judgmentally to each other.

Session 2, the understanding scripture. During the regional Shared Conversations we have been struck again and again by how important and valued the sessions on scripture have been, the opportunity to read scripture together, to share a love of scripture with each other, grappling with passages that different people understand in different ways and discussing different ways of approaching scripture. At Synod in July the Sunday evening will be the first of two sessions about scripture. We are hoping for a panel of three people who approach the reading of scripture differently. They will each present from their perspective, particularly concerning human sexuality and related issues. There will, we hope, be an opportunity for questions from the floor.

That leads then to session 3 on the Monday, reading scripture together. Synod will break into smaller groups and within those smaller groups there will be an opportunity to read scripture. We are hoping that as groups we will offer different perspectives and approaches. The purpose of this session is to grow in understanding about how others approach scripture in different ways, including passages that may be familiar to you.

In session 4, the changing culture, having shared personal stories and read scripture together the Monday afternoon will be an opportunity to look outward at the culture. We are hoping to have a panel of people who interpret culture differently, who respond differently to changes in human sexuality in our culture. The panel will, we hope, include young voices, inclusive voices and traditional voices. Their presentation to Synod will be food for thought as you then move into smaller groups to discuss and respond to what they have offered.

On Monday evening a number of voices from across the Anglican Communion and, we hope, some ecumenical voices will reflect from their experience, perspective and context upon that framing question that David just reminded us of about cultural changes and the way that the Church should respond.

Then, session 6 on the Tuesday morning provides the opportunity for you, the new Synod, to reflect on how you will walk forward together in light of the profound differences that you hold. As Synod, you will explore ways that you want to engage with discussions and decisions about human sexuality. There may be some practical suggestions. There may be some process ideas. There may be some principles suggested. There may be some questions raised about which there are not, at that moment, answers. There may be hopes shared about ways in which this Synod expresses profound disagreement in a way that is a missional gift to the world.

Before I hand back to David, can I just have a word about worship. One of the really important people in the regional Shared Conversations has been the chaplain. We have been privileged to have a number of chaplains accompanying us, holding us in prayer, supporting participants and facilitators, when needed, and leading us in worship throughout. Worship has been woven through the regional Shared Conversations and this has been hugely appreciated by participants.

A rhythm of worship will, therefore, weave its way through the July Synod Shared Conversation too. In July we are hoping that some of the chaplains who have been on the Shared Conversations will be available to accompany you, to work with the Chaplain to the Synod in preparing and offering worship and in holding us all in their prayers. Let me hand back to David who can talk a little bit about how you might want to prepare yourself for July.

Canon David Porter: I want to just spend some time reflecting with you about the nature of what we are embarking on when we meet together in July in York and how you might prepare yourself mentally and spiritually for the conversation before you. I need to emphasise strongly that what we are offering is facilitated space not mediated space. Those who will work with you are there to help you have a conversation, not to mediate the differences between you; to ensure that voices are heard.

We recognise that the two days that you will spend in the Shared Conversation in July are not part of the decision-making process and, as those who come to Synod may be expecting to make decisions and may be anticipating making decisions on these issues, we are asking you at one set level to take a step back from that and to allow this space to be held, because not all conversation is about resolution. It is about understanding, about recognition, about diversity and difference. It is about bonds and boundaries.

There is also a need to have certain expectations of yourselves and of the facilitators. I think it is true to say that the 25 facilitators who have been involved in the Shared Conversations have now built up a level of experience of holding this space, but we are all acutely aware that many of you in your own right are gifted and trained facilitators and those who help hold space and discussion.

If you are anything like me, the hardest thing to do when you have this role in life and all sorts of other ways is to be a participant in a facilitated conversation. There is a certain anxiety amongst the facilitating team that we are probably going to have to do our jobs professionally amongst one of the most critical audiences that we have ever had to face. We just invite you to do some emotional work on that, particularly those of you who have had a long time of working in this area. The way we are going to do it will not necessarily be the way that you would do it. The difference between us is that we are the people who have been asked to do it. We just seriously invite you to enter that space with us because I am reflecting to you the anxiety of the team as we come to this.

Not only is this a facilitated space, we are hoping that it will be a safe space. What do we mean by that? Safe space does not mean that you will not hear things that you will find difficult or even, at times, offensive. Safe space is creating the space for all views to be engaged, for respectful engagement and accountable conduct, to engage in what has often been referred to as, "Good disagreement". I believe that good disagreement is informed disagreement. It is engaging in conversation with discretion and respect, to listen to and to interpret the other in the light of their best intentions. That requires self-restraint in our public exchanges when other agendas may be at work. It is how we earn the right to have dialogue in the substance of our disagreement when we engage in that conversation with such respect.

We are hoping to benefit from the thoughts of Andrew Acland, who is a member of the design team and an adviser to Government both nationally and internationally on facilitated processes. Andrew has drafted a booklet for us on the process of holding good conversation and we are working on that as the design team and, hopefully, we will have that as an electronic version on our website before Easter to give you some things to think about around good conversation.

The third thing I want to say about the space is that it will be a guarded space. We have suggested to the Business Committee (and, as far as I am aware, they are with us on this) that during the period after lunch on the Sunday to lunch-time on the Tuesday there will be no fringe meetings, no exhibitors, and a plea from the heart: We know the first Sunday is the Wimbledon Final (it always is), but you have come to be part of a Synod which is probably going to have to face and discuss and reflect upon one of the biggest challenges in our missional life, not only in this culture but in our relationships in the wider Communion. We invite you to prepare yourself for 'Wimbledon withdrawal' and to genuinely commit to the process from after lunch on the Sunday and to be part of it with us. We want to guard that space.

My final comments. What does a Synod in conversation actually look like? It has always got to be an honest conversation. The language and how we talk to one another is as important as what we say, the labels and terminology we use, our ability to move from a campaigning discourse to a compassionate discourse. May I commend to you the *TED Talk* by Sally Kohn, a lesbian presenter on Fox News, talking about the challenges of being on that news channel given her own personal convictions. She draws to us the need to have emotional correctness in all of our dialogues, that it is not about agreeing but listening. It is giving people the opportunity to be heard.

People do change through dialogue, not necessarily in what they think but in how they act and relate. Relationships are established. We come to handle our views relative to others and, at best, dialogue changes how we talk with and about one another. Healthy relationships, in which there is even a possibility of persuasion, begin from such a place by being emotionally correct. We may still not agree but we are listening to each other, not because of what we say but how we have said it. It is all too easy in these discussions to be politically right but emotionally wrong; indeed, theologically right but relationally dysfunctional. We are inviting you to take responsibility for the other person, to relate to them not simply out of an institutional allegiance but out of a mutual accountability for each other's spiritual welfare. Maybe in the end we will not be able to share space, but we are still concerned and committed to each other in Christ.

The second thing I want to say about the nature of the conversations is not only are they to be honest but they are going to be risky. At its heart, this conversation is about who we are. Os Guinness, the American Christian philosopher, has said that how we live with our deepest differences is one of the fundamental questions of our times.

Rabbi Lord Sacks says that identity is based on narrative; the stories we tell about who we are, where we come from and our relationship to others. When conflict is rooted in issues of identity and belonging, it is equally threatening. The conflict we often face in the Church is not simply about doctrine, principle or polity, but of what it is to be us. Who are authentically Anglican, or even Christian? What makes someone or some group Anglican, and who belongs? Such identity-based conflicts are profoundly intractable. They ultimately threaten us, confronting us not only with difference and the apparent incongruence of our diversity, but the prospect of our own destruction as we get written out of the story. When these dynamics undergird conflict, no wonder we intuitively avoid it. It is an understandable survival instinct and we instinctively recoil from the consequences of such vulnerability.

This conversation invites us to walk in the opposite direction: to embrace that vulnerability, to take risks, to test and discern together. It will bring us into conflict and it is in itself going to be a conflictual process. However, we believe, as those who are designing this process, that our actions and our meaning and our narrative can expose us as people to the vulnerabilities of each other's story.

When we avoid conflict, we often do so more because of what it induces in us - how we do or do not handle conflict due to our inner self - rather than the matters under dispute. We want to create a time for you as Synod where conflict can genuinely be your friend, to be embraced and transformed, rather than allowing it to consume and corrode us from within. This is a difficult choice to make and in order to confront and not avoid this, you need to feel safe. You need to make the choice to enter the space in which we can move forward, and that is going to be risky.

The Chair. We have time for some questions and answers. I will take questions three at a time, if we have that many people standing. A reminder that this is questions, not speeches and it is particularly about the process at York. That is what we have been talking about, so questions regarding the process in York.

Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford): I want to welcome these Shared Conversations. I will ask a question, but I just want to give the context to it. There are many of us, both in this chamber and in our church, who are bringing ourselves to these conversations and not just our beliefs. I suppose my question to David is what involvement at a panel level will LGBTI people have in those conversations? It is terribly important that we listen with open ears on all sides. As many of you know, I have set up Good Disagreement, and I am a great believer in the importance of creating this space, but we need to ensure that we are actually hearing from real people and embracing and listening to them, not just talking about them. I would love to understand what provision has been made to actually hear from those of us to whom this is a personal issue.

Mr Sam Margrave (Coventry): In regard to human sexuality, it seems that we use the term “human sexuality” but we really mean “homosexuality”. I would argue that there is a wider spectrum of sexual desire.

The Chair: Is there a question coming?

Mr Sam Margrave (Coventry): There is a question right at the end.

The Chair: A question would be quite good now.

Mr Sam Margrave (Coventry): People are defined as transsexual or demisexual. Will we be looking at a wider context than a narrow focus on homosexuality? Also, will we be looking at healthy relationships for all couples, what good sex looks like, and issues such as pornography, rather than just focusing on homosexuality?

Revd Canon David Banting (Chelmsford): In view of the apparent elevation of story and experience to be a fourth leg for the Anglican stool, can I ask both looking back to the conversations and looking forward to York, what way the Bible will be seriously studied as the key, historic leg of Anglican ways of thinking and doing? What place has been given to the foundational issues behind the “what” question as to the “how” question of the disciplines and principles of interpretation?

The Chair: I am going to ask David Porter or his team to respond.

Canon David Porter: I think I can safely say that Sandra has left this bit to me. In response to Jayne, we are committed to making sure that the panels reflect both the diversity in Synod as well as in the wider Church, and therefore people will be involved in the panels for whom this is a personal issue as well as just a question of view.

Sam, I am tempted to say how much time do we actually have? I hear your point. It is a very serious one and it has come up in the Shared Conversations, but we have been given a particular remit and, at one level, this conversation is not solely focusing on the question of human sexuality over the two days; it is rightly on some of the issues that David has raised for us as well.

I do not believe in the Shared Conversations we have elevated story and experience above other aspects of what forms our Christian faith. We begin with the story of our

faith quite simply because it is difficult to have these conversations if you do not know who you are talking to, and the best way to get to know one another is to create space to share what it is we actually share, which is faith in Christ, and how that has been formed and shaped. We then go immediately into two sessions on scripture, which will address the very issues that you have raised about authoritative interpretation, about how we approach particular passages and also the opportunity to debate and share around those passages together in small groups.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr David Lamming (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich): The group Shared Conversations have necessarily been confidential to the members attending them. Is it proposed that the plenary and panel sessions at York be open to the press and the public and will they be minuted?

Revd Canon Mark Pilgrim (Bristol): Will there be a wider range of preparation material available before the Synod than was available for the first Shared Conversation which I was a part of in the South West region? It was noted that the range was relatively small and that lay and ordained and professional people struggled sometimes to cope with what was prepared.

Mr Elliot Swatridge (Church of England Youth Council): This is similar to the question asked over there, but in view of the media likelihood to spin such stories in a negative sense against the Church, how are the discussions going to be framed in a way that does not portray the Church as homophobic? It is a question about media relations.

Canon David Porter: My apologies, I should have said in my earlier comments about creating the space that one of the other things we have agreed is that there will be no media presence. These are private sessions of the Synod, similar to what took place when we had the group day talking about legislation for women in the episcopate. It is not public and it not open to the press. That will be a rule that will be adhered to during the times that you are with us.

I agree with your point, Mark. Many people are now producing their own materials from a diversity of views, and on the Shared Conversations website we will start to now flag that up and give you pointers to various materials that we are becoming aware of, arising out of the Shared Conversations and the various groups. That material will be available to you.

The Chair: Colleagues, we do have timed business at quarter to, but there are a number of people still wanting to speak, and, if it is the mind of Synod to continue this a bit longer, I would be prepared to propose that we continue for a further ten minutes until 5.55 but that would need Synod's approval. Would those who wish to continue this item until 5.55 please show? Those who wish to stick to the original timings, would you show?

This motion was lost on a show of hands.

The Chair. It is clear we are sticking to the original timings. We have time for just a couple of comments.

Mrs Debrah Mclsaac (Salisbury): Sorry, my question is hardly worth the walk. Will there be a prohibition on using social media as well?

Ven Gavin Collins (Portsmouth): In preparing for the regional Shared Conversations, the two primers sent out were incredibly helpful in giving a breadth of material from different perspectives. Most of us will have our own pre-set views on this subject, and I wonder if it could be considered to send out material to all members rather than leaving it to us to pick and choose from websites, which will inevitably, by tendency, limit to one's pre-formed views. The question I would like to ask is: will all of us as members of Synod commit in preparation for July to reading not just the things we already have but across the range of perspectives on this matter, so we can make the most of this time in York?

The Chair. Canon Porter, would you like to make some final replies?

Canon David Porter. Thank you, everyone. Everything has been very helpful in helping us focus. We will be using the St Michael's House Protocols which are on the Shared Conversations website and can be downloaded for you to see. Within that therefore we would ask people to restrict their use of social media. I do not think we want to stop it altogether, but we will be asking people not to be reflecting and quoting other people, but more reflecting where they are in the process. There will be certain restrictions on the use of social media during our time together. We will talk to Church House about the publishing of extra copies of the resources that were sent out before the regional Shared Conversations and make sure that every member of Synod has them.

I can only endorse your plea that everyone takes responsibility for preparing themselves for coming to this conversation. There is a limited amount that a small team at the heart of this can actually do. You need to take responsibility for yourself. We will help you do that by flagging up various materials on the website.

The Chair. Synod, can I thank all who participated in that. I thought we kept very tight on the questions and that enabled a number of points to be made and responded to. Thank you very much. That brings us to the end of this item of business.

THE CHAIR *Mr Aiden Hargreaves-Smith (London)* took the Chair at 5.43 pm.

Questions

The Chair. We move now to Item 7, Questions. May I start by reiterating the apology offered to members earlier by the Chair of the Business Committee for the late circulation of questions and answers. For this item we shall need the yellow A5 booklet. Members may recall that this item involves our celebrity panel answering questions from members, without hesitation, deviation or repetition, or something like that. We shall be using the new simplified procedure for questions so I shall announce each question. The answers which are set out in the question booklet circulated prior to the Synod will not be read out. We shall therefore move immediately to supplementary questions, if

there are any. It would be helpful if those answering questions could make their way to the lectern as promptly as possible when we reach their question, and if those who may be thinking of asking a supplementary question would ensure they are seated close to one of the fixed microphones, we can then hope to maintain a proper pace and make good progress through the 64 questions and answers before us this evening.

May I remind members that the key to a supplementary question is in the term. It must be supplementary, which under our Standing Orders means that it must be strictly relevant to the original question and the answer given, and it must be a question. This is not an opportunity for members to make points or speeches. I should also remind members that the question must not contain any argument or imputation, or ask for any expression of opinion. Finally, I have been asked to remind members to give their name, diocese and Synod number in the usual way when asking supplementary questions.

Pensions Board

1. *Revd Stephen Trott (Peterborough)* asked the Chair of the Pensions Board: In the light of the FRS 102 regulations affecting the reserves shown in organisational accounts for pensions, have any consultations taken place between the Pensions Board and Her Majesty's Government about the financial burden this will cause for small charities which, as 'responsible bodies' for the purposes of the Pensions Measure 1997, have to make contributions to the funded pension scheme, far in excess of their annual turnover in relation to their actual work, and have any representations been made requesting transitional arrangements?

Dr Jonathan Spencer (ex officio) replied as Chair of the Pensions Board: No. This change in accounting procedure requires charities to disclose additional information about pensions (the present value of their deficit recovery contributions) in their accounts. It makes no difference whatsoever to the pension payments that charities have to make now or will have to make in the future, and so has no impact on the financial strength of dioceses and other responsible bodies. The Pensions Board is providing technical support to enable Responsible Bodies and participating bodies to comply with the requirements.

Revd Stephen Trott: Could I ask if the Chair of the Pensions Board or representatives of the Board would be willing to meet with representatives of the small charities and mission agencies which form part of the Church of England pension scheme to discuss the very serious problems which have been caused by these new regulations which require them to set aside enormous reserves in their accounts to cover potential pension liabilities in the future?

Dr Jonathan Spencer: The short answer to that question is "Yes", but we are already planning to provide additional support and guidance to all members of the clergy pension scheme to make sure that they present their accounts in future in ways that conform with the new requirements that present a true and fair position and do not pretend to be what they are not.

Mrs Julie Dziegiel (Oxford): I am a parish treasurer and a few years ago I was delighted when the Pensions Board sent me the accounts notes that were required to go in my accounts. Is this going to happen again and, if it is not, could it?

Dr Jonathan Spencer: The answer to that question is I think “Yes”. In exactly what form I do not yet know because the work has not been completed, but the intention is along those lines. I should add this is purely a technical accounting change. Nothing that is proposed here or intended here will change the underlying financial position of parishes or dioceses or other employing bodies of the Church of England.

2. *Revd Canon Catherine Grylls (Birmingham)* asked the Chair of the Pensions Board: What progress has been made by the EIAG and the NIBs on drawing up the ‘engagement framework’, as requested in the Climate Change motion passed by this Synod in July 2015; who has been involved in that work so far; and when is it hoped that it will be published?

Dr Jonathan Spencer (ex officio) replied as Chair of the Pensions Board on behalf of the National Investing Bodies: The National Investing Bodies are currently developing the climate change engagement framework in consultation with relevant experts and academic institutions. A series of indicators is being developed that will provide a basis to judge what progress companies and key energy-intensive sectors are making in the transition to a low-carbon economy. Significant progress has been made in this work and we are committed to publishing the framework by June of this year.

In further developing the engagement framework a number of consultations will be undertaken with key stakeholders both within the Church and externally.

Revd Canon Catherine Grylls: Would the Chair of the Pension Board be happy to tell us who some of those key stakeholders might be, please?

Dr Jonathan Spencer: In a sense, anybody who wants to be involved. So if the Environment Working Group wishes to have a discussion with us or any of the other people who participate in some of the fringe events in York wish to talk to us, that is fine. We plan to complete this work by June. What has been done so far is mainly the technical internal work, but we are open to discussions with anybody who wishes to discuss with us.

Central Readers’ Council

3. *Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the Central Readers’ Council: (a) At the last count, how many licensed, non-retired readers were there in the Church of England by diocese; (b) What is their current age profile by decade: 20-30; 30-40; 40-50; 50-60 and 60-70 (by number and percentage); and (c) Over each of the last five years, how many readers have been newly licensed and how many have reached retirement age, resigned, died in service or otherwise left?

The Bishop of Sodor & Man (Rt Revd Robert Paterson) replied as Chair of the Central Readers’ Council: As at 31 December 2014, there were 6,278 licensed readers, and a

further 2,800 active readers with permission to officiate. A further 760 were in training. Only 2% of licensed readers and 9% of trainees were under 40 at the qualifying date. Detailed statistics are available on the notice board. However, some dioceses include a wide variety of lay ministries under the broad category of “reader” or “licensed lay minister”, whereas others do not, meaning that the apparent decline in reader numbers over the past decade obscures a burgeoning of other lay ministries with episcopal authority.

Mr Adrian Greenwood: I declare that I am a lay reader. Thank you for your answer. In order to increase the number of readers, to what extent is the Central Readers’ Council actively engaged and involved with both the Evangelism Task Group and those responsible for the Resourcing Ministerial Education programme so that the distinctive role of the lay reader ministry is reinforced and, I imagine, reinvigorated in this 150th anniversary year?

The Bishop of Sodor & Man: Thank you for that question. Indeed we are deeply involved, not least in my involvement as co-Chair of the Lay Ministry Working Group, and all those various working groups are relating to one another. We are very anxious to do as you wish to see happen: more and more people being authorized to, as we are using the expression, “bring God into the conversation”, whether it is in church or outside church.

Ms Carrie Myers (Southwark): I declare an interest as a reader in the teeny, tiny 2%. I would be interested to know what is being done and what more can be done to further increase the number of younger readers.

The Bishop of Sodor & Man: A certain amount has been done by me and others to try and do something nationally in encouraging more younger readers, but I think it is part of the whole process of encouraging a broader spread of authorized ministries in the Church of England, not just the reader ministry but a whole range of different ministries. There may also be something to be done in terms of the image which, in the case of readers, is perhaps just a little dated.

Archbishops’ Council

4. *Mr Francis Spufford (Ely)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops’ Council: When it is necessary for the Communications Office to react instantly on behalf of the Church on a subject where opinion in the Church is divided, how is it decided what line should be taken with the press?

The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops’ Council: The Communications Office consults official statements, policies and teaching of the Church such as General Synod resolutions and motions, statements from the House of Bishops, statements from Archbishops and other official sources.

Mr Francis Spufford: On what occasions would it be appropriate and perhaps good for our reputation for the Communications Office simply to say that there is good

disagreement within the Church?

The Bishop of Sheffield: I would imagine those occasions would arise, Francis, and it is a very worthwhile question to explore, but only at the point at which the Church had so explored those conversations in our inner workings and we had established that disagreement was there and was permanent and could not be reconciled at the present time. So it would not be difficult to look back in history and find areas where that disagreement existed and it would not be impossible to look forward and envisage seeing it in the future. Discerning it in the present is a much harder call.

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): I wonder, Bishop, if you could clarify the question of whether there are times when it is actually Communications Office staff who communicate on behalf of the Church of England, but outside persons from the Comms Office and, in those cases, should not care be taken to ensure that immediate reactions are consonant with the answer that you have given?

The Bishop of Sheffield: As far as I am aware, every effort is made by the Communications Office to establish that. You will be aware, as all of us will be, that these occasions and situations can come up quite quickly and there is not always time, and the people who may be nominated as first responders may not be available and also that the Church has a responsibility of vocation and a desire to speak proactively, and not always defensively, to particular situations. My close observation of the Comms Office is that they do a very, very good job in that, but they would not claim themselves, in the nature of things, that they are infallible in what they do.

5. *Revd Canon Jenny Tomlinson (Chelmsford)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: What steps have been taken, and to what effect, to seek to ensure that each implementation group of the Reform and Renewal Programme includes BAME people, and a balance of men and women, and those who are lay and ordained?

The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Previous Synod questions on the composition of the task groups have created much greater awareness. Each task group as it is formed is asked to ensure that its composition both reflects the nature of its task and the need for diversity of membership.

The composition of the currently active task groups is 38% female, 44% lay and at least 7% BAME (two of the recently formed groups did not ask their members to declare ethnic background). The importance of diversity of membership will have been heard and all future task groups and current task group chairs will be asked to review the balance of their membership.

6. *Revd Canon Jane Charman (Salisbury)* asked the Chair of the Archbishops' Council: Is the Reform and Renewal programme now definitely called the Renewal and Reform programme and, if so, what was the thinking behind this change?

The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Yes, the programme is now referred to as Renewal and

Reform. Although the work that lies behind the words is neither specific (individual elements of the work streams cannot easily be categorised as solely renewal or reform) nor sequential, it is important to express the primacy of the renewing work of the Spirit.

Renewal and Reform cannot simply be a matter of internal reprioritisation or institutional reform, although no doubt it will contain significant elements of both. It must be about God's work of transformation in and through God's people and God's world and our attendant need prayerfully to discern and join in with how and where God is leading. Renewal and Reform expresses this a little better.

House of Bishops

7. *Mr Robin Lunn (Worcester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: In the light of the recent reports of the possibility of agreeing a fixed date every year for Easter, what consideration has been given to the role that the General Synod, and indeed the wider Church, might play in making that possibility a reality?

The Bishop of Peterborough (Rt Revd Donald Allister) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: There has not yet been an opportunity for the House of Bishops to consider possible responses to the recent reports regarding the date of Easter. Questions about either a fixed or a common (but not fixed) date have engaged the Church of England's attention on at least three occasions in the past 100 years, in 1927, 1966 and 1999. On the first two occasions, there were debates in the General Assembly, and if more progress had been made ecumenically at the end of the last millennium, doubtless the matter would have been brought to General Synod. As ecumenical consensus will again be critical in moving forward on this issue, the Council for Christian Unity is likely to have a significant role in advising on the appropriate point for time to be sought on the General Synod's agenda.

The Bishop of Ludlow (Rt Revd Alistair Magowan): Given that Parliament on 3 August 1928 passed the Easter Act as an Act of Parliament, setting Easter as the Sunday after the second Saturday in April, the reason that was not implemented being that it needed the agreement of both the House of Lords and House of Commons, is it now the duty and do you think it would be good for the Lords Spiritual to try and bring the Houses together so that Easter can be set?

The Chair: I am afraid, Bishop, you are asking for an expression of the Bishop of Peterborough's opinion, which is not permitted under the Standing Orders, so we will move to Mr Lunn's supplementary.

Mr Robin Lunn: When does the House of Bishops plan to consider responses and, in view of the three previous attempts in the last 100 years, what commitment will be required from ecumenical partners before we fully engage once again?

The Bishop of Peterborough: On the question of ecumenical partners, this has to be seen as a worldwide international matter, not just a matter to be decided by the United Kingdom Parliament, so talks need to be very broad, they need to be on the world scale, not just on the national scale. Those have begun and will doubtless continue.

Those responsible for arranging the House of Bishops' agenda will have heard the first part of your supplementary.

8. *Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Given the importance of prioritising evangelism and mission among young people in urban areas reported by the Evangelism Task Group at the fringe meeting at the July 2015 Group of Sessions, what progress is being made to identify financial, human and training resources to turn this priority into reality as part of the Renewal and Reform agenda?

The Bishop of Liverpool (Rt Revd Paul Bayes) replied as Vice-Chair of the Archbishops' Evangelism Task Group: Renewal and Reform is a wide-ranging body of work. One current priority is to establish it as a coherent and robustly financed work programme capable both of implementing decisions already taken and also responding to new work given to it by Synod.

Assuming GS 2015 is endorsed by Synod we will work quickly to translate its priorities into action. The outcome of the day conference on 1 March at Bishopthorpe will be key to identifying concrete steps to translate the priority of young people in urban areas into deep-rooted practice. We hope that this conference can also inform the 'beacon events' over the Pentecost weekend. We will ensure good links between the R&R programmes and relevant resources such as MPA's work on Mission Academies and the Gabriel Collective. MPA and the Education Division are also planning to appoint a youth evangelism officer to work jointly with staff in both teams.

Mr Adrian Greenwood: Bishop Paul, turning first as chair of trustees of the Salmon Youth Centre in Bermondsey, which has been doing evangelistic youth work for 100 years, what support can General Synod give to both the Evangelism Task Group and those responsible for resourcing ministerial education to ensure that significant resources are made available to the training and deployment of those with a gift for evangelism amongst young people, especially given the observations of Beth Keith on pages 13 and 14 of GS 2015 that for many clergy, mission and evangelism are seen as additional things rather than essential.

The Bishop of Liverpool: The Archbishops' Task Group on Evangelism is a low-key thing without any budget. The Synod therefore, in response to your question, has an enormous capacity to wire resource in the Church towards these matters. Tomorrow there will be an opportunity in the debate to discuss this and, if the Synod gives a clear steer to the task group, the task group will then be able to place that advocacy before those who can make a difference, either as part of the Renewal and Reform agenda or more widely.

9. *Revd Alistair McHaffie (Blackburn)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: The 'Christenings' national website www.churchofenglandchristenings.org and leaflets inform parents considering presenting their child for baptism that "You don't have to have been christened yourself". What was the process by which this assertion was agreed, who was consulted and what is the theological, legal and liturgical rationale behind it?

The Bishop of Norwich (Rt Revd Graham James) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: There is an obligation on clergy to baptize the children of any parent who wishes their child to be baptized. The Canons do not say that parents of infants being brought for baptism have to be baptized themselves. However, the minister must instruct the parents on their responsibilities.

The website churchofenglandchristening.org and the related resources have all been produced as part of the Archbishops' Council project around the baptism of children under 12. This work is underpinned by a vision for church growth, so parents are encouraged to talk to their local church and discover all that it might mean to have their child baptized. This may also lead to exploratory conversations about their own spiritual journey, and where appropriate, they too may be baptized, if not already.

Revd Alistair McHaffie: Thank you for the response and, in the light of that, what support can a priest anticipate from a diocesan if exercising the right under the Canon to delay baptism for the purposes of instruction including the invitation in the common worship to profess the faith of the Church, which profession would logically lead to baptism for unbaptized professors of the faith?

The Bishop of Norwich: I think that would depend on the particular circumstances of the case and the relationship of the priest with his diocesan bishop. In relation to what the Christenings project is attempting to do, the Canons are in themselves rather helpful, because I know of children aged seven or eight who have requested baptism for themselves, largely as a result of a very good church school where they have learned something of what it means to commit themselves to Christ, whose parents do not object to them being baptized, but themselves may not be able to make the promises. I think we have to cater nowadays for believing children of unbelieving parents. That is the big difference compared with the a few generations ago, and I do believe a little child shall lead them.

10. *Revd Dr Andrew Atherstone (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Who has oversight of the theological content of the Just Pray website (www.justpray.uk)?

11. *Revd Charles Read (Norwich)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Who decided which prayers would be published on the resources section of the Just Pray part of the Church of England website and what advice did they seek about the doctrinal issues raised by including prayers to the saints such as the Hail Mary and the Prayer to St Christopher?

The Bishop of Norwich (Rt Revd Graham James) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: The oversight of the Just Pray website, including prayers, rests with the Director of Communications for the Archbishops' Council. The site seeks to promote "a new spirit of prayer, using all the traditions, ancient and modern" reflecting the priority of the Archbishop of Canterbury for the renewal of prayer.

The site was launched with the advert featuring the Lord's Prayer. The prayers on the site were chosen to engage with a non-praying audience some of whom would have

heard or engaged with prayer at some point in their lives.

The websites, prayers and video resources promoted come from a range of traditions and denominations. A series of new Just Pray videos has just been launched for Lent and Easter based on Psalm 22.

Revd Charles Read: While I know the Director of Communications of the Archbishops' Council is a man of theological learning and erudition, because I once taught him theology, I would still like to know whether he took any evidence about the content of the Just Pray website.

The Bishop of Norwich: You would need to ask your former theological student that. I am sure that anyone trained at Cranmer Hall is very competent to determine what should be on the website. What is absolutely crucial is that what is on the website is a very great range of Christian prayer. It is not meant to be simply a Church of England website; it has links leading to the Jesuit Pray as you Go podcast; it has got links to Re: Jesus. Yes, it does contain the Hail Mary which, if the Bishop of Norwich says it in church, must be very Church of England.

The Chair: Very Church of England, Father.

12. *Very Revd Timothy Barker (Channel Islands)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Is the House considering how to address the impact of the imbalance between the number of dioceses (identified in the annual report of the Dioceses Commission [GS Misc 1130 para 15]) upon the workload of the Archbishops and their staff?

The Bishop of Portsmouth (Rt Revd Christopher Foster) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: In deciding not to pursue the Commission's proposals to redraw the Provincial Boundary, the House recognised the present imbalance but felt that it had other priorities at the present time.

The workload for the Archbishops and their staff in such areas as resourcing leadership in mission, episcopal ministerial development reviews, and clergy discipline cases remains unequal, but in its discussion last May members of the House felt that there were potentially other ways of addressing these. It was left that the Archbishops, together with the House's Standing Committee, would reflect further on the matter.

Very Revd Timothy Barker: I thank the Bishop for his answer. Can he help us with any information about the Archbishops' and the Standing Committee's further reflections?

The Bishop of Portsmouth: I am unable at the moment to go beyond the answer I have given Dean Barker. The matter is with the Archbishops and the Standing Committee.

Revd Preb Simon Cawdell (Hereford): Given that is the case, can you help us by suggesting when the Archbishops' Council and House of Bishops' Standing Committee might actually deliberate upon this subject?

The Bishop of Portsmouth: The matter is with the Archbishops and the Standing Committee. Members of Synod will be aware that the House's decisions, in due course, are reported, and they will be.

13. *Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Is the House of Bishops aware of concerns surrounding the response to allegations made against the late Bishop George Bell, and will it give consideration to the issuing of guidelines regarding the publication of evidence against deceased individuals before they can be presumed guilty of alleged crimes?

The Bishop of Durham (Rt Revd Paul Butler) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: On 3 February, the survivor in the case of George Bell gave a detailed interview to the *Argus*, a local newspaper in Sussex, detailing her abuse. The House of Bishops is well aware of this issue and the principle remains that it is legally impermissible for the Church to disclose any evidence used in the settlement, or any information that might lead to identification of the complainant. To be absolutely clear: no specific confidentiality agreement has been applied in Bishop Bell's case; confidentiality laws apply in all cases of this nature.

The desire for transparency does not sit easily with the requirement for confidentiality. Many vexed questions from local, national and international correspondents have been raised, which is understandable given the international standing of Bishop Bell as a theologian and church leader.

But here we must also consider the courage displayed by any survivor in coming forward both to report the abuse and to give an interview to a newspaper. The law rightly affords them protection to safeguard the confidentiality of their deeply personal information. Further statements on this matter are available on the communications blog.

Miss Prudence Dailey: Given that, for the reasons helpfully elucidated by the Bishop, the detailed evidence in the case of Bishop Bell cannot be published and cannot be subject to public scrutiny, so that the public cannot come to an informed view as to his guilt or innocence, will the House of Bishops therefore consider providing guidance on the circumstances in which it is appropriate to publicise allegations of historic abuse, and to take public action, such as the renaming of buildings or the proposed removal of Bishop Bell's commemoration from the Common Worship Calendar, which implies a presumption of guilt?

The Bishop of Durham: After any such cases we always do a review of what learning there might be, and this will be no exception, particularly around communications, and so forth. We will continually bear this in mind and keep working away at all our protocols. That is all I can say.

14. *Dr Andrew Bell (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: It is widely reported that a fragment of bone believed to have come from the body of Thomas Becket is to return to England from Hungary, to be displayed in venues including Westminster Abbey and Canterbury Cathedral, and to be the focus of services in which

“senior Anglican clerics” will take part. In view of these reports, has the House of Bishops considered offering guidance on the holding of such events in the light of Article 22 which prohibits “... worshipping and adoration, ... of reliques, and also invocation of saints...”?

The Bishop of Coventry (Rt Revd Dr Christopher Cocksworth) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: The House of Bishops has not met since the press coverage referred to in the question occurred. Offering hospitality to Roman Catholic Christians who wish to make relics they value accessible to the public, thereby enabling thankful remembrance together of ‘thy servants departed this life in thy faith and fear’, is a powerful symbol of ecumenical reconciliation and is not incompatible with the teaching of the Church of England.

15. *Mr Jack Shelley (Exeter)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: The House of Bishops reviewed ‘Communion by Extension’ in 2005 and reported to Synod in 2007 (GS Misc 873) that they would re-consider their guidance in the future in the light of further advice from the House’s Theological Group. Has that further advice ever been received, whether from the Theological Group or, subsequently, from the Faith and Order Commission?

The Bishop of Coventry (Rt Revd Dr Christopher Cocksworth) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: Neither the House of Bishops’ Theological Group nor the Faith and Order Commission has offered advice on this subject to the House of Bishops since 2007.

Mr Jack Shelley: When does the House of Bishops intend to look again at their guidance, and maybe also the liturgy, without awaiting the theological guidance?

The Bishop of Coventry: I think it should be said that there was no commitment to review the guidelines. Seventy-eight per cent of the diocesan responses at the time regarded them as adequate, so there was no commitment. If there is serious concern that those guidelines are inadequate or not being applied properly, then I think that should be made known through the normal processes.

Canon Malcolm Halliday (Leeds): In view of the report that we received here two years ago, “Released for Mission”, about rural ministry, which stressed the pressure upon rural ministry providing Eucharistic ministry, is it not surprising that this is not being allowed to lie in long rural grass?

The Bishop of Coventry: I am being asked for an opinion there. I can only repeat that if there is concern that this is something that is worthy of further consideration by the House of Bishops, particularly in the light of the issue that you raise, that should be raised through the normal channels.

16. *Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: In the light of the rapidly growing interest in gender fluidity and transgender issues within our culture, what steps has the House of Bishops taken to review the Biblical, theological and scientific perspectives on the relevant issues with a view:

- i) to the House being resourced to form a coherent and considered Christian analysis of the issues,
- ii) to being able to offer clergy and the Church generally theologically credible moral and social teaching, and pastoral advice?

The Bishop of Coventry (Rt Revd Dr Christopher Cocksworth) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: The House of Bishops continues to value the substantial report produced in 2003, *Some Issues in Human Sexuality: A Guide to the Debate* (CHP 2003, also GS Misc 722). There has not been another major report since then that reviews transgender issues. Members of Synod will have noted the intention of the Business Committee, as expressed in its report to schedule the Blackburn Diocesan Synod Motion on 'Welcoming Transgender People' for debate after the July sessions of Synod, has been completed. The debate will require all members of the Synod, including the House, to give these issues careful attention.

Miss Prudence Dailey: Given that the public discussion of transgender issues has moved on considerably since 2003, and that the concepts of gender, as distinct from biological sex and transgenderism, raise a number of deep theological questions that are beyond the scope of a diocesan synod motion about 'Welcoming Transgender People', will the House of Bishops consider seizing the initiative on these issues and carrying out some serious theological and pastoral reflection on them as soon as possible?

The Bishop of Coventry: I think I can say that the House of Bishops' Standing Committee will, I am sure, want to keep this area in mind as one area where it may wish to commission further work for consideration. The Pilling report, as we know, did not address it directly, but he did say this is a matter that the Church of England needs to give some attention to. Your concerns will have been heard.

17. *Canon Giles Goddard (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: What was the basis for the reference to 'mutual accountability' in the response of "a Church of England spokesperson" (*Guardian*, 29 January) to the recent YouGov poll on C of E attitudes to equal marriage, given that a significant majority of dioceses rejected the proposed Anglican Covenant?

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby) replied as Chair of the House of Bishops: The response referred to the acknowledgement by the Primates at their recent gathering that to commit to walking together implied interdependence and mutual accountability. Such catholicity in relationships is not incompatible with the legitimate diversity and independence of each province.

18. *Revd Canon Andrew Godsall (Exeter)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Could the House be invited to reflect on the recent Primates' meeting and, if so, what undertaking might be given for particular reflection on whether it was appropriate to adopt an approach involving 'relational consequences' in relation to a member province of the Anglican Communion in the light of the fact that a majority of the dioceses in the Church of England declined to approve the Anglican Communion Covenant?

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby) replied as the Chair of the House of Bishops: The House received a report on the Primates' meeting along with members of the College when they met in January. The Primates addressed the impact on relationships within the Anglican Communion when any province makes a unilateral change in doctrine. They have set out specific consequences in the functioning of the Communion and a task group will be appointed to carry forward the implications of their decision.

Revd Canon Andrew Godsall: Is there a difference between the specific consequences referred to in the answer and the relational consequences envisaged in section 4.2.7 of the proposed Anglican Communion Covenant that the dioceses of the Church of England rejected? If there is, what is it?

The Archbishop of Canterbury: Thank you. That is a very interesting question. The covenant was not considered at all during the Primates' meeting. I think it may have been mentioned once in passing. Therefore, the way in which the consequences were looked at was not related to the covenant in any way at all. To the best of my knowledge, no more than 16 - it may only be 11 - provinces have actually signed up to the covenant, therefore the vast majority would not consider it relevant in considering this, so there was no link.

Dr Rachel Jepson (Birmingham): Would the House of Bishops also take the opportunity to discuss plans to impose similar relational consequences for those provinces which support the criminalisation of homosexuality and, in so doing, are in breach of the Lambeth Resolution?

The Archbishop of Canterbury: Thank you very much. I hope it is clear that the House of Bishops was not involved in the Primates' meeting. It was the Primates' meeting, and the House of Bishops has not imposed any relational consequences in any way at all, as I hope I made clear earlier. Such consequences are those at Communion level and cannot bind any particular province.

Having said that, I think the point you raise is a very, very important one. If you look at the communiqué, which you will find on the Primates' meeting website, you will find that there is a very, very clear statement of the longstanding opposition of the Anglican Communion to the criminalisation of LGBTI people. Given that that is a very important part of the thinking of the Anglican Communion in this area, one could anticipate that the Primates, when they meet, were someone to be advocating such, would need to consider that, if they were continue to advocate it since the Primates' meeting we just had. I am one vote out of 38 and I could not possibly predict or anticipate what the outcome will be, but thank you.

19. *Mrs Anne Foreman (Exeter)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: What steps does the Church propose to take in the light of the reply given on 14 December by the Minister of State for the Armed Forces to a written question about the registration of military chapels for same-sex and other marriages?

The Bishop to the Armed Forces (Rt Revd Nigel Stock) replied as Bishop to the Forces: I wrote to the Minister on 18 December saying that it was not clear what she had in mind where her reply referred to seeking advice “on how Parliament’s sanction of same-sex marriages may be fully implemented”. I offered to meet her. I also suggested that the reply may have over-simplified the position in saying, “none of the Sending Churches currently allows same-sex marriages to be conducted [in military chapels]”. I explained that it was not legally possible for a marriage of two people of the same sex to be solemnized according to the rites of the Church of England; and, so far as I was aware, none of the other Churches whose ministers serve as military chaplains had opted in to same-sex marriage. Their clergy did not, therefore, conduct such marriages, whether in military chapels or in their own churches and chapels.

Mrs Anne Foreman: Thank you very much indeed, Bishop, for your answer and for making the position so clear to me and, who knows, perhaps clear to the minister as well. From your answer, and what I have read about the 2013 Act, it appears that same-sex marriages in military chapels is both possible and impossible at the same time.

My supplementary is, therefore, please can the House of Bishops consider what steps they might take to respond to the growing level of interest and concern about the Church apparently not recognising or honouring same sex relationships by some form of religious ceremony that can be used with confidence?

The Bishop to the Armed Forces: I am not sure that quite follows on from what you were asking about military chapels. What is possible in military chapels is for the secretary of state to apply for those ones which are not consecrated to be registered for same-sex marriage. If that was the case then same-sex marriage could take place by a member of a denomination that would carry it out. They would have to have a registrar available for that. At the moment, that is the only way that these could happen within a military chapel.

Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford): Is it possible to understand whether a member of TEC acting under licence here in the UK could conduct a same-sex marriage in a consecrated chapel?

The Bishop to the Armed Forces: It could not be in a consecrated chapel, no.

Ms Jayne Ozanne: And in an unconsecrated chapel?

The Bishop to the Armed Forces: They would have to have overseas permission. Whether they would get that is another matter; that is slightly beyond what I can answer.

20. *Mrs April Alexander (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: “The Archbishops’ Secretary for Appointments is charged by Synod with monitoring diversity through the appointments processes for Bishops, Deans, Archdeacons and Residentiary Canons.” (The Diversity Monitoring page of the Church of England website). In view of the particular importance of this matter in the aftermath of the

decision in 2014 to admit women to the episcopate, when is Synod going to receive a report on this monitoring?

The Bishop of Truro (Rt Revd Tim Thornton) replied as Chair of the Development and Appointments Group: Monitoring the diversity of applications for, and appointments to, senior roles is crucial in understanding where there might be barriers preventing suitably experienced people from posts of wider responsibility. The information allows us to consider what interventions might be required. However, publication of diversity data needs to comply with the requirements of data protection and equalities legislation. The Developments and Appointments Group will discuss the best way to take this forward.

Mrs April Alexander: I wonder which particular clauses of the data protection and equalities legislation is preventing the publication of anonymous data, on which Synod voted, given that the Bar Council has recently said that without data it is impossible to establish the nature and extent of inequality and that there should be a presumption of publication.

The Bishop of Truro: None of the clauses is preventing us, it is just that we have not got round to deciding the best way to put the information into the public domain to bring it either here or where it is going to go.

21. *Revd Charles Read (Norwich)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: As the current funding for research into gender issues under the Transformations agenda runs out in August 2016, what plans are in place to continue this research, particularly into the many gender issues around creating and affirming different patterns of ministry, and the disproportionate numbers of women in self-supporting ministry?

The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: All research being conducted and commissioned by the Ministry Council is mindful of diversity issues, particularly when sampling groups for study. The concern to attend to gender issues is not exclusively a feature of the Transformations work. For example analysis conducted throughout the duration of the Clergy Experiences of Ministry Project from 2011 to 2016 has consistently sought to test its findings for gender effects (see further: <http://www.ministrydevelopment.org.uk/emproject>). The Transformations research has made important contributions to work in vocations, self-supporting ministry and how clergy move through ministry, including senior leadership (see further: http://www.ministrydevelopment.org.uk/gender_and_ministry_research). These areas continue to be on the Council's research agenda with work on self-supporting ministry planned for later 2016. Also the longitudinal research referred to in GS2020 para 32 will develop the Transformation research findings and assist in understanding better what issues, gender and otherwise, underlie our different patterns of ministry.

Revd Charles Read: I take it from the reply that the Transformations project will stop in its present form when funding runs out. Do you know if there are any plans to mark this project at its ending by, for example, a publication of interim results?

The Bishop of Sheffield: Thank you, Charles. No, my understanding is that the Transformations Group will continue for some years and it will be for that group to determine when it comes to an end. The specific funding for specific research to support the work of that group comes to an end, but there will be a lot of ongoing work that the Ministry Council is doing anyway which is relevant to this agenda, including, for example, the exemplary work that is being done in relation to vocations and encouraging vocations among younger women.

22. *Revd Dr Ian Paul (Southwell & Nottingham)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: What arrangements does the House have in place for a member or members to speak to the media on its behalf in relation to issues of human sexuality, in particular, to explain the teaching position of the Church and the statements of the House, and to correct any misunderstandings?

The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: Approaches to members of the House from the media usually come via a diocesan communications officer and/or the communications office in Westminster. Human sexuality accounts for a very small number of those enquiries. As with all interview requests the key is availability of bishops and balancing long planned diaries against requests which are inevitably labelled “urgent” and arrive with a very short time frame to accommodate a response – especially with broadcast media. The media are not duty bound to approach our offices prior to running stories on human sexuality and often will not do so as they will seek polarising views rather than reconciling voices in the mistaken belief that makes for a better story.

Revd Dr Ian Paul: Would it be possible for the Bishop of Sheffield to confirm, given that the Primates’ gathering was in people’s diaries ahead of time, given the significance of the issue and given, as we heard, in the Presidential Address there was a significant misrepresentation in the media, whether news outlets, particularly Channel 4 News, had been in touch with the Church of England centrally and whether there was an available list of people who could act as spokesman? I do not know whether the Bishop would prefer to give a written answer rather than answer on the spot.

The Bishop of Sheffield: I could not give an answer to that question without notice and preparation, but I will do what I can to elicit answer. Thank you.

Secretary General

23. *Very Revd Frances Ward (Deans)* asked the Secretary General: Sir Michael Wilshaw has announced that Ofsted has set up a special team of inspectors to crack down on unregistered independent schools that give rise to serious concern for reasons such as: fire hazards, unhygienic conditions, evidence of misogynistic, homophobic and anti-Semitic teaching material; and staff not being properly checked to work with children. Given the need not to waste valuable Ofsted time and resources, detracting from this important work, can the General Synod be assured that Church-sponsored education provision will not be liable to such inspection - such as youth groups, choirs, Sunday schools, Confirmation classes, cathedral choir schools and non-residential youth activities and holiday clubs?

24. *Mr Nick Harding (Southwell & Nottingham)* asked the Secretary General: What representations were made to the Government during the period of consultation regarding Ofsted registration and possible inspection of church-based children and youth activities, and what assurances or otherwise did you receive?

25. *Mr Clive Scowen (London)* asked the Secretary General: What representations have been made, in response to the Government's consultation or otherwise, in relation to the proposal, in the name of combating extremism, to bring church children's and youth work within the scope of Ofsted inspection and control, and what response if any has been received from the Government?

Mr William Nye replied as Secretary General: The Government is consulting on whether and how to register and inspect what it calls 'out of school settings', including potentially youth groups, holiday clubs etc. The Archbishops' Council and the National Society have made representations to the Government and held several meetings with ministers and officials. We have argued firmly that there is no need for blanket registration of these activities. The problems the Government have identified in a few settings can be addressed without the need to register all of them. The Government has yet to respond to the representations received.

Mr Clive Scowen: In the event of the Government not accepting the representations which have been made, what plans are in place to seek and to mobilise political and public support for the fundamental freedom of Christians and other people of faith to nurture their children in their faith and to commend that faith to young and old alike without state interference?

Mr William Nye: Thank you very much for the question. I think it is probably a little premature to say what plans there might be, depending on what the Government says in response. However, the Church, through the Education Office, the Second Church Estates Commissioner and the Archbishops' Council, and with a number of other dioceses writing in, have made their views very clear. We have also sought to help mobilise voices from other parts of the third sector, other youth organisations, who have very similar concerns as well as the Church and other denominations.

Revd Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich): Is the Secretary General aware that the perceived silence of the Church is causing considerable anxiety in many quarters and leaves the field open for others to say things that are untrue? What do we propose to do about it?

Mr William Nye: I confess, I was not aware of that. The Government is in absolutely no doubt about the really quite strong views that have been expressed by the Church of England through bishops, through our representations, through the Second Church Estates Commissioner, and numerous meetings that we have had with ministers from more than one department. They are in no doubt about the strong views that we have, particularly about our view that while it is appropriate to try and crack down on radicalisation in some places, it is not necessary to do that to have a blanket registration scheme for all activities with young people.

The Chair: Questions 26 to 28 were originally directed to the Chair of the Archbishops' Council Finance Committee but were allocated to the Secretary General as it was thought that the Chair of the Finance Committee was unable to be with us. In fact, we do have the pleasure of Canon Spence's inimitable presence, so he will answer any supplementary questions.

26. *Mrs Heather Black (York)* asked the Secretary General: Could the Secretary General please explain how an evaluation of the effectiveness of the Church and Community Fund was undertaken and the conclusions reached before closing the fund down at the end of 2015?

Mr William Nye replied as Secretary General: Since the mid-1980s the Council's Church and Community Fund has funded some national Church work as well as local projects through grants. In reaching its decision to end the Church and Community Fund's grant making programme at the end of 2015, the Archbishops' Council considered the evidence from ongoing evaluation of the impact of the Fund, and the resources available to carry out the necessary work that can only be done, or is most effectively or efficiently carried out, at national level. The Council also noted plans to target funding to support work in the poorest parishes as part of the Resourcing the Future proposals.

27. *Revd Canon Catherine Grylls (Birmingham)* asked the Secretary General: Following the closure of the Church and Community Fund what plans does the Archbishops' Council have to enable and support the initiatives and mission supported and enabled by CCF?

Mr William Nye replied as Secretary General: From 2017 the aspiration is that the Archbishops' Council will distribute at least £20 million p.a. for investment in mission and growth opportunities, if sufficient money can be made available from the funds managed by the Church Commissioners.

Revd Canon Catherine Grylls: Thank you for your answer. One of the key elements of the way that the CCF worked was the sharing of good ideas and a concern to consider replicability. What thought has been given to how these helpful elements might be continued under a new funding arrangement?

Canon John Spence (ex officio): Thank you very much. If I may with your permission, Chairman, just digress for a moment. Can I thank those two members of General Synod, who, on arriving in the Church House lift this afternoon from the cold winds of Great Smith Street and on discovering that my hand that shook theirs was very warm, spontaneously decided to cuddle me between floors.

The Chair: I think that might be deviation, Canon Spence.

Canon John Spence (ex officio): They only cuddled me, Chairman. As it was a guarded space with no media present, I will keep all other information confidential.

I do take this point very seriously. It is critical that we maintain that approach to replicating good news stories or good practice. It is a key feature of what we are doing in terms of the new funding streams coming post-Darlow. I will be very happy to consider how we can extend that into that funding piece and in those other sources of funding which will be carrying on if - if - we are not able to resume distribution of the Church and Communities Fund.

28. *Mr Andrew Presland (Peterborough)* asked the Secretary General: What elements of the Church's national funds will individual PCCs be able to apply for under the Resourcing the Future proposals, given that it was said during the November 2015 Synod that parishes would be able to apply for funding, but is stated in GS 2021 that the Funding for Mission in the Poorest Communities will not be distributed directly to parishes?

Mr William Nye replied as Secretary General: The national funds managed by the Church Commissioners are distributed to dioceses to advance their plans for supporting local mission. The funds will largely be directed to parish work; but it is right, in view of the scale of funds, that diocesan leadership teams take the responsibility for how they are spent and take the lead in any application process.

The Funding for Mission in the poorest communities will be distributed between dioceses on a formula basis to support mission in low income areas. The Strategic Development Funding is available for dioceses to apply for – to support large scale programmes which will make a significant difference to their mission and financial strength. It is expected that diocesan applications will build on parish initiatives.

29. *Mr Colin Slater (Southwell & Nottingham)* asked the Secretary General: Can the Synod be informed of the cost of preparing and distributing by email the Church of England daily and weekly media digest, with particular reference to staff costs?

Mr William Nye replied as Secretary General: It is difficult to provide an accurate assessment of staff costs as the digest is compiled on a rota basis involving different members of the communications team, on differing levels of seniority and pay.

The communications office subscribes to a digital cuttings service as part of the digest at a cost of just over £4,000 per annum. In addition just over £8,000 was paid for the services of former trained journalists to do the first draft of the digest at 5am each weekday morning when the cuttings arrive. That draft will then be sent to a member of the team who will edit, check and send. The team aim to issue the digest before 8am each weekday morning. At weekends the Comms team compile and edit the digest themselves and seek to issue before midday.

Mr Colin Slater (Southwell & Nottingham): I thank the Secretary General for his response. Would he accept from me, and I am somebody who supports this work that has been introduced and finds it both useful and informative, that it is therefore remarkable that it should be introduced with apparently little idea of the total cost of this service. When does he anticipate that such a figure of total cost will be available to this Synod?

Mr William Nye: I have tried in my answer to give you the best estimate of the total cost in terms of the actual outlays on the cuttings service and the services of the journalists who help prepare. As I said, the rest of the cost is essentially absorbed by the time in the early morning by the various members of the Communications Office who do this, which is a pretty negligible amount of the time they spend, in putting together something which is circulated to a wide number of people. If we can get a better estimate, I am very glad to give it to you.

Mr David Lamming (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich): Having regard to the costings that we have just been informed about, how many subscribers currently are there to the daily media digest? What publicity is being given to the digest to encourage other people in dioceses and parishes to become subscribers?

Mr William Nye: I was informed earlier today that there are somewhere over 2,000 subscribers at the moment. It is provided to all members of the General Synod and, perhaps as a means of publicity, I would encourage all members to encourage anyone you might know in the Church to sign up to this free service, because the marginal cost of additional subscribers is, of course, zero, and we would get even better value out of it if we could get another few thousand people signed up.

Clerk to the Synod

30. *Revd Julie Conalty (Rochester)* asked the Clerk to the Synod: Please provide the following statistics regarding the composition of this Synod and its predecessor:

- (a) the percentages of the membership (broken down by House) which is male/female; and
- (b) the percentages of the membership (broken down by House) which is white British/BAME/'other'.

Dr Jacqui Philips replied as Clerk to the Synod: The breakdown by gender of the membership of the Houses of General Synod is as follows:

	2010	2015
Bishops	100% male 0% female	96.2% male; 3.8% female
Clergy	71.2% male 28.8% female	66.5% male; 33.5% female
Laity	53.8% male 46.2% female	51.2% male; 48.8% female

In 2010 the following percentages of each House declared themselves as BAME:

	2010
Bishops	1.8%
Clergy	3.7%
Laity	3.3%

The self-declared figures for ethnic background for the 2015-2020 General Synod will be made available in early March 2016.

National Society Council

31. *Revd Wyn Beynon (Worcester)* asked the Chair of the National Society Council: Has consideration been given to whether it is legal and ethical for Diocesan Boards of Education to force Church of England schools to join their own Diocesan Multi Academy Trusts and to refuse permission for them to join smaller, local MATs?

Mrs Susan Witts replied on behalf of the Chair of the National Society Council: It is the responsibility of every Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) to ensure the effectiveness and safeguard the Christian character of its Church of England schools. In fulfilling that responsibility the DBE must plan strategically for all of the schools in its family, rather than just for an individual school. Building a strong diocesan MAT or developing strong church school led MATs is essential to achieve this goal.

The National Society is in the final stage of agreeing a Memorandum of Understanding with the DfE which sets out the parameters in which all these decisions will be made, with a clear expectation that dioceses will be setting them within an overall strategy for ensuring all Church of England schools in the diocese remain strong. Any school wishing to convert to academy status should discuss the options with its DBE at the earliest stage.

Revd Wyn Beynon: Does the National Society encourage Diocesan Boards of Education to support foundation schools thinking of joining local MATs with non-foundation schools in order to further an incarnational mission?

Mrs Susan Witts: I offer apologies from the Bishop of Ely; he was unable to be here today. I am answering on his behalf as one of two members of the National Society Council elected by General Synod.

Given the dramatic changes in the education landscape over the last five years, it is vital that dioceses develop the correct capacity to ensure all of its schools remain strong and are well served as part of the diocesan family. Since the publication of *A Diocesan Board of Education for the Future*, DBEs have the strength and are developing the capacity in this area, but, in order to continue to sustain this development, they need to help all the Church of England schools within the diocese to play a part in building a strong family of schools for mutual benefit for the good of the whole.

The Memorandum of Understanding negotiated by the National Society makes it very clear that the Secretary of State and regional schools commissioners will be expected to work with dioceses as they continue to develop strength and capacity in this area, but this will not be to the detriment of any child's education in the present. On average, Church of England schools are more likely to be rated "good" and "outstanding" than other schools, so we are confident that within our own school system we have the capacity to enable all the schools to flourish. Thank you.

Canon Peter Bruinvels (Guildford): Is the respondent aware that in the diocese of Guildford we welcome all kinds of schools, whether or not they are in our trust, they are still part of the family. There are no penalties. We prefer them to join our trust, the Good Shepherd Trust, but, if they do not, they are still part of our family.

Mrs Susan Witts: Many community schools want to be part of the diocesan or church school-led MAT because they recognise the benefits, as you say. This is underpinned by clear values and principles. DBEs have a responsibility to ensure that any such arrangements are put in place in a way which safeguards the Christian character of the Church of England schools in perpetuity.

Church Buildings Council

32. *Mrs Rosemary Lyon (Blackburn)* asked the Chair of the Church Buildings Council: What evidence is there to show that the online Faculty application system is proving less onerous as well as providing a speedier outcome for parishes?

Sir Tony Baldry replied as Chair of the Church Buildings Council: The online system, introduced in November 2014, was designed to make the Faculty application process easier and speedier for parishes.

More than half of the dioceses are already using the system since its launch, with some parishes having already applied for multiple Faculties through the system. Because the system keeps a record of the Standard Information form and the Statement of Significance, parishes have found Faculty applications less onerous and speedier, as they do not have to repeat this work.

In Leicester Diocese, the DAC Secretary explained that using the online system meant that “parishes are able to make applications for Minor Works authorisation and Faculties online with the ability to track their progress”, making the Faculty process more accountable.

33. *Mrs Sheri Sturgess (Truro)* asked the Chair of the Church Buildings Council: Are representations ever made to those bodies and agencies concerned with the preservation of biodiversity and the rights of animals to consider whether the rights of bats to exist on Church premises are in any sense commensurate with the rights of those who have to clear up the consequences of their presence?

Sir Tony Baldry replied as Chair of the Church Buildings Council: There is significant research and development to assess how we can reduce the impact caused by bats in churches. This has included a three year research project that concluded in 2013, as well as a pilot project led by Historic England that focused on churches with significant bat issues. Natural England is currently creating a licensing framework to provide the mechanism through which the impact of bats will be controlled in churches.

In partnership with Natural England, Historic England, the Churches Conservation Trust, and the Bat Conservation Trust, the Church of England is seeking Heritage Lottery Funding for a five year Bats in Churches project to create a national support network for

churches that have bat related issues and trial a range of solutions. The outcome of the bid for funding will be known in March, and a major conference for the church, heritage and bat sectors will be held in Coventry on 13 May.

Revd Canon Alan Bashforth (Truro): In the spirit of Jeremy Corbyn, I ask this question on behalf of Ellie, the Assistant Curate of the Eight Saints Cluster in central Cornwall, who I know lives in the hope that one day they will not be simplified and reorganised into the 'guano team'.

The Chair: And your question?

Revd Canon Alan Bashforth (Truro): There is one, I promise! Do you think it would be possible for Ellie to make a contribution to your coming conference?

Sir Tony Baldry: Of course. Indeed, I have agreed with Natural England, who are organising the conference, that they will send an invitation to every church that they know of which has a problem with bats. I would expect that church and that group of churches to have an invitation to the conference. Hopefully, we will have about 150 representatives of churches from up and down the country, who have particular problems with bats, involved in this conference.

34. *Mr Samuel Margrave (Coventry)* asked the Chair of the Church Buildings Council: Can the Church Buildings Council please tell Synod the cost (including postage and staff time) of the Chairman of the Council's Christmas card and why an email (with a donation to charity or a Church in need) was not considered sufficient?

Sir Tony Baldry replied as Chair of the Church Buildings Council: I believe in sending Christmas cards as part of the celebration of Christmas.

The cost of designing and printing the Christmas cards which I sent last year in my capacity as Chair of the Church Buildings Council was borne entirely by myself. No costs fell to the Church Buildings Council or to any other part of the Church of England.

The cost of the postage of the Christmas cards which I sent out in my capacity as Chair of the Church Buildings Council was borne entirely by myself. No costs fell to the Church Buildings Council or any other part of the Church of England.

There would have been a de minimis cost in staff time in emailing to my secretary, whom I pay, the address list of the Chairs and Secretaries of DACs and others to enable my secretary to print the necessary labels for the Christmas cards.

Council For Christian Unity

35. *Revd Paul Hutchinson (York)* asked the Chair of the Council for Christian Unity: What reasons were given by the Scottish Episcopal Church in 2012-13 for its withdrawal from full formal participation in the Joint Study Group whose report is being presented at the current group of sessions?

The Bishop of Peterborough (Rt Revd Donald Allister) replied as Chair of the Council for Christian Unity: A letter received by CCU staff from the Bishop of Glasgow and Galloway in April 2013 noted that the Faith and Order Board of the Scottish Episcopal Church 'remains concerned that the nature of the talks has moved from faith & order conversations towards ecumenical discussions, the outcome of which may lead to the signing of a form of agreement or statement', indicating that the Scottish Episcopal Church would not wish to be a signatory to such an agreement. The Scottish Episcopal Church did however then appoint an observer, who attended all subsequent meetings of the Joint Study Group and contributed fully and constructively to the deliberations leading to the report being presented to Synod, including detailed discussion of the draft text.

Revd Paul Hutchinson: As an observer, and indeed as the Anglican Church that has the vast majority of relationships with the Church of Scotland, was the Scottish Episcopal Church given sight of the final version of the Columba Declaration before it was given to the media? Did the SEC at any time before then indicate its approval of either the process or the substance of that declaration?

The Bishop of Peterborough: The Scottish Episcopal Church had an observer at the meetings of the joint study group, who was fully involved in the meetings and who was present at every stage, including the drafting of the declaration.

Ministry Council

36. *Revd Dr Philip Plyming (Guildford)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: Given that under the RME proposals, dioceses are being given greater control, flexibility and, therefore, responsibility over the resources for ministerial education, what consideration has been given to the training and support that will be needed to help diocesan teams navigate what will be an increasingly complex financial landscape?

The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft) replied as Chair of the Ministry Council: The Ministry Council is very aware of the added responsibilities for dioceses and Theological Education Institutions. Ministry Division staff will work with diocesan and TEI staff from April to September 2016 on detailed implementation to cooperate in designing the most efficient and effective financial and administrative systems. These will be kept under review and adjusted if necessary. A full-time Pathways Adviser will be available to DDOs and TEIs with advice and guidance on pathway choices. The Division's finance team will be available to support dioceses and TEIs with guidance and information. There will be the option of a controlled trial of the new arrangements in September 2016 for dioceses and TEIs who wish to take part and use this for training. Staff in the Division will plan for transition to the new system in September 2017 with the needs of dioceses and TEIs in view and in consultation with them.

Revd Dr Philip Plyming: Thank you for your answer, Bishop. Has the consultation conducted so far suggested that dioceses will need to recruit additional staff to their ministry and mission teams to manage the additional work they have described?

The Bishop of Sheffield: I do not think it has yet. There is a focus on strengthening DDO and vocational advisers' teams in order to grow vocations, in order to eliminate waiting time when candidates are coming forward. I think there will be some added work in detailed consideration of pathways, which may also put work on DDOs and vocations teams. Most dioceses already have capacity to do that kind of thing, because they are working with candidates for lay ministry, for other forms of ministry, and helping to design that.

The financial complexities will not be too great on the scale on which a diocese operates in terms of invoicing and collection and that kind of thing. It is really important that we prepare thoroughly, and we have from now until 2017 to do that, and work out the systems really carefully. I do not think any of the challenges are insurmountable.

37. *Revd Canon Jonathan Clerk (Leeds)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: What work is being done to test the relative effectiveness of Contextual Ordination Training against Residential?

The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft) replied as Chair of the Ministry Council: The first phase of research into the effectiveness of ministerial education commissioned by the Resourcing Ministerial Education Task Group suggested that all pathways could be used with confidence. Following feedback from Synod, Theological Education Institutions (TEIs) diocesan staff and others, further research is being undertaken to scrutinise this important finding and to explore in more detail the benefits of the three existing IME Phase 1 pathways and Phase 2 provision. This work is currently in progress, qualitative in character, and involves listening to multiple perspectives, including ordinands, TEI staff, placement supervisors, church wardens, diocesan officers and training incumbents. Initial findings from this work will be reported at the Faith in Research Conference in May 2016. It will also make a significant contribution to the longitudinal described in GS 2020 paragraph 22.

38. *Revd Dr Emma Ineson (Universities & TEIs)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: GS 2020 'Renewal and Reform, Resourcing Ministerial Education' states that "The final round of written consultation showed that 10% of dioceses were not content to proceed on principle. Some other dioceses and TEIs have varying degrees of concern either about the impact on their situation or about implementation". Of the 21 Theological Education Institutions that responded to the December 2015 written survey of detailed responses to the funding proposals, to the question: 'Please indicate on the scale below your overall support for the current proposals', how many indicated that they were: content to go ahead; content to go ahead with changes; not content to go ahead at this stage; or uncertain?

The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft) replied as Chair of the Ministry Council: Of the responses received from TEIs, 1 was content to go ahead without any change, 13 were content to go ahead with changes, 5 were not content, and 2 were uncertain. There was a high level of consistency between the changes required by the 13 who were content to go ahead and the concerns of the 5 who were not content. It is therefore clear what changes are now required and the Council is ready to address them in the implementation stage.

Revd Dr Emma Ineson: Given the high level of consistency in the changes suggested by TEIs who responded to the written consultation on RME, such that it is said in your answer to be “clear” what changes to the funding proposals are now required, please could you state briefly what those changes will be and whether or not they will include the ring-fencing of Vote 1 funding for IME 1?

The Bishop of Sheffield: Thank you, Emma. I am very happy to do that. There is also some detail on a blog I posted on Friday, which gives clearer answers to this.

You may like to know there were four main issues raised by the TEIs in their responses, and a similarity of response among content with changes and not content. The ring-fencing of funding for IME 1 had ten responses, and there are some comments on the blog about that. I think we have put some comments in the report about dioceses using funding for IME 2. It is clearer on the blog post that that would come after time and by negotiation. There is more conversation to be had.

The second, the lower age band should be 32. Seven institutions raised that question. You will see from paper 2020 that we are actually exploring that, but in order to do that we need to gain the agreement of the Finance Committee in order to be able to raise Vote 1 by the required amount, and the Finance Committee has not met before Synod is meeting.

The third concern was additional administrative burdens on TEIs. Those, it seems to me, are best explored in the next round of consultations about implementation. I think perhaps they are not as complex as people think they may be, but that is to be explored. The fourth is travel costs and particularly the rural demographic and travel costs. You will see there is a later question about that and a very specific answer to that question.

39. *Revd Canon Alan Bashforth (Truro)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: Has consideration been given to the possibility that the sparsity of large well financed parishes in poorer rural dioceses that could afford the maintenance cost of a student undertaking a placement on a mixed-context based pathway will severely curtail the possibility of such pathways being used in those poorer rural dioceses?

The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft) replied: Yes. Indeed, there is already a scheme that has over the last two years provided financial support to less well-resourced parishes to enable currently some 40 students to follow mixed mode-context based pathways that would not have been financially viable otherwise. The RME proposals look to strengthen this scheme by extending the reach of this to support a wider range of dioceses, including rural dioceses and apportioning the cost of across all dioceses as part of Vote 1. There will also be a review of mixed mode-context based issues and separately of family maintenance arrangements to ensure that the funding arrangements remain fair and that students and pathways are treated equitably.

Revd Canon Alan Bashforth: Through the accidents of geography and demographics, poorer rural dioceses produce a smaller cohort of ordination candidates of the age that

will attract most funding and a smaller number than those in an urban context in university towns generally. Will having a smaller, older cohort inevitably limit choice and flexibility in choosing training pathways both for the ordinand and the diocese in those circumstances?

The Bishop of Sheffield: Thank you. We hope not in the modelling that we have done so far. We have said that we need to have particular conversations with the dioceses of Truro and Exeter and those are being arranged now about how to take that forward, and with one or two other rural contexts. We think those can be overcome. There is a specific point about travel expenses which we will come to in the next question. Under the proposals in GS 2020 there are proposals to broaden the scheme whereby dioceses receive additional funding for candidates in mixed mode training in poorer contexts, and that would certainly apply to rural contexts.

40. *Revd Canon Alan Bashforth (Truro)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: An ordinand trained on the South West peninsular travels an average of 2,600 miles/year to access training, giving an expenses bills of £1,700/year. As travelling expenses under the RME provision are to be part of the tuition grant provided to dioceses, is it therefore the case that Truro and other rural dioceses, faced with such travel costs, will in effect receive at least £2,000 less than many of their urban counterparts to train each of their ordinands?

The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft) replied: The standard grant is calculated to include an allowance for travel as the average expense for ordinands in that age cohort. It is clear that this arrangement could for geographic reasons disadvantage students in the South West and other areas where distance from a teaching centre entails longer distance travel. The Ministry Council is aware of this issue and can provide assurance that as part of the work on implementing the RME funding arrangements the disadvantage to students in remote rural areas will be addressed. A possible solution, for example, is to offer a supplement to the standard grant where there are travel costs for a student above a certain ceiling. This and other options will be considered in discussion with dioceses and TElS.

Revd Canon Alan Bashforth: Was consideration given to working out the details of this clear and recognised anomaly in RME before asking Synod to vote on the funding proposals, rather than voting on the proposals with a promise that this and other anomalies would be ironed out later?

The Bishop of Sheffield: I think it is true to say, if we look back over the last year and the iterative process that we have had of putting proposals forward, reflecting on them, gaining feedback, revising, then putting them back, that process will go on for some time. I would imagine it will go on until the proposals are actually implemented, and each iteration we are able to get them better and better and more and more suitable. The complexities of understanding the vagaries of the present Vote 1 system are a challenge in themselves. It takes about two hours to work through what is and is not happening in the current Vote 1. No, it was not possible to anticipate all of the questions and problems but we hope it is constantly changing and improving. There is no cut-off to our doing that. We will go on improving it as we go forward.

Mrs Anne Foreman (Exeter): Is there a timeframe for the options considering about travel costs in rural areas, because it is a pressing issue?

The Bishop of Sheffield: We will be looking at that over the next two to three months and I hope we will have something settled by then, Anne. That is the timescale we are thinking of.

41. *Revd Dr Andrew Atherstone (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: How many ordinands began Initial Ministerial Education in each of the last five years 2011-2015 inclusive? Please give the numbers for the four age bands (29 and under, 30-39, 40-55, over 55 at the start of their training), with each age band divided into numbers of men and women.

The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft) replied: The detailed analysis in answer to the question is below and has been provided on the noticeboard.

Total number of ordinands starting training

Year	Male	Female
2011/12	242	228
2012/13	288	251
2013/14	258	249
2014/15	271	202
2015/16	254	240

Number of ordinands starting training by age bands

Year	Under 30		30-39		40-54		55 and over	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
2011/12	55	19	81	35	72	126	34	48
2012/13	77	17	86	43	79	126	46	65
2013/14	75	25	78	55	82	115	23	54
2014/15	84	24	73	34	85	94	29	50
2015/16	66	29	75	45	85	115	28	51

Revd Dr Andrew Atherstone: Your blog on Friday suggests that the solution to this gender imbalance in recruitments is to give dioceses the liberty not to send younger students to college, to reinvest some of the cash in older ordinands; is not a better solution to ensure residential training for under 40s but just recruit many many more younger women? What is the Ministry Council doing to ensure that happens?

The Bishop of Sheffield: Thank you. What a helpful question. It is in two parts. We want to do much more to encourage the recruitment of younger candidates, including younger women, and that is what the Vocations Initiative will be focusing on and Synod will hear more about that on Wednesday morning. You are quite right that the principal question to address is the recruitment of more younger candidates, including women, and to find a better gender balance. However, it is absolutely the case that the funding which is allocated through the block granting scheme is not attached to individual students. It is given to the dioceses. It is for the dioceses to determine how this is shaped. Thirty six per cent of the students under 30 who will receive the largest block

grant on the current profile do not currently train by three years' residential training. There is a significant residue there which can be invested in older candidates as now. The candidates in the next band, 30 to 39, 30% of them do not train by two years' full-time training. Funding is there for dioceses to redistribute and reallocate to other candidates. It is so important to understand that we are keeping the same amount of funding in the system, possibly a little more if we go to 32, as at present. We are not taking money out of the system. We are entrusting dioceses with allocating it to candidates as they know them and to fund their training appropriately. Dioceses do really want (a) to have that flexibility, and (b) to give their ordinands the best possible training. Why would we not?

Mrs Susannah Leafe (Truro): It was good to hear that you are looking to encourage women into training. Would one way of increasing the number of women at our theological colleges be to consider finding a clear pathway for the women who would like to serve in our churches in a complementarian ministry?

The Chair: I think, actually, Mrs Leafe, this is about ordinands.

Mrs Susannah Leafe: It is about ordinands, but is there a way of ordination like the deacon training? That is another form of ordination.

The Chair: I think you might be going beyond the question, I am afraid, but thank you for putting it.

Mrs Susannah Leafe: Sorry.

42. *Mrs Helen Lamb (Ely)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: With respect to papers GS 2015 and GS 2020, and in light of the Ministry Council reviewing the ministerial selection criteria, what connections are being made by the Ministry Council with the work of the Evangelism Task Group to ensure that any revised selection criteria include the significance of a demonstrated commitment among candidates both to evangelism personally and the effective support and encouragement of others in evangelism?

The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft) replied: The current criteria for selection include the requirement that a candidate should have a personal commitment to mission and evangelism (Criterion H1) and enable others in mission and evangelism (Criterion H4). Candidates are currently asked at interview to refer to evidence of their practical engagement in both of these. In preparation for the review of the criteria document, staff from Ministry Division have met members of the Evangelism Task Group and have worked with one of its members to support research exploring the assessment of candidates at Bishops' Advisory Panels under the criteria relating to evangelism. The fruits of this research will be used in the review and further comments from the Evangelism Task Group will be invited in the course of the review. The current criteria are publicly available on the Church of England website for members to see.

Mrs Helen Lamb: Thank you for the response which mentions that there is research underway exploring the assessment of candidates in evangelism at Bishops Advisory

Panel, could you confirm what the scope of that research is and what question or questions it is seeking to address?

The Bishop of Sheffield: I think it is a retrospective piece of work exploring the experiences of candidates as they go through the process and what can be learnt from their experiences that we can reapply as we take this forward and hope for it to be better.

Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark): Of course, there is some research already available in the Evangelism Task Group Report by Beth Keith who has suggested that, for many clergy, evangelism and witness are not regarded as additional rather than central items. Will you, therefore, Bishop Steven, take on board her suggestion that witness is clearly identified as central to the Church's understanding of ordained vocation and not an optional extra for some?

The Bishop of Sheffield: Thank you, Adrian. That is already there in the criteria and it will reassure Synod to know, I am sure, that Ministry Council and Ministry Division have been in constant dialogue with Beth through her research and are continuing that conversation.

The Chair: Sorry, I am afraid we have had two supplementaries already on that question, I am afraid, so we move to question 43 from Dr Paul.

43. *Revd Dr Ian Paul (Southwell & Nottingham)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: What is the expectation of time spent in study (as opposed to being on placement) towards taught modules for those on 'full-time' ordination training?

The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft) replied: There are no nationally set expectations for the time spent in study taught modules in full-time ordination training. Validating Universities have their own expectations for the class contact hours for each taught module and all Theological Education Institutions will abide by these as a condition of validation by the University and by the Church Universities also set expectations for the amount of private study which should accompany each module, but in practice such expectations are difficult to enforce because students work and learn at different paces.

Revd Dr Ian Paul: Thank you very much for your answer. Given that most of our training is now going through the Common Awards Programme, I wonder if the Bishop can clarify what role there is for the Durham University Common Awards Guidance on Contact Hours, what role does that play in the review and the approval of training pathways?

The Bishop of Sheffield: Thank you, Ian. I think it is fair to say we are in the first year of that system operating now and Durham have received the validation submissions from all our participating theological colleges and courses. I think as the Common Awards Oversight Group continues its work, they will begin to look at those kinds of standards against university guidelines as we move forward. It will be a constant improvement and reflection on quality there.

44. *Revd David Craven (Carlisle)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council/Chair of the House of Bishops: What progress has been made towards the implementation of recommendations made in the report GS 1407 looking at the permanent diaconate titled *For Such a Time as This*?

The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft) replied: When *For Such a Time as This* was debated at the November 2001 Synod, it was referred to the bishops and the dioceses to take forward locally. That remains the position. The ministry of deacons has most recently been considered nationally in *The Mission and Ministry of the Whole Church* GS Misc 854. There are currently no proposals to take action nationally on the development of the diaconate. It remains open to bishops and dioceses to develop their own approach to the encouragement of the permanent diaconate. The national selection system includes candidates for the permanent diaconate and candidates for this order are eligible for funding through Vote 1 to train alongside other ordination candidates in the theological education institutions.

Revd David Craven: Other than the document *Discerning the Diaconate*, what training and resources does Ministry Division provide for DDOs on discerning vocations to the permanent diaconate, and are there plans to look to providing further resources in this area in the future?

The Bishop of Sheffield: Thank you. That is a helpful question to which I do not have a ready answer, but I will write to you and put something on the Synod noticeboard.

Mrs Susannah Leafe (Truro): As those who are deacons are other ordination candidates, could I ask the same question in relation to this question: Can we find clear pathways for those women wanting to be trained for complementarian ministries?

The Bishop of Sheffield: Thank you. I think the diaconate, as outlined here, would be one such pathway. I know of dioceses and parishes in a traditionalist Catholic perspective who are exploring that. I do not yet know of any in a conservative evangelical complementarian tradition which are exploring it, but it would be a very interesting conversation to be had.

45. *Dr Simon Clift (Winchester)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: In the context of seismic shifts in the working landscape for ordained clergy, as they grapple with acquiring new skills and ways of working amidst ever-increasing expectations from parishioners and senior church leaders alike, and in the light of the latest 2015 edition of *Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the clergy*, what steps are being taken to promote and sustain the health and well-being of our clergy thus ensuring that one of the Church's most precious resources is safeguarded?

The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft) replied: The Archbishops' Council's advice to dioceses in relation to the provision of Continuing Ministerial Development (CMD) advocates taking "seriously the flourishing of the whole person in their ministerial context." This year's national CMD officers' conference, recognising the context described in the question, is featuring input on this area, as are the HR advisers' conference. In addition, national officers are in conversation with a range of both grant

awarding trusts and service providers who work in this area to encourage greater transparency around their activities and their engagement with dioceses. In this context, Dr Tim Ling, Head of Ministry Development, is contributing to the Society of Mary and Martha's Doing Healthy Ministry Together working group, presenting findings of research commissioned by the Ministry Council's CMD panel.

Dr Simon Clift: A declaration of interest. I am Director of Health Services at Inter Health, a Christian healthcare charity working with international mission agencies and Christian denominations. Thank you for your answer, Bishop. A simple question. As a newcomer to Synod, I would like to ask what opportunities there will be within the life of this Synod for those of us, like myself, with particular expertise and interests in this area to contribute to a further conversation as to how effectively to promote and sustain the health and well-being of clergy throughout the course of their ministry and, in particular, during their initial period of training?

The Bishop of Sheffield: It is a really important question and thank you for raising it. I am not aware of things that will bring this specifically to the Synod's agenda, other than that as we move forward in Resourcing Ministerial Education and the Renewal and Reform process we will be looking increasingly about helping people at every stage of ministry, of which this is part. I know staff and colleagues in the Ministry Division will be only too pleased to dialogue with you and with other members of Synod who are bringing particular expertise in this area.

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): Would the Bishop like to know that the House of Clergy Standing Committee, at my request, are discussing this item on Wednesday, with a view to exploring a way that we can assist in bringing some of the work that is going on together on this very important issue of well-being.

The Bishop of Sheffield: Thank you. I am very very pleased to know that. It is a hugely important subject. I look forward to the fruits of your deliberations.

Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee

46. *Revd Paul Hutchinson (York)* asked the Chair of the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee: Further to two answers given to questions at the groups of sessions in both July and November 2015, what progress has been made in examining the mandatory retirement age for clergy?

The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker) replied: After carefully considering this matter RACSC does not recommend any change to the current legal provisions. A GS Misc paper, detailing the arguments that RACSC considered, will be brought to General Synod in July, subject to the approval of the Archbishops' Council. The current provisions enable clergy to carry out a stipendiary ministry that can continue to accrue pensionable service past the retirement age. Trends in clergy deployment and retirement indicate that most clergy choose to retire before 70. RACSC recognises that the most significant impact of the mandatory retirement age is for incumbents. Priests in charge and assistant curates can minister after 70 on a time limited and renewable basis. The option of not renewing the term preserves the dignity of clergy in cases

where they are no longer able to carry out the duties of their office to an acceptable standard whilst avoiding invoking the capability procedure.

47. *Revd Shaun Morris (Lichfield)* asked the Chair of the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee: Noting that the stipend principles in para. 2 of the 43rd report of the Central Stipends Authority differ from those of previous reports, could the Chair of RACSC describe the consultation process that was behind the setting of these new principles?

The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker) replied: RACSC consults annually with dioceses, on behalf of the Archbishops' Council, as part of its core stipend setting function, and keeps the stipend setting process under constant review. RACSC was asked by the Archbishops' Council, who take stipend decisions informed by our recommendations to them, to revisit methodology and process issues that had been raised by dioceses. RACSC has widened its data sources, made adjustments to the stipend setting timetable and built in opportunities for more engagement with stakeholders throughout the process. In re-articulating the stipend principles, RACSC has tried to provide a set of clear and unambiguous statements to guide decision-making around stipends and which can be applied consistently by the Council and its Committees. I am available throughout Synod if members wish to speak about stipends methodology with me.

Revd Shaun Morris: An underlying principle in the setting of stipends used to be that they are, "Adequate for clergy to discharge their duties without undue financial anxiety." That principle no longer appears in the latest Report.

The Chair: And your question, please?

Revd Shaun Morris: My question, are we no longer able to have regard for the financial needs of clergy and their families in the setting of stipends?

The Bishop of Manchester: When we are setting stipends we, obviously, have need to have regard to the needs of clergy and their families. It is one of the key things that we have to think about. The wording that we use may vary from time to time.

Mission and Public Affairs Council

48. *Mr Andrew Presland (Peterborough)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: What steps are being taken in advance of the referendum on EU membership to make (i) the man or woman in the pew; and (ii) the wider British public aware of the wide range of views that are expressed on the *Reimagining Europe* blog?

Mr Philip Fletcher (ex officio) replied: The blog *Reimagining Europe* (@ReimaginingE) is supported by MPA as a safe space to air the wide variety of views held by Christians on European issues. It is marketed via Twitter and other social media platforms. It features regularly in the Daily Digest issued by the Communications Department. The aim is to make the blog the premier resource for Christian reflection on matters concerning the referendum on Britain's membership of the EU. The MPA Division is

exploring whether blog contributors might be interested and willing to engage off-line in cafe style conversations. The blog material should, we hope, assist church and community groups planning hustings or other events ahead of the planned referendum.

49. *Mr Bill Seddon (St Albans)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: Recognising that: Funerals can be expensive; many people struggle to cope with the cost; the death of a loved one can plunge those on low incomes and few savings into serious long-term debt; and there is an acknowledged lack of transparency relating to the costs of funerals; could consideration be given to encouraging clergy to ask funeral directors in their parishes to sign up to the Fair Funerals Pledge and provide the bereaved with information about affordable funerals?

Mr Philip Fletcher (ex officio) replied: Openness and transparency are vital in relation to helping people cope with death and the arranging of a funeral. The Church's 'Grave Talk' initiative is being used by many parishes to help people to talk openly about these matters. Funerals have to be arranged under pressure of time and under the stress of bereavement. It is very important that the pricing and other details of funeral packages, especially the more affordable options, are made visible and clear by funeral directors. This is the main thrust of the pledge, and the National Association of Funeral Directors has supported it. Clergy and church councils generally have a very good working relationship with funeral directors, and many may wish to discuss with them the best ways of supporting and helping bereaved people; the Fair Funerals Pledge could be a natural part of that conversation.

50. *Mr Bill Seddon (St Albans)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: Given that the cost of the average funeral now averages over £8,400, having risen by twice as fast as CPI over the past decade, and that the shortfall between the cost of funerals in aggregate is estimated to exceed the money people have available by over £190 million, are there any plans to encourage the Government to have an inquiry into funeral and bereavement poverty, including what many perceive to be an inadequate and confusing Social Fund Funeral Payments system?

Mr Philip Fletcher (ex officio) replied: The recent report on the churches' role in tackling funeral poverty drew attention to a marked increase in funeral costs over the last ten years, and the fact that Social Fund Funeral Payments only cover a limited proportion of the normal cost, even when a grant is made. Many people have difficulty with funeral costs, and accordingly the Church of England keeps funeral fees relatively low. I welcome the active part which the Lichfield Diocese has taken in the Funeral Poverty Alliance. The Work and Pensions Select Committee is currently conducting an inquiry into bereavement benefits, including the issues raised in this question, and we await with interest the outcome of that Inquiry.

51. *Mrs Heather Black (York)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: In the light of the recent reports about asylum seekers in Middlesbrough being accommodated in houses with red doors, leading to intimidation and fear, how is the influence of the Church of England being used to ensure that asylum seekers and refugees are housed in suitable and safe accommodation, without fear of intimidation?

Mr Philip Fletcher (ex officio) replied: Over 2,000 asylum seekers are living in the Tees Valley area, with over 1,000 in Middlesbrough. Churches are playing a full part in helping them to settle, and the evidence of stigmatisation through uniform door colour was disturbing. I welcome the fact that doors have been repainted. In Parliament and elsewhere, several bishops have highlighted the dangers of stigmatising asylum seekers, refugees and other migrants, and creating a culture of suspicion and hostility. The need for adequate provision of accommodation and finance is an issue in the current Immigration Bill, and bishops have spoken very recently on this in the House of Lords. Under the leadership of the Archbishop of York, we work nationally with the 'Still Human Still Here' coalition, which advocates for decent treatment of asylum seekers, and we shall continue to work to ensure that suitable and safe housing is available.

Mrs Heather Black: Thank you for your answer and for highlighting the large numbers of asylum seekers housed in Middlesbrough and Teeside where housing is so cheap. Can I ask, please, that MPA and the Bishops continue working on the issue of adequate and safe housing for asylum seekers and, in particular, press for a review of the current contracts for housing asylum seekers which allows for private contractors to profit out of housing asylum seekers often in poor and inadequate housing?

Mr Philip Fletcher: Thank you, first, for your question. It is a very vital issue and I want to pay tribute to the work of the churches in Middlesbrough in helping to alleviate the problems, which I realise bear especially on that area. I do not think we shall be focusing all our efforts on the extent to which market principles should apply here because there will be a variety of views, not least within this Synod. What we do need to do as the Church of England is continue to emphasise the importance of supporting those in extreme need and setting an example by doing so.

52. *Mr Elliot Swatridge (Church of England Youth Council)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: In the light of the continued imprisonment of Pakistani Christian Asia Bibi on charges of blasphemy, following her being sentenced to death in November 2010, as well as the plight of similar individuals who have been targeted due to their Christian faith, what work is being done by the Church of England to raise awareness of, support, and campaign for the release and protection of Asia Bibi and her family and other vulnerable Christians in Pakistan?

Mr Philip Fletcher (ex officio) replied as Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: MPA has been working with the International Panel of Parliamentarians for Freedom of Religion or Belief (IPPFoRB) since its inception in Oslo in October 2014. IPPFoRB is an informal international coalition of parliamentarians committed to combating religious persecution and advancing freedom of religion or belief. The bishops of Coventry, Peterborough and Leeds have been closely involved in its work which includes amongst other activities supporting the work of those parliamentarians in Pakistan in their efforts to press for a review of the blasphemy laws and a suspension of Asia Bibi's sentence. In October 2014, the Bishop of St Albans pressed the case of Asia Bibi in a written parliamentary question. The bishops are assisted in their efforts by briefings supplied by the MPA Division which arise out of the excellent relationship that exists with the United Church of Pakistan following the Archbishop of Canterbury's visit in May 2014.

Mr Elliot Swatridge: Thank you very much for the extremely positive response in fighting for the human rights of Asia Bibi, have you any information on what effect such action has had on the Government of Pakistan's continued severe persecution of people for their Christian faith?

Mr Phillip Fletcher: I do not have any precise information. It is one of those areas where it is extremely difficult to know what impact representations will have. If we look at the across the board, not least at the work of Amnesty International, as well as of the churches, continuing to raise concerns in season and out of season within the UK and, where appropriate, with the Government and other institutions in Pakistan, I believe is well worthwhile and all of us should continue to hold Asia Bibi in our prayers as well as all those others who are under threat.

Revd Paul Cartwright (Leeds): I must declare an interest. I am the parish priest of a Pakistani Christian fleeing violence. Is the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council aware that greater weight is given to Pakistani Christians who are fleeing such violence if they are Muslim converts rather than born Christian? Can the Church challenge the Home Office to change this unjust policy?

Mr Phillip Fletcher: I was not aware of that particular point, though I suspect that a number of members of the House of Bishops may well be aware of it and those who are Lord Spiritual do have opportunities to continue to raise, both formally and informally, issues with Ministers and in the House of Lords particular points such as the one that you have made.

53. *Mr Samuel Margrave (Coventry)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: Does the Council hold information as to the financial or other support provided, not just by the Archbishops' Council but also by the other national Church institutions, to fund the fight for the legal rights of Christians and Christian groups (such as Christian Concern, the Christian Legal Centre or the Christian Institute); and, if it does, can it confirm what support has been provided over the last decade to stem the erosion of rights for Christians and Christian groups to help stop us reaching a situation in which we would see the banning of the Lord's Prayer in cinemas, or Christians sharing prayers or wearing a cross at work?

Mr Philip Fletcher (ex officio) replied: No funds have been earmarked in advance by the NCIs for the costs of legal actions designed to protect the rights of freedom of religious belief and its expression. But MPA makes appropriate representations to Government and public bodies stressing the importance of such rights - for example, a forthcoming submission to the EHRC inquiry into the refusal by a commercial cinema chain to show the pre-Christmas advertisement on saying the Lord's Prayer.

Mr Samuel Margrave: In regard to discrimination against Christians, particularly in the workplace, although the answer notes that there are no financial resources set aside, what is the risk to Christians such as churchwardens to their jobs if the Church are not going to support them against discrimination by their employers?

Mr Phillip Fletcher: I would not accept that my answer means no support. There are

ways of supporting Christians in their work context other than providing specific funds for them. If I can make the point, and I owe here Lord Williams of Oystermouth a debt, it is to try and persuade - and this is a much wider societal point - the society in which we live of the difference between what I might call 'procedural secularism', that is simply seeking to ensure that all religions and belief are equal before the law, and a sort of 'programmatic secularism' which says religion is only about a totally private matter which should not invade the public square. We should be making it very clear that we do not accept the programmatic secularism approach while recognising that we are one amongst many with a job to do in relation to convincing our fellow members of English society of the importance of religion.

54. *Mr Clive Scowen (London)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: What representations have been made to the Government about the desirability of radically reducing the £100 maximum stake which can be wagered every 20 seconds at the 34,500 fixed-odds betting terminals present in high street betting shops, and what response if any has been received from the Government?

Mr Philip Fletcher (ex officio) replied: We have been concerned about these machines for a long time. In 2008 this Synod called on the Government to monitor their addictive effects. Since then, MPA has been regularly involved with the issue through the Community Liaison Group of the Gambling Commission and other fora. We have pressed on Ministers the importance of the issue. Much research has been done and some changes have been made, but the basic situation, unfortunately, remains as described in the question. The Bishop of St Albans, with other Lords Spiritual, is currently seeking early opportunities to raise concerns on the maximum upper limit in Parliament and with Government.

Mr Clive Scowen: Given the apparent ineffectiveness of the approach taken thus far in ending a situation in which an individual can gamble away £18,000 an hour at betting terminals, does Mr Fletcher not think that the time has come for a more high profile and public campaign to protect the vulnerable, in which we could make common cause with many local authorities and others who share these concerns? Is he aware of the Private Member's Motion on this subject which is now open to members concerned about this issue to sign?

The Chair: He may or may not think something about it, Mr Scowen, but I think, as you realise, you were asking initially for an expression of his opinion, which I am afraid he cannot give. I think we have probably heard the second limb of your question, thank you. I propose at this point, given the IT issues which affected the circulation of the papers, to take questions 63 and 64 to the Church Commissioners from Mr Philip French. They are to be answered by Sir Andreas Whittam Smith as First Church Estates Commissioner.

Church Commissioners

63. *Mr Philip French (Rochester)* asked the Church Commissioners: Where is the information technology/digital strategy for the National Church Institutions set out?

64. *Mr Philip French (Rochester)* asked the Church Commissioners: What are the principal information technology/digital investment projects within the NCIs' remit over the next 2-3 years?

Sir Andreas Whittam Smith (ex officio) replied: With permission, I will answer questions 63 and 64 together. The NCIs have in the last two years undergone a significant renewal of their ageing IT infrastructure. The aim is faster and more reliable systems, improved governance and resource management, improved security and lower total cost (including better procurement). The IT strategy for the next three years is currently being finalised and will need to be approved by our IT Governance Group and the NCIs. The principal investments envisaged in the next 2-3 years (subject to approval following analysis of the requirements, costs and benefits) are the provision of a common Customer Relationship Management platform, improved electronic records management and data security, better business intelligence, more mobile hardware to enhance work flexibility, and an improved digital presence for the Church of England. These investments are in line with the Renewal and Reform and Simplification agendas - they are about optimising our support for the wider Church.

The Chair. In that case, we will go back to the normal order, and questions 55 to 57 to the Business Committee and are to be answered by Canon Sue Booy as Chair of the Committee.

Business Committee

55. *Dr Graham Campbell (Chester)* asked the Chair of the Business Committee: When the original handsets for electronic voting were introduced some years ago, the then Chair of the Business Committee said that they were a Mark One version, and that in due course a Mark Two version would be introduced which would contain a microphone to enable members to speak from their seats and not have to go to a lectern. Do the new handsets contain a microphone, and if so, is the intention of the Business Committee to use that facility to enable members to speak from their seats and avoid having to make their way to a lectern?

Revd Canon Sue Booy (Oxford) replied: The voting handsets were updated recently because the software for the previous ones had become obsolete. The new handsets were chosen primarily for their reliability and security, although they happen to include a microphone function. In deciding whether to activate this function at General Synod, the Business Committee would need to take into account the following considerations: (a) the practicality of activating this function; (b) the feasibility and costs of amplifying speeches made using the microphones around the Synod chamber; and (c) whether enabling Synod members to speak from their seats would make it harder or easier for them to be seen and heard by other members around the Synod chamber and those watching on the web cast, taking into account the limited number of fixed cameras used in the chamber.

56. *Mrs Sue Slater (Lincoln)* asked the Chair of the Business Committee: For what reason are the Shared Conversations referred to in the Agenda for this group of sessions as being on "Spirituality, Scripture and Mission", when the regional Shared

Conversations have been entitled "Scripture Mission and Human Sexuality"?

Revd Canon Sue Booy (Oxford) replied: Given the size and role of the General Synod, the Shared Conversations at the July Synod will take a different approach to those which have been taking place in the regions. The Shared Conversations in July will enable the Synod to explore 'good disagreement' as the Church of England's national legislative body, taking into account matters of shared faith, scripture and mission, which is why they have been described in this way in the presentation listed in the February Agenda. The shape of the Shared Conversations in July will be presented in outline during the February Synod. They will include discussion on the Church's response to matters related to human sexuality in our culture.

Mrs Sue Slater: In view of the fact that the Agenda said that the Shared Conversations were going to be about "Spirituality, Scripture and Mission", but the presentation from David Porter was headed "Scripture, Mission and Human Sexuality", is it possible for the Business Committee to confirm whether we are going to be talking about spirituality in July, or whether this was a vain attempt to make it look as if we were not allowed to talk about human sexuality?

Revd Canon Sue Booy: I will go backwards. I can assure you that it was not a vain attempt to do anything. I feel really that I was helped, and I hoped that members of Synod were helped, by David Porter's presentation this afternoon to understand that we are moving into a slightly different space. I am not entirely certain what it is that you think we might not be doing and I am sorry that I may be doing you an injustice by misunderstanding you.

57. *Revd Canon Giles Goddard* (Southwark) asked the Chair of the Business Committee: What procedures exist for allowing the Synod to obtain reliable information on matters concerning Anglican Communion affairs?

Revd Canon Sue Booy (Oxford) replied: Synod members are welcome to write to the Secretary General of the Anglican Communion, the most Revd Dr Josiah Atkins Idowu-Fearon at his Anglican Communion office address in London. The Anglican Communion office produces news and updates on a regular basis.

Clergy Discipline Commission

58. *Revd Stephen Trott* (Peterborough) asked the Chair of the Clergy Discipline Commission: How many complaints are made annually under the Clergy Discipline Measure; has any assessment been made of the proportion of them that might properly be considered vexatious; and what steps, if any, are being taken to reform the Measure so as to prevent it from being abused as a distressing form of personal harassment of those serving in ordained ministry?

The Bishop of Lincoln (Rt Revd Christopher Lowson) replied: The latest available figures are for 2014, when 79 complaints were made against priests and deacons. If a complaint is vexatious, the bishop already has power to dismiss it at the preliminary scrutiny stage under section 11(3) of the Clergy Discipline Measure; and if he or she

does so the respondent cleric is not even required to answer the complaint. In 2014, 15 complaints were dismissed in this way. The Clergy Discipline Commission does not believe the Measure needs amending with regard to vexatious complaints, but it will give further thought as to whether additional guidance should be provided to bishops and registrars on how to deal with them.

Revd Stephen Trott: Is the Clergy Discipline Commission aware that a number of people are, in effect, weaponising the Clergy Discipline Measure as a means of harassing clergy? Can I urge those responsible to deal very very quickly with such vexatious complaints because they do cause great distress to people who are honestly going about their day's work and are being confronted with what looked like serious charges being made against them?

The Bishop of Lincoln: I thank you, Father Trott, for that question. We are aware that on some occasions vexatious litigants will use the Discipline Measure for their own agenda, but we have to balance the need to ensure that those with valid complaints are heard, whilst also ensuring the measure is not used in the way you have described. We are trying to improve and encourage bishops in their use of pastoral care so their clergy can be dealt with and supported very quickly. If you have particular examples in mind, we would be very happy if you were to write to the Chair of the Commission with some particular examples and the Commission will be very very happy to look at that and move forward, as you say, as quickly as possible.

Revd Preb Simon Cawdell (Hereford): Would the Commission consider the possibility, just that as sanctions upon clergy are usually made public, where it is found and particularly if persistently it is found that there are vexatious complaints against the clergy, that complainants are made aware of the possibility that vexatious complainants may also be made public?

The Bishop of Lincoln: Well, that is a very challenging question. I will take that back to the Commission. We have to be careful because we do not want people who are making complaints to be deterred from making complaints because, even if people have made several complaints before, there may on this occasion be some merit in their particular complaint. You have got to strike that balance that I was talking about earlier between allowing people to make their complaints but, also, not allowing people to use the complaints mechanism as a way of damaging clergy who are going about their ministry in a good and helpful way.

Crown Nominations Commission

59. *Mr Francis Spufford (Ely)* asked the Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission: Does the CNC plan to assess the effect that the increase in the number of diocesan representatives has had on the work of the Commission?

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby) replied: The increase in Diocesan Representatives from four to six has been in place since 2005 following a decision by Synod to this effect. As Synod is aware, the central members do keep the operation of the Commission under regular review and I will discuss with them

whether they would like to consider such an assessment.

Mr Francis Spufford: I can see I am going to have to get some bifocals just for use at General Synod. I very much welcome this reply. It may seem trivial to fiddle with the details of process, but institutional design matters and incentives always matter in our fallen state, has a date been set for the CNC to consider this issue?

The Archbishop of Canterbury: I can certainly say it will be on the agenda of the next central members' meeting and that is usually about once a year. I would guess it will be in the fourth quarter. I just have not got my diary completely in my head. I am sorry about that. It is a very fair question, thank you. I hope someone will note down that we will put it on that agenda. Thank you.

The Chair: I will be happy to do that, your Grace.

The Archbishop of Canterbury: You are very kind, yes, thank you.

Canon Dr Addy Lazz-Onyenobi (Manchester): First of all, I must confess that the people John Spence was referring to earlier on were Lisa and myself; a confession. Will training in the quality and diversity be helpful for those on CNC to enable them to be able to interview their candidates properly?

The Archbishop of Canterbury: Thank you, it is a very good question. I entirely agree, it is very useful and, in fact, some has already taken place.

60. *Revd Dr Hannah Cleugh (Universities & TElS)* asked the Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission: What specific measures are in place to ensure that the CNC is able to interview a diverse range of candidates?

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby) replied: The challenge is twofold - to ensure a diverse pool of candidates from whom members can propose people for consideration; and to ensure that any candidate who is part of a selection process is enabled to share their gifts and experience to the best of their ability. With regard to the former, Diocesan Bishops are actively encouraged to nominate candidates to the pool across the breadth of diversity. The nomination process for specific vacancies is kept as wide as possible through the announcement inviting the submission of names. We also work with groups of women, BAME clergy and different church traditions to help individuals imagine a future vocation as a bishop through training courses, creating learning groups, personal coaching and support with paperwork. As a Commission of the Church of England, voting members are also regularly reminded of the significance of the Guiding Principles.

Dioceses Commission

61. *Canon Pamela Bishop (Southwell & Nottingham)* asked the Chair of the Dioceses Commission: As we go into 2016, what items are on the agenda for the future work of the Dioceses Commission? For example, are there plans under consideration for the reorganisation/reconfiguration of any existing dioceses?

Canon Professor Michael Clarke (ex officio) replied: This year is one of transition for the Commission as the terms of the current membership expire at the end of April. A substantially refreshed Commission will be considering its future priorities when it meets in June. There are no immediate plans for a major diocesan reorganisation seem though I continue to visit bishops' regional groups with a view to identifying geographical obstacles to mission which we as a Commission could help to unblock. In addition to its on-going task of reviewing suffragan sees as they become vacant, the Commission continues to engage with issues of episcopal oversight, following its Lambeth Symposium in October 2014. The Commission also continues to encourage joint working across diocesan boundaries.

Faith and Order Commission

62. *Mrs Lorna Ashworth (Chichester)* asked the Chair of the Faith and Order Commission: What work has the Faith and Order Commission done on the recognition of orders of other churches, and in particular of the Anglican Church in North America?

The Bishop of Coventry (Rt Revd Dr Martin Warner) replied: The Faith and Order Commission has given significant attention to these matters since its inception in 2010. In 2013, it published a report on *Recognition by the Church of England of Orders Conferred by Other Churches*, reviewing the general criteria to be used in cases arising under the Overseas Clergy (Ministry and Ordination) Measure 1967. The report remains available on the Church of England website. A supplementary paper advising the Archbishops on the specific issue of recognition of the orders of clergy ordained within the Anglican Church in North America was then produced by the Commission in 2014.

The Chair. Thank you. I am afraid we will have to draw stumps there. I am sorry that we have not managed to navigate us quite to the end of questions, but that brings us to the end of our business for today. Before we depart, may I thank the Community of St Anselm and St Matthew's, Westminster and 24/7 who have been leading the continuous praying presence today.

May I also remind members that we should go straight to our respective groups tomorrow morning, which will start with worship at 9.15. In case anyone has not yet had an opportunity to check which group they are in, please do be aware that some groups are meeting at Lambeth Palace and some groups are meeting here in Church House. We move now directly to our evening worship, which will be led by Father Beswick.

The Revd Jonathan Beswick led the Synod in an act of worship.

Full Synod: Second Day Tuesday 16 February 2016

THE CHAIR *The Revd Canon Dr Rosemarie Mallett (Southwark)* took the Chair at 11.30 am.

The Chair: Good morning, Synod. As we begin the continuation of this morning's session, may I remind Synod that the prayer support this morning is provided by the Community of St Anselm.

We understand that some people in the gallery are having difficulty in hearing speakers from the floor so when we come to the debate if I could ask Synod members to speak more closely into the microphones but not immediately on it otherwise all of our ears will explode at that point.

Report from the Evangelism Task Group (GS 2015)

The Chair: We move now to Items 8 and 9 on the agenda for which you will need to have sight of GS 2015. You will have noted, I am sure, that this is a presentation by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the members of the Evangelism Task Group, followed by a take note debate on the Report from the Task Group. May I now welcome and introduce the members of the Evangelism Task Group. We begin with the Archbishop of Canterbury, Bishop Philip North, the Revd Elizabeth Adekunle, Mrs Beth Keith and Canon Mark Russell. I now call upon the Archbishop of Canterbury to begin his presentation.

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby): First of all I would like to start by thanking the members of the Archbishops' Task Group. It is the Archbishops with an "s apostrophe". The Archbishop of York is not here because he is on sabbatical going round his diocese on an evangelistic pilgrimage and I think we would want to acknowledge at this point his extraordinary commitment to evangelism in his own province, the way in which he has led in mission and evangelism in his ministry. What he is doing at the moment, doing an on-foot pilgrimage around the whole of the diocese of York is a typical example of the way that he leads, so we pray for him and for blessing on his ministry in these months.

The Task Group is sitting in magnificence behind me along here. I will not go through them all, but they have done a wonderful job and we are deeply grateful to them.

The high points of the calling to serve God and His Church are the times when He works to draw people to Himself, the times when hearts begin to thaw with His love, eyes open to His light and shoulders lift as He comes alongside to bear burdens as those who have carried around guilt, like the pilgrim in *The Pilgrim's Progress*, that has weighed them down with regret and shame, know a freedom and release they never dreamt possible as those who assumed that they had no worth realise their inestimable and infinite worth to God. God works through His spirit to draw people to open their hands to receive His love and transforming power, and we have the huge privilege of seeing this happen. For me, some of the most memorable and grace-filled moments of

the last three years have been seeing God at work in the lives who would not call themselves Christians but whom I have had the privilege of seeing being gently and profoundly drawn to Jesus Christ. This is our duty, our privilege and our joy. There is nothing like it.

For too long the ministry of evangelism in the Church has been viewed as an app on the system. I do not know what kind of apps you have on your mobile device. My family tell me it is not very *avant-garde* to enjoy the *Financial Times* app as much as I do. That probably counts as advertising. Are we allowed to do advertising? Chairman, are we allowed to do advertising?

The Chair: No.

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby): No. You better strike that from the record! I never said it, but I do enjoy it. But you will know - some of you will know and I have learned - that apps are simply add-ons, optional extras suited to those with particular interests and activities. As I said, for many it seems that evangelism is such an app simply to be used for those who are gifted, who do not mind being out of their comfort zones, who are happy talking about faith with strangers and have a clever way of explaining the mysteries of God, but evangelism and witness are not an app. They are the operating system itself.

Evangelism is the proclamation, the setting forth, the holding out of the Good News of Jesus Christ in ways that do justice to the beauty, integrity, joy and power of the one who was dead and is now alive, the one who lived for us, died for us, rose for us, ascended and prays for us. It is from God, about God, with God and because of God. Above all, He calls and enables us to be His heralds, those who proclaim the Good News. All Christians - all Christians - are witnesses of the love of Jesus Christ. The Spirit is given to us precisely for this task and, as witnesses of Jesus, we then become witnesses to Jesus, relaying what we have experienced and what we have known to others.

The Archbishop of York and I set up this Task Group because we want to recall the Church of England to the operating system of the love that overflows in evangelism. Many have been engaged within the Church for many years in evangelism. This is not new to many, if not most, of those who are sitting here today and indeed in the Church of England. It was set out in *Towards the Conversion of England* in 1945 that every local church should live to see those, who know nothing of God's love, hear, see, taste and accept His gracious presence in their lives. This commitment is seen in our prayers, our budgets, our diaries, our resources and our planning.

In the presentation that follows drawing on the history of commitment to evangelism that has existed in the Church of England and in God's church globally, we will highlight three particular areas of attention which the Task Group has seen as urgent. Bishop Paul Bayes will then lead through a take note debate, something we felt, in liaison with the Business Committee and having carefully listened to comments from the floor in November, that would enable members of Synod to participate fully in discussing how we might be increasingly devoted as a Church without exception to witness and

evangelism.

I hope we can be very clear about one thing: a commitment to evangelism and witness comes out of love, not out of fear. It comes out of obedience to Christ, not out of a concern at the latest figures on church attendance. It is a sign of our discipleship, not a church growth strategy or a survival technique. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5:14-15, "For Christ's love compels us" - or in the King James' version "constrains us" - "because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And He died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him who died for them and was raised again". A prayerful, sensitive, respectful, love-filled renewal of evangelism and witness will renew the whole Church. It will renew each of us deeply. For as I said a few moments ago, there is nothing as wonderful as seeing God at work, leading people from darkness to light.

The Bishop of Burnley (Rt Revd Philip North): "A Christian presence in every community", boasts the Church of England's website. Whenever I see that I think of places like Brambles Farm or Mereside or Grange Park where the church has closed down and the clergy have been withdrawn, because it is not true. The Church is not present in every community and the places where we are least present are the poorest, the outer estates of our towns and cities. The paper in front of you relates some pretty frightening statistics which have since been updated by the 2014 data. Over the past five years attendance in Church of England churches has dropped by 3.4%. On the outer estates the declined figure is double that at 7.5%. Nationally 1.7% of the population attend an Anglican church. On the outer estates the figure is less than half that at 0.8%. Now you might think that a Church with a bias to the poor would be investing in the estates; not so. We spend £7.87 on ministry per head of population nationally. That rises to £23.88 in rural areas. On the estates the figure is just £5.07.

That is the statistics. What about the anecdotal evidence? We know that all too well. Clergy, some of them on the estates because that is the only job they could get, who feel isolated, lonely and forgotten; PCCs which feel a constant sense of guilt because the rest of the Church is telling them how heavily they are subsidised; buildings that are cold, leaky and unfit for purpose; massive challenges in developing consistent patterns of lay leadership; evangelistic resources which simply do not work in the urban context where educational expectations and patterns of family life are so different. The Church on our outer estates is dying and it is dying very quickly. The conclusion is an obvious one. We are all leaders of a Church that has taken a preferential option for the rich.

So why does this matter? Why should this be such a high priority for the Archbishops' Evangelism Task Group? Because almost every single effective renewal movement in the history of the Church has started with the poor. Look at who Jesus chose as disciples, look at Francis or Vincent de Paul or Wesley or the Oxford Movement. Integral to their proclamation was Luke 4:18 where Jesus announces that "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor". Unless we are a poor church for the poor, our mission will come to nothing. In a spreadsheet world there will always be those who say we need to close struggling churches which are unviable and focus our attention on the hot spots, but that would be nothing less than a betrayal of the Gospel. A Church that abandons the poor has

abandoned God and loses the authority to proclaim. The church on the estates may arguably be receiving a financial subsidy from the rich, but the spiritual subsidy goes in the opposite direction.

So what can we do? I started with stories of doom and gloom, but there is another side to that story which is that there is some ministry happening on our outer estates which is nothing short of heroic. Some churches are reviving, some are planting. The diocese of Blackburn has recently reinvested massively in the Mereside estate which I mentioned at the beginning. Many are offering outstanding service to their communities. In some places the church is the only community facility left. On 1 March we are gathering together a group of estates practitioners at Bishophorpe Palace to confront head on the issues that the Church on the outer estates faces. Let me point out that is not a council house.

Gathered there, we will seek to challenge the wider Church and ask if it is prepared to pay the price of commitment to the nation's poorest. We will learn from examples of estate churches which are growing. We will think about ways of attracting the best leaders to the estates and reflect on what resources they need to flourish. We will seek to nail once and for all the false dichotomy between evangelism and community engagement because you cannot have one without the other. We need a bigger Church to make a bigger difference.

The battle for the Christian soul of this nation will not be won or lost in Kensington or Cobham or Harrogate. It is out on the estates where life is hard and where church life is failing fast that our ability to capture imaginations with the saving news of Jesus Christ will serve as the litmus test. That is why we are prioritising evangelism on the estates and why we hope that the wider Church will hear the appeal that we make.

Revd Elizabeth Adekunle (Acting Dean and Chaplain St John's College, Cambridge; Archdeacon Designate of Hackney): I am going to talk a little bit about race and identity and inclusion in the Church, which I know will fill you with joy, that sort of warm, tingly feeling you get when somebody says something you love, and not with dread. When we think about identity, ours and others', words like "race", "nationality", "place of origin" are just a few words used to define this. In this group of 32 people there are a total of 19 people whose first language is not English. Seven identify as British, though within that particular group of seven they do not all look the same. All of them live in the UK and 25 in cities. This can be a minefield when we think about trying to identify individuals. We get bogged down with politically correct terms that can completely overwhelm us and make us feel self-conscious. When asked the question, "Where are you from?" I struggle if I am being honest. Do they mean place of origin? Do they mean where I actually live now or where my home is? These are difficult questions to answer and sometimes because of the reality of this terminology we can retreat into our own little worlds, gravitating towards people that are like us where we do not have to have these sorts of conversations, or completely and utterly fearful that we might say something that is not politically correct and therefore be labelled or branded, Heaven forbid. There is something very important about the assumptions that we make when we define people and the truth of the matter is it is becoming harder and harder to use these assumptions.

I will give you a few statistics and they were in the paper you have already received. By 2006 25% of children born in the UK had a foreign mother or father - this is from the Children's Society - and that number has increased since then. Another: according to the Census results, the immigrant population of England and Wales increased by 2.9 million - I will say that again, 2.9 million - in the decade to 2011 bringing the number of people born abroad close to one in eight. Defining people on our assumptions can be problematic.

But this is not all doom and gloom. There is a positive here. We have an opportunity to address this issue, an issue that has hung over the Church for so long in the way in which we have welcomed people, or rather excluded people, particularly in the 1960s when a number of Afro-Caribbean people came to the UK. I would like to offer you one word to think about, to express in your own way in your communities when you leave, and that is "welcome". In the same way that in 1960 a number of people were not welcomed and therefore left the Church, I would suggest that we move forward with a warm welcome when we meet a stranger. It is the heart of our community and everything else will follow.

I will offer you a short story. I read a while ago about a young man who was on a train, off to kill himself. He had enough and he felt isolated and alone, and was so blinkered and so focused on doing this, and a man approached him on the train and said, "Hello. How are you? How's your day been?" The man's response was short, "Fine", "fine", "fine". Then the man continued to talk about his own life, his love, his attention, the man who was about to kill himself decided to go home and start again.

The power of welcome is so simple. It is offering ourselves and who we are to another human being just as they are without trying to change them or assume any different. It is, at the heart, love and we get that beautiful story in the Good Samaritan where the stranger crosses the road to help somebody in need and by crossing that road he crosses the racial and cultural divides that separate them. We are reminded therefore that love is at the heart of this welcome, showing love in simple ways as well as in radical ways, in subtle ways as well as in obvious, overt ways. We welcome because God welcomes. We love because God loves. We reach out to those people who may look different because God reached out through Jesus Christ. We are reminded of course that we are one body in Christ. We are reminded of this in Corinthians and throughout the New Testament. Jesus Christ broke down barriers and cultural and racial differences. He looked beyond social dynamics that are embedded in our secular society to a message of Good News that transcends this.

In welcoming others we normalise difference. We do not say what divides us and focus on that, but we say what unites us and glorify in that and love that. We do not get too bogged down with the difficulty in trying to pigeonhole people in the language which we use but, rather, we use the language of Christ, that is the language of love. It is so important that we, as Christians, pray for this change, long for this change, long for a Church that represents the community in which we live and eventually the kingdom of God; diverse in all of its glory. It is important that we recognise the importance and the joy of supporting and encouraging all people to nurture a personal relationship with

God, reaching out to them just as they are. We pray that the Church will be positive in influencing and promoting cultural diversity by enabling all people to hear the Good News and to live it out in the service of God to the glory of God's name.

Mrs Beth Keith (Ordinand, Cranmer Hall): The word "evangelism" can elicit a mixed response. Some are happy using it; it makes others shudder. Perhaps it evokes an image of a certain type of practice or a certain type of faith, and all this talk of growth and renewal has encouraged us but perhaps left us feeling aloof about motivations or under pressure to perform. And yet we remember the joy of the Gospel. We remember how beautiful are the feet of those who bring Good News.

Recently I have been involved with the Beautiful Witness project. We have been around the country interviewing people about their ministry, people who have seen others come to faith in the last few years. Their stories from a mix of contexts and from the range of traditions that together make up the Church of England shatter any of the stereotypes that we can sometimes jump to. Ronan, a prison chaplain, talks about uncluttered opportunities to share the Gospel and difficulties in supporting Christians once they leave prison. Anna and Chris talk of longevity but part of their witness in the urban estate in Hull is being there and not leaving. Father Oliver in the Midlands opening the church up in a community where over 80% of people are Muslims or Sikhs. Vicar Sue developing Fresh Expressions of church at her local school in Cambridge with families who have recently come to faith. Steve reopening a closed church in Newcastle. Here the difference between people coming to faith or not means all the difference in whether there is a church in that community. Each talked about how they shared the Gospel, yes, in actions; yes, in words. They shared stories of joy, hope and new life but also the difficulties and pain encountered in their ministries, but these stories of witness, of people coming to faith, are not always mirrored across our Church.

The Continuing Ministerial Development Panel observed that for many clergy vocational understandings are firmly focused on pastoral ministry with intentional outreach of relatively less importance. The research underpinning this report speculated that evangelistic activities, unlike other priestly roles, require a level of perceived ability before they are seen as central to vocation.

How do we prepare people for ordained ministry? We have long-established patterns of formation. Ordinands during a formational worshipping community, we are taught, taught a whole range of things but, as important, if not more important, we are formed. We are shaped over mealtimes and through a pattern of prayer leading services and preaching in debate and discussion and inevitably, in part, down the pub. We grow as we are challenged and supported. We grow through what we are taught, yes, but we grow through what we do. We grow through what we practise. Our formation in prayer, worship and Christian community is practised daily and weekly.

However, mission, and in particular evangelism, often does not enter into the day-to-day practice of training. Given what we know about the link between practice, perceived ability and understandings of vocation, this is concerning. To be formed for witness we must practise it. If we are to see evangelism and witness fully embodied within the Church of England, we must focus our attention on placing the call to witness at the

heart of ordained ministry and shape our selection and training for this. That witness is clearly identified as central to the Church's understanding of ordained vocation and not an optional extra for some. That selection processes clearly identify candidates lacking experience. That training providers support all ordinands in developing expertise in witness and evangelism and in particular that those lacking experience in this area be given appropriate opportunity. That IME learning outcomes include training in witness and evangelism grounded in practice and theological reflection to ensure all future clergy develop both understanding and practical experience. Only then will priestly vocation be understood as a commitment to witness through sacrament and word, action and message within the Church and beyond.

Canon Mark Russell (Sheffield): There was a very sharp intake of breath around this chamber in November when the Archbishops' Council finance lead John Spence said that an 81 year-old was eight times more likely to be a member of a church than an 18 year-old. That statistic keeps company with many, many others. The average age in our church is 62; the average age in our nation is 40. Half of our parishes have fewer than five under the age of 16. Many different reports indicate that Christians come to faith primarily at a young age. In a recent study by my colleague in Church Army, Jasper Rutherford, 84% of Christians came to faith before the age of 25 and only 1% after the age of 45. We are familiar with many of these stats, but maybe not so much with the story behind each empty seat.

My friend, Andy Croft, tells a story of walking home one evening and coming across a 15 year-old boy on a fence sobbing. He asked the young man what was going on, and he told a random stranger that his dad had died when he was young, he had never known his father, his brothers were in jail, he was being looked after by an uninterested social worker and his girlfriend had just dumped him. Andy listened as this young man poured out his soul and he kept saying over and over again, "I just need to know someone loves me".

For every empty seat, for every church with no youth group or children's group, for every shocking stat, there is a young person or child who does not know that God thinks they are fantastic and that He loves them. The *From Anecdote to Evidence* report named the declining numbers of children and young people as a major factor in church decline. However, we do not do evangelism with younger people to shore up our Church from decline; we do it because we passionately believe young people need to know the joy and the love and the hope that comes from following Jesus Christ. Like the young man on the fence, they need to know they are loved.

We believe that the Church of England can be a place where younger people can discover family and friendship, and love and encouragement, where they can have positive relationships across generations, because they have encountered God and God's people. Whether it is through good youth work, children's work or Messy Church, we believe younger people can find a home in the Church of England. The task group believes that it is crucial for this Synod to understand the seriousness of the situation we face. Yes, loads of parishes are doing great things, and we celebrate that, but we passionately believe that unless the Synod and the wider Church can grasp the seriousness of the situation we face, we will not turn this around. We passionately

believe that God yearns for us to turn this around. We want as your task group to be advocates for change and to raise up the profile of evangelism to and with younger people.

We are delighted that the Synod staff will appoint a new officer for evangelism with younger people, and we are delighted that the Archbishops will appoint the first ever bishop for evangelism with young people, but if we are to see cultural change and to see more young people reached with the good news, it needs to begin with you and me and the dioceses and parishes we represent.

We make three simple recommendations: 1. We as a church need to invest in more paid young people and children's workers; 2. That our deaneries be required to develop action plans for younger people; and 3. That dioceses prioritise evangelism and witness with young people.

Some of us are old enough to remember *Youth A Part*. This year is the 20th anniversary of *Youth A Part* and the vision of that document remains as relevant today as ever before: to reach every young person in this nation with the good news of Jesus Christ.

You know something, friends, we are not downbeat; we are hopeful. We are hopeful that you and we as a Synod can own this challenge; that together we can raise the bar and turn these statistics around; that we can help more young people to find their home in our churches. We can do it because God wants to give us that vision and the strength, courage and resources to reach more young people with his good news, as the Psalmist put it, to tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of our God.

Friends, if we have courage, if we take risks, if we put our money where our well-intentioned words are, then we believe passionately we can turn young people's lives around; trajectories of young lives changed forever; the next generation of our nation's leaders with a strong Christian faith, because we yearn to see more young people become disciples of Jesus Christ, being the Church of England in this generation and the next.

The Chair. I thank the task group for that presentation and now invite the Bishop of Liverpool to move the motion at Item 9.

The Bishop of Liverpool (Rt Revd Paul Bayes): I beg to move:

'That the Synod do take note of this Report.'

You will have heard from the tone of the speakers the passion of the task group which the Archbishops have called together, and the difference between that passion and what so often comes before us in this chamber. On behalf of the task group, I am grateful to the Business Committee for giving such a substantial block of time for reflection on evangelism and on the work of the group. I am grateful, too, to you, Synod, for taking seriously the opportunity that the time has given you.

It is now over 30 years since the Anglican Consultative Council, at its sixth meeting

developed the Five Marks of Mission, since very widely adopted across the Church and across the Communion as the grounds for our participation in the mission of God. When the ACC developed the Five Marks, it went on explicitly to say this, and I read from the ACC website: “The first mark of mission, identified at ACC-6, with personal evangelism, is really a summary of what all mission is about, because it is based on Jesus’ own summary of his mission”, and the ACC goes on to quote a number of scriptures, including Mark 1:15 where our Lord says: “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe in the good news”.

The ACC went on to say: “Instead of being just one (albeit the first) of five distinct activities, this [evangelism] should be the key statement about everything we do in mission.” As you have heard, friends, that is our main and perhaps our only point. Evangelism is not a department. Evangelism is not an option. Evangelism is all we do, seen in a certain way; part of the operating system, as the Archbishop has said. The passion for justice, for diversity and for the young is the platform on which we speak of the beautiful shepherd.

To ask what have these presentations to do with evangelism is to miss the point that the ACC tried so clearly to make all those years ago. Evangelism comes to earth in a moment of sharing, a moment that can come before each believer at any time; a moment that can be grasped or missed. As Beth has said, we need to ask whether we are training ourselves and the leaders of the future to grasp or to miss this moment that comes when the platform for the beautiful shepherd is laid out in justice and truthfulness.

In our report, we have tried to emphasise the diversity and the beauty of that moment and to indicate what it means for our life together. We do not believe that the evangelistic moment is to be seen as the preserve of nominated evangelists nor of any one tradition within our Church, but of all of us, in all we do. We are the Archbishops’ task group. However, as we say in the report, we have always been grateful for the blessing and the encouragement of Synod. Both our Archbishops have set evangelism as an explicit priority in their own ministry, and much of what this group does is to contribute to that priority for them.

In addition, we were asked - and I am quoting from our term of reference – “to keep the priority of evangelism before every part of the Church”. In other words, to survey the whole of the Church’s life in evangelism mode, to look at all we do and ask whether this or that way of working, this or that tone of voice, this or that allocation of resource enables or hinders the sharing of the life of God in the moment of evangelism.

Our report comes to you halfway through our life as a group. We offer it to you to show some of the particular paths we have chosen to tread as we interpret this very wide brief. We intend to continue along these paths, together with such others as we can discern, and for which we may have the capacity. This debate is part of that process of ongoing discernment. Long as our report is, it cannot contain full detail of all that we are doing. The specific implementation, for example, of our Pentecost Prayer Initiative is something that each diocese and each local Christian community will be adapting and fitting with its existing commitments and priorities.

The research we have commissioned complements other research work done, but it is specifically designed to be delivered relationally within dioceses since it is qualitative in nature, built on interviews with individuals and small groups, and we will be rolling that out for dioceses to choose or to choose not to take part in in the future.

We hope, nonetheless, that our interim report has given you a sense of the task we are attempting, and we hope that you will take note of it in a spirit of support and ongoing encouragement, and in a spirit of critical friendship, which will sharpen our work into the future.

Friends, Christian people are people whose salvation was won on the Cross. Our Lord had no beauty there on the Cross. He was the disfigured man of sorrows and yet he never preached sorrow and his word to us has always been, "Do not be afraid", and he is and remains the beautiful shepherd. It is by his stripes that we are healed, but it is his beauty that we are called to share, and so we have tried to keep the beauty and the limitless attractiveness of the Lord Jesus in focus. We are not alone in doing so. The Archbishop mentioned yesterday in his Presidential Address, and you will have read in our report, the united commitment of the Anglican Primates to evangelism as expressed in the communiqué of their meeting at Canterbury last month. The Primates walked together as they committed themselves "through evangelism to proclaim the person and work of Jesus Christ, unceasingly and authentically, inviting all to embrace the beauty and joy of the Gospel".

We hope that this emphasis on the introduction to the person of Jesus as the beautiful one and the joy-bringer, brought by people standing on the platform of justice and truthfulness, is evident through our own report.

The contribution of task groups and even of Synods to this sharing of beauty and joy is real, but modest. We can give a fair wind, we can bless and encourage, we can certainly commend and advocate the focusing of enabling resources, as Mark Russell and others have done a few moments ago. Today this task can be moved forward by your taking discerning note of this report, and by your comments and suggestions in debate. It seems to us that the work of the group and the Synod is to pray that in the power of the Spirit, through the broken vessels which are the Church's people and which is the Church itself, the beauty and joy of our Lord Jesus may shine clearly. It is because we believe that that we work as we do and we have done what we have done.

In the group work you have had the opportunity to view the work of evangelism through the lens of your own discipleship. In the presentation just seen you have had a chance to hear the heartbeat of what we are doing and to note some of the matters that we feel are urgent if we are to share our faith with authenticity. Now in this debate the group hopes that you will help us further, through your response to these things as they appear in our report. I commend the report to Synod for debate and I move the motion standing in my name.

The Chair. Thank you, Bishop. The floor is now open for debate. Just before we start, I want to say to Synod that the debate is timed to finish at lunchtime, at 1 o'clock, unless Synod wishes it to conclude later than that, so I will be looking for a motion for closure

on the whole debate at least ten minutes before that to allow the Bishop time to respond to the debate.

May I also remind Synod members, in line with the guidance in the Business Committee recommended code of practice, to declare at the start of their intervention any financial or other interests which are relevant to the issue under debate. We are going to begin the debate on the report with a five-minute speech limit. There are quite a few people looking to speak, so after the first few speakers I am going to impose a three-minute time limit on contributions.

Revd Dr Jason Roach (London): Thank you to the Evangelism Task Group for their hard work in producing this report. As a new member to Synod, it has become clear to me that some of the material that we have to cover is worthy but dull, and yet there is nothing dull in the first paragraph of a report of being told to “share the beauty of Jesus Christ”. I thank the group for all their hard work in doing that.

I just want to reflect for a moment on my experience as a minority, and my work in trying to encourage young people and young vocations in the Church of England, particularly among ethnic minority groups. As I have done that, one of the things that I have been aware of is that many say, “The Church of England does not seem to be for us”. There are many reasons for that, but one of them seems to be for a group who have an extended background in Pentecostalism through family and friends, many of whom are from estates, to them the message of Jesus Christ, crucified, risen and ascended seems to be lost among many other emphases in our Church. Therefore, it seems to me this message is key to our mission and our recruitment. I just want to encourage the working group to continue to ensure there is clarity on this central message that we proclaim in the written materials and things that we produce, not only for recruitment, but, as the Archbishop of Canterbury outlined, as part of our operating system, because as the old adage goes: “The first generation knows the Gospel; the second generation assumes the Gospel; and the third generation denies the Gospel”.

When Jesus stood up in Nazareth, cleared his throat and spoke, he said, “The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor”. That passage in Isaiah 61 continues that Jesus would “bestow [on him] a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning”. Let us be clear that it is because Jesus Christ took off his crown and took up our sin that we can know joy and forgiveness and see his beauty. Let us be clear on the sin-bearing death of Jesus, the life-giving resurrection of Jesus, for the glory of God and for the growth of the Church.

Revd Canon Kate Wharton (Liverpool): I am delighted to be able to make my maiden speech on a subject which is so fundamentally important to who we are as a Church, and also so close to my heart as the vicar of an inner-city church ranked 12,631 out of 12,660 parishes nationally, in the most recent Church Urban Fund statistics, making it the 30th poorest parish in England.

In Liverpool Diocese, we have a phrase that matters to us a great deal - you have heard it already today - that we want to be a bigger church in order that we might make a bigger difference. Both parts of that phrase are important. The Church must grow

bigger. That is our goal. It is what we long to see, but not simply for its own sake. We want the Church to grow bigger so that it can make a bigger difference and have a greater influence on the society and the world around it. This report speaks to us of the very thing which is in our DNA as Christians. We who have known and experienced and encountered the saving love the Jesus of course want others to know it, too.

I wholeheartedly commend and affirm this report from the Evangelism Task Group. I am delighted that there is a particular focus on urban ministry and that a day conference is planned soon at Bishopthorpe. I look forward to being there and to sharing our story from St George's, Everton, where our church is small but growing, with new people of all ages regularly coming to join us.

It can be all too easy to think that Church growth, especially in deprived urban communities, is a quaint idea from the past, but in the last few years our church has doubled in terms of its Sunday attendance. We have seen our electoral roll increase, our number of weddings increase, our fringe grow in size and commitment, our one-off events and celebrations take off and several social justice projects launched and growing in influence.

The Talking Jesus research is challenging and important; at times hugely encouraging and at times deeply concerning. We must engage with it, talk about it, pray about it, learn from it and plan and prepare with it as we go forward together. When we see that 81% of practising Christians have a university degree or equivalent, compared to 44% of the population and that 18% of practising Christians are retired or not employed compared to 32% of the population, then we have to ask ourselves whether we are genuinely engaging with and reaching all parts of our society.

The same is true for the decline in attendance and finance statistics Bishop Philip shared with us earlier. Why are urban areas seeing greater decline? Why is church attendance so much lower there? If we are not engaging enough in these communities, why not? There are fundamental questions to be asked as to how we do church in these communities, how we share our faith, how we disciple people, how we select and train leaders, how we do social action, how we resource the Church.

In our urban communities life is tough. The people I meet every day are on the edge, living in desperate poverty, coping with the effects of crime and antisocial behaviour all around them, struggling with addiction; unemployed, on benefits, seeking asylum. They are just trying to make it through. If Jesus is real anywhere, and to anyone, he must be real to them.

I do not think it has ever been more important for us to regain our confidence in talking of Jesus, or more important for us to ensure that his name is shared in all the corners of our land. There are very specific challenges when we come to share our faith in our most urban deprived urban communities; of course there are, but there are also very specific opportunities, and these must be taken. Some of our urban churches are seeing great growth and great fruit. There is life and there is hope, but we need to ask some questions, learn some lessons and look to the future.

I am pleased that this report encourages us to do this and helps us to begin to imagine what it might look like. I hope that we will continue to share ideas and dream dreams, that we will act or speak, because if we fail to do this, if we fail to reach this group in society, then, whatever else we may do, we are failing to follow in the mission of Jesus whose heart was always for the poor.

The Bishop of Worcester (Rt Revd Dr John Inge): I would like to encourage us to do more than take note of this report. I would like to encourage us to rejoice in it and wholeheartedly commit ourselves to following up all that it commends. As I speak I declare an interest - a passionate interest in fact - in evangelism, and I declare that interest as Chair of the council of the Archbishops' College of Evangelists. Some of you may not know of the existence of the college, and it is worth articulating for a moment or two what it is for. It was formed just over 12 years ago, as a way of recognising, accrediting and encouraging those who have a ministry of evangelism that stretches beyond the parish and indeed beyond the diocese. People who are members of the college are commended by their diocesan bishops and, although we are a small organisation, I hope we will be able to do a great deal to further this hugely important, crucial and exciting work. We work very closely with Church Army, with whom we are partnered, and Mark Russell is a member of the council.

In the college, we recognise the scriptural truth articulated in Ephesians 4:11 that the gifts Jesus gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets and some evangelists. We are all called to be evangelistic, but some are given very particular gifts as evangelists. I hope that in recognising the importance of us all taking responsibility for evangelism, we are able, at the same time, to recognise the particular gifts that are given to some. Some are called to be evangelists. That is something we are doing in the College of Evangelists nationally. We are encouraging the setting up of colleges within dioceses. We also work in partnership with the Fellowship for Parish Evangelism. All of us have a responsibility to be evangelistic, but I hope we will be able to nurture not just clergy but everyone who has those gifts, and do everything that we can to bring those gifts to fruition. All of us are called to witness, but some have particular gifts, which I hope we will do everything to encourage.

The Chair imposed a three-minute time limit.

Mrs Lucy Moore (Winchester): My declared interest is that I head up the Messy Church network at the Bible Reading Fellowship, so I have the privilege of hearing daily reports of evangelism through and in the local church. In fact, this weekend in Wales I was hearing about a church which had done its first messy church, and they had 90 new people through the door. Sadly, they said they could not do it again because there were too many to cope with.

I applaud the fact that the Evangelism Task Group has dedicated space to evangelism specifically among young people. I want to shout aloud a statement that most people come to faith as children or young people, and I am thrilled by the dream of a church which is a place of home and nurture. However, I am not sure this paper quite hits the nail on the head and I would suggest that things have moved on, and can move further. I am convinced that the local church is the best place to do evangelism and to nurture

all believers, of all ages, through continuing hospitable evangelism.

Recent research points clearly to the uncomfortable, yet delightful truth that if we really want our children and young people to stick with faith and church, the best place for this to happen is in a church of all ages together. I am going to say that again, despite the shortage of time, because it is so important. If we really want our children and young people to stick with faith and church, the best place for this to happen is in a church of all ages together.

The traditional approach is to send children and young people out of the gathered church into age-segregated groups. If we are doing this because we genuinely believe that this is the best place for them to encounter God, that is fine. If at other times in the week they are meeting in age-segregated groups, that is fine. If we are sending them out of our churches - out of their churches - because their presence means, "I can't have everything that I want, my way", that is not fine.

The recent research *Talking Jesus*, *Sticky Faith* and *We are Family*, Joanna Collicutt's article in the *Church Times* all point towards that uncomfortable yet delightful truth that our children and young people have a better chance of becoming and staying Christian if they belong to a cross-generational Church. Let us help their churches - our churches - do evangelism by becoming real families, not ones which amputate some of our own limbs week-by-week.

I know family work is not a "sexy ministry", and as a Church we do not usually value family workers as much as some other ministers, but, as a Church, we need to recognise that families, not just children or youth in isolation, are absolutely key.

I would humbly suggest that Synod ensures no one is selected for lay leadership or for ordination who is not happy to learn to work and worship with families, children and young people, and that all training for parish ministry includes a hefty component of training for work with families, children and young people.

The Chair: I would remind Synod members to give their name, number and diocese as clearly as possible. I also acknowledge that there are quite a number of speakers who are speaking for the very first time, even though they have not announced it.

Miss Judith Rigby (Canterbury): For my maiden speech I am wholly encouraged by the priority given to ministry with children within the context of this report. However, relating to page 12, I believe it is constantly important that we ask the question: "Who is this for?" A great deal of the expressed motivation for investing in ministry for children and young people is the hope that there will be a subsequent return on that investment in Church growth. Is this more about us, the Church, and less about them? It is vital that we hold the opportunity for children and young people to encounter God as the only motivation for this work.

The website, *fromevidencetoaction*, that was launched last year as a follow-up to the *From Anecdote to Evidence* Report still states, "Attracting young people to church is crucial. If a church is appealing to children then parents may come too." The research

noted that growth is more likely to be found where there is a good number of children as well as adults attending.

I ask the question, is the motivation potentially flawed? Children are not marketing tools that we can use to woo their parents. There is a better way forward if we but choose to act with only the faith formation of our children and young people in mind, seeing them as disciples, fellow pilgrims, just as likely to help us learn about God as the other way round.

Mark Russell mentioned three recommendations. The first talks about employing more youth and children's workers. It is possible that employing more youth and children's workers will create the opportunities for younger people to come to faith within the appropriate relational context. This is an important consideration for the third recommendation, evangelism must have a subsequent context to receive people into community.

There is, however, the constant risk with employing a specialist that the community around the role will use the good work going on with them, the young people out there, as a distraction from facing the challenge that may well be required of them, or that they would see their collective responsibility to nurture the faith of the next generation fulfilled in the person they have employed.

The Report does not address ministry with children and families, which I know has been another aspect of the Evangelism Task Group's work. Could the whole breadth of ministry, with children in ministry with young people, be spoken about as one aspect of church life rather than continuing to separate them? The questions are the same across the age range. Where do children and young people have the opportunity to encounter God? Where do they see adults encountering God? Where do adults get to see children and young people encountering God? I wonder if the recommendations could, rather, include the need to listen to the voices of children and young people in determining their own place in our church life.

Mr Nicholas Lebey (Southwark): Thank you, Chair, for calling me. I welcome this Report and I thank the Task Group for their excellent work.

A priest approached a young boy on the street and said, "Could you tell me where the post office is, please?" The boy gave him the directions and the priest said, "Thank you. If you come to my sermon tonight, I will tell you how to get to heaven." "I don't think so", said the young boy, "you do not even know how to get to the post office."

Evangelism is one of my areas that I really like. I am a church and youth evangelist and I have had the wonderful privilege of serving young people in Belfast, Bradford and now in the Borough of Greenwich. I work with very difficult young people who have no church background. In this context, evangelism is not just an event. It is a process. We often talk about how young people come to faith in stages and we talk about belonging, believing and behaving, but in this context I will add one. It starts with what I call 'blessing', where a youth worker goes there and spends a lot of time serving, listening and then gradually introducing the Christian faith.

That is what we have done in Thamesmead, a place where there is a lot of crime and vandalism and it has become a way of life; but, thank God, we have seen some of these young people come to faith after months of serving them and being there for them. When we opened our first Christian community we had nearly 40 young people come and we have seen so many come to faith.

What begun as just one night, we now have three nights. We have Friday night where young people can hear a bit about the Gospel. Tuesday night, young people have come to faith doing the Youth Alpha. Recently last summer we did a Soul Survivor Summer Camp. We came back and young people said to me, "Nicholas, we want to start our own church", and on 1 November we launched a new church led by young people for young people.

Why am I telling you this? It worked because there was a paid youth worker in the parish, supported by a wonderful team of volunteers from the local churches. I really welcome the recommendation that we need to invest in youth work, because it is the only way we can raise a new generation of young people who will go out there and reach young people because if we have to reach the masses of young people it will take young people reaching the young people.

The last point I want to make is this. What happened when they came to faith? I tried. I invited one of them to morning Eucharist service. We sat at the back. The speaker was speaking in English, but I ended up interpreting to the young person because he could not understand some of this language and it occurred to me that we need to create a Christian community where it is accessible, engaging and encouraging for these young people to flourish and thrive in their faith.

That is why I want to encourage this Synod to think about Fresh Expressions. Vincent Donovan in his book, *Christianity Rediscovered*, said: "When the Gospel reaches people where they are, the people's response to the Gospel is a church in a new place." I hope that we encourage Fresh Expressions because when we do that I am convinced that in about 30 years some of the young people I work with in Thamesmead will be sitting in this chamber discussing how they too can pass their faith to the younger generation. The question is, are we going to help them do it?

Mrs Alison Coulter (Winchester): I want to start by thanking the Task Group very much for their hard work, their excellent presentation and Report, and to the Business Committee for allowing us to spend the whole morning speaking about evangelism. It has been very inspiring and encouraging.

I just want to raise one concern I have, however, that looking at the list of names in the Task Group there are only two who are not ordained, and one of those is an ordinand. I happen to be a newly elected lay chair of a diocese. I am also new to General Synod and I am a newly appointed member of the Task Group looking at Lay Leadership, so lay leadership is very much on my mind at the moment. If we remember back to the excellent Barna Report, on Public Perceptions of Jesus, that Rachel Jordan and others brought to us at the last Synod, they made the point that of non-Christians in the UK 38% have a friend who is a Christian but only 1% know a church leader, so we do know

that laity are key to evangelism.

I really do not want to speak negatively at all about anybody's calling or ministry, just to make the point that we need to do it collaboratively together. I want to specifically ask, please, if lay voices could be better represented on this Task Group; or maybe this is something you think the Lay Leadership Task Group is going to tackle, in which case please could we find ways of exploring that together as we start our life as a Task Group, so that we join up our thinking and make sure that we are really effective in sharing the good news about Jesus together, the joy bringer and beautiful one.

Revd Dr Philip Plyming (Guildford): I want to welcome this Report and enthusiastically endorse it, but I want to push a little further on one aspect of the Report which is the definition of the 'good news' that we are seeking to share. I want to explore what is that theological heart of this good news? It is a question I found myself facing when I did some research on St Paul's correspondence to the church in Corinth.

You will be familiar, I am sure, with the heart of the Gospel which Paul preached in that upwardly mobile and successful city. From 1 Corinthians 2, "I resolve to know nothing among you except Christ and him crucified." But Paul also reflected in the previous chapter, no doubt drawing on his Corinthian experience, that such an evangelistic presentation met with a mixed response. He reflected that the message of the Cross was profoundly unpopular to some who heard it, for it challenged the prevailing world views around wisdom and power and self-improvement. Indeed, some thought it a scandal. Yet Paul preached the message consistently and many people from different backgrounds in that city came to faith. In other words, Paul recognised that the Gospel message would sometimes be challenging, even unwelcome to some, but he knew it had the power to change lives.

How does that example speak to us today? Well, it reminds me of some of the writing of the US theologian and pastor, Timothy Keller, who in his book, *Center Church*, provides an excellent survey of the contemporary missiology and, in particular, the contextualisation necessary for effective witness and evangelism in contemporary society. Keller notes carefully the ways in which classic Christian doctrines such as sin, salvation and redemption are not readily accessible to a post-modern mind-set and can create real obstacles to the Gospel message being heard.

He proposes two steps in response. First, he argues persuasively that we should find winsome ways of presenting the good news so that people's felt needs for justice and truth, for life and love, for meaning and hope are met. But he also argues that we should recognise that parts of our Gospel message, the uniqueness of Christ, the universal need of salvation, are uncomfortable to post-modern ears. He said we should not be embarrassed about this. We should show that we understand the challenge but be prepared to show why it is necessary.

I guess I thought about that as I read that quote from John 10:11, which headed the introduction to the ETG Report, "The beautiful shepherd." Because what makes Jesus the beautiful shepherd is what that verse goes on to say, that he lay down his life for the sheep. Why did he do that? He did that because we, as sheep, have, in the words of

Isaiah 53, "Gone astray." We have turned to our own way and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. That is a challenge to a culture that says we are all right as we are. One of God's things the Gospel says is we are not all right as we are. We are lost sheep in need of being found. We are sinners in need of a saviour. The fact that we are stray sheep is a challenge to many in our society. I am not suggesting we lead on evangelistic work, but in the words of John Newton who said, "Although my memory is fading, two things I remember very clearly, that I am a great sinner and Christ is a great Saviour."

Revd Mark Barker (Rochester): Like other speakers, I am delighted to see the topic of evangelism high on the Agenda for this Synod and hope that it will retain this prominence and not get sidelined as we enter into Shared Conversations on human sexuality, however important that topic is also. There is much in this Report that is positive, but I want to underline one area in particular and also raise an area, I believe, should be looked at.

Firstly, I want to affirm the section on chaplaincy. At this point, I have to declare an interest as the Bishop of Rochester last year created a part-time Fresh Expressions post for my wife as a community chaplain working with various charitable organisations in West Kent who care for different vulnerable groups, young people on the fringes, adults with learning difficulties, those with addictions to drugs or alcohol, the local winter shelter for the homeless.

She has only been doing the job five months but never has she had so many opportunities to talk about Jesus and so many people asking about the Christian faith. Already, six men are doing an Alpha course with her every week, as they are hungry to find out more about Jesus. The opportunities for chaplains outside the structures of parish ministry are enormous and I am becoming convinced is an area the Church needs to be investing in more, as so often chaplaincy is to the most vulnerable and needy who perhaps will not relate to the Church through the parochial system.

An area that is lacking in the Report, I believe, is outreach to men. If you go onto the website of Christian Viewpoint for Men (CVM), you will find some interesting statistics. 50% of men feel comfortable in a lady's underwear shop, but only 33% feel comfortable in church. The UK official statistics state that the Church consists of 60% women and 40% men, but at the current rate of loss by 2028 men will have all but disappeared from the UK Church. They have done some other research as well. 3.5% of the family will follow if a child comes to faith. If a mother comes to faith, 17% of the time the family will follow; but if a father comes to faith, 93% of the time the family will follow.

Based on those statistics from CVM, I would ask the Evangelism Task Group to look at ministry to men, outreach to men, because as CVM say, 'If you can get the dad you get the whole family'. Thank you.

The Chair: I see no one standing and so I call upon Bishop Paul to respond to the debate.

The Bishop of Liverpool (Rt Revd Paul Bayes): Thank you, Chair. We are most grateful

to Synod for the tone of the debate and for the support we have got. We are grateful also for the steers and the sharpening that have come through colleagues' input. Thank you for the time you have given. We are speaking on behalf of the Task Group, if you have not had a chance to speak, Synod members, if there are particular things you want to say to us as we enter the second two years of our life, please do not feel you have missed your moment. Talk to group members or send emails to us. We will clock what you are saying.

Thanks to Jason Roach for underlying our own desire, a real desire, to be there for the urban poor and for minority groups within the Church. That echo of that voice is most welcome. Jason also said at the end of his speech that it was important we should be clear on doctrine, and I am grateful to him and to Philip Plyming towards the end of our input for underlining the need for us to hold the truth of the Cross and of our redemption at the heart of what we offer. It is, as we all know, the beautiful shepherd whom we follow, but it is the beautiful shepherd with the marks of the nails and, unless we emphasise that, we have nothing but feel-good religion to give.

I am so proud of Kate Wharton. She is one of mine. Nobody else can have her. The diocese of Liverpool trying to make a bigger difference through a bigger Church. Kate, I can assure, Synod, that your own testimony bears out in reality there in the church in Everton. If anyone wants to come and see how urban ministry can and should be done, you are welcome to queue up outside Everton St George.

John Inge rightly emphasised the role both of the College of Evangelists and of the FPE, Fellowship of Parish Evangelists, and of the role of evangelistic ministry. We have stressed the importance of witness across the Church, but that is not to discount the role of those particularly gifted in evangelism. The Task Group contains a number of people, some of whom are here today, who have the evangelistic calling in spades and we try to use their skill as we work together.

Thanks to Lucy Moore and to Judith Rigby for the emphasis both on children and families and on the intergenerational community of the Church. It was my privilege as a team rector several years ago to feel called by God to set up intergenerational small groups. Friends, if you are not called by God to do that, do not do it, but if it works it is fantastic to see how God can work through those of all ages and it is good to have that underlined, both in the employment of youth workers and in Judith's good point that by professionalising ministry we must not abrogate responsibility ourselves to share our faith with those of all ages.

Nicholas Lebey, thank you very much. I shall use you next time I need to find a way to heaven and I shall remember what you said about investing in youth work, which is one of the key points of our young people's section and which we will continue to advocate as we go forward.

Alison Coulter, I am so sorry, we, the Task Group, have dropped the ball on this. It was I and a couple of colleagues who advised the Archbishops on the membership of the Task Group and we should have clocked more than we did the paucity of lay voices. We will put that right, partly through conversation with the Lay Leadership Task Group

which, of course, has only recently been set up and we are explicitly committed to working with that Task Group, but thank you for underlining a mistake that we made. Finally, Mark, thank you for your stuff on chaplaincy. You will have seen Simon Betteridge's part of our Report on chaplaincy which indicates Simon came quite late to the group, at the Archbishops' explicit invitation, in order to bring that emphasis to our work and we promise you we will continue to do so. When it comes to men's ministry, we will strongly take on board what you have said and we will do some kind of research around the Synod to see how many people go into lady's underwear shops as a matter of routine.

Synod, I am grateful to you all for having taken this debate seriously and also for having engaged with the group work. The work you have done there will be used by the Task Group as we go forward. We will be back with our final report in due course. The work we do will not end in the meantime. Please keep in touch with us. In the meantime, colleagues, I offer you this Report for you to take note and move the motion standing in my name.

The Chair: I now put Item 9 to the vote.

The motion

'That the Synod do take note of this Report.'

was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: Item 9 is clearly carried. This completes the business on this item and we move to lunch.

THE CHAIR *Mr Geoffrey Tattersall (Manchester)* took the Chair at 2.30 pm.

The Chair: Please sit down, otherwise it is going to be a very long afternoon. It might be a very long afternoon away, who knows? Joking apart, we move to Items 10 and 11, which you will see are of a piece. First, I need to remind you that the Continuing Praying Presence this afternoon is provided by the London-based members and associates of the Iona Community. I also want you to welcome the Revd Canon John McLuckie from the Scottish Episcopal Church, who is seated in the public gallery.

Report of the Church of England - Church of Scotland Joint Study Group (GS 2016)

The Chair: We turn to Item 10, which is the Presentation under SO 107. I call upon the Rt Revd Dr Angus Morrison, the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. I invite him to address the Synod.

Rt Revd Dr Angus Morrison: May I begin by expressing my thanks to the General Synod, and to the Archbishop and Secretary General for the honour conferred upon me in being invited to address the General Synod on the occasion of the presentation of the

report of the Joint Study Group: *Growth in Communion, Partnership in Mission*, and, in particular, the proposed Columba Declaration.

The declaration will, I believe, if approved by this Synod and by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, symbolise and give expression to a relationship which has grown and developed in recent years and which, in the providence of God, may yet deepen more fully to our mutual, but not exclusive, benefit. The strengthening of the bonds which already exist between us can only serve the 'advance of the Gospel', which is our united desire and aim. May I say how enormously heartened I was to listen to the debate on evangelism and mission here this morning.

Indeed, the relationship between the Church of England and the Church of Scotland is one embedded in the DNA of both churches, given the common context in which they were shaped; that of the Reformation of the 16th century. That the subsequent journeys taken by our two churches thereafter have been somewhat different owes something to a variety of factors, including, no doubt, matters theological, liturgical, political and climatic. We can discuss Scottish weather later.

Likewise, the impact of the *Book of Common Prayer* (the 1552 edition, of course) on the Scottish Reformation is somewhat under-researched, but may still be percolating down for all we know. Equally, if John Knox had accepted the Bishopric of Rochester, who knows what our relationship might now be? Could I have been a bishop?

We cannot second-guess the progress of history and we stand where we stand, with our identities shaped by the contexts in which we have sought to understand and express our understanding of the Christian faith. We are shaped also by the present context in which we are set, a context which surely invites us, and invites us pressingly, to consider again how we each, and in concert with one another, give expression to our relationship, not for own sakes alone, but for the sake of the Gospel; as partners in mission as participants in the mission of God. The report before the General Synod today, and, I trust, the General Assembly in May, gives us the opportunity to do just that.

The report proposes nothing ground-breaking, but what it does is to remind, recall and reaffirm what we already do together in partnership and in concert with one another as 'national churches', and as churches within the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of which we are both part, and in virtue of which we are related to one another, and related to other churches within our particular communions and beyond.

In seeking to establish and further any relationship there are, of course, challenges along the way. The course of true partnership never runs entirely smoothly. I am aware that there have been some misunderstandings of what this report is about, partly because of the way that it attracted national press coverage just before Christmas before we were ready to release the full text, and that those misunderstandings have resulted in some hurt and dismay on the part of the Scottish Episcopal Church in particular. We have been working hard since then to address those misunderstandings and to focus on how responding to the report can be a positive opportunity for building relations with the Scottish Episcopal Church and the Church of England. The Scottish

Episcopal Church's press release on 29 January confirms their recognition of these positive developments and sets out a constructive way forward, with a timetable set for their formal response to this report following its debate today and at the Assembly in May.

Thus, Bishop Gregor Duncan, Acting Convenor of the Faith & Order Board of the General Synod of the Scottish Episcopal Church, stated: "The Board believes that publication of *Growth in Communion, Partnership in Mission* now provides an opportunity to build on the warm relations which the Scottish Episcopal Church already enjoys with the Church of Scotland and very much looks forward to continuing discussions."

I want to say to the General Synod that the regrettable release of elements of the declaration has engendered intense and remarkably productive engagement between the Church of Scotland and the Scottish Episcopal Church, with respect to how both churches might give expression to our journey together within the specifically, and rather different, Scottish context. Equally, I believe that recent events have actually significantly strengthened the determination within both churches to give appropriate expression to that relationship.

It was a privilege this morning to attend worship at Lambeth Palace. There, we prayed for the unity of Christians and that the Holy Spirit would enable us to experience the suffering caused by division, to see our sin and to hope beyond hope. As someone whose roots lie in separatist Presbyterianism, that touches me deeply. Let it be openly acknowledged that over centuries in Scotland, our relationship with our Episcopalian brothers and sisters has not always been a happy one. We need - we all need - to recognise our sin and fault. Grace, however, frees us from the past and enables us to hope beyond hope. Our Lord prayed fervently that we might be one, walking together in mutual love, acceptance and service for the sake of the Gospel. At core, that really is what we are about today.

I am fully persuaded that the report and the Columba Declaration, now before this Synod for debate, offers us all a very special opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to move forward together and to work out together the implications for us all and for the vital mission we share of the concern that was so close to Jesus' heart.

What does the Columba Declaration offer to both the Church of England and the Church of Scotland? Remarkably, it offers, for the very first time in our history, the opportunity for both churches formally to affirm each other. Thus: we acknowledge one another's churches as churches belonging to the One, Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ and truly participating in the apostolic ministry and mission of the whole people of God; we acknowledge that in both our churches the word of God is truly preached, and the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion are rightly administered; we acknowledge that both our churches share in the common confession of the apostolic faith.

For the life of me, I cannot imagine why we have not done this before. Here today, we have the opportunity so to do. We owe no less, I believe, to our common Lord, and we owe it to the world to which he has sent us in mission and in service.

Therefore, in terms of the Columba Declaration, we have a firm foundation from which: first, to recall where we have come from and the steps which have led us here; secondly, to acknowledge with gratitude to God what we are already doing in our present partnership in mission; and, thirdly, to identify what we might consider doing in our future partnership.

There is no prescription for the future in the report. Rather, there is an opportunity before us to affirm, to renew and to consider how we might deepen the relationship which we share, a relationship expressed carefully, yet confidently, in *Growth in Communion, Partnership in Mission*, and in the terms of the Columba Declaration. I commend the report and the declaration to the General Synod. Thank you.

The Chair: I was going to express our thanks to the Moderator, but I have already done that. We are very grateful to him for speaking to us.

We move now to Item 11. I need to say a couple of things first. In accordance with the Business Committee's recommended Code of Practice: Declaration of Interest, Synod members should declare at the start of their intervention in any debate any financial or other interest which may be relevant to the issue under debate.

The second is that you will see from the Order Paper that we have a substantive motion and two quite different amendments. The plan is that this debate will continue to about four o'clock or ten past four. There is no timed business, I am in your hands, but that is the aim. There is obviously a lot to get through and we will have to do it quite efficiently. For that reason, after the Bishop of Chester has spoken, from the outset I am going to impose a three minute speech limit, which I think will sharpen our thoughts. It will give you time, during the Bishop of Chester's speech, to sharpen up your speeches to be three minutes and not five. With no more ado, I call upon the Bishop of Chester to speak to the motion standing in his name, Item 11. He has up to ten minutes.

The Bishop of Chester (Rt Revd Dr Peter Forster): I beg to move:

'That this Synod:

- (a) welcome the report of the Joint Study Group of the Church of England and the Church of Scotland (annexed to GS 2016) as a significant development in the relationship between the two churches;
- (b) approve the Columba Declaration, consisting of mutual Acknowledgements and Commitments, as set out in paragraph 38 of the report; and

- (c) request the Council for Christian Unity to oversee the implementation of the Commitments contained in the Columba Declaration and set up the Contact Group proposed by it.'

It gives me particular pleasure to introduce this debate. Although English by birth and upbringing, I have had a close association with Scotland for over 40 years. I studied at the University of Edinburgh for the degrees of Bachelor of Divinity and Doctor of Philosophy. During that period, I was sponsored for ordination by the then Bishop of Edinburgh, Alastair Haggart, who, 20 years later, was one of the two bishops who presented me for consecration as Bishop of Chester. I trained for the Anglican ministry at Edinburgh Theological College, which, sadly, no longer exists to provide full-time residential training. During my time in Edinburgh, I met my wife, whose father was a priest of the Scottish Episcopal Church.

For 30 years we have had a retirement house in Scotland, and I have regularly worshipped both in the Scottish Episcopal Church and in the Church of Scotland during that time. I owe both churches a very great debt indeed.

The report before us, and its immediate predecessor, *Our Fellowship in the Gospel*, set out the rich history of formal contact between the Church of England and the Church of Scotland, but there has never been a formal doctrinal statement of what we do and do not agree upon. Today, we seek to remedy that.

Section 13 of the report itself sets out ten examples of our current practical cooperation, which the report rightly calls "a rich tapestry". Those ten examples intersect. I can well recall the St Andrewside visit of the then Moderator to the previous Archbishop of Canterbury a few years ago, when he proposed that there might be a collaborative response to the serious financial crisis which was manifesting itself. Among other things, that led to the recent launch of the Churches Mutual Credit Union, in which the current Archbishop of Canterbury has taken a particular interest.

The present report, and the accompanying Columba Declaration, seeks simply to undergird this developing pattern of cooperation and provide a clear foundation for the future.

In many ways, and deliberately, the report itself is a modest document. It does not seek to break substantial new ground in ecumenical theology. It is based upon existing bilateral agreements, such as the Meissen Agreement with the German Protestant Churches, the Fetter Lane Agreement with the Moravian Church and the Reuilly Common Statement with the French Protestant Churches.

In our discussions, we were also very conscious, from the Church of England's side, of the covenant between the Methodist Church and the Church of England. From the Church of Scotland perspective, there was a careful commitment to maintain consistency with other dialogues and agreements to which it is committed.

Common to these various relationships is the issue of the interchangeability of ordained ministries. We do not claim to have made any specific progress towards a resolution of

this difficult and challenging matter, although during our talks we were able to remedy one practical deficit by designating the Church of Scotland under the provisions of the Church of England's Ecumenical Canons, and this has regularised and extended the possible participation of Church of Scotland ministers in Church of England services in England and, indeed, in Europe.

The contexts for this are limited, but not insignificant. For example, a Church of Scotland minister has recently retired to live in my diocese and he and his wife have found a spiritual home in the local Anglican parish church. He is making an excellent contribution to our ministry, in part because he is sharing with us the riches of his particular background and tradition.

We discuss in the report the issues which arise when either a member of the Church of England, ordained or lay, visits or settles in Scotland, or when a member of the Church of Scotland, ordained or lay, visits or settles in England, or indeed the diocese of Europe. Those concerned will make their own decisions about where they will find a primary spiritual home. The working party viewed this diversity as enriching for the wider goal of unity between denominations. Ecumenism can never be a zero-sum game. All deepening of relationships between Christians serves the ultimate goal of our visible unity in Christ.

The dialogue and partnership between the Church of England and the Church of Scotland is shaped by our particular calling as, in some sense, national churches which have a parish structure covering the nation, and a recognition by the state and wider society. As our country has become more secular, we find ourselves drawn together as we face common problems and opportunities. For all the ways in which our recognition and calling as national churches has had very different histories and legal structures, we have found we actually have more in common in our common tasks in mission than we might have supposed.

Every bilateral dialogue is set in a wider context. In this case, the Scottish Episcopal Church as part of the Anglican Communion has a particular significance. *Our Fellowship in the Gospel* recommended that the SEC should be invited to be a full member of future conversations, and for two years that was the case, but, to our regret, the SEC decided that it did not wish to be party to a formal doctrinal statement, although it raised no objection to the continuation of the talks on a bilateral basis, and it appointed an ongoing observer, the Chair of its Interchurch Relations Committee.

There has been a suggestion that the SEC was not properly consulted as the report was formed. The SEC observer attended all meetings and played a full role in the discussions. As the report was finalised, we explicitly asked for, and received, the assurance that there was nothing in the report and proposed agreement which would cause any difficulty for the SEC. An article in the national press just before Christmas, written by a journalist who had not actually seen the report, led to some misunderstanding. We have worked hard since then, in the light of the actual report, to address these issues with the SEC. The SEC has now published the official statement, to which the Moderator referred, that: "the publication of the report provides an

opportunity to build on the warm relationships which the SEC already enjoys, and looks forward to continuing discussions”.

There has been less formal consultation with the United Reformed Church, although there has been some. The dynamics here are somewhat different, partly because of the earlier publication in 1984 of the well-regarded report of the Anglican-Reformed International Commission, *God's Reign and our Unity*, of which the then General Secretary of the URC was co-chair with the then Bishop of Bristol. *God's Reign and our Unity* lies firmly in the background of the present report, which we believe is entirely consistent with it.

Perhaps, significantly, the distinguished 20th century ecumenist and theologian, and indeed evangelist, Lesslie Newbigin, had a key role in the production of *God's Reign and our Unity*. Lesslie Newbigin had been ordained into the ministry of the Church of Scotland initially for missionary work in India, and was eventually consecrated as a bishop of the uniting Church of South India. On returning to the United Kingdom, he chose to minister within the URC in Birmingham. I can recall my own conversations with him in retirement 40 years ago, when he visited Edinburgh, precisely about his experience both as a minister of the Church of Scotland and a bishop of the Anglican Communion. I believe that he would have welcomed the present report and proposed declaration as long overdue.

I am delighted to be able to move the motion which is before us.

The Chair: The motion is open for debate. Do not all stand at once! We will have a general debate initially. I will then call the two movers of the amendments to speak to, but not move, their amendments. Eventually we will work our way through the amendments.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

Revd Stewart Fyfe (Carlisle): I have a personal interest in this matter, having been raised in the Church of Scotland and later ordained in the Church of England. I warmly welcome this report. The healing of a rift as deep as the Reformation dispute between episcopalianism and Presbyterianism is a magnificent work of grace, and I thank those who have worked to bring us to this point.

I do want to ask that priority be given to resolving the fundamental issue of episcopal authority, because this is vital not only to the practical work of shared mission, but also to us playing our distinct part, as Father Cantalamessa encouraged us to do, as the “*via media*” in facilitating worldwide ecumenism. We should not lose sight of that in this debate.

Ministering as I now do in Cumbria, this is a live issue affecting shared ministries and shared membership. Getting permission for the Church of Scotland minister in my congregation to preside at Communion, even in the first ecumenical county, has been tortuous. I nearly lost a church warden from a congregation that desperately needed his

outstanding leadership skills because he could not bring himself to be reconfirmed by a bishop; an issue that was only resolved by a timely momentary deafness on my part.

I have to say that mirrors my own pain when seeking ordination on being told that my deeply meaningful confirmation in the Church of Scotland would have to be redone because it was not episcopal. It was handled generously, and I was encouraged to consider myself a member of both churches, which I do, but we cannot be satisfied with a theology that means that whatever underlying goodwill there might be between us, the first experience of many seeking to serve alongside us is a closed door.

The issue has also been a historic bar to resolving the schism of the Reformation, which has tended to see the reunification of the Church as something that will only be possible when we come to our senses and return to Rome.

This report offers an alternative route for reunification. To say that the Church of Scotland is not episcopal misunderstands the fact that in Presbyterian theology *episkope* is shared by the whole Church. By recognising, as I hope we will, the legitimacy of the Church of Scotland, surely we also recognise that the apostolic succession has been alive and well throughout its existence and that its tradition of sharing *episkope* is legitimate, and so a person who has been ordained or confirmed in the Church of Scotland has been so with full episcopal authority and can minister alongside us without first being required to pass under the beatific hands of an Anglican bishop.

Ven Dr John Perumbalath (Chelmsford): I must enthusiastically welcome a report about Anglicans and Presbyterians affirming common ground on faith, ministry and mission. In the church where I was ordained, we do not talk about Anglicans and Presbyterians; we are all just members of the Church of North India. For two years, Sunday after Sunday, I celebrated Eucharist or a Service of the Word using the liturgy of the Church of Scotland when I was presbyter in charge of St Andrew's Church in Calcutta.

Having placed my ecumenical credentials on the table, let me now say why I am not enthused by this declaration. First of all, this involves two churches, the Anglican Church in England and the Presbyterian Church in Scotland. Any agreement we make outside England should involve the Anglican Church there, in this case the Scottish Episcopal Church.

Secondly, we had an opportunity to re-examine the direction of this journey, which we did not use. The Scottish Episcopal Church was fully involved in the discussions, but, as we are told, they withdrew, saying they did not feel they could share the direction of travel. We should have paused there and then, redefined our direction and proceeded. That did not happen.

We are told that the Scottish Episcopal Church has told us it is fine for us to proceed. It shows their generosity in spite of the pain and concerns. By going ahead, we are showing a lack of generosity on our side. We are also told that these discussions on a bilateral basis were justified because we were talking as the established churches of the land in England and Scotland. That is fine. In that case, the discussion should have

focused on matters common to these two churches as the established churches of the land, not ministry and membership of the Church of Scotland. At best, this is a discussion that has drifted away from what it was meant to be.

Signing an agreement or making a declaration in this context is not the best way forward. We need to continue our discussions with the Scottish Episcopal Church and also the United Reformed Church in this country. For that purpose, we need to pause.

I will be supporting the amendment later on moved by Mark Russell. Thank you.

Very Revd David Arnott (Church of Scotland): I speak as the Church of Scotland representative to the General Synod. I was talking with John McLuckie at lunchtime about our relationships with the Scottish Episcopal Church. He and I are both in agreement that they are well, they are full and they are very hearty. There are two meetings coming up of the Interchurch Committee from the Scottish Episcopal Church and our own Ecumenical Affairs Committee to talk about this and to take things forward, and that is nothing new because there is very good co-operation in many parishes up and down the land at a local level.

For some 14 years I ministered in the town of St Andrews, which you may know as the home of golf and the home of Scotland's oldest university, and for those two reasons perhaps there is a very large percentage of people resident in the town from south of the border and many of them would find their way to my congregation. I would say to them, "You are more than welcome to come and join us, but I have to say to you we have neither prayer book nor bishop in this church", and they said, "But you have something far more important, you have a parish". That concept of a parish and what that does to a church was fundamental in their choice of coming to worship in the Church of Scotland, this in a town where there are two Scottish Episcopal churches and three Church of Scotland churches as well as a variety of others.

That ought not to be underestimated in what binds us together. Our territorial responsibilities, unique in vision, link us and make us different. Secondly, every two years our two Churches hold a gathering alternately in York and Edinburgh, and those attending share best practice and innovative and imaginative work which we are both carrying out which might of interest to the other. Over the years much seed sowing has taken place but, importantly, formative ideas have taken root in presbytery and in dioceses. This dialogue encourages both parties to look beyond themselves in an ecumenical and British context, and to understand the new and rich depths of the Gospel and the varieties of ways of sharing that most precious of messages.

Thirdly and finally, despite what I read in my morning papers almost every day, I have no idea how the political future of Scotland is going to pan out. I might add I am happy to appear here without needing a passport, but whatever happens in the years ahead it does not take away the inescapable truth that you and I are neighbours and we always will be. We live in close proximity. We share a common language, a national press, a national broadcaster and a monarch. It seems to me time that we acknowledge our neighbour. I have enjoyed my three years as the Church of Scotland's representative at this General Synod; you have made me feel most welcome and I hope you would affirm

that welcome by supporting this motion.

Dr Chris Angus (Carlisle): Thank you, Chairman, for calling me. Carlisle refers to itself as “a great border city”. It looks to both England and Scotland, and people from both sides of the border come to shop. Indeed I remember the incongruous sight of Rab C Nesbitt advising my young daughter on a choice of dress. The northern boundary of my deanery is the border between Cumbria and Scotland. I worship in a church that sits in the ruins of a priory founded in 1169, built from stones taken from Hadrian’s Wall. It shows the scars not only of the dissolution but of early reprisals from across the border for its hosting of Edward I.

But aside from the apparent barriers between the countries, in Cumbria we are keen to remove the barriers between denominations. We have a major ecumenical strategic initiative underway, God For All, working in full partnership with the Methodists and the United Reformed Churches and with the co-operation of other denominations, including the Church of Scotland, and we are well on the way to becoming an ecumenical county.

So what of our relationships with the Church of Scotland? The Church of Scotland does actually function south of the border as the Border Kirk with churches in Carlisle and Longtown and has done so since 1832. Relationships between our churches are very good and actually very active, particularly in terms of mission and outreach. The Church of Scotland is on the executive Churches Together Carlisle Group and is very involved in the ecumenical missional activities in the city and particularly in work with young people. When St Aidan’s Church was flooded in early December it was the diocese café run by the Church of Scotland which took over hosting breakfast for the homeless in the city. Plans are afoot to bring even closer working together in mission and ministry. I particularly commend the final sentence of the Co-Chair’s preface to the Report, “The new possibilities that energise us are not about novel doctrinal statements or additional institutional structures but about growing in communion and partnership in mission so the people may be drawn to the good news of peace, the Gospel of Jesus Christ”, a view that resonates so well with what we are striving to achieve in Cumbria. In Cumbria we welcome the opportunity to work with the Church of Scotland and I commend the Report.

Revd Andrew Foreshow-Cain (London): I thought I might take this opportunity in my maiden speech to address some rumours that some of you may have heard about me. It is true, I am a proud Episcopalian. I was confirmed at King’s College in Aberdeen on 20 May 1984. It was a long time ago. I used to have hair.

But since then, even though I have moved south, I have kept friends and connections with the Scottish Episcopal Church and I still regard myself in many ways as an Episcopalian. I share many of the concerns of my fellow Episcopalians north of the border about this Report, the way it was formulated and what it is proposing. I am a believer in cock-up rather than conspiracy, and I think that some of the problems that there have been with this Report are because of that rather than anything else, but simply because there have been a series of mistakes made in its formulation and distribution, that does not necessarily mean we have to go ahead and approve it here and now, and I am going to urge us not to do so.

Let the Synod be absolutely clear: there is a real sense of offence in many parts of the Scottish Episcopal Church, our sister church in the Anglican Communion, about this Report and what it is suggesting, not the least of which is the fact that of course those who drafted the initial press release got the name of the Scottish Episcopal Church wrong. The Provost of Glasgow, not known for mincing his words, wrote recently: "I know of no-one in the Scottish Episcopal Church who thinks it was ever remotely appropriate for the Church of England to negotiate an agreement with the Church of Scotland at all. It appears to many, and continues to appear to many, as the height of rudeness and discourtesy for a church of the Anglican Communion to negotiate an agreement with a church which is a dominant church in a territorial area of another member church of the Anglican Communion". I believe he is right and justifying this on the basis that the Church of England and Church of Scotland are in some senses similar because of their national status, which you have already heard about today, is rather disingenuous because the document then goes on to make much of mission, ministry and membership, which are properly ecumenical concerns between the Scottish Episcopal Church and the Church of Scotland within the territorial area of the Scottish Episcopal Church. These are issues for the Scottish Episcopal Church and not for the Church of England to take to itself without proper consultation and the agreement of a sister member of the Anglican Communion.

There are many issues which we as a Synod might want to consider but not least of which is there has been no official response to this agreement from the Scottish Episcopal Church yet, and indeed that response will not come until this goes before the Faith and Order Board of the Scottish Episcopal Church in September 2016. I would suggest it would be premature of us to approve this Report until we have heard what the Scottish Episcopal Church actually thinks about this Report. There are many questions we could ask about the Report but it is undoubted that we are in danger of sowing real seeds of ecumenical distrust, not just in Scotland but also between the Scottish Episcopal Church and the Church of England that may well impact upon our relationship for many years to come. There was, as we have heard, a press release from the Scottish Episcopal Church recently but they of course had no option but to respond and that press release makes no indication of approval for this Report. I would urge you to support Canon Mark Russell's amendment and put this away for now.

The Chair: Dr Dagmar Winter followed by Mark Russell to speak to but not move his amendment.

Revd Canon Dr Dagmar Winter (Newcastle): I warmly welcome this Report. I warmly welcome the motion. This is a great opportunity of affirmation of each other. It even uses words of the Lutheran Augsburg Confession of 1530; now if that is not ecumenical. A lot of hard work has gone into the Columba Declaration, so let us not throw this out completely but embrace our Scottish brothers and sisters, Episcopal and Presbyterian.

I think we know something in the Anglican Communion of misleading early press releases and statements, but I do not think we should let that control us and throw us off course of the good work we have done and will endeavour to do in the future. I do not think that headlines are going to improve if we do this, and indeed did this unnecessarily as I believe, and which was also quite clear from the Bishop of Chester's words earlier.

As the Moderator indicated, we have every opportunity now to move forward together, Scottish Episcopal Church, Church of Scotland and Church of England, that we may be one.

Coming from the diocese of Newcastle, I am happy to report from Berwick the relationship of Berwick Parish Church, which is somewhat tucked behind the Church of Scotland in the town there, with the Church of Scotland is good and that they are continuing to develop closer relationships through shared services. The Columba Declaration is a good basis for this and many, many other ventures, recalling some of the past, affirming the partnership in mission and setting out to explore a future together.

Please reject Mark Russell's amendment, which I believe is well intentioned but misguided, and support the amendment of the Bishop of Truro which affirms the good work which has been done over many years as well as affirming the presence, role and importance of the Scottish Episcopal Church who shall indeed be part, as they have been, of the exploration of life, ministry and mission together.

The Chair: Canon Russell to speak to but not move his amendment.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of five minutes.

Canon Mark Russell (Sheffield): I declare an interest: I am Chief Executive Officer of Church Army, an Anglican mission agency dedicated to enhancing the mission of the Anglican Church across these islands, and so I work regularly with bishops in Scotland, Wales and England and of course the mainland across the Irish Sea, and perhaps I can give unique insight into how the Anglican provinces in these islands relate to each other. As I have spoken to the Primus and the bishops in Scotland, I have felt acutely the pain they feel on how this has been handled. We all know there is a difference between what is said and what is heard. What has been said has been outlined beautifully by the Bishop of Chester and by the Moderator, but what has been heard on the ground in Scotland has left many Episcopalians to feel hurt and to feel hurt by us. When you are a minority church, which the SEC is, you perhaps feel those issues more acutely than if you are an established church in England or Scotland. Yes, the SEC has published a press statement, but I think they were between a rock and an ecumenical hard place. The Primus has blogged in very, very strong terms about this as have many of his clergy and other Episcopalians. Friends, we need to hear that hurt.

I was baptized an Irish Presbyterian and so with great joy I welcome the Moderator and I welcome his remarks about what the SEC has been through, and I hope that the Moderator, Sir, will forgive me but the Synod is our institution to debate and decide on matters such as this and even the present honoured guest does not mean we cannot have an honest conversation. I profoundly believe my amendment is helpful. It is not a derailing amendment. It is simply putting some space into this process. I support anything that brings Christians together, increases trust, increases partnership. I am a passionate ecumenical. In fact, one of my congregation in Northern Ireland stopped me once and said, "Mr Russell, are you one of those ecumaniacs?" I believe that ecumenical relationships are supposed to help relationships at ground level, not make

things more complex, and they are complex in Scotland, so my amendment proposes to allow some space, some breathing space, to allow some dust to settle, to allow some work to be done to rebuild trust which I am delighted those conversations have begun, to ask our bishops in our house to reflect on the reaction of the bishops north of the border and to come back to us with fresh proposals before next year.

I adore the Church of England but I am not English. I think I perhaps bring another voice to how the Church of England is seen in the Celtic fringe. I mean what would an Irishman know about how the English are perceived in a Celtic nation? The Bishop says rightly this document does mirror other ecumenical arrangements but with one fundamental difference. The other ecumenical arrangements are within churches within the EU that come under the jurisdiction of the diocese of Europe which comes under the jurisdiction of this Synod. This Synod has no jurisdiction north of Carlisle.

We need to hear what Anglicans north of the border are telling us, and they are hurt. The Primus and I talk regularly - we have spoken this morning - and he tells me he did not see the final text of this paper until after it had been published. Now that cannot be right. The Primus knows and believes as I do this document and this process must move forward, but it must move forward in a way that allows the SEC to be involved, to allow the Scottish bishops time to bring their own congregations forward. Is that not what ecumenism is supposed to do? Friends, there is a win-win here that my amendment allows us to grasp. The win-win with all the good that the Moderator and the Bishop and others have said this document brings, but the other element of the win is that we do not leave the Scottish Episcopal Church behind but that we hear their hurt, we own it, we listen to it, we acknowledge it and we together move forward with them feeling listened to, feeling loved and feeling included. That, my friends, is what I think will enhance the Gospel, the kingdom and the work of Anglicanism on this island. I encourage you to support the amendment standing in my name.

The Chair: I am going to now call the Bishop of Truro to again speak to but not move his amendment.

The Bishop of Truro (Rt Revd Tim Thornton): According to the Business Committee's code of practice, I declare a financial interest. My wife and I used to go on holiday to Scotland and we spent money there, and I would like to encourage all Scottish people now to come to Cornwall and spend lots of money in Cornwall.

Approaching this debate today, I find myself, not unusually as a bishop, pulled in two apparently contradictory directions. On the one hand, I very much want to welcome this Report. It is at once modest and realistic, yet also constructive and creative. It holds together the traditional agenda of the Faith and Order Movement within ecumenism with the kind of focus on mission and context that is needed in the 21st century Church. It has been very carefully scrutinised, not least by the Council of Christian Unity, of which I am a member, and our comments have been fully taken into account in the final version. The House of Bishops has seen it and is content with it. Yes, concerns have been raised about particular phrases in it since Christmas but, as you have already heard from several people, we have worked hard to address the misunderstandings giving rise to them and there is no need for further revision of the text itself. It is a good

report. It is ready to be accepted and acted upon, and doing so will affirm, strengthen and enhance one of our most significant and longstanding ecumenical relations. It will not change the world or the Church, but it will be one more historic step in the long journey towards Christian unity.

At the same time, however, I am also very conscious that the response to coverage in the national press just before Christmas, and to the Church press releases put together at very short notice with the intention of complementing that, must make us think very carefully about what we are doing today. As you have again already well heard, some brothers and sisters in other churches, particularly the Scottish Episcopal Church, one of our nearest neighbours in the Anglican Communion, were left feeling confused, threatened, hurt and ignored, and, as the Church of England, we need to accept our share of the responsibility for that. We got some things wrong in the process of this Report coming into the public domain and we should apologise for that. I know that Church House staff and others have already said that to colleagues in the SEC, but I also want to say publicly today as a member of the House of Bishops and of the Council for Christian Unity.

So I find myself pulled in two directions. Of course, as always, I agree entirely almost with Mark Russell. Of course it is right, Mark, there is a huge difference between what is seen and what is heard, and that is why I think we must oppose your amendment and I would urge you to support the amendment in my name. On the one hand, I want to welcome what remains a good report which has already been through an extensive process of revision and scrutiny, and enables us to take a historic step in our relation with a key ecumenical partner. But I also want to make sure, as I am sure of all of Synod wants to make sure, that the SEC hears loudly and clearly that we have listened to their concerns, that we do regret the hurt that has been caused, and we want to put that right by giving them confidence there will not be any activity arising from our approval of this Report that will bypass them, dismay them or cut them out of consultation and decision-making.

I believe that my amendment will enable us to accept the key points of the main motion, crucial for us to do today, and take that historic step today in our ecumenical relations which we all want, whilst also demonstrating the value we place on our Anglican Communion relations within the British Isles and directly addressing the issues that have been raised within the SEC to approve an amended motion that names and affirms the SEC and ensures that concrete action is taken to respond constructively to their concerns is the best way to honour them as our communion partner in Scotland as we take this historic step with the Church of Scotland. I urge Synod to support the amendment in my name.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

Revd Dr Miranda Threlfall-Holmes (Durham): As you can see from the members of the Joint Study Group, I speak as someone who was a part of that Joint Study Group just for a couple of years and left at about the same time as the Scottish Episcopal Church, although not for the same reasons.

I am speaking to support this motion but also to support the Bishop of Truro's amendment. First of all, I want to say, as a historian, we have already had reference from Stewart Fyfe as to just how historic this document is. Now I am sure most of us do not get terribly excited about ecumenical statements but this is, as Stewart Fyfe said, a very historic document. We were very aware as we went through our discussions of the historic dimensions to the relationships between our two churches and the fact that for many centuries the Church of Scotland and Church of England have, at least to some extent, defined themselves in opposition to each other. So this document does give us the opportunity to make what is a very historic statement of recognition of each other, not least in its careful phrasing of recognition of each other's episcopacy.

But I would also like to take this opportunity, as someone who was in those discussions, to correct some of the misconceptions that have been heard in this debate. First of all, to what Dr Perumbalath said and also to some extent addressing Mark Russell's points, there was considerable discussion of the different ecumenical discussions and documents that were already there. That was fully informed by the members of the Scottish Episcopal Church delegation, particularly by Dr Methuen who is obviously an expert in these areas. We discussed not only the documents that are referred to here in this Report but also other ecumenical relationships that the Church of England had entered into, such as discussions with the Lutheran World Federation which included relationships with other Anglican churches in different jurisdictions and some of those complexities. So that was fully discussed in the presence of all the Scottish Episcopal Church representatives and was completely part of what was known and was part of the information available to us. Of course our direction of travel was very much influenced by that.

My recollection of the Scottish Episcopal Church's decision to withdraw was that of course when we started talking about making some sort of ecumenical declaration, they quite rightly said that it would be a bit strange for them to be part of making an ecumenical declaration with the Church of England, because of course they are fully in communion with the Church of England already, and so that simply was not appropriate. At no point in those discussions was it suggested that it was inappropriate for the Church of England to make an ecumenical declaration with the Church of Scotland and in fact my recollection is that we were told, "You're the two national churches. We think it's great you're having these conversations. It's just not particularly appropriate for us to be part of it, so get on with it with our blessing". I was therefore rather taken aback by the twitter storm and blogosphere storm that then erupted when all this came out, but I can assure you that all those who were involved in those discussions were fully aware of this and certainly as far as we were aware up until the point where I left in 2012 we were having these discussions with the full knowledge and blessing of the Scottish Episcopal Church, so I commend the motion and the Bishop of Truro's amendment to you.

The Bishop of Peterborough (Rt Revd Donald Allister): Declarations of interest: when I am not in my tied palace in Peterborough, our home is in Edinburgh. I worship in a number of different churches but I worship most regularly within the Scottish Episcopal Church very happily. I have been made welcome there. I feel a friend and that that is a good place for me to be.

I want to speak very strongly in favour of this motion and of Bishop Tim Thornton's amendment and clearly by consequence against my friend Mark Russell's amendment. I do so obviously as the Chair of the Council for Christian Unity and as a member of our Faith and Order Commission. I want to point out that this is actually about mission. The context of the modern ecumenical movement is that it is all about mission. It stems from the Edinburgh Missionary Conference of 1910. That is what we are about. It is about being united so that we can present Christ better to the world and we need to be able to do that clearly with the Church of Scotland. I see no problem here with the Scottish Episcopal Church where I have many friends, some of whom I have spoken to at lunchtime today and others in the recent past. It has been a difficult time - what has just been described as a twitter storm - since Christmas. I am very grateful to Bishop Tim Thornton for his amendment that begins to deal with that and saying that we are sorry for any misunderstandings that have arisen. We are sorry for miscommunications and way that the Scottish Episcopal Church may feel hurt. There is no intention to do that. We want to involve them fully in continuing discussions. We do not want to do anything that disturbs our good relations with them and there is nothing in this amendment or in the Columba Declaration that would disturb our good relations with the Scottish Episcopal Church.

Can I assure Synod that when this has come to the Council for Christian Unity and the Faith and Order Commission, as it has done regularly over the last few years while the group has been working on it, each time it has come up we have sought assurances that the Scottish Episcopal Church knows what is going on and is not going to be upset by this and each time those assurances have been there. The Scottish Episcopal Church has been fully involved, initially in the talks and then through its observer, and all through has been happy and not raised objections. The Council for Christian Unity would not be sponsoring this debate and this motion if it were not for the fact that we have sought those good relations ongoing with the Scottish Episcopal Church.

Please, for the sake of mission in this country, this land in England, Scotland and beyond, will you support this motion and support the Bishop of Truro's amendment.

The Chair: The Archbishop of Canterbury, after which I shall ask Canon Russell to formally move his amendment.

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby): You will not be surprised that I would like to urge you to support the motion and to support the Bishop of Truro's amendment and to resist the amendment from Canon Mark Russell. I agree with him on one thing in particular, that there is a difference between what is seen and what is heard; and my fear is and my strong feeling is that it will be heard if we accept this, that we have, despite what he says, kicked this agreement into the long grass. That may not be the intention of his amendment, but it feels like the reality and that will be seen and heard as a turn against ecumenism, a turn against walking together.

I hope this Synod will believe me when I say that I am deeply committed to the Anglican Communion. I hope that I have demonstrated that in many, many ways and many, many air miles. I, too, have had not one but numerous conversations with the Primus David Chillingworth with whom I get on well and have listened very carefully. Yes, the

announcement was cack-handed. It was deeply discourteous and badly dealt with. I do not know how that happened but it was, and I would very firmly add my apology to that of the Bishop of Truro and the Bishop of Peterborough. It was not done in the way it should be between Christian sisters and brothers, and our sister church in Scotland, the Scottish Episcopal Church, rightly felt upset. But, as they have seen this agreement, once they had seen it and calm had returned after Christmas, their response has been that it is a much more moderate agreement than they thought it was.

Initially, it felt a bit like a BMW; it turns out to be more of a Morris Minor. I think therefore that this is a significant but modest step in saying that half a millennium of not recognising each other should be offset and that we should begin our steps forward. I strongly support the Bishop of Truro's amendment because I think we need to show that we are deeply concerned with the health and flourishing of the Scottish Episcopal Church, but, most of all, with the mission of the Church, because underlying all this is the fact that when we are seen as walking in unity, the world sees that Jesus Christ came from the Father. That is what John 17 says to us again and again and again. I believe that the fundamental call to live in love and unity, as the Primates voted to walk together - and their differences were absolutely extraordinary and profound - should overrule everything else.

I hope that we will support this motion, that we will support the Bishop of Truro's amendment and that we will work hard to show, not only with our words but with our actions, that we regret deeply the hurt that has been caused inadvertently - Andrew Foreshew-Cain is exactly right that it is cock-up not conspiracy - by the poor communication.

The Chair: Canon Russell, do you formally move your amendment?

Canon Mark Russell (Sheffield): I formally so move.

The Chair: The Bishop of Chester to reply.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of five minutes.

The Bishop of Chester (Rt Revd Dr Peter Forster): My first car was a Morris Minor, so thank you for those remarks, Archbishop. Nothing has changed this "Morris Minor" of a report. I would ask Synod to resist Mark's amendment, but I will happily and very gladly accept the Bishop of Truro's.

Mark's amendment suggests that we unilaterally, without any consultation with our Church of Scotland friends, now delay consideration of the report in the face of the official SEC response in recent weeks encouraging us forward. I do say "official" SEC response, and I must correct Andrew Foreshew-Cain on that point. It is a response on behalf of the Faith and Order Board and it is called - and I have it in front of me - an "official response", pending full consideration later in the year. Just this morning the Secretary General of the Scottish Episcopal Church has emailed us to confirm that is the official response at this stage.

I must also, with respect, correct Mark over one point he said. He said that we did not send the report to the SEC and its Primus before publication. We did - on 5 January, three and a half weeks before it was published. It is in that period that the SEC Faith and Order Board produced its response. Social media activity does tend to produce elements of confusion and misunderstanding sometimes.

I think it is important to see the heart of what we are doing as in shared co-operation. That shared co-operation is not in any sense exclusive to the Church of England and Church of Scotland. Other churches south of the border and north of the border will be most welcome to participate in that in relation to ministerial training, Fresh Expressions, or whatever. It is very important to nail this point. We are not proposing any Church of England activity in Scotland. That is what has been around on social media. Not at all. We are proposing co-operation between the Church of England, here in Europe, and the Church of Scotland, mainly in Scotland, so we are not talking about incursions into the Church of Scotland at all. The social media posts have caught passing winds, partly from the Primate's meeting and partly from the political situation and the separatist strands in Scotland. Consultation with the SEC has been very full.

Can I add one further point to all that has been said so far. At every meeting of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in the last five years, there has been a bishop of the Scottish Episcopal Church representing the Scottish Episcopal Church, and at every meeting of the General Assembly there has been a report on the progress of these discussions, in addition to the other contact that we have had before. Notwithstanding what has been said, clearly there is more work to be done - that is what happens from hereon in - but I think we have the basis for continuing with the approval of the report and declaration and I would ask Synod to resist Mark's amendment.

The Chair: We are now debating Item 20, Mark Russell's amendment.

Very Revd Tim Barker (Channel Islands): Three months ago I might have reviewed this report with a sort of "So what?". Encouraged and interested perhaps, but not really sure that it would affect me and the place where I was ministering, but I am now in Guernsey, in the Channel Islands, and what I am learning is that it is not England. It is not a bit of England detached in the Bay of St Malo. The British Isles are infinitely more varied and nuanced than they might appear to be in England. The crown dependencies are different, as are the other nations of the British Isles.

I sat down on the day of the publication of this report with my Church of Scotland colleague in Guernsey - yes, the Church of Scotland is represented in both of the Channel Islands - and we agreed that we will look forward to the working out of the opportunities of the Columba Declaration if our two churches so encourage us.

We believe this is important for our common life and mission in Guernsey, with our other ecumenical partners, especially the paragraphs of the declaration on the commitment to congregational partnership and to working together on social, political and ethical issues that arise from our participation in public life. We believe this is important for our witness and our mission as the Church of England and the Church of Scotland in Guernsey. I believe it will be a great shame if this were delayed. I urge you to vote

against Canon Russell's amendment and strongly in favour of the main motion, as amended by the Bishop of Truro's amendment.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): Chairman, after the next speaker could I tempt you with a motion for closure?

The Chair: Can I see whether anybody wants to speak in favour of the amendment?

Mr Peter Hart (Chester): In urging Synod to vote for this amendment in Canon Russell's name, I hope this will be seen in a positive way; as a way of progressing this debate, not destroying it. To speak against any scheme that comes forward for unity is to speak against the Holy Spirit: an unforgivable sin. To speak against a motion put forward by my own diocesan bishop may also be considered a grievous sin. However, I hope I am not negative in this.

In an effort to promote and enhance this unity, more time is surely a great asset, a necessary asset, to develop the many positive elements there are in this report and to address lots of issues that cannot be overlooked. For example, we cannot, and should not overlook the importance of episcopacy to the Church of England in any scheme that this Synod debates. This is fundamental. We cannot, and should not overlook the situation in regard to the Scottish Episcopal Church. We must allow more time and space for the reconciliation that we have heard about from the Moderator and the Bishop of Chester for that to continue. I am pleased that it is happening. Give it space to go on. Let us resist creating a disunity in our rush to create another unity.

All these points need addressing and resolving in the hope of securing a "yes" vote when it comes back again in the future. I would urge you to vote for this amendment in a positive mood, giving that time and thought, and then prayerfully to consider the matter when it comes before us again. This is not to destroy, but to enhance and improve; not to obstruct mission, as the Bishop of Peterborough has rightly and enthusiastically promoted. I do not think to reconsider is to kick it into the long grass, but a sensible approach, working together, to get the best scheme.

The Chair: Mr Freeman, I am going to call the Chair of the House of Laity and then I will take your point of order, if I may.

Canon Dr Jamie Harrison (Durham): Yes, he has been in the Cathedral, sung in the choir, yes, he has been back and forward to the Episcopal Church in Edinburgh to sing, as I often go to the Festival. I just wanted to add a word of caution if you wish to support this amendment. I have heard three speakers who are the nearest neighbours (as well as me) to the border. We have had Miranda from Durham, Chris from Carlisle and Dagmar from Newcastle, and each of them has been very supportive of this move to bring the churches together, and they are at the most cutting edge. If you think back to the various rieviers and all the disputes and difficulties across the border, I think we hear their voices and wonder perhaps they know something that we in the south do not know about relationships and how best to resolve these sorts of issues. As we move to pray and vote, let us be aware of those voices that come from the far north of England.

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. Does it have the consent of Synod?

This motion was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: That motion was clearly carried. We proceed to vote on Item 20 which is before the Synod. You can see the words. They are on the screen behind you all around you.

A Speaker: Point of order. Could we have a vote by machine?

The Chair: If you mean by that a counted vote, then do I see 25 people standing? I do not see 25 people standing, so we will simply vote on Item 20. You will understand that if members vote in favour of amendment 20, we will not deal with amendment 21.

A Speaker: Point of order, Chairman, we are struggling to hear at the back.

The Chair: I am sorry, it must be my dulcet tones. I thought that as a fellow member from Manchester you could always hear me, but there it is. We will have words later.

Therefore I put Item 20 to the vote.

This amendment was lost on a show of hands.

The Chair: The amendment is clearly lost. We move to Item 21.

The Chair: I ask the Bishop of Truro to formally move his amendment.

The Bishop of Truro (Rt Revd Tim Thornton): I do so move.

The Chair: Thank you very much. The Bishop of Chester to reply.

The Bishop of Chester (Rt Revd Dr Peter Forster): I am very happy to accept this amendment. It is entirely in the spirit of how we have conducted these conversations for the past five years.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): A point of order: motion for closure on Item 21.

The Chair: Let us try and hear one speaker for and one speaker against. Does anybody want to speak for the Bishop of Truro’s amendment? Does anybody want to speak against the Bishop of Truro’s amendment?

Dr Rachel Jepson (Birmingham): I wish to encourage Synod overwhelmingly to vote in favour of the Bishop of Truro’s amendment and then overwhelmingly to vote in favour of the amended motion, because this would give a clear signal that the Church of England

wishes to move towards visible unity with all the churches with whom we are in relationship, including our brothers and sisters in the Church of Scotland.

As a member of the Council of Christian Unity, most of whom are members of the General Synod, I would like to reassure members that the process which has led to this point has been thorough and fair. At CCU we were kept informed of the progress of the joint study group and wholeheartedly discussed and approved the draft report. We were reassured by the fact that the Scottish Episcopal Church sent an observer from 2013 onwards, who took an active part in the meetings and had the opportunity to report back accordingly.

The Columba Declaration would give us - the Church of England and the Church of Scotland - the timely opportunity to publicly share our acknowledgements as stated alongside our commitments. The declaration is in line with existing ecumenical agreements, for instance the Reuilly Common Statement and the Meissen Agreement, which General Synod approved, and, as a consequence, members of our churches are living out as they witness and worship in their communities, and further developing mutual support and friendship.

What enthuses me - and I hope you, too - and why timing is pressing is the golden opportunity we have to work together on a wide range of social, political, as well as ethical issues, especially within the context of our two nations' national public profile and life. The fact that both churches are prepared to allocate the necessary resources for joint initiatives is most encouraging. That is what makes this, the Columba Declaration, distinctive. So let us vote for the motion as set out, with the addition of the Bishop of Truro's amendment, which ensures the Scottish Episcopal Church will remain a key partner as the process goes forward.

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. Does it have the consent of Synod?

This motion was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: We proceed to vote on Item 21, which you can see on the screen in blue.

This amendment was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: We are back to the main motion as amended by Item 21.

The Bishop of Coventry (Rt Revd Dr Christopher Cocksworth): I am also the Chair of the Faith and Order Commission and, as you know, the report was put past the Faith and Order Commission, so I thought you might like one or two perspectives from a faith and order angle.

The first is that recognition of another church as a church is a right and proper thing to

do. As we have heard on a number of occasions, including from the Archbishop of Canterbury, recognition in this case is long overdue. Secondly, the affirmations of the declaration are without contention. They are consistent with other affirmations and recognitions that the Church of England has made in other ecumenical settings. Thirdly, as we have also heard, the commitments are modest and they are realistic.

I can certainly confirm from a faith and order point of view that we were given every impression that there was absolutely no intention for incursion by the Church of England into Scotland, and thereby into another province of the Communion, and that intention, I am glad to hear, has been clarified in the clarifications that we have received before this debate and in various speeches in the debate. Relationships have been damaged in some ways, that is true, and I am grateful that the Bishop of Truro's amendment has been passed so that they can be addressed in that way.

What I think makes the declaration most interesting from a faith and order perspective is the way it brings together faith and order questions with issues of mission and public engagement of the churches with state and society. The response of the Faith and Order Commission to the World Council of Churches' doctrine, a document which some of us looked at the July Synod, called *Towards a Common Vision*, our assessment was that we were largely content with the faith and order dimension, but we were much more critical of its understanding of the Church's public mission in society. By virtue of the two churches - the Church of Scotland and the Church of England - our history, our particular relationship to the state, our understanding of the parishes, as we have heard, and our identity as national churches, we have a particular opportunity to engage with this from an ecumenical perspective. How do we publicly engage with society? How do we model not only in this nation but, in a sense, in the world the fact that there can be an embeddedness of religion into society, and a particular relationship with the state, which is good for the freedom of all and for the flourishing of all in society.

This missionary task and engagement is a critical and urgent matter in our nation. It would be an odd thing to do that though, if there were not a fundamental recognition of each other's churches. I think what the report is doing is an interesting model of how we need to move from faith and order questions to mission and public engagement and keep them together.

Mr Tim Hind (Bath & Wells): I was well briefed during the run-up to the Porvoo Agreement by my brother, who happened to be Bishop in Europe at the time so he knew a little bit about it.

I was privileged to be sent by this Synod to the SEC Synod some four years ago. I was engaged in the conversations that they were having about all sorts of things that are very dear to our hearts at the moment. In fact, they are going through the same sort of reform and renewal things that we are going through. I recognise that a lot of what was said in all of those things was about the use of words and how careful we have to be with words.

My initial reaction was that we should go with the Mark Russell amendment because I felt that we were in a wrong place. I am reassured by the Archbishop of Canterbury

about the Morris Minor (as long as it is not a Papal Fiat!). However, I would like to urge caution on those who write reports for us because the one thing that I disagree with Bishop Tim Thornton on is that this is a good report. It is an average report. The reason why it is an average report is that not all the words are fully explained. The phrase that we have been battling with this afternoon is a throwaway phrase that says that the SEC wanted to go not in that direction. There is no explanation within the report of why that is the case. If we are going to be in the same sort of situation later on other reports, we need to be much more careful about the words that we use.

Mr Graham Caskie (Oxford): On hearing my accent, you will not be surprised that I declare an interest in this matter. As a former member of the Church of Scotland, and indeed someone whose father is a retired parish minister and, indeed, the moderator's presbytery clerk in Perth, in many ways, I am as Church of Scotland as it can get. I was born into it, baptized into it, I professed faith in Jesus and, as a teenager, became a member. As I said, my father is a retired minister and both my grandfathers were elders as well. Like many others of an evangelical background, I spent my student days in the Church of Scotland at St George's Tron in the centre of Glasgow. It has been a fair distance to travel from being a youth representative of the Presbytery of Dumbarton at the General Assembly to being a representative of the Diocese of Oxford here at General Synod. I therefore owe the Church of Scotland a deep debt of gratitude that I can never repay.

In seeing this declaration before us, I think of the many ways that as churches we can learn together. One is established and the other is national but both as parish. People in the Church of Scotland have benefited from writings from people such as John Stott and here in this Church the writings of people such as William Barclay.

It would seem only natural that I would seek support this motion. However, section (a)(ii) of the declaration acknowledges that in both our churches the word is truly preached and, Chair, I am torn. As was their right - and this is not the time or the place to go through the arguments why - the General Assembly has decided to allow the ordination of those in practising same sex relationships. As a result, an admittedly not large amount of ministers and congregations could not, in conscience, remain within the Church of Scotland, including my own student church.

I want to stand with them, but I also stand with those who remain; those like my father who feel called to stay within that church. Chair, it grieves my heart that I am not able to stand in solidarity with the church of my youth and the church of my forefathers. It is upsetting more than I imagined that I cannot stand together with the Church of Scotland and vote publicly for this motion. Good Christian folk have left and good Christian folk have remained. I want to stand with them both. For that reason, and with a heavy heart, I have to abstain from voting on this motion.

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. Does it have the consent of Synod?

This motion was put and carried on a show of hands.

Canon Mark Russell (Sheffield): Point of order. Might I ask for a slight clarification? You said my amendment was clearly lost. I noted that about a third of the chamber voted with me, and I think it should be recorded that the amendment was “lost” and not “clearly lost”.

The Chair: I have said what I have said, I am afraid, and that was my view of the vote and that remains. I call upon the Bishop of Chester to reply.

The Chair imposed a time limit of five minutes.

The Bishop of Chester (Rt Revd Dr Peter Forster): Can I thank everyone who has taken part in this excellent debate and for all their contributions. Just a few comments in conclusion. If I can perhaps go to Mr Caskie first - and I entirely respect his position on this - indirectly he illustrates why our relationship with the Church of Scotland is important. Many of these issues, such as the sexuality agenda, are quite similarly experienced, partly because of the structure of the national church north of the border and south of the border, and it is remarkable how, in a sense, we have learned from each other. Many other parts of the world of course are struggling with this agenda. I respect that entirely.

I am grateful for Tim Hind’s observations. I stand here as an ordinand of the SEC and I owe that church a huge amount and I will worship in it when I retire. We did not want to put into the report our interpretation of the reason why the SEC withdrew. Their own explanation was very limited, and I think it would have been wrong for us to try to, as it were, second-guess or import, and that is why the report does not say more on that.

Thank you to Miranda Threlfall-Holmes for a very helpful reminder of our early discussions, and the very important role that she played in those discussions herself. They really were very deep and careful, and if you look at the people who contributed, two are professors of theology in English universities. It was a very deep conversation.

Can I say that I think those who spoke from Northumberland, Durham, Carlisle, and indeed Tim Barton from the Channel Islands, brought home the local importance of what we are doing for the churches in those places, and I think that is quite important.

Can I just end on this point, if I may. Behind all of this is the conversation that we are having with the Methodist Church, which of course is present in Scotland as well. Once we get to a further stage in the Anglican Methodist discussions, I think that is going to cast a light on other discussions with other protestant churches. I think we are right to, in a sense, focus upon the Anglican Methodist conversations in terms of interchangeability of ministry and not try and break new ground in this particular Report. Once we get further on, my hope is that some of the other issues will indeed open up in new ways, but that is I think dependent upon discussions we have not actually referred to much directly.

In all of that, and I really will finish on this point, and I am sure that my Church of Scotland friends would want me to say, the issue of bishops lurks in our discussion. I sometimes think the Church of Scotland might be open to having bishops as long as they were not like the English bishops were, and then they would be happy. In many ways, the Church of Scotland does have a very strong theology of episcopate. That point was made right at the beginning by Stewart Fyfe. I think that a creative engagement over patterns of episcopate between the Church of England and the Church of Scotland may, indeed, bear rich fruit in the future, but for the moment I am very happy to commend the motion before the Synod.

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): Point of order. Mr Chairman, in view of the motion that now looks both towards the Episcopal Church and the Church of Scotland, and in view of the public interest, I wonder if I could tempt you to a division of the whole Synod?

The Chair: Do 25 people stand? The answer is there will be a division of the Synod.

The motion

'That this Synod:

- (a) welcome the report of the Joint Study Group of the Church of England and the Church of Scotland (annexed to GS 2016) as a significant development in the relationship between the two churches;*
- (b) approve the Columba Declaration, consisting of mutual Acknowledgements and Commitments, as set out in paragraph 38 of the report;*
- (c) request the Council for Christian Unity to oversee the implementation of the Commitments contained in the Columba Declaration and set up the Contact Group proposed by it; and*
- (d) grateful for the Church of England's valued relationship with the Scottish Episcopal Church within the Anglican Communion, request the Council for Christian Unity to ensure that the Scottish Episcopal Church is invited to appoint a representative to attend meetings of the Contact Group.'*

was carried following a counted vote of the whole Synod. The voting was as follows:

<i>IN FAVOUR</i>	<i>243</i>
<i>AGAINST</i>	<i>50</i>

49 abstentions were recorded.

The Chair. That concludes this item of business.

THE CHAIR: *The Bishop of Birmingham (Rt Revd David Urquhart)* took the Chair at 4.00 pm

Diocesan Synod Motions: Parochial Fees (GS 2017A and GS 2017B)

The Chair. I have got some introductory remarks to make to remind members that they should declare any expressions of particular interest before they speak and then, Synod, this session is asked to know rough timings. As you see, the next item is timed for about half past 5 and there are two motions here under this item, or two items, 12 and 13, but two motions and proposed by the same person. They are closely linked. I am expecting that the first motion will be the substantial discussion and then the second one slightly less and I will be looking to move on to the second one a bit before 5 o'clock.

There is also financial comment to this, so if you have been eagle-eyed on the Sixth Notice Paper you will see that Items 12 and 13 are mentioned on page 3 in terms of finance. The really eagle-eyed of you will notice that in the two papers that relate to this debate, GS 2017A and B, that in A there was a table missing which was available from the Information Office and that was referred to in your Fourth Notice Paper at page 3, so if you wanted that table, it is available to you.

I am now able to ask the Ven Nikki Groarke, who is Archdeacon of Dudley, I understand, not of Worcester, my local knowledge tells me, and could you please speak to the first motion, up to ten minutes.

The Ven Nikki Groarke (Worcester): I beg to move:

‘That this Synod call on the Archbishops’ Council to exercise its powers under s.1 of the Ecclesiastical Fees Measure 1986 so that fees prescribed as payable to parochial church councils in respect of funerals and weddings should include any costs and expenses of providing a vergers.’

Thank you, Mr Chair. When I stood for election to this Synod I did not for a moment imagine my maiden speech would be one of this nature: two linked but separate motions requiring some complex timings for the Chair to navigate on a topic which has previously generated rather more heat than is experienced in many of our church buildings. It would not have been my first choice.

When Synod first debated the current Fees Measure I was vicar of an inner-London multi-cultural parish with only one or two weddings and a handful of funerals in the church building each year. To be frank, the debate passed me by unnoticed. I stand here now as Archdeacon in a diocese of immense variety, ranging from urban areas of significant deprivation to sparsely populated rural villages and hamlets; a diocese in which I have, however, noticed a far greater engagement with the Church at times of birth, marriage and death than in my former part of London. Perhaps the general

population is less post-Christian in the Midlands.

It is the clergy and congregations of the parishes of the diocese of Worcester who I represent here today, people concerned to exercise a ministry of hospitality and welcome to those whose initial or sometimes only visit to church is for one of our occasional offices. In a much quoted recent article in the Guardian, Peter Ormerod listed 20 things the Church of England has done for us. The fact that a Guardian columnist could find 20 good things to say about the Church of England was a miracle in itself; that they were mostly true, quirkily amusing and poignant was a bonus.

The final one was that somehow it creates places, both physical and emotional, where people encounter God and change their lives subtly, radically, beautifully. That, rather than being cheaper than those who are sometimes seen as our competitors, is what we have to give, places where people encounter God and change their lives. This is the essence of our motions. Those families who look to the Church to play a part in their key life events deserve the very best we can give. We are not competing for business. Rather, we have something unique to offer.

The motions seek to simplify our systems so that in all our relating to and communicating with those who seek our ministry, we can emphasise the difference inviting the presence of God will make to their wedding or to the funeral of their loved one. The experience of clergy in our diocese, backed up by funeral directors, is that the vast majority of those families who choose a church funeral or wedding make that decision on grounds other than cost. The service is one element in a larger package, very obviously for weddings but even for funerals where the cost of coffins, flowers, memorials, cars and refreshments far surpass that of the service.

A guiding principle adopted by RACSC has consistently been that fees for marriages and funeral services should be as inclusive as possible, leaving 'extras' to apply to those items over which people have a genuine choice. Were we to do this wholeheartedly, it would mean that the money discussions could be restricted to the rest of the package and the conversations about the church element of the proceedings could focus instead on pastoral engagement.

The pastoral connection with a grieving family is hard to sustain if the conversation goes something like this: 'Would you mind very much waiting in the funeral cars after the service for 15 minutes whilst I lock the money away in the safe, check the lights are off and tidy and lock up? Or you could pay for a verger or caretaker to do that? A verger who could also welcome latecomers and deal with any unforeseen disturbances once the service is under way. Oh, and, by the way, do you want the church to be warm and welcoming? If so, that is about 60 quid extra'.

Similarly, tempting a couple exploring a church wedding to consider the spiritual significance of their choice is so much easier if the bargaining about cutting costs here and there that they have done with the reception venue, cake maker and florist is missing. As they will often have spent much time negotiating with those providing other elements of the package, they will be genuinely surprised to be asked about support staff and heating. Where else ever would any of us be asked such a bizarre question?

Restaurants asking when you book if you would like a waiter, cutlery cleared and the heating on? To say these elements are optional extras is a fiction.

This is not a top-down motion. You will have seen the graphs demonstrating the response to our research at grassroots level: Clergy, PCC treasurers and undertakers all calling for change. The conclusions are clear and the diocesan synod members in Worcester are keen that these views are considered carefully in the next Fees Order in 2019. Having fees which are simple, transparent, fair and requiring minimal explanation will enable a focus on that which makes a service in church different.

I draw your attention to three other points raised in our paper. We all know that fees can be waived in cases of financial hardship. The diocese of Worcester contains areas of severe deprivation, particularly in Dudley, yet from the 4,000 or more weddings and funerals conducted annually we are aware of only a handful of occasions over the past two years that fees have been waived in the diocese.

The steady decline in numbers of weddings and funerals in the Church of England illustrated in Statistics for Mission 2014 does not suggest that the last two years, when fees have been higher, have been other than part of consistent trends over the period shown since 2004, and initiatives such as the 'Weddings Project' in seeking to reverse such trends have rightly stressed the importance of the quality of pastoral response.

We are aware that in General Synod's debates to establish the current fees' arrangements, concerns were expressed about the level of fees becoming too high. However, at a time of wholesale review it seemed to us that the decision to make heating and verger costs optional extras was a convenient way to appear to keep the costs down. We feel the inclusion of costs for heating and vergers took an expedient but misplaced hit.

The majority of churches in the diocese of Worcester charge for a verger, most commonly around £20 to £30, set slightly above the living wage, for two to three hours' occasional work. We have few churches with staff teams or paid administrators. In many of our more rural churches we struggle even to find people willing to stand as churchwardens. Verger assistance for weddings and funerals is, therefore, vital for our clergy. Whilst we appreciate this is not true for all, we consider that the benefits of including the cost in the fee nationally would outweigh the negative impact of a fee increase for the minority of cases where a verger would not have been required.

We would look to RACSC to make a more realistic recommendation for a national fee than that indicated in the Annex to the Bishop of Manchester's paper, which seems to us to be atypical and somewhat higher than we would expect. I will address the more complicated issues around inclusion of heating specifically when I come to the second motion. For a significant section of our population, marriage and funeral services are the only contact they have with their parish church.

As we serve our communities in this way, providing opportunities for them to engage with church representatives and encounter the living and loving God at times of both joy and grief, we should prioritise a ministry of hospitality and pastoral care. Having fees which are simple, transparent, fair and requiring minimal explanation will enable a focus

on that which makes a service in church different.

Those families who look to the Church to play a part in their key life events deserve the very best we can give. Let us simplify our systems so we can emphasise the difference inviting the presence of God will make to these occasions.

Mr Chair, I beg to move the motion.

The Chair: The motion is at Item 12 which ends with the word "verger".

Revd Canon David Felix (Chester): Thank you very much, Chair. I was involved in the Revision Committee to the 2011 Fees Amendment Measure which changed the 1986 Fees Measure and the framework to which this debate now relates. That Amendment Measure is not an example of good law. It was rushed through in a day's revision, leaving many issues unresolved. You cannot make good law unless there is a clear and settled policy behind it.

The fact that this debate is taking place today, so soon after that Measure was debated, shows that it is not clear and there is no settled policy behind it. However, I am the first to admit and to accept that the Amendments that took place in 2011 did a lot to clarify the fees' situation and to get rid of some of the rather imaginative and creative practices that took place at the time and does give greater clarity.

The problem arises, as the motion touches upon, over the use of the word "optional". Optional is not the same as, 'You don't need it if you don't want it'. Twice in the last six months a bride has come to me asking me to explain the role of a verger - wholly justifiable - and then to say on one occasion, "I don't want him, I'm not prepared to pay for him", only for her future mother-in-law to step in and save the day. Ken, our verger, works closely with Jo, our housekeeper, in ensuring that the church is well-presented for funerals and for weddings. I estimate it involves about three hours for him to get them ready for a funeral and five hours' work for weddings. He takes great pride in his work and the quality of it.

Our church is open every day and so Ken's worst fear is that half an hour before a service starts a group of walkers turns in with their muddy boots. We are, after all, the shrine to Lewis Carroll. He then goes into a state of panic and reaches for the Ewbank or carpet sweeper. He is afraid of the Hoover. His work is crucial to our ministry and the PCC was very concerned that his role could be seen as being optional and, therefore, by implication, unnecessary.

I welcome this opportunity to return to the issue of fees. I hope that we are not afraid to have a full, frank and honest debate about it and to set PCC fees accordingly to reflect the actual cost involved. Paragraph 5 of GS 2017B fails to justify the present position, because it is impossible to reconcile the relationship to recovering the true cost involved and yet at the same time providing a culture of uniformity.

One size does not fit all. Each church's overhead is different. There is already a postcode lottery, not around fees but because of the location of the building and its

appearance - yes, church buildings are tools for mission - and also because of the quality of the ministry offered by those working there. I am left to conclude that as we reflect upon the Simplification Agenda in these sessions, maybe we should also abolish the fees' structure and replace it with a less prescriptive regime.

The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker): Thank you for calling me. I am very grateful to the Archdeacon of Dudley in that most wonderful diocese of Worcester for her excellent speech to introduce this debate. In the summer of 1984, and newly priested, I took my first ever wedding. As I stood at the back of the church, handing out hymn books, there was a loud bang to my left. I turned round to find the vergers, an elderly widower, had completed his life's ambition and died with his boots on. As I summoned the ambulance and the bridal car went around the block time after time after time, I became quite convinced that vergers were not an optional extra, in my view.

As Chair of RACSC, some years on, I now welcome this debate. We had the major discussion on fees moving away from trying to have these conversations every year to setting a fees' regime on a five yearly basis and then coming back to it fairly recently. It has had a little bit of time to settle and now is a really good time to have a debate about these matters of principle before we get close to the time that we need to set the next Fees Order, which will hopefully give us a further five years' worth of progression afterwards.

I think that regime helps us. It gives continuity. It means that when we are booking weddings, often a year or two in advance, we can give couples a good idea of what fees are going to be. I welcome the fact we are having this debate now.

These matters were both contentious in the last quinquennium. My recollection is that originally they were in as set fees and it was the floor of the Synod that took them out. Members of Synod, it was you or some of your predecessors who last debated this. Clearly, those debates were quite divisive within the views that there were and I think it is important that we do rehearse that now so that RACSC in preparing for the next quinquennium can take in mind what Synod has done today. My fear is that you end up dividing more or less 50/50 and then we fear that we will end up with yet more amendments later on.

The Archdeacon introducing the debate mentioned that the fees should be as inclusive as possible. That is one of our Four Principles. The others are they should be justifiable. I think she referred to that when talking about the living wage and the hours of work done. They should be uniform across the Church. Finally, they should be affordable.

I would hope that, Synod, in this debate you would hold all those Four Principles in mind as you come to a decision which way to vote on this item and the one that follows it. Members of Synod, I am not giving you a steer, from the point of view of RACSC, as to which way to vote on this or the item that follows. I think the issues have been well-rehearsed here before and no doubt will be as this debate progresses. Please do help us at RACSC by giving us a clear steer as to whether you want these items to be part of the statutory fees or optional extras.

Revd Preb Simon Cawdell (Hereford): I speak as the team rector of Bridgnorth with nine parishes, with churches ranging in age from medieval to Victorian. Three seat 50 maximum. The one in the market town seats 400.

As a participant in the discussions during the previous Synod, I wish to remind you of the principles on which the Fees Order were made. They were worked through and their rationale was explained in GS Misc 989. Paragraph 6a of that Report states that fees should be justifiable on the basis of the costs incurred, as the bishop has just confirmed. Members may recall that it was on that issue precisely that Synod declined to pass the Fees Order for 2012 owing to the excessive standardisation that had been brought in, in particular in relation to vergers and heating.

If I may give you examples from my own benefice where we offer a differential level of fee for heating, depending on which church is used, and we are pragmatic about the use of vergers, recognising that in the smaller village parishes where occasional offices are just that, church members are only too delighted often to support members of their village for the occasion, be it baptism, marriage or funeral, at no additional cost. I might give you an aside that in one of them last November I took a wedding that, on examination in the registers, had been the first for ten years.

On the other hand, we gently encourage the use of a verger in the large town church, which is open and regularly in use, probably on average between once and twice a week, where the sweet papers and other detritus left behind by the undiscerning public visitors - who we love but, frankly, do not always know quite how to treat the place - need to be cleared before use, and I hope encourage it in not such a crass way as in the Archdeacon's caricature in her opening speech. It is very easily, gently and pastorally done that actually this is something we normally include for the sake of how they would like the place to look.

The nature of the churches is different, and the costs incurred simply reflect that. The same course is also true in regard to the relevant heating costs - I know that is the next debate - where churches of different sizes incur radically different costs. It is just as relevant now as it was in 2011 when we had that last debate.

The background paper from the diocese, GS 2017a, states in paragraph 6: "The need to keep these events affordable". Perversely, the suggestion that the standard fee would increase in order to compensate parishes for the incorporation of these fees would mean, in fact, that in a lot of these cases these events become more expensive, not less, in a significant number of cases.

As the Archdeacon has already conceded, local discretion would in effect be removed as, although a PCC has that discretion to reduce fees, in fact that rarely happens in practice. Just think for a moment. Summer weddings will subsidise the heating at winter funerals. Smaller churches would benefit unrealistically at the expense of those which are larger, and usually in rather greater use.

In our benefices, we have an Order under the Pastoral Measure in place so that we are able to offer applicants a range of possible churches depending on the size, style and affordability of the occasion that they want. It is our experience that this choice is used, particularly where weddings are concerned. It mirrors experience in secular venues where they vary almost infinitely in style and cost. Even for couples residing in single parish benefices, the rules of qualifying connection in practice enable considerable choice, and that should be welcomed by us. People are used to choice, and we should allow it and encourage it as part of our service to them.

What is required is not rigid standardisation, but clear and open rationale and presentation of the relevant fees that will pertain. To suggest that people do not understand this is a nonsense almost to the point of infantilising them.

This motion will, in fact, have the opposite effect of that which it intends. It will increase fees unnecessarily in cases where that is not appropriate, in smaller churches and communities, at the same time as leaving many of our larger landmark churches with a considerable additional cost to fund. The concerns and proper desire of the diocese of Worcester to welcome people to our churches is better managed by early openness and clarity about the real costs involved in the service requested. Please defeat this motion.

Dr David Martlew (Liverpool): Thank you for calling me on this occasion. In preparation for this meeting, and having read the documents relating to this motion, I took the precaution of consulting one or two of the local undertakers regarding funeral costs and the behaviour of clients. I was very disturbed by what I was told.

First, I was told that there has been a perceptible shift over the last three years in the way in which clients plan their funerals and that costs - marginal costs - are becoming a factor. When the undertaker is arranging a funeral, he is saying what the local fees structure is going to be. He tells me that clients are told that if they want to have the entire service at the crematorium the marginal cost will be around £86. If they want to have a service at a Roman Catholic church in the area the marginal cost will be about £170. If they wish to have a funeral service at an Anglican church in the area, the marginal cost will be approaching £300. They perceive this as a very significant barrier to the use of an Anglican church.

I recognise that this is a local response based on a very small sample, but it is disturbing that uniformity across the country does not really exist. This motion would reduce the flexibility at local level to address the question of the fees structure as it appears to local clients.

The funeral ministry is a key element in evangelism, I believe, so we really wish to encourage people to take advantage of the unique selling point which the Anglican Church has, in terms of the gospel and the pastoral support that goes with using an Anglican church for the funeral ministry.

I fully agree with the previous speaker, who said we need to deliver the best possible quality to people in order to draw them to Christ, which is what we want to do. My undertaker sources are saying that all too often the Anglican church is freezing cold,

even though they have charged for heating, the plaster is dropping off the ceiling, the person who conducts the service gives the impression that this is very hurried and not at the top of his or her priorities, and the churches quite often are untidy.

I therefore feel that the motion we have before us is forcing a sort of top-down uniformity, which is unrealistic. I would like to see more freedom at local level and more freedom to deliver the quality that befits the Gospel of Christ.

The Chair: After the next speech the speech limit will reduce to three minutes.

Ven Dr Anne Dawtry (Leeds): I am very grateful to the diocese of Worcester for raising this matter. I was not a member of General Synod the last time that fees were discussed, but, as the member of senior staff guiding our diocesan fees policy at that time, I followed the debate very carefully.

My memory is that a proposal very similar to the one before us was discussed, and rejected, by General Synod at that time, because of the fact that including the cost of vergers, and indeed heating, in the PCC's fees would increase the level of the basic statutory fees, with which wedding couples and the bereaved would be faced.

It was also considered that those items were perhaps already included in the PCC fee. I hear, and understand, that in the diocese of Worcester the considerable increase of fees which took place after the last Fees Amendment Act has made no difference to people using the church for weddings and funerals. However, that has not been the case in a number of urban parishes in my own diocese.

Research that I have done, both with parishes and funeral directors, has shown that the increase in funeral and wedding fees has had the direct effect, particularly on funerals, of reducing the number of funerals booked by families. Careful pastoral care by the clergy has often been undercut by civil celebrants for funerals, who offer a cheaper - not better - package, which is appealing to funeral directors wishing to undercut their neighbours. I do not wish to revisit the fees level set in that Measure, but I am probably not alone in believing that it was increase enough.

I am, therefore, not in favour of increasing the PCC fee by adding the cost of verger, and indeed heating, to the basic package, since I believe that (a) these things are already covered, and (b) that this might further discourage families from accessing the local parish church for the pastoral offices which are their right because of grounds of affordability. I will therefore not be voting in favour of this motion.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

Mr Tim Hind (Bath & Wells): I do not have an interest to declare, but I do have a confession to make, and that is that I was on the working group that was the architect for the current Parochial Fees Order. It was under that working group that we came up with the four principles that the Bishop of Manchester has reiterated today.

I think it needs to be re-emphasised that those four principles were agreed by Synod and they were brought up because it was important to have a firm basis upon which to agree the fees going forward. The fourth one of those was that we should have a uniform fee across the country. That is the one that I want to concentrate on now, because I do not think we have got enough information here from the Worcester debate to tell us the variation of costs that are currently being charged for vergers and heating across the country.

Yes, we are having a very interesting local look at what Worcester does, and maybe within the Worcester diocese things are fairly even across the diocese, but I do not believe that we know what the impact is of adding in these things to the standard fee. The other principle is that once something is in the standard fee it then cannot be charged additionally. We need to be very careful that if we have a very large, very cold church that needs a lot to heat it, that may have a large impact on the fees that are going to be collected for that church. We need to be very careful and very cautious before we load anything else into the base fee, given the fact that those charges are already made as part of the fees that are asked from the client.

Revd David Brooke (Durham): I think I probably agree with Tim Hind that perhaps we do not have enough information, but I am glad that we have reopened the question. My recollection of the debates in the last quinquennium is that we found ourselves with two of the four principles in great tension; uniformity and justifiability. In the end, we went with justifiability trumping uniformity.

I am still not quite decided which way I am going to vote on this, to be perfectly honest, but I hope we will hear what is being said. I think we find ourselves caught in the position where having, in the previous quinquennium to the last one, legislated, we then had to apply it in the early part of the last quinquennium, and the only way to make something variable was then to make it optional. That is where the tension lies, because as soon as you make it optional you will have these conversations from time to time, and they can be very uncomfortable and difficult.

I tend to agree with the Bishop of Manchester that vergers are not optional. I also think that, at the end of the day, heat is not optional because the Health and Safety Executive says that we should be working in a temperature of 16 degrees or above. That seems a little idealistic in some of my churches, but if I am not allowed to turn the heat on, I definitely need a verger whose duties must include keeping me warm.

The Bishop of Brixworth (Rt Revd John Holbrook): I declare an interest as the bishop who serves on the reference group for the Archbishops' Council's project group, led by Sandra Millar, improving the quality of weddings, christenings and funerals across the Church. They have a significant impact in the diocese of Leicester, almost as great as the improvement and fortunes of Leicester City Football Club since I arrived as acting bishop. I claim no credit for either.

I love funerals, and they have always been an important part of the ministry I have shared. When I was ordained, funeral directors used to give me Christmas gifts. Then our relationship matured and we exchanged gifts. I suspect if I were now in parish

ministry I would be the one offering presents, such as the relationship and the balance shifted. In many places we are struggling to be invited to offer the funeral ministry that we care so deeply about. It all depends upon the quality of our relationship with local funeral directors.

From my conversations locally and with national leaders, I have to report the immense harm done to those relationships by the last change to the fees structure. Across the country, faithful local ministers and, nationally, Sandra and her team, are rebuilding and building those relationships with our colleagues in the funeral directing business. Please do not damage it with this well-intentioned, but, I believe, unhelpful proposal.

The Bishop of Worcester (Rt Revd Dr John Inge): There have been some very helpful contributions to this debate which have set in context, for those who are new to Synod, the discussions that took place when this matter was last debated. Recourse to the four principles should be helpful to members of Synod in coming to a conclusion about this recognising, as has already been suggested, that they do tend to conflict with one another.

I would simply like to say that this is not intended as a top-down initiative. This motion was brought from Worcester diocesan synod following extensive research, copies of which you have in front of you, which shows very strong support for what is being suggested. The reason for that is a pastoral one. Much has been made, rightly, of the need to be very wary about increases in fees for fear of putting people off.

When we look at the figures that we have got here it is not all that difficult to see that there is a great majority. It is much more difficult to see what the reason is for this. It would seem to me that we should pay cognisance to what the Archdeacon said, and what has been mentioned in a previous speech, about the awkward conversations that take place if heating and vergers are reckoned to be an extra. I think that pastorally, my own experience as a parish priest would lead me to believe that is not conducive to good relationships and trust. As Nikki was saying, if one went to a restaurant and was charged extra for the heating one might take exception to that. Pastorally, it seems to me that it would be much more sensible to opt for the uniformity which this motion allows for, rather than to invoke the necessity of conversations of the sort which I would suggest are off-putting to people because there will be a break down in trust. That is what I think we see behind this motion from Worcester diocesan synod. Thank you.

Revd Canon Andy Salmon (Manchester): I want to speak on behalf of the urban church. For us, our great concern is that we do not want to put people off having services in church. Our concern is always to make sure that there will not be a financial consideration in whether people choose to have a service at the crem or in church. We want to minimise the difference between the two. We are concerned that we want to keep the costs down, but I do not consider that having a verger is really an optional extra. That point has been made by various other people.

I do not want to get into a conversation with somebody and say, "and would you like to have a verger there?" They do not generally understand what it is about. They would

probably largely choose not to have one. I do not want to be running down the church to close doors or sort things out in the middle of a service.

On one occasion our normal vergers were not able to do it and I roped in my 16 year-old daughter to be vergers at a wedding. Being new to the role, I think I told her but she forgot to close the doors after the bride had come into church. She was so intent at looking at her phone that she did not notice me giving her the eye, and I ended up having to send her a *Facebook* message to get her to close the doors. Anyway, hopefully she has learnt from that.

I certainly do want a vergers in church, but I want to keep those fees down. At Annex 1 we are told that the additional cost for a vergers would be £32 for a funeral, and that seems rather high to me. At the moment we do pay a vergers and we pay out of the PCC fee, because we do not want to charge any extra on top of the basic. I would support this motion if we kept the fee for a vergers down.

The Chair: After the next speaker I would welcome a point of order on closure for this part of the debate.

Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford): I have been listening to this debate with open ears. I came in not sure which way to vote. I know I am going to, sadly, vote against this motion. I applaud its aim, which was to try and ensure we gave an open welcome to anybody who was looking to engage with us.

I come from a very, very poor parish in Oxford. Yes, there are poor parishes in Oxford. We score highest on every deprivation index you can think of. We have a pretty church; it is a Grade II listed church. We cannot afford to heat it. In fact, most of our heaters do not actually work. We have not been able to change many of our light bulbs for many years because we cannot find a ladder long enough to get to the roof. That is the size of the space that we are trying to heat. We have a vergers, she is 85 years old. She is Ivy. I do not think she understands all the ideas of what it is to be a vergers, but she does it loyally and with a great heart. When her friends die she wants to be there to serve them.

Yet when we have marriages, of which we have quite a lot because we are such a pretty church, it is the rich, young couples who come in and who want to have a beautiful wedding. Quite frankly, when they have paid a couple of thousand pounds for their dress and for the reception they are going to have, heating the church and paying the vergers does not seem a very heavy burden. Yet for our funerals, which are normally our loyal parishioners who have been with us for years, who have not had an income for virtually decades, every penny counts.

I really believe that the proper thing to do is to allow the local context to make the right decision for their own mission. I wish that we could open our churches and give away the service, but the reality is we cannot. We need to make appropriate decisions for the appropriate people we are looking to serve, and for that reason I will be voting against this motion.

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

“That the question be now put.”

The Chair: I accept that proposal. Those in favour of a closure on Item 12, please show? Those against, please show?

This motion was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: Archdeacon, would you please respond to the debate at Item 12. You have up to five minutes.

Ven Nikki Groarke (Worcester): Thank you. I am glad that this Synod has enjoyed the opportunity to debate an issue which has previously been rehearsed. I sense that there are still some questions around what is a complex issue. As we consider how to vote, I would ask you to bear in mind the aim behind this motion, which is to minimise conversations about money and options, enabling our clergy to focus rather on pastoral care, on engaging with that which makes a service in church different.

We have had some helpful contributions. I particularly liked the one about the problems with mother-in-laws. Mother-in-laws are nothing compared to dealing with presenting a motion in Synod, but it is useful to be reminded of the difficulties we have in planning weddings. Our unique selling point is not that we are cheaper. We will always be undercut by civil celebrants. That is what they do, and we know that funeral directors will work with the most convenient person, which is often not the church. We know we will be undercut, whatever we charge.

I want to remind you of the four principles, particularly the principle of uniformity. If we have a uniform fee across the country, which people do not have to talk about, they will be able to engage in enabling people to encounter God at their time of great joy or great grief. This is a pastoral and missional question that we are looking at.

Again, I would remind you that we want to make our fees completely transparent and not pretend that things are optional when they really are not. We have heard several people say about vergers that they could not do a funeral or wedding without one. Let us not keep the fiction in mind that it is optional. Let us allow that part of the fee to be something which we do not have to talk about. Thank you.

The Chair: The motion before you is at Item 12. Those in favour? Those against?

The motion

‘That this Synod call on the Archbishops’ Council to exercise its powers under s. 1 of the Ecclesiastical Fees Measure 1986 so that fees prescribed as payable to parochial church councils in respect of funerals and weddings should include any costs and expenses of providing a verger.’

was lost on a show of hands.

The Chair: We move on to Item 13 on your Order Paper.

Revd Preb Simon Cawdell (Hereford): Point of order. I beg to move:

“That the Synod do pass to Next Business”

The Chair: I have to say something from the book. There is a first time for everything, Synod. The procedural motion has been moved that this Synod do pass to next business. If that motion is carried, the motion at Item 13 lapses and “the matter cannot be brought up again for debate in the lifetime of this Synod, except with the permission of the Business Committee and with the general consent of the Synod.” Would you please now speak very briefly to your motion? The existing speech limit of three minutes continues to apply. I will then take it on from there.

Revd Preb Simon Cawdell (Hereford): Following the defeat of Item 12 in quite such a clear way, it seems inappropriate to spend time on a motion at Item 13 which inevitably contains the same substantive issues. Synod has already made clear its mind, and certainly if I was called to speak upon this item the arguments that I would put would look remarkably similar to those which I put in the previous item.

The idea of having standardised heating costs for churches of radically different sizes is a clear breach of the principle that fees should be related to costs in a demonstrable way and, as previously, would in many cases have the inadvertent effect of raising the level of fees for many people, particularly those requiring the use of churches in the summer. Synod has other pressing business before it, which I think it might more usefully pursue.

The Chair: Thank you. Archdeacon, would you please respond to that in the first instance?

Ven Nikki Groarke (Worcester): I have only one or two additional remarks that I want to make which were mainly about the outward focus of our proposals and the postcode lottery where parishioners do not have much chance to choose where they should get married but, given the rather resounding defeat of the previous motion, I would be happy to accept the closure at this stage.

The Chair: I am allowed to ask you if there is any other debate on that. I see no one standing. I am going to put to you the motion that the Synod do pass the next business and I must repeat myself, if the procedural motion is carried, the motion lapses and the matter cannot be brought up again for debate in the lifetime of this Synod except with the permission of the Business Committee for general consent of the Synod. If it is lost, this procedural motion, then the motion at Item 13 will continue. I now put to you that this Synod move to next business.

This motion was carried on a show of hands.

Thank you. We now move to next business.

THE CHAIR *The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker)* took the Chair at 5.01 pm.

Proposed Enabling Measure (GS 2018)

The Chair: Synod, we now come on to our next item. This is Item 14 for which you will need GS 2018. Can I also draw your attention to the financial memorandum that is contained in the Sixth Notice Paper. The way I am proposing to structure this - we have got quite a bit of time so we will take quite a few speeches - is after the Bishop of Willesden has introduced the item we will then take a number of speeches and then when it is about right we will ask Mr Scowen and to come and both speak to and move his amendment. We will then have a focused debate on Mr Scowen's amendment, after which when we have dealt with that, one way or another, we will come back to the main motion as or as not amended. That is broadly how we are proposing to structure our debate this afternoon. I am going to call on the Bishop of Willesden to propose the motion that stands in his name.

The Bishop of Willesden (Rt Revd Pete Broadbent): I beg to move:

'That this Synod:

- (a) endorse the view of the Archbishops' Council that there needs to be a means of amending or repealing some primary legislation concerning the Church of England by a more rapid and less complex process than is currently possible;
- (b) welcome the proposals set out in GS 2018; and
- (c) invite the Council to introduce draft legislation at the July group of sessions to give effect to them.'

When we first embarked on the Renewal and Reform programme, one of the background streams of work entailed some serious thinking on how we could optimise the role of the national church and its institutions. For those members of Synod with long memories or perhaps super-efficient retrieval systems, GS Misc 1094 was the place where the detail of what we were proposing in the background was spelt out. That included better use of digital opportunities, new ways of being Synod through shorter and more efficient meetings, and exploring what was put, in shorthand terms, as how "much of the Church's rule book could be changed by order rather than Measure". The proposals in GS 2018 spell out pretty comprehensively and coherently where we have got to in our thinking on that last proposal. We had a consultation in 2015 and the framework before you takes account of the responses we received.

Let me just summarise the paper, recognising of course we are not yet dealing with a draft Measure as we were yesterday and therefore we are only asking Synod for an in-principle decision on the matter. If Synod gives its consent to Item 14, draft legislation would come back to the July Synod, timetable permitting, for first consideration debate

then.

So what is an Enabling Measure? What is it trying to do and what is it trying not to do? The paper makes it clear in paragraph 9 that it will not end the use of Measures to legislate. That is our normal way of proceeding. It is a process that is well tried over the years and where there is serious legislation to be done Measures will be the way in which we do it, but - paragraph 10 - it will produce a new framework to allow amendment or repeal of primary legislation by secondary legislation and that is explained in paragraph 10.

Then just to summarise what else is going on, it will include important safeguards. Paragraph 12 spells out those safeguards, tests that have to be made, legislation that will be excluded and a scrutiny committee to make sure that it fulfils the requirements of enabling legislation work.

Secondly, it will provide criteria. Look at paragraphs 17 onwards where it says "Purpose and general scope of orders under the proposed Enabling Measure", and it is quite important to recognise again we are setting down reasons why you might use this because it is not going to be the norm, so there is going to be a burden which results directly or indirectly from ecclesiastical legislation and that is spelt out as financial costs, administrative inconvenience or an obstacle to efficiency.

Thirdly, the order would be tested against a number of conditions and they are set out in paragraph 22, and they are quite carefully worded. The lawyers have worked through this to say, "What would a framework look like?", and 22 and those bullet points in bold type explain that. Then also there will be a set of exclusions and that is paragraph 24 onwards where it is quite clear that is major stuff and it is not going to be touched by any such order-making process. Then paragraphs 31 to 45 spell out the way in which the whole process would operate within Synod and that will obviously be written into the standing orders as well as being part of the Measure.

When we consulted on the proposal, we received an interesting submission on behalf of the Ecclesiastical Law Society. I declare an interest: I am a member of that body. I believe in what they do. The submission urged upon us a much more conservative approach. They reminded us of the work of Chancellor George Stafford, whose working party in the 1980s had proposed a major programme of work in the repeal and consolidation of obsolete legislation which of course has never been enacted. That is what happens when you do a report.

I think the view we would take is that the Stafford proposals would, in an ideal world, be very valuable, but the officer and synodical time that would be taken in progressing this work would be disproportionate and would actually make very little difference to our most frequently used legislation. Stafford is helpful but is not the target we are aiming at by proposing this Enabling Measure, although paragraph 50 of GS 2018 does indicate that we are consulting on what you might call "Stafford lite", a repeals Measure which will come to Synod soon.

Another concern raised by the Ecclesiastical Law Society was the parliamentary

precedent for our proposal, which is the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006, has had a mixed press and is not an unmitigated success story in terms of process or democracy. With that in mind, the proposals we have put here actually have some important checks and balances built into them which I have already referred to, described in paragraphs 16 to 21, which I think meet some of the issues that the parliamentary legislation did not deal with.

Chair, I welcome the fact that the ELS has been engaging with this process and, while they are not entirely convinced of the approach that we are taking, I think we can agree the legal framework of the Church of England is a good expression of the way in which we bring proper order to our Gospel imperatives. Law and Gospel are partners, not antitheses in our work as the Church of England, by law established and regulated. As part of our consultation, there has also been a very helpful discussion with the Ecclesiastical Committee of Parliament to make sure they were aware of this proposal and that they were clear how it was envisaged that this would fit into the parliamentary procedure for church legislation. There is mention of this, if you want to look at it, in footnote 3 on page 8 of GS 2018.

Chair, it might be helpful in the light of this to restate where the Renewal and Reform process is taking us in relation to legislation. First, it is crucial that all future Measures, canons and regulations are now going to be written in a clear and concise way, and we develop a new habit, a habit whereby primary legislation is minimalist in order to achieve clarity of purpose with better recourse to secondary legislation and codes of practice that are much more easily updated. That is the philosophy of what I was putting before you in simplification earlier on.

Secondly, we will need a process variously to repeal defunct legislation and consolidate some over-complex and frequently amended Measures as was done with the Mission and Pastoral Measure, and there is more detail about that if you want to read it in paragraphs 46 to 49.

Thirdly, there are the kinds of proposals I introduced to Synod yesterday, not without controversy but therefore being dealt with through the full synodical process and procedure for Measures and, as phase 2 of simplification kicks in, there will be more of that. But this is the fourth and final tool in our tool kit, the Enabling Measure, that provides for a different mechanism for change with proper criteria, proper safeguards and proper process, and Item 14 invites the Synod to welcome these proposals and move them to the next stage. I beg to move.

The Chair: Item 14 is now open for debate.

Dr Chris Angus (Carlisle): Thank you, Chair, for calling me. I wish to speak in favour of the proposed Enabling Measure of the wider move to simplify and improve our legislation.

I speak as a member of the Rule Committee and of the Steering and Revision Committees responsible for the recent amendments to faculty jurisdiction that followed on from the work of the Faculty Simplification Group. As GS 2018 records, we had to

undergo a some tortuous process, first of all introducing the new set of Faculty Jurisdiction Rules, the 2013 set, which made those simplifications possible within the constraints of the existing Faculty Jurisdiction Measure; then introducing an amendment Measure to bring about the necessary changes to the Faculty Jurisdiction Measure to allow us to move further; and finally introducing another set of Faculty Jurisdiction Rules, the 2015 set, to support the remaining most important simplifications to the faculty process, the introductions of Lists A and B. The whole process went very smoothly both within the committee stages and in Synod itself with very little contention and wide support, but it took a long time, three years between the Rule Committee starting work and the final rules being in place, and those three years followed on from extensive consultation. The changes that were required to the Faculty Jurisdiction Measure are an excellent example of what the Enabling Measure would allow us to do. It would have made a substantial difference to our work and would have allowed significant burden to be removed from our churches at a much earlier point. The safeguards outlined in the proposal seem both sensible and adequate. In the case of the changes to the faculty jurisdiction the existing process is adding time and complexity without bringing any positive benefit or safeguards that I have been able to identify.

I have had the opportunity to observe at first hand the work of the Rule Committee, not only on faculty jurisdiction but also clergy discipline, and have come to an appreciation of the highly considered, informed, balanced and careful way in which it has approached its work, evidenced by the way in which the fruits of its work have been received by the Synod. I assume that the proposed legislative reform scrutiny committee would operate to a similar standard as a crucial component of the procedure for making orders.

I fully support the principle of keeping the provisions of primary legislation much simpler in encompassing the detail in secondary legislation. In the drafting of secondary legislation the Rule Committee time and time again comes up against constraints imposed upon it because of unhelpful restrictions and formulations quite unnecessarily included in the primary legislation. I also support the programme of consolidation the Legal Office is now embarking on, particularly the fact that consolidation is part of the process of making legislation fit for purpose.

Two years ago I was appointed to chair a lay panel to consider an appeal under the Church Representation Rules against removal from an electoral roll. I think it was quite possibly the first such appeal to be heard in almost 100 years. We became very familiar with the Church Representation Rules and some of the very real deficiencies in them. We were able to say what had been done wrongly by some of the parties involved but not able to give guidance on what they should have done, guidance that even the Legal Advisory Commission felt it was not in a position to give.

I commend the approach being proposed in the paper before us and would urge you to support it.

Canon Peter Bruinvels (Guildford): I am the current Deputy Chairman of the Legislative Committee. I have been a member of the Legislative Committee for the past 30 years and I have also been a member of the Ecclesiastical Committee, so I have got a foot in

both camps.

I want to start by praising the work of the Legislative Committee, particularly to new members here present. It is thorough, it is professional, it is dedicated, it is knowledgeable. More importantly, it is wise. It is made of up of experts advising us, standing counsel, Dean of the Arches. It prepares comments on explanations on all kinds of legislation before it goes to Parliament and in my opinion, as it works well, why is there any need to change it?

When you look at the role of the Ecclesiastical Committee, and I want to pay tribute to them - Pete Broadbent mentioned earlier on there is a footnote about their view - it talks about going to inform them of the proposals, seeking their view. I think if we do go ahead, then we need a standing conference urgently between the Ecclesiastical Committee and the Legislative Committee to work out the way forward. I want to pay tribute to the work of the Ecclesiastical Committee, not just because they find most of our Measures expedient but because they are highly professional, they are thorough, they are challenging, they are knowledgeable, and they are proactive. They are there to help us. They are amenable, yes, but they are an external body of people and their role is really important for the wider Church of England. It is not a given. We need to prove the case each time. We have the best legal advice and when we get the nod it means they find it expedient.

Now time has been talked about, how long it takes to get Measures through. Women Bishops Measure is one such example; the final time it went really through very fast. It moved so fast going through all the stages here, and we can do that again on many times if we so wish on the floor of the House, but then the Ecclesiastical Committee delayed their summer recess to give it its full approval. Therefore, I cannot see any need for the legislative reform scrutiny committee. We have one in place already. It is us, the Legislative Committee, and, more importantly, it is totally representative of Synod. That panel of legal experts which is needed must not be side-tracked. We have also helping us the chairman of the Steering Committee and the Revision Committee chairman and when we give evidence in the Ecclesiastical Committee we have them there normally as witnesses. We have a proper checking procedure. We are only going to meet, it looks like, members of Synod, twice a year so the legislation will work in time with how we are meeting and, as I said earlier on, more importantly, it is working well.

Now if you are wondering about sweeping up Measures, we always have - and I remember it as a Member of Parliament - the regular sweep-up Measure, the Miscellaneous Provisions Measure and that still will be available and it is still possible and it is there. So let us just remind ourselves the Ecclesiastical Committee was set up by the Church of England Assembly Powers Act 1919. It is chaired by Baroness Butler-Sloss, the sister of Michael Havers, former Attorney-General. It is made up of 30 members of all complexions, 15 MPs, 15 peers. It is a statutory committee. Its procedures have been laid down. It is like a joint select committee. It is doing that work and, although, yes, some of it will still go to it, my belief is all should still go to it. It examines all our draft Measures given to us through the Legislative Committee. We as a Legislative Committee have met once, each time to look at a draft Measure, to

prepare the comments and explanations. We review all the points. We do it as best we can. We are not going to be too rushed. We do it correctly. We do it professionally. An explanatory document which I normally sign, and sometimes the Archbishops do as well, an executive summary, goes through each clause and we have the Worshipful Charles George supporting us. This is a very important principle. It is working well. Why break it? When we get the final approval past and it goes automatically committed to the Statutory Committee and then to the Ecclesiastical Committee, we know we have done our job. I plead that we continue with the way it is going now. It is working well. I cannot see the need for such a change now.

Mrs Julie Dziegiel (Oxford): Chair, I was a little bothered yesterday when the Bishop of Willesden in his opening remarks for the Draft Mission and Pastoral, et cetera, Amendment Measure said that a simplification agenda as part of Renewal and Reform was not exciting. I completely disagree. I think it is very, very exciting indeed.

We, the Church of England, are hugely privileged to be a legislative body. We make laws, we change laws and we do so from our own perspective. We do so as believers in Jesus Christ, His grace and the knowledge that the most important thing anyone ever does is accept Jesus into their lives and we are allowed to create a legal framework around that. Wow! What a privilege and what a responsibility.

But times change and sometimes things do not work out as we thought they would. Sometimes there are unforeseen consequences. Sometimes we can see ways to do things better than we thought they would have been done. Enter the simplification agenda, full steam ahead, seeking out legal barriers, legal barriers to mission and getting stuck in to sort it out. They asked dioceses, they asked parishes, they went directly to churchwardens. They did not seem to ask treasurers, but, hey-ho, you cannot have everything.

In the last quinquennium I served on three steering committees engaging with the detail of legislation, steering it through the legislative process. I also served with Chris Angus on the Rule Committee, which counts an impressive number of ecclesiastical lawyers in its ranks, and I did what I could as a mere accountant. We did revise the Faculty Jurisdiction laws twice because we could not amend the primary legislation fast enough. I have seen the legislative process in action and, frankly, it is not exactly nimble, which is why I welcome the concept of this Enabling Measure. There need to be safeguards and GS 2018 explains the areas where the Enabling Measure might be able to shorten the legislative process and critically those where it will not. The Measure itself of course will be subject to the full scrutiny afforded by the current legislative process.

Our legislation and our legislative powers are a huge privilege and a blessed tool for mission. Let us look at making that tool more responsive, quicker on its feet. We must not let fear hold us back. What we must do is trust, trust each other and our God, and move forward on this.

Miss Emma Forward (Exeter): Ladies and gentlemen, I wonder if we are all in full agreement with the assumptions which form the basis of GS 2018. One of the principles set out early on in the document is that, in a fast-changing world, institutions

need, without compromising their core values, to be adaptable and fleet of foot. Secondly, too much law would stifle creativity and give insufficient weight to trust in relationship. I would like to challenge these two assumptions: that we need to be fleet of foot in a fast-changing world and that law would stifle creativity.

I understand why it sounds appealing to reduce the amount of time and speed up the process by which laws are passed. When I began my time on Synod ten years ago, like most people, I was surprised at how many times a matter must come through the Synod before it brings about tangible change. You might know what I mean when I say it can feel like a very slow-moving iceberg. Similarly, the complexity of the legislation that we must understand often feels too much, meaning that we are always particularly grateful for those among us who have legal expertise. Yet when observing how Synod works through a slow process, I feel there is often wisdom therein. The work that we are doing here is incredibly important, weighty and always with significance for the whole Church. Yes, a less legislation-heavy Synod would suit me personally, I would find it easier, but that is my failing for not really taking the time to get to grips with the necessities of a staggered legal process as an elected member of a law-making body. Of course law feels dry much of the time, but is it truly the antithesis of trust in relationship? If a couple wishes to marry and commit their relationship to law, is that because of an absence of trust in relationship or rather an abundance of it? Indeed, Christ himself spoke lovingly in terms of law and commands.

We have heard mentioned already today the Ecclesiastical Law Society and in its written response to the Archbishops' Council consultation document, it said the following: "Rather than disparaging law as stifling creativity, its dynamic facilitative quality should be recognised, valued and deployed to advantage". This is not to say that there is no need to improve the efficiency of the processes through which we work, but I would question the wisdom of rapidity and complexity without a fuller consideration of why that matters to us and what it might mean.

The Chair. We have Debrah Mclsaac. After that, I think we are ready, Mr Scowen, to speak to and move your amendment.

Mrs Debrah Mclsaac (Salisbury): Many of you in this chamber will remember, "I agree with Pete; that is all you need to say"! Today I would like to start with, "I agree with Emma". In favour of simplification? Yes, of course. In favour of efficiency and streamlining? It is very difficult to be against it, and I am certainly not, but we need to be very careful about what we are doing. By changing the initiation and approval processes and, most importantly, the deliberative step of open debate in this chamber, there may be consequences which we do not expect. The papers that we have been presented with contain a very short list of what the new procedure will not apply to, including some legislation going back to the 16th century. Personally, I would very much like to see some real examples of what it might potentially apply to, in order to get some sense of the thing. There is a reference in the paper to delegation. Delegation is a very big word and a big concept, and I am not sure that it should be open ended in that respect. We do need to be careful of unintended consequences, including the consideration by the proposed Scrutiny Committee.

When it comes before this House, there is a range of expertise, perspective and experience which is spoken about in this chamber. It is listening to others which triggers ideas, which helps you apply it to your own situation and then enables you and me to make our own contribution. That is the way in which the law should, in this case, be creative. I do not think there is any place for legislation to be creative. I think it is in the deliberative stages, where it should be.

We also have to be well aware of the impact on checks and balances. It was proposed in the original consultation, I believe in one of the precursor documents, that the majority of the members of the Scrutiny Committee would be appointed by the Archbishops' Council. That would rob this Synod of a very critical part it plays in the checks and balances. Even more power would be vested in a very few. There are also some real questions around the division between primary and secondary legislation and whether a code of practice can be appropriate in the circumstances. We will remember how we wanted to see those codes of practice in other circumstances.

Efficiency? Absolutely, yes. Whether it is good representation that is being proposed here, I am not quite so sure. We also have to remember that deliberative debates in General Synod are the very reason for our existence.

The case for simplification is powerful but, in my view, it has not yet been made in this context. When we come to it, I would urge you to at least support Mr Scowen's amendment, but there are other possibilities: a proposal for an annual simplification; an idea that every provision that is put and is subject to this procedure is severable; perhaps a referral to the Legislative Committee. I think we should ask the Simplification Group to go away and work at it a little more. We are not quite ready to go with it yet, in my opinion.

The Chair: Mr Scowen, please, to speak to and to move your amendment

Mr Clive Scowen (London): I support the principle of the main motion that we should have a fast-track means of changing legislation when missional imperatives so require. This is intended to be a friendly amendment seeking to add another useful strand to the safeguards surrounding the use of this proposed important new power. Clearly, where a draft order brought to Synod under the new Enabling Measure was genuinely uncontroversial, what is proposed already in GS 2018 is adequate. Likewise, where there was both support and opposition within the Synod for a proposal, but the question was simply whether we should make a particular change or not, what GS 2018 proposes at the moment would be adequate.

I suggest that there is a third type of proposal which the Archbishops' Council might bring to Synod as a draft order, where the GS 2018 package is not currently adequate. That is the sort of proposal where a groundswell of members, while not being against the object being pursued by the proposal, nevertheless, feel that it could be achieved differently, or by better means, or that other dimensions need to be considered before the legislation is finalised. In those circumstances, the requirement for a simple yes/no vote with no possibility of amendment will not serve us well.

Where there is a groundswell of members who believe that proposals and a draft order can be improved and made more fit to achieve its object, the amendment that I am proposing would give the power for those members to require that instead of a simple yes/no vote, the proposal would proceed as a Measure would, with the Revision Committee, revision stage and so on, and at those stages other ways of achieving the objective could better be explored. I anticipate that this procedure would not be invoked often, but, when used, it could be really valuable and important.

As Debrah McIsaac said, there is a huge reservoir of wisdom and creative thinking in this chamber. As Synod members, we are not here just to vote yes or no on legislative proposals drawn up by the staff or the Archbishop's Council. There are occasions when we need to bring our own experience and expertise to bear on shaping it, and we should not lose that input where there is a substantial number of us who feel that it is needed.

What would the "substantial number" be? Forty members is a time-honoured number within our Standing Orders. We need 40 members, you will recall, to proceed with a proposal to amend legislation at the revision stage. However, some may think that 40 is too few for this purpose. My amendment does not specify a number. That can be worked out when we get to consider the legislation.

I have heard it suggested that this amendment is premature when we do not yet have legislation before us. All that my amendment is seeking to do is to insert a headline commitment to the principle of having such a procedure. Frankly, it is just as appropriate to include this at this stage as it is to specify the requirement for a Scrutiny Committee, as GS 2018 does. At this stage, we should specify the type of furniture we require and at the legislative stage we will refine precisely what models, colours and fabrics we should have. Today please support the principle of having a procedure to enable a change to full Measure procedure where it is needed and leave the fine details to be resolved at the next stage.

The Chair: Could you move, please?

Mr Clive Scowen (London): Chair, I move.

The Chair: The Bishop of Willesden to reply.

The Bishop of Willesden (Rt Revd Pete Broadbent): Clive and I are good friends and I value his input. He is part of my area council and part of the Bishops' Council in London. We would not survive in London without his interventions, and I value that.

I want to say three things about what he is proposing here. The first is we are getting into that habit that I have been trying to persuade you out of which is, "Careful now". "Careful now" is the first instinctive reaction of the Synod. If there are enough people who think "Careful now", you will vote for the amendment, but I do worry that our first recourse, whenever anything slightly new comes before us, is to say, "How do we hedge this round with more qualifications?"

Secondly, I think Clive is right: it is premature, and thank you for saying so. It is premature because you do not even have a draft Measure before you. You do not even know quite whether we are going to come forward with a Measure that includes the Scrutiny Committee, although I assume it will, and therefore it is a bit daft to be trying to build in things and trying to protect yourselves from what you have not yet seen. It is quite possible for Clive to move this at revision a stage later on anyway.

Thirdly, there is something slightly back to front in what he is suggesting. I need you to think about this one, because I think he is offering us a soft furnishings catalogue without having thought about it, because the 40-member rule does not work as a parallel. When we have the 40-member rule in legislation, people have to stand in Synod when a matter is before the whole Synod for debate. It is actually on the floor of the Synod before you start. The other precedent we have, which is built into our constitution, is that matters that are doctrinal or touch on the worship of the Church of England can be sent off through Article 7 or Article 8 business to various Houses. There are safeguards built in in those ways, but it is legislation that is actually there before the Synod. What Clive is proposing is there can be a blocking number, we know not how many, of people who say, "This can't even reach the floor of Synod in the form it is being put forward; we want to have a Measure instead". That seems to me to be a bad precedent because this proposed shape suggests that the whole Synod - and lots of the contributions so far have been about people saying we all have wisdom together - should be able to debate the merits of this, and either go forward or send it back.

My inclination would be to say to you, do not accept the amendment yet, because we can still debate its merits later on, I think Clive is probably trying to over-prescribe at this stage when we do could with mature reflection on what safeguards we build in, and that can come later when we come to legislation. Do I resist the amendment? I think I do resist it. If you vote for it, you are tying our hands a bit in trying to devise something which would work much better in a mature form when we see the whole package.

Mr Clive Scowen (London): Is it in order for me to clarify something in response to what the Bishop of Willesden just said?

The Chair: No, it is not, I am told, not at this point, Mr Scowen, it is not possible to clarify. Maybe a friend will speak on your behalf if the opportunity arises. We are now debating Item 22 so speeches must be on the subject of Mr Scowen's amendment. Please stand if you wish to speak.

Revd Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich): I have been on Synod for 16 years. I am well into my second millennium. I have got nosebleeds from the bewildering speed at which we do things. I have been a Christian for 40 years. In that time, we have talked about women's ministry - for 40 years. It has taken us 40 years to get where we are now. We are not known for knee-jerk reactions and shooting from the hip. We live in a digital age where within seconds the world knows what the Archbishop of Canterbury may or may not have said. We need to speed up. As a former insurance broker, I would describe the Church of England as a car with three speeds: slow, dead slow and let's go backwards. All the Bishop of Willesden is proposing, and this is why I resist Mr Scowen's amendment, is that we add a faster

gear. We do not need a system whereby as soon as we engage that gear, all the brakes go on, and that what he is proposing. Please, Synod, it is time to grow up and time to take decisions and live in the consequences of them, because we do have a capability of going back and revisiting them and changing them, if we want to, already.

Mr Philip French (Rochester): I would ask you to resist Clive Scowen's amendment for a further reason, which is I think it is defective in the wording. It asks for a draft order to be treated as if it were a draft Measure, but it is surely one thing or the other? An order would not be framed in the same terms as a Measure. We need to deal with cats or dogs, but not pretend that one is the other, so I agree with Pete.

Mr Andrew Gray (Norwich) Chair, a few weeks ago in *The Economist*, there was an article about the spread of the Pentecostal churches. The reason they are considered to be so successful is because they are not burdened down with legislation, which is great for them. I fully understand why much of the spirit behind this Enabling Measure is to try and make the Church of England more agile. That can only be a good thing. However, I support Mr Scowen because I have grave reservations about this Enabling Measure. The reason Mr Scowen is trying to put a brake on it at the moment is because there are a number of items in this Enabling Measure that are, frankly, rather sloppy.

For the first part is the fact that, in principle, we are trying to push something forward which will, in effect, bypass Synod. If we look at the safeguards that are in place, what we are proposing is there is a Scrutiny Committee, except, it appears from the legislation that the Scrutiny Committee will be same for all orders, so, unlike the current situation where Synod puts in experts for relevant parts of legislation, the Scrutiny Committee will have the same people each time. Not only that, it will also include members of the Archbishops' Council who have made the draft order. That is not scrutiny; that is a conflict of interest.

I very much support Mr Scowen's amendment. The fact is we do not want to confuse being agile in terms of front-line evangelism with being agile in terms of legislation. There is a difference. The fact is if we want to be agile and fast-moving in evangelism, that is something that needs to happen in terms of mission and ministry, but legislation requires careful forethought and scrutiny. If we want to be more efficient in Synod - and by the way I do not see any cost savings in any forecasts for how much money would be saved by this, so we are being asked to pass something that might save an unspecified amount of money at some stage in the future - the simple fact is we could do so by having fewer presentations and spending more time on legislation.

Peter Bruinvels made the point very well, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it", and the fact is we are not going to turn the Church of England around by tearing up the rule book and pushing this forward. It is badly thought through. Frankly, I would go further, Mr Scowen, if I had the choice, and vote it down altogether. Be that as it may, let us not confuse the need to be an agile organisation at the front line with rushing through badly thought through legislation. Act in haste; repent at leisure. I would urge you to support Mr Scowen's amendment.

Revd Stewart Fyfe (Carlisle): There is a saying in legal circles that hard cases make bad law. There is a danger here of legislating out of fear of cases which are either unlikely to occur or which are most likely to be covered by existing safeguards and scrutiny. There is also a danger of saying, if I might paraphrase the Prolocutor of Canterbury, "We wanted to change quickly but not this quickly", or, rather, of overcomplicating our simplification. I do not want to deny that Synod worked extremely well in passing through very quickly the issue of women bishops, but it did so at great cost and inconvenience. I also do not want to deny what was said about there being wisdom in slow progress in legislation. I thoroughly agree with the sentiment that law does not stifle creativity. This Enabling Measure is an example of the creative use of law. Yes, we should be rightly proud of the synodical process and the due consideration it gives in passing legislation. It is Rolls-Royce treatment, but you do not take your Rolls-Royce down to the local shop, unless you are buying champagne perhaps.

The Chair: Mr Fyfe, we need to be on the amendment. I have not heard a reference to Mr Scowen yet.

Revd Stewart Fyfe (Carlisle): I am coming to that, sorry, Chair. The point is the purpose of this amendment is it is to be used in cases where there are uncontroversial issues that require quick legislation. Parliament has a similar process, and all we are doing is giving permission to this, and therefore to over-complicate the process with the amendment and to slow up that process of using a quick-fix solution for uncontroversial matters that require a simple and quick bit of legislation is simply holding up the simplification that we all know is needed. Therefore I urge us to give this wings, reject the amendment and support the motion.

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): I want to refer members to paragraph 34 of the report. I think the last sentence is important and it has a bearing on Clive's amendment. "More detailed provision as to the Scrutiny Committee's membership would be contained in the standing orders for General Synod". That responds to the point we have just heard from the previous speaker. It does strike me that it remains possible - and I do not know if there is any nodding from behind me from the lawyers - for the powers that Mr Scowen wants to be given to the Scrutiny Committee so, if they have concerns, they can refer it back to us, rather than at this stage committing ourselves to something that is quite so deliberate as Mr Scowen wants. I think we could put something into later legislation that would meet Mr Scowen's concern that we do not need to do quite now. On the basis of that, I would oppose Mr Scowen's amendment.

The Chair: We will take one more speech, after which, if there are further people standing, I am getting ready for a motion for closure, but we will take one more speech.

Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark): I would just urge members to look very carefully at the words of the motion. Item 14: "That this Synod, (a) endorse the view of the Archbishops' Council that there needs to be a means of amending or appealing some primary legislation concerning the Church of England by a more rapid and less complex process than is currently possible". Amen to that. I welcome the proposal set out in GS 2018, and - and some people are jumping the gun here - invite the Council to introduce

draft legislation at the July group of sessions to give effect to them. There is plenty of time for the detailed points that Clive Scowen is putting forward to be considered in due course, but let us, for goodness' sake, pass this and get on to the July group of sessions. I resist the amendment.

The Chair: That brings us then to a vote on Item 22. This is Mr Scowen's amendment. You can see the effect it has on the motion on the screens.

The amendment was lost on a show of hands.

The Chair: That is clearly lost. It takes us back into Item 14, unamended, and the debate continues.

Canon Dr John Spence (ex officio): As a wee lad who started his Christian journey in the United Free Church of Scotland, and rather bypassed the Church of Scotland on my way to the Scottish Episcopal Church, only arriving here via the Church of Ireland, I much enjoyed the debate earlier and would commend Synod for it. It is relevant to what I want to say in making three points.

First, this is not about in any way reducing the authority of Synod; it is about enhancing it, by enabling time to be spent in the most relevant ways on the major topics that we face.

Secondly, you have appointed me to share the responsibility for ensuring the efficiency and effectiveness of all our central operations. I must tell you that I am having trouble balancing your budgets for 2017-19. In a world of constrained resource, I find that our officers are being too preoccupied with dealing with complex Measures on very minor administrative points, in trying to progress things forward at the expense of other more valuable ways of using their time. Contrary to what Canon Peter Bruinvels, my dear friend, said, it is broken. We are not proceeding at the pace and with the scrutiny that is required.

Thirdly, Simon Butler referred yesterday to the deficit of trust. You all know I am no Church House groupie. I resist any attempts that it should take an authority that it should not have, but I can tell you, in my experience of our officers, that our legal people will ensure we strictly observe all the safeguards that are put in this Measure when it eventually comes forth. You have rightly rejected Clive's amendment because it is premature. We will not bring a Measure to this House and see it passed unless all those safeguards are fully in place and meet your satisfaction. You can trust your officers to ensure that those safeguards are observed.

Bishop Peter talked about minimalist legislation. I would not go that far. The legislation that we bring before you should be appropriate and essential, and that is a principle that we will observe and, in doing so, you will have the opportunity to scrutinise as fully as possible, but also in a timely way, while matters of less import can be progressed more rapidly. I urge you to pass the motion.

Mr David Lamming (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich): Members of Synod, may I start by

declaring an interest as a member of the Ecclesiastical Law Society, but not a party to the paper that was referred to earlier by Bishop Pete. He did refer to the society as being partners in law and gospel. Perhaps I ought to start by saying that the newsletter of the society is *Gospel and Law*. Perhaps in the light of changing round Reform and Renewal to Renewal and Reform, that is appropriate.

Can I start by endorsing everything that was said by my diocesan colleague, Jonathan Alderton-Ford a few moments ago, that we are concerned here with promoting gospel and with accelerating necessary change. One of the problems at the moment is that we have virtually agreed, having passed the legislation to enable women to become bishops, that Synod should only meet twice a year. That, necessarily, is a brake, if we do that in the future, on the legislative process. Therefore I want to welcome this proposal which, as has already been pointed out, is simply to endorse the principle of legislation such as is now proposed. We will have the full opportunity to debate as a proposed Measure the detailed proposals when they come before this Synod. The proposals will have to be in a Measure, not an order.

Having said that, I would like to make one or two observations on the detail that is in GS 2018, which perhaps can be taken into account by those who will be drafting the Measure when it comes before us in July. That is the intended timetable.

First of all, at paragraph 22, the preconditions for initiating the process for making orders, there is reference there to one of the preconditions being that the provision does not remove any necessary protection. The question of course arises as to what is “necessary” as opposed to “unnecessary” protection. That is clearly something to which attention will have to be addressed.

Secondly, I would like to endorse the contribution that was made a little earlier this afternoon about highlighting, or at least listing, what is intended to be covered by this proposed new procedure. The report lists what will be excluded from it - those protected measures that will have to be amended by a Measure and not by this new procedure - but it will be helpful if in July we have as a schedule or an annex to the draft Measure a list of those subjects which it is envisaged, perhaps within the next year or two years, could come before Synod under this proposed new procedure.

Thirdly, at paragraph 45, we have a summary of the proposed procedure. It would be helpful to highlight paragraph 45(iv) which says this about the draft order: “The draft order [as amended]” - that is if it has been amended by the Scrutiny Committee - “is considered by General Synod which decides whether to - (a) approve the draft order; (b) reject it or; (c) refer it back to the Scrutiny Committee, in which case steps (iii) and (iv) are repeated”. In effect, if this Synod does not like what is brought before it to approve, it will be sent back, and, of course, cannot come back before the next sessions of Synod, be it in the following February or the following July. There is, as it were, a built-in brake in the procedure that is envisaged. It perhaps does beg the question which needs to be considered when the Measure is in draft form as to whether there is to be any limit on the number of times an order can be referred back and, also, perhaps whether there should not be a provision for Synod to be able to amend the order as opposed to simply either accepting it or referring back. I would invite the Archbishops'

Council when drafting any legislation to consider whether that would be appropriate or not.

With those qualifications and also with a plea, please, for accessibility of the new legislation, I would invite Synod to approve the motion on the Order Paper.

Rt Worshipful Timothy Briden (ex officio): I ought to start by declaring a contingent interest in that if the Measure does become law I might find myself on the Scrutiny Committee. The book of Esther 1:19, "Let it be written among the laws of the Medes and Persians that it be not altered." I feel rather sorry for the Medes and Persians. It must have been an enormous inconvenience to them to have to labour under perpetual laws incapable of amendment or repeal, but perhaps they have one lesson for us which previous speakers have touched upon: Making law is very important.

The fact that we do it frequently in Synod may perhaps blind us sometimes to that importance. If the making of law is important, we also need good procedures for maintaining that law in proper order and discarding it when it is no longer of use. In pursuit of those proper procedures, I welcome the proposals that are being made for a more efficient way of achieving that end.

I wanted to try and demonstrate to Synod the need for this new procedure and so I looked through the volume of Halsbury's Statutes, Volume 14, to try and find in its 1,400 odd pages something that might help Synod along, and my eye lit upon the Ecclesiastical Leasing Act of 1842. Section 1 contains the admirable provision that ecclesiastical corporations may grant leases. Sadly, this is achieved in a total of 81 lines of close print with numerous sub-clauses. You might have thought that was enough but, no, we go on to section 4 which makes provision for the granting of leases of waterleaves and wayleaves. That runs to 37 lines with numerous sub-clauses. In case the unfortunate draftsman of these leases loses his way, we then go on to section 5, which says that leases will be confirmed even though they are voidable for informality. That provision runs to 43 lines with numerous sub-clauses.

Members of Synod, I really rest my case, I think, on the need for a mechanism for dealing with this obsolete legislation which really needs attention, and I am afraid there is quite a lot of it if you care to plough your way through Volume 14. It is important that there should be safeguards. This is an important procedure and it is not to be used rashly. The way that the legislation is coming to us suggests that this is not going to be a licence to the Archbishops' Council to slash and burn its way through the statute book. The Archbishops' Council can initiate the process, then the matter has to go to the Scrutiny Committee.

If I find myself on the Scrutiny Committee, I would remind Synod that, along with the Dean of the Arches and the Vicar-General of York, we are independent persons. We are not in anybody's pocket. We exercise our powers according to law and I have no doubt that we would do that if asked to serve upon this Committee. I have no doubt that other members of Synod asked to serve alongside us would adopt exactly the same approach.

That is not the end of the matter because the Report then goes to Synod and it will be for Synod ultimately to allow the matter to go forward or not, and so there is ample provision for the matter to be filtered through in a proper way and not pushed through indiscriminately. In conclusion, I invite the support of this and I hope that the end result will be to create something of which the Medes and the Persians would have been quite envious.

Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford): I am just going to take this opportunity really to say one or two general things about simplification. GK Chesterton said something to the effect that you should not remove a fence until you know why it had been put there. I have to say that despite the promised safeguards in this legislation, yesterday's discussion on the Draft Mission and Pastoral Amendment Measure did reinforce a certain degree of fear that I have that we are in danger of doing that.

The Church of England has not evolved as a top-down Church. There are all sorts of checks and balances woven into our complex structures that form part of our relationship and the warp and weft of how we are woven into the fabric of the nation. What looks like irksome red tape and bureaucracy to the guy or gal in the purple shirt trying to get things organised, stopping them from getting on with things that need to be done, might look like necessary safeguards to the man in the pew or in the local community where the church is.

I want to say that trust alone is not enough. I think we realised that when we had the women bishops' debate and, finally, we came to a solution that satisfied all of us because it did not rely on trust. We had the independent reviewer and that provided a mechanism which was satisfactory to those on all sides of the debate. Trust is not enough because, as fallen creatures, we cannot always be trusted. It is as simple as that. Law is the foundation of trust.

I have no doubt that the Bishop of Willesden will say I am resisting change, to which I would respond: Well, really, what did you expect? Let me just conclude by saying that change is not always good. Sometimes the accrued wisdom of the ages which may not always be easy to fathom, nevertheless, knows best. I would, therefore, urge that this whole project be approached with caution.

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 approval, does it have the approval of Synod?

This motion was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: I, therefore, turn to the Bishop of Willesden to respond to the debate. We have negotiated an agreed seven minutes.

The Bishop of Willesden (Rt Revd Pete Broadbent): I might take less, we will see. Thank you to all those who contributed. Actually, it has been a good debate, I think, in

terms of espousing the issues. I am grateful for the support of Chris Angus who reminded us that we took three years to get anything done on faculties and that only now do we have the new legislation in place and it is a tortuous process.

Again, Julie Dziegiel who said it is not exactly nimble, is it? Of course, it is the case that there need to be safeguards. There need to be proper legal framework. I hope you listened to the speech I made at the beginning because I was quite clear that, actually, I am a supporter of good law and I believe that the Church of England by the law established is ordered in that way. Therefore, I would not find myself a long way away from most of those who have been expressing concerns. Indeed, safeguards are built into what we are proposing. It is not as though we are coming to you with a complete blank cheque.

Prudence Dailey and I find ourselves on Facebook quite often agreeing with each other on traditionalist understandings of things and I am one who would believe that there is a whole corpus of received wisdom that you should not jettison. Trust alone is not enough. This is not about saying you are left without the anchor of law. We are not just saying, 'Trust us and let us go on with it'. We are saying, 'Here is a new procedure which may just help us shifting away some of the dross in legislation', and the Synod will still have that final say on being able to scrutinise things and send it back.

Peter Bruinvels was very strong on our existing system not being broke and I follow him in the tributes he paid to the Ecclesiastical Committee. He was asking the question how are we going to talk to them. Well, we will consult the Ecclesiastical Committee when we have some properly formed legislation to consult with them on and we will ask them how they would like us to proceed. The informal consultation we had with them a few months ago was the beginning of a discussion to alert them. We have not done anything formal yet. That will come in due course.

I have to say, Peter, I think you actually proved my case for me with your example on women bishops. If you cast your mind back, the only reason we got the women bishops' legislation through quickly was because some bishop got up and said "I agree with Pete" is the way you proceed with this, and you all did, and we cut out the revision stage of the legislation to make it quicker. We did not do revision in great detail on the floor of Synod and we fast-tracked it through all the procedures to get it done quickly. We had to do that because it was not working properly, so thank you for proving my point. We will not be wanting to do that with every bit of legislation, I am sure you will agree.

I think it is also important to recognise that there will be things that will need the full deliberation, and Peter's advocacy of that legal framework which exists when we deal with Measures is the safeguard we have got. We are not going to change how we deal with really important Measures that require full scrutiny. I am with him entirely on that, but that is not what is being proposed here.

Emma Forward wanted to challenge some of the assumptions and suggested there is a wisdom in slow process. I do not think we are disparaging process and law. What this does for you is give you a new way forward. Some of the other criticisms, Debrah

Mclsaac, thank you for your contribution. You asked us for examples. Actually, if you read paragraph 55 we give you examples of the sorts of things but we will give you some more in due course.

There is a bit of misunderstanding, I think, in terms of what we are doing with the Legislative Reform Scrutiny Committee. We are not saying necessarily that this will have a fixed membership or, indeed, that it could not be capable of being set up in different ways to deal with different bits of legislation. I envisage it as being something with a core membership - and I am very glad of Timothy Briden's volunteering to be a part of that - but to have different members appointed both by Synod and by Archbishops' Council. We will need to work out the details, but we clearly need to have people with expertise - that is what this Synod does - involved in that process. We would be stupid to ignore the possibility there are folk on Synod who could contribute to that, but please do not think it is going to be a bunch of stooges. It is not. It is going to be a proper Committee, formed probably with a fluid membership, which will give us the detailed scrutiny that is required.

Mr Scowen and I had a useful interchange around his amendment. I think I do want to say that if we did go down his road that there is one more problem, of course, that if you bring something to Synod in the form of Enabling Measure legislation and then it has to go back and be revamped to become a Measure, that might take some time. On the other hand, if his proposal does find favour later on, we would have to find ways of morphing something that was coming in one form to become something else. It is not impossible but it might be a bit of a difficulty in terms of how we deal with that.

Thank you to all those others who spoke in favour. Andrew Gray asked about the costs. They are in the Sixth Notice Paper and set out there. Obviously, we do not know exactly but there is some cost saving that we think. Stewart Fyfe talked about the creative use of law. That is what I believe we should be doing.

David Lamming talked about giving this whole Measure full scrutiny. We will do that when it comes back. He said, how do you define 'necessary protection'? I am not sure. We will ask the lawyers to think about that. They were not sure when we talked about it but I take the point he is making. I think we could come back with a list of the sorts of issues that might be dealt with. Thank you, David, for your question on that and probably, when we come to the detailed legislation, we will try to give you some examples of the sorts of legislation we are talking about so that people can see a working of what we are talking about.

The question about sending stuff back; well, actually, of course, if you send stuff back, in the end if it is not working then it gets withdrawn. We already have that provision in synodical debate for Measures. Measures can be referred back for further revision and further revision and further revision, and the Standing Orders do not say how many times that can happen, but if you have banged at a door two or three times and not been admitted, you probably might say, 'I am not going to get in the first place'. I do not think you have to worry about how many times.

Chair, thank you for a wide-ranging debate which you have allowed for us. I hope that

now the Synod will say let us go forward to the next stage. Do not be frightened of this legislation. It is going to help us in shifting some of the burden that is around and it will not undermine due process.

The Chair. We are about to put this Item 14 to the vote. Before I do that, can I just let you know, Synod, that as our reward for good behaviour, we got through our matters so expeditiously this afternoon, we will be moving on to some contingency business which you will find in paragraph 10 at (iii) of your Agenda books, so please do not rush off after the vote. I now do put Item 14, unamended, to the vote.

The motion

'That this Synod:

- (a) endorse the view of the Archbishops' Council that there needs to be a means of amending or repealing some primary legislation concerning the Church of England by a more rapid and less complex process than is currently possible;*
- (b) welcome the proposals set out in GS 2018; and*
- (c) invite the Council to introduce draft legislation at the July group of sessions to give effect to them.'*

was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair. That is clearly carried and that brings this item to an end. We move on now to contingency business.

THE CHAIR: *The Revd Canon Dr Rosemarie Mallet* took the Chair at 6.20 pm.

Diocesan Synod Motion: Blood and Organ Donation (GS 2022A and 2022B)

The Chair. Evening, Synod. I was not expecting to be back in the Chair quite so soon. We have additional time for our deliberations this evening, as you have heard, and so we are moving to contingency business on Special Agenda IV, the Diocesan Synod Motion from the diocese of Leeds on Blood and Organ Donation. You have already been indicated where you can find it on your Agenda, which is on (iii), if you want to have sight of the exact terminology of the motion. You will also need to have sight of GS 2022A and 2022B. Thank you very much. I call upon Reverend Paul Cartwright to move this motion on behalf of the diocese of Leeds. You may speak for up to ten minutes.

Revd Paul Cartwright (Leeds): I beg to move:

‘That this Synod call on all Church of England parishes to encourage their members to consider, as part of their Christian giving:

- (a) becoming blood donors; and
- (b) registering as organ donors and making their wishes known to their families.’

Good afternoon, Synod. It is with great joy that I bring this motion to you today from the diocese of Leeds, known as West Yorkshire and the Dales. This is an example of our synodical structures working at its best, with this motion originally being proposed by the Allerton Deanery and eventually arriving here with us today after going through our diocesan synod.

The Diocesan Synod Motion that stands in my name today is here to encourage the Church of England parishes to encourage their members to consider becoming both blood donors and to register on the register of organ and tissue donors. The subject is not new for the Church of England and you will see in GS 2022B, the background paper, that the Church of England has contributed to four major policy debates in recent years and it has taken part in six national initiatives, including being a founder associate of the Flesh and Blood (FAB) Churches Campaign.

I wonder how many of you, prior to your papers being issued today, have heard of this campaign? It is good to see some waving to indicate that they have. If you have not, visit the website, www.fleshandblood.org, and there are some fantastic resources there that you can use within your parishes. Why has the diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales brought this to you once again today? Well, quite simply, it is something which is close to our hearts, if you pardon the pun.

Last year, in 2015, the NHS Organ Donor Register was modified to allow anyone in the UK to register a decision to donate, to register their decision not to donate, or to nominate others to make a decision for them after their death. This helped to bring the issue to the forefront of some of our minds along with the fantastic Flesh and Blood Campaign. For some of you here today it may make you feel uneasy when we talk about this subject, but in a faith where we recognise our Saviour, Jesus Christ, as giving us his body and blood as a living sacrifice, surely the least that we can do is the same for our brothers and sisters in need.

It would be very easy to bring to your attention the on-going need for blood and organ donation by quoting statistics, but I am sure you will all be able to think of someone who is a blood donor or has acted as an organ donor or has needed blood products or organ donation. When the Synod representatives were approached to propose this at General Synod, I thought it would be helpful if I volunteered to do so because I have got a quite a bit of experience in most of the areas concerned.

As some of you will remember, prior to being ordained I worked as a police officer. One

of the many specialisms that I had was working as a family liaison officer supporting the families of those who were seriously injured or killed in road traffic collisions. I helped to support families with loved ones in intensive care through the process of preparing for their death on the occasions when they were only being kept alive by machinery and when there was no chance of recovering.

As part of this role and when dealing with those who have been killed on the road, as a family liaison officer we routinely enquired whether their loved ones had left any instruction regarding the donations of their organs and whether the family had thought about giving permission for this to happen. Of course, the law has now changed and it is enough for the person to give permission whilst they are alive, but for some they have not thought about it until that very moment when they had the added stress and grief in their lives of making a decision for their loved ones. This is one way in which the Church can play a positive role in the process by encouraging all its members to consider donation whilst they are fit and well.

It was certainly a privilege walking alongside these families in their time of need. As a Church, we can reassure people that there is no theological reason which would stop people from donating. In fact, it seems a natural and right thing to do to come to the aid of someone in need. For these families I can tell you with confidence that many lives were transformed, not only those who have been waiting for a donation but the families who took the decision to donate their loved ones' tissues or organs as they gained comfort from their decision.

Of course, the work in this field does not stop there. Personally, having seen the need for blood products, I have managed to get a Wedgwood plate for the number of blood, platelet and plasma donations that I have made. Quite a few emergency service workers do the same, as do our hospital staff. I have even donated actual platelet products when I have been a close match for someone with leukaemia. I have got to say it was good to pay in the bank and you never know when you are going to withdraw from that bank.

Of course, it does not stop there. For my wife and two children as well as my extended family, the kindness of people donating blood and blood products have meant that I have so far been able to spend seven extra years with them after I was diagnosed with an acute fast-acting leukaemia in 2008. The blood products that I received saved my life and, to be honest, I am unable to find the words to thank those who kindly donated the blood and platelets that saved me and so I thank God for them every day.

Within our parishes we have a wide diversity of people who are able to donate blood and register on the Organ Donor Register. Of course, that includes people from many different backgrounds, from minority ethnic backgrounds who on occasions have rare blood types or tissue matching needs. Surely, we can grasp this opportunity to really show God's love for our world and use the abundance of resources that we have to change and save lives.

Of course, we need to recognise that not everyone will be able to become a blood or organ donor and some may not choose to do this. That does not make them any less a

Christian. Synod, I ask you to wholeheartedly support this motion which has been sent to you for support from the diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales and which stands before you in my name. Thank you.

The Chair: The floor is now open for debate. May I just remind Synod that our deliberations are due to finish at seven o'clock for worship, which means that I would be looking to have a motion for closure for the debate ten minutes before that time to allow Fr Cartwright time to respond and for the vote to be taken. With no further ado I would call Mr Freeman and the Bishop of Carlisle to speak.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): I would wholeheartedly support this and hope you all go back to your bases and do exactly the same. Over my life I have put 80 units of blood in. Shortly before November Synod, I found myself in hospital and in the middle of the night I woke up, having had an operation, with drips in, with a bed full of blood at 2am on a Sunday morning - not the best time to put a hospital to the test. The duty registrar and his mate sorted me out, put me right, and I ended up needing three units of blood. I would encourage you all to do it. You never know when you are going to need it.

I have been carrying an organ donor card since 1995. I have told my family, they do not object. I have got it in my pocket now. I would also encourage you to look, as well as at organs and blood, at what you do with your body when your soul has gone to a better place. There was an interesting comment on Radio 4 appealing for people to talk to their medical practitioners on whether or not their bodies would be useful for medical research or teaching. If you are thinking about it, talk to your GP and they will point you in the right direction. So a 100% mark for our friends from Yorkshire for bringing this to us, and please support it. Thank you.

The Bishop of Carlisle (Rt Revd James Newcome): I want to speak briefly, but very warmly, like my friend John Freeman, in favour of this excellent motion. I declare a double interest, both as lead bishop on health and also Chair of the National Stewardship Committee.

The content of the motion is almost identical to the content of the Flesh and Blood Campaign, which, as we heard, was launched a couple of years ago in partnership with the NHS and several other Christian denominations. I think that was the first time as a Church we have worked so closely with the NHS on a campaign of this sort. It involved the distribution of thousands of leaflets and posters to churches all around the country, a number of presentations with various gimmicks, which included wrapping Carlisle Cathedral in a huge red ribbon which, incidentally, is now available to borrow should you wish to do so. That is the ribbon, not the cathedral! It involved two stalls at festivals, such as Greenbelt, where people signed up to the organ donor register at an astonishing rate. The overall success of the campaign was enormous.

As well as approving the content of the motion, I also like the way in which it is worded. It deliberately encourages rather than demands. It emphasises the fact that giving blood and organs is part of our Christian stewardship. It points very simply, but very effectively, to the importance of discussing one's wishes with near relatives. One of the main reasons for the lack of suitable organs for transplant in this country is the fact that

families often, and very understandably, say no to the removal of an organ at the crucial moment, even though the person concerned may have wanted his or her organs to be donated.

Synod, the need for more blood and organs is enormous. Like Paul Cartwright, I know of no theological reason why Christians should hold back from voluntary donation and even, for some, live donation, for instance, of a kidney.

A BBC reporter asked me earlier today about the implications of all this for our resurrection body, an interesting question to come from the media. It was a great opportunity to expound 1 Corinthians 15 on air. There are also some who have responded to pieces in today's *Times* and *Guardian* about this motion by complaining that the Church of England is not only asking for all our money, now it wants our organs too! Of course, both are simply a matter of giving back a little of what we have so generously been given by our Creator. I do hope that we can give this motion the support that it so manifestly deserves.

Mrs Helen Lamb (Ely): I also want to speak in support of this motion. Had I been less of a newbie to General Synod and worked out how contingency business works, I might actually have proposed an amendment partly building on what was just said. For me, what is missing is the opportunity this presents in light of our conversation this morning.

I do not know how everyone else felt listening to the evangelism discussion. I feel like here I want to nod along and endorse everything and be very excited, but on Thursday at work, on Monday back at the school gate, I confess I am so often such a chicken. I just do not know how to find that opportunity to share the hope that we have.

But what an opportunity this is, not only for generosity, not only for sacrificial giving that follows Jesus' model, but also to give a reason for the hope that we have. Not only do we have a sacrificial Saviour, we have a resurrected Saviour, a Saviour whose body bears the marks of the nails and yet walks through walls, and a Saviour who promises us that resurrection eternal life. That passage in Corinthians 1:15 is: "the dead will be raised imperishable". My body will not be decaying in heaven, it will not be afflicted with all the things that afflict it in this fallen world and whatever state it is by the time I die or Jesus returns. What a hope that is, and how different it is for everything else in this world where death is to be feared, avoided at all costs, and never discussed, if possible.

I really want to support the motion. I wish I had got an amendment in saying, "Because of our Christian generosity and also the hope of the resurrection to come, I won't need this body because God has a better one in store for me". So let us support the motion and let us be prepared to give a reason for that hope in talking to our families and our friends.

Canon Lucy Docherty (Portsmouth): It is very difficult to follow two such excellent speeches as have just been made. In fact, I do not know how to begin to follow the lady who has just spoken, she said it all. As I was running round the corner of the building thinking, "What's the person saying, I don't want to repeat her", why I came to talk was by the wonders of modern technology I have just had a text from a colleague of mine,

who is an ex member of Synod, who said, "Please talk about altruistic kidney donation", which is what the Bishop just mentioned in passing in his speech, because her husband altruistically donated a kidney to his brother a few years ago.

I just want to make the point, because I do not think it is talked about very often, how valuable that service is to our brothers and sisters, our families, and in some cases to others. Altruistic kidney donation is not very well known, but it is worthwhile mentioning it now so that we can be thinking about it and adding it into our conversations with our friends and neighbours when we talk about organ donation.

Organ donation is very close to my heart, because my next door neighbour was dying from his heart illness. We watched him slowly, over the years, become weaker and weaker to the point where he could not walk down his garden. Eventually, he was in hospital, Papworth, and we knew he would either come back in a coffin or not at all. It was wonderful to see him the other day climbing a tree in his garden and telling me that he could cut trees down now because of his new heart. That is one of the best examples I have ever seen of the wonders of modern science, and also the wonders of organ donation. I wholeheartedly support this motion, as I am sure all of us do. What is not to support, members? What is not to support? Thank you.

Revd James Pitkin (Winchester): I am delighted to have my maiden speech on a subject which is so very important. I have two declarations of interest. My wife, Sue, is a hospital chaplain in Southampton and I have been a platelet donor for many years, and am building up a good whisky glass collection.

My wife is often part of the team that helps families think about organ donation as their family member dies. She can tell many stories about how important it is that the families have had a conversation about organ donation before they get to that point, and this motion is a great helper towards that end.

However, the best thing that I can offer to you in support of this motion is part of the story of James Lewis, a five year-old who lives in Hampshire and has had a heart transplant. His mother, Kate, writes: "I remember going to a Christingle service in our village church with our children two years ago, and I had to fight hard to keep the tears at bay. I didn't know if it was going to be James' last Christmas. James was on the list for a heart transplant and he ended up waiting 15 months for his new gift of life. This felt so special this year, especially when I think how James was fighting to survive in the PICU at the Freeman Hospital, Newcastle, hundreds of miles from home, this time last year. Now look at him. This candle not only represents the light of the world that we celebrate in Jesus' birth at Christmas, but it also represents hope. Transplant gives families without hope, hope. It gives new life. From death comes new life. We remember James' wonderful donor family and honour their loved one who saved James' life. This candle is for you. We light a candle to honour James' donor and their family. Their gift of new life, a heart for James, has given us our boy back. We celebrate Christmas this year knowing how precious life is."

I would like to end with a statement from the United Network for Organ Sharing: "Without the organ donor there is no story, no hope, no transplant, but when there is an

organ donor life springs from death, sorrow turns to hope, and a terrible loss becomes a gift." Please do support this motion.

Revd David Craven (Carlisle): I want to wholeheartedly support this motion. My perception of this area was made very real just after Christmas. First, my mother-in-law is awaiting a bone marrow transplant and has to go to hospital on a regular basis and spends literally hours in the hospital having various blood transfusions. That would not be possible were it not for the generosity of others.

Also, just after Christmas, it was with shock that I took a phone call informing me that John, who was a key member of our church family, was in intensive care with little prospect of recovery. John had suffered a massive haemorrhage to the brain. When I went to visit him and administer last rites late on Sunday evening, the duty nurse informed me that John had instructed that his organs be donated. On meeting with the family a few days later, this was one area that they did not need to worry about. In the throes of their shock and grief, they were at peace knowing that a decision had already been taken for them and that John was making a difference.

As Fr Paul Cartwright said, just as Jesus gave us his life, his body, that we might enjoy life in all its fullness, surely it is incumbent upon us all as his disciples to follow his lead in giving of ourselves to help others. This message of giving and stewardship in a holistic sense needs to be communicated more clearly by us, the Church. Stewardship is about our lives and our bodies.

Finally, may I urge that more resources be given to equip us in this important task of communicating with the wider Church. I am going to go from this Synod and register as an organ donor in light of the debate that has taken place this afternoon.

Canon Elizabeth Paver (Sheffield): I think so many times during our debates, Synod, after presentations, after many of our debates, we sit here saying, "What can we do?" There is not enough in the word "support" to follow a debate like this. Support is not enough. Action is what is needed. Actions speak louder than words. There are some people here who will not be able to donate, but they can be advocates and find others. I think seriously we should take it back to our diocesan synods, as the motion says, to our parishes, but when all of us act together we could make a huge difference across our land. Please, do not just say you will support this motion, but there is going to be action from each and every one of us Synod members.

Mr Philip Geldard (Manchester): I work as a charge nurse in a hospital in central Manchester, the main city centre hospital. At our hospital we do kidney transplants on a daily basis, both from live donors and from dead donors. I often see patients coming into hospital who are awaiting kidney transplants, those who are on regular renal replacement therapy, be it haemodialysis two or three times a week or what we call CAPD, which is a treatment that has to be undertaken at least three times a day. This takes time out of the patients' lives, it reduces their general quality of life. There are other ongoing health issues that go along with this as well.

I would just like to encourage members of Synod to support this measure and, if called to give of our own kidneys, to do so to our fellow human beings to improve their quality of life. Thank you.

Miss Jane Patterson (Sheffield): If I were not here this afternoon I would be doing my day job. I am a consultant surgeon. In fact, hopefully by this time my operating list would have just finished. Hopefully, much blood would not have been spilt. However, I can say in the course of providing emergency care, over the years I have been involved in many life and death situations where people's donated blood and blood products have made a real difference.

I think this motion gives us a number of opportunities. One is to contribute to the common good, which has been one of the priorities of this Synod for the last five years. I agree with Helen that we have an opportunity to witness. We live in a culture where the population is increasingly in denial about the reality that all human beings die. By talking about donation, we have an opportunity to have conversations about life and death issues. I suggest that we do two things: we go and sign up - my own organ donor card, I note, is 31 years old - and also we support this motion. Thank you.

The Chair: I see no one standing. I call upon Revd Cartwright to respond to the debate and to move the motion. He has five minutes to respond.

Revd Paul Cartwright (Leeds): I will try not to use it. Synod, thank you for your wholehearted support in this important field. Thank you from me, from the diocese, but thank you from those who will need those products that we have heard about today in hospital, expected or unexpected.

It would be really easy to go through the list and say, "So and so said this, so and so said that", but I do not think we need to do that because there is a commonality here. We see the example given by Christ and we follow that example; the example that we are called to follow and called to show around the country and the world.

I ask that you support this wholeheartedly. It would be great if we had 100% of hands going up. It would send a message to the nation. Also, that you take it out there as has been suggested. Those who cannot donate like me - I can no longer donate because of the treatment that I had - but also those who choose not to donate can be great advocates for this. It is not just Christians, we have got a body of people that we can approach, but we need to take it out into those places where we, as Christians, go. I am very pleased to move this motion.

The Chair: I now put this item to the vote. Those in favour, please show? Those against?

The motion

'That this Synod call on all Church of England parishes to encourage their members to consider, as part of their Christian giving:

- (c) becoming blood donors; and
- (d) registering as organ donors and making their wishes known to their families.'

was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: That is clearly carried. That closes this item of business. I would like to offer Synod's thanks to those who have been leading the continuous praying presence throughout the day and this afternoon on your behalf.

The Revd Jane Morris led the Synod in an act of worship.

The Archbishop of Canterbury dismissed the Synod with the blessing at 7.00 pm.

Full Synod: Third Day Wednesday 17 February 2015

THE CHAIR: *Mr Aiden Hargreaves-Smith (London)* took the Chair at 10.31 am.

Diocesan Synod Motion: Impact of Sanctions on Benefit Claimants (GS 2019A and GS 2019B)

The Chair. Good morning. Before we begin this morning, this week marks the 180th anniversary of the founding of the Church Pastoral Aid Society and so we would like to offer our congratulations to CPAS and in particular to one of our members, John Dunnett, who is the General Secretary.

We come now to Item 15. This is a Diocesan Synod Motion brought by the Leeds Diocesan Synod on the impact of sanctions on benefit claimants. For this debate we shall need GS 2019A and GS 2019B and Order Paper III which contains details of the motion and of the three amendments which have been tabled. It may help members if I set out how the next hour and a half might unfold.

The motion will be moved by Canon Kathryn Fitzsimons. I would then like to take a few speeches to get us going on the substance of the main motion. I shall then invite Mr Bacon to speak to and move his amendment. There will be an opportunity for a short debate before we vote on that amendment. We shall then move to the Archdeacon of Sheffield and Rotherham's amendment and follow the same pattern before moving to the Bishop of St Albans' amendment. When we have dealt with all three amendments, we shall, I hope, return to debate on the main motion, as it may or may not have been amended by then. The more quickly we move through the amendments, the more swiftly we shall be able to return to the substantive debate. As ever, I am in your hands, Synod. When we come to the amendments, I know I can rely on you to remember the words from our reading from *Ecclésiasticus* this morning: Do not refrain from speaking at the proper moment. I will ask you to be less mindful of the injunction subsequently: Do not subject yourself to a fall. I now invite Canon Fitzsimons to move the motion. She has up to ten minutes.

Revd Canon Kathryn Fitzsimons (Leeds): I beg to move:

‘That this Synod:

- (a) request the Church of England Mission and Public Affairs Council to evaluate, with others as appropriate, the impact of sanctioning upon benefit claimants; and
- (b) call on Her Majesty’s Government to implement the recommendations numbered 58-63 inclusive, made in December 2014 by the All Party Parliamentary Inquiry Report into Hunger in the UK *Feeding Britain* in respect of the use of sanctions upon benefit claimants.’

Synod members, the motion before you began in Airedale Deanery Synod in Bradford some months ago. Synod members were involved in the work of local food banks and it was becoming clear that a significant proportion of people they were serving were destitute because they had been sanctioned by the DWP due to some misdemeanour relating to benefit payments.

WRIB (an acronym for Welfare Reform Impact Bradford) helped them to look more carefully at the way in which the sanctioning process had become more frequent and punitive and they unanimously decided to see if the Church of England might be keen to examine this more carefully. The motion came to the WYAD Synod and received overwhelming support, following a detailed presentation of the method, the scale and the effect of such sanctioning.

We note also the concerns raised by the diocese of Sheffield and we welcome the additional amendment to our motion that is being proposed. Let me make it clear that this motion is not about questioning the principle of people being sanctioned because they fail to meet appropriate expectations. The principle of conditionality has always been a necessary feature with regard to social security payments and we do not question the need for this.

We are, however, questioning recent substantial increases in the severity of the sanctioning process and in the frequency of sanctions being applied. Does the sanction fit the crime is a key question. We are concerned about the disproportionality of the measures currently being applied. We are also concerned about the lack of flexibility available to DWP staff in their dealing with people.

There is now little opportunity to take into account the range of problems folk are living with, whether that be mental health issues or limited English. These affect their capacity to adhere to expectations.

Some of the changes that have taken place in the current welfare reform process:

Since October 2012 there has been a three tier approach in place for JSA, Jobseeker's Allowance, claimants. Sanctioning for misconduct at the lowest level occurs if a claimant is late for a job centre interview, does not apply for enough jobs, or fails to attend a work programme session. This results in the immediate loss of benefit for at least four weeks, and subsequent similar misdemeanours would be likely to result in a loss of benefit for 13 weeks.

There are also significant changes in the sanctioning of people who claim Employment Support Allowance. This is for people who are assessed as being too ill or too disabled to work. Where such people are deemed to have a prospect of getting back to work, they are required to carry out work-related activities and be making preparations to seek work.

Many such people have health-related conditions that affect their ability to meet job centre requirements. They can be sanctioned for up to four weeks. Staff are no longer able to acknowledge particular circumstances that may contribute to difficulties. Such

inflexibility is clearly prescribed in the new regime that has been operating since 2012.

Examples of harsh treatment include a claimant who was late for a job centre appointment because he had been to a job interview first. A dad who was sanctioned, even after he left a voicemail at the job centre to let staff know he would not be able to attend. He had a court hearing to prevent his flat from being repossessed. When he went to the job centre the following day, staff told him they do not listen to voicemails and issued the sanction. Another man, again a father, who was sanctioned for failing to attend an appointment because he became confused about the date of this and a doctor's appointment. This man has a diagnosed memory condition following a head injury some 20 years ago.

There do seem to be real questions as to whether the sanction fits the crime. For most of us the thought of being punished by the loss of four weeks' pay for being half an hour late for work as a first offence would be bizarre, yet those who are punished in such a way are also usually people who are living from hand to mouth with no savings or resources other than dependence on friends and families. Such concerns seem to be reinforced by statistics that show that 61% of those who appeal against their sanctioning have their sanction revoked eventually.

The changes that have taken place in the sanctioning process: There are too many instances where such treatment of people, many of whom are vulnerable, have led to a level of enforced destitution which, in our view, is unacceptable in a compassionate society.

Airedale Synod's concerns emerged at the same time as an All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Food Poverty which was being undertaken under the co-chairmanship of the Rt Hon Frank Field and the Rt Revd Tim Thornton, Bishop of Truro. The Inquiry included an important section that highlighted their concern about the effect of sanctioning. Their research showed that this is a key factor in the rise and use of food banks.

The Inquiry's Report, 'Feeding Britain', published in 2015, offers a range of recommendations to Her Majesty's Government in respect of sanctions. These are summarised on the GS paper accompanying.

We urge that this Synod strengthens the call upon Her Majesty's Government that they be adopted in full. It is good to note that the work of this Inquiry was funded by the Archbishop of Canterbury and that it is maintaining its determination to urge for reforms that will lead to a hunger-free Britain in 2020.

We would suggest that the recommendations made in the Report in respect of sanctions are a key factor in this and worthy of our strongest support. We recognise the limited resources of the MPA, but working in partnership, with access to good data, can enable the MPA to bring influence to bear where we see unfairness. The Joint Public Issues team, whose 2015 Report, *Time to Rethink Sanctions*, illustrates the concern of the wider Christian Church.

In addition to building on the existing partnership with JPI, MPA might explore how the Synod could be a useful partner to the on-going work of the 'Feeding Britain' Inquiry. The number of Church members engaged these days in food bank provision gives added motivation for this. Perhaps we could discover what proportion of such people are there as a result of benefit sanctions. That could be relevant and illuminating. Current evidence shows that in some areas it may constitute half of the clients being served.

We urge that Synod support our motion and show our solidarity with those of us who are serving on the ground, serving people who have been left destitute because of the way in which benefit sanctioning is being implemented. I move the motion standing in my name.

The Chair. Thank you, Canon Fitzsimons. Item 15 is now open for debate.

Revd Canon Graeme Buttery (Durham): Am I my brother's keeper? Not just Cain's angry retort to God in the Book of Genesis but the question a former Bishop of St Albans posed to this Synod on another occasion and another issue some years ago.

Let me tell you about my brother, or at least one of my sisters. She had three children. The youngest is 2. The eldest is 9. She has a partner, a partner who deliberately declared himself self-employed because he could not or would not engage with the system; a lady who has had her benefits sanctioned, let us be honest, taken away from her for four weeks, but it has happened before and it will happen again. She went to see her aunt who is a member of my congregation. Her aunt lent her £20 and she immediately went out and bought five scratch cards and a packet of cigarettes.

That is my sister. Who is my brother, and am I their keeper? I have lived on benefits too many years ago to remember now, but £30 for a fortnight in St Albans, even in those days, did not go very far and it destroys any hope you have of being able to think for yourself, let alone those luxuries that a wonderful middle class education expect you to enjoy. What it must be like for some of my parishioners, who have spent years and years in such conditions, I can only begin to imagine.

The lady who came three times in one week to our door to access the food bank, which a lot of my parish clergy colleagues know have existed for years, it is called the *Kitchen Cupboard*, and when she turned up for her third food parcel from St Oswald's food bank in the same week, as my wife handed that over she said, "Pet, it is good to see you but we are not Asda", and then she said, "Now what is the real problem?"

I rejoice in this debate and I thank the diocese of Leeds for bringing it. I wonder at the amendments and I support them all, especially the one from the Bishop of St Albans, but as I have said in this chamber only about a year ago it does not go far enough. To call upon anybody to do anything is a bit wet, if I am being perfectly honest.

Let us harass, beg, bully, cajole, plead, march up and down outside Whitehall until we prove ourselves a nuisance until the Government does something. Let us not have this debate and then just once again move on to something else. Let us come back to it

time and again until we see real change. Let us, by all means, use our expertise in food banks, credit unions and all the rest, but let us remember that any institution, if we are not careful, can dehumanise the people they are meant to help.

"The computer says no" is alive and well even in the best-intentioned of organisations, because the overwhelming need, above all else, is to see the human in every person we are talking about today. It is to get alongside them, not to do for them. God forbid we do anything else for people or do to people. Do it with them, as I have said before, or, more importantly, help them and be alongside them so they can do it themselves, so that dignity and that ability to seize the opportunity which are basic human rights shall be theirs; so that those who are scared of forms, cannot cope with bureaucracy, have the sort of chaotic family structures and lifestyles which means that no matter where the money comes from, benefits or otherwise, they just cannot cope and their lives will never change and never improve.

It is not enough to just make sure they have the money. We have to be alongside them day by day, treat them as individuals, be human faced, and to provide for them not just material resources but the one thing which we value the most of all in our daily lives as Christians and which is in the shortest supply, and that is the time. Sometimes when you are out the door and the person knocks on it, the diary should go out of the window and you bring them in and you sit them down.

Let us pass this overwhelmingly. Let us rejoice in the amendments, but let us then not think the job is done or even beginning to be done. When you go home, make sure you see the human face of every situation and help them to be dealt with as individuals with precious lives made in the image of God. Are you your brother's keeper? You bet your life you are.

Miss Millie Holmes (Leeds): I am on the pastoral team of a 'fresh expression of church' which runs out of a homeless shelter in Leeds. We reach out to those with multiple and complex needs, including those with mental health issues, addiction and ex-offenders, many of whom are some of the most chaotic and marginalised in our society.

Last week, I asked at our Sunday service for people if they had some stories of when they had been on benefit sanctions. One man I spoke to, who I will call Sam, suffers from severe anxiety and said that he had a three month sanction for missing one job centre appointment. They cut his money by over a half. This meant that Sam was often without either food, gas or electric. He had the flu when the appointment was but there was no consideration for the fact that he was ill.

I am also a signatory for a food bank and have regularly provided vouchers for those who have had benefit sanctions. Sam was somebody who I gave a food bank voucher to and I know that, speaking to our local food bank, they have seen a huge rise in those who have had sanctions.

Another woman called Jess was pregnant and in hospital, which means that she missed an appointment. She had a ten day sanction with no money at all. There was no communication, no letter, no phone call, just no money on her payday. During a

stressful time of being in hospital, people should not be sanctioned.

These are just the stories that I have heard in the last week or so. Further in the past I have known many who find reading difficult, so when they receive letters they do not understand what they mean. Someone I know cannot tell the time and missed an appointment because of this and was sanctioned, or problems with homelessness mean that post is sent to wrong addresses. The system is not helpful for so many people.

Another injustice in the system is the way that benefit sanctions to people's disposable income then impacts their housing benefit if they do not quickly declare to the council their new income. This can often lead to rent arrears and then more money troubles down the line.

I welcome this motion with open arms. As the Church, it is our duty to stand for the last in our society and to push for a fairer system. In Isaiah 58 it says, "Is not this the kind of fasting that I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter - when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood."

The Bishop of Carlisle (Rt Revd James Newcome): I would like to begin by expressing my gratitude not only to Leeds diocese for bringing this very timely motion, but also to the Mission and Public Affairs Department for providing, as ever, such helpful background information. Synod, I want to put on record the fact that they serve us extremely well and deserve our thanks. I am not sure that I have got much to add to what we have already read and heard about the current welfare sanctions regime, but I am able to confirm it from two sources which you probably will not have seen or even known about it.

One is a local report that was produced about a year ago by the so-called Cumbria Welfare Reform Commission, which I had the privilege of chairing. This involved a comprehensive survey on the impact of welfare reform on literally dozens of claimants, as well as charities and housing associations and DWP staff right across the county and, in particular, in some of the more deprived areas down the west coast of Cumbria and in Barrow. We conducted scores of face to face interviews and we submitted our findings to the 'Feeding Britain' Group.

The second is an All-Party Parliamentary Group Report on Child Poverty and Health. This was published only last week and I was able to attend its launch in the House of Commons. It looks, in particular, at the effect of welfare reform on children, especially those in poor working families and concludes that the various cuts, taken together, could end up tipping a further one and a half million children into poverty in this country by 2020.

The results of both those Reports are strikingly similar and they prompt me to offer my wholehearted support to this motion. On the one hand, the Cumbria survey indicated that sanctions were often a major cause, not only of severe material hardship and, of course, the use of food banks, but also of a climate of fear and anxiety. That was

picked up also by the APPG Report on Child Poverty.

On the other hand, there has also been a lot about mental health in the news during this last week. Ironically, the indiscriminate and unhelpful application of sanctions, if it continues, could undo much of the good work which the Government is proposing to put more money into. That is one good reason why this motion is so very important. However I think we do need to appreciate the degree of nuance that is required in tackling the sanctions regime. Perhaps some of that will emerge in our debate on the amendments.

As we heard, I do not think anyone is arguing for no sanctions. Sometimes they are appropriate and necessary, but in Cumbria we identified the importance of three things in particular which desperately need to change. The first is communication with claimants who often simply do not understand what is going on. That is contained in recommendation 58. Where we are, phones have been removed from job centres and claimants often cannot speak directly to anybody about their situation.

A second thing, education for DWP staff who also sometimes do not understand what is going on and are frequently under considerable stress. This education should include the possibility of greater discretion on the part of those administering sanctions - that is contained in recommendation 61 - and also an end to the arbitrary application of sanctions by anonymous bureaucrats.

Finally, we identified the need of advocacy for the most vulnerable. This is one way in which the Church and voluntary organisations already do and can in the future make a huge difference. We concluded that if it was not for the advocacy that is already being offered there would be far higher levels, even than there are at the moment, of confusion and misery. I guess we are all aware that this plays into the hands of loan sharks too and I do encourage Synod to support the motion very warmly.

The Chair: I now invite Mr Bacon speak to and move his amendment at Item 23.

Mr Nigel Bacon (Lincoln): May I start, as I am sure the whole of Synod will do, by welcoming this motion coming to us and thanking first Airedale Deanery Synod and then the Diocesan Synod of West Yorkshire and the Dales, or Leeds, depending on how you wish to call it, bringing this to us. It is absolutely right that we do press the Government to implement in full the recommendations of the Feeding Britain Report as they relate to the use of sanctions on benefits claimants for all the reasons that have already been set before us and which will no doubt be explored through the rest of this debate. I am grateful for the background paper prepared by the Mission and Public Affairs Council but to make it plain, and as some of the comments already have explained, this is an area where the Church of England is already highly active.

Chair, I recognise that much of that activity has happened since West Yorkshire and the Dales passed the motion that is now before us. Consequently I would hope that Canon Fitzsimons will agree with me that it is important that we now give public recognition to, and affirm, that extensive work which has been done, done by the Church of England in partnership with others. That is the first objective of the amendment I am now

proposing to Synod.

My second objective is that we build on the base of the work that has already been undertaken to evaluate the impact of sanctions. As it stands, the motion before us does not give recognition to what has already been done and paragraph (a) could be seen as inviting us to initiate a fresh round of evaluation. I suggest the time for study is over. We have got to use what has already been done and make the most of it. I do not think it would be a good use of our resources to invest in a whole round of evaluation again. Canon Spence reminded us yesterday that, excellent though they be, our resources are limited and they need to be focused on many important things. In its background paper the Mission and Public Affairs Council states that it will continue to monitor the situation on sanctioning by its involvement in the Feeding Britain Working Group and other organisations. Chair, I would ask Synod to note that my amendment does not preclude undertaking a fresh evaluation study, should that be found necessary. The essential thing, though, now, I would suggest, is that we build on the work that has already been undertaken by our Church in collaboration with others. As Graeme Buttery reminded us or encouraged us, now is the time to start leading by example, to focus our efforts on convincing Government to implement those recommendations in full. I would suggest that we have the stories, we have the evidence, we have the arguments in support of those recommendations. Let us press forward and implement them and encourage Government to implement them in full. Chair, I beg to move the amendment that stands in my name.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

Revd Canon Kathryn Fitzsimons (Leeds): I am assured that Nigel Bacon's amendment is friendly and a lot of me wants to support it, and I keep going backwards and forwards so I leave it to Synod to decide whether they should support this motion or not.

The Chair: You cannot say fairer than that. Item 23 is now open for debate. Could I remind members that speeches should be directed at this amendment.

Ven Pete Spiers (Liverpool): I want to congratulate Nigel Bacon for bringing this amendment. I am going to vote in favour of it. It is all very easy when we have these motions to ask someone else in the Church of England to do a report. We know all the evidence. You have all got your own stories, dreadful stories, about the impact it is having. What we need to do is not commission another report or more research which has already been done but we need to get on and help change the Government's mind on the way that they are administrating the system so please support Nigel Bacon's amendment.

Revd Zoe Heming (Lichfield): I am wholeheartedly with the Ven Pete Spiers in welcoming the time for action, no longer discussion. As a disabled person, it is pretty hard to get anywhere on time - and if you need any proof of this, speak to my assistant who comes with me here - because the big picture is that this is increasingly a problem for disabled people. In my own context there are many disabled people that I mentor who have now had to stop volunteering - this is one of those unintended consequences of this - lest they be deemed as fit for work, which is not the same thing as having a job

sector awash with people wanting to employ anyone with more complex needs. Jesus identified himself with destitute, disabled and powerless people and so must we, His Church.

The Chair: I see the Bishop of Truro standing. After that I might, if there are others standing, be looking for a motion for closure on the amendment.

The Bishop of Truro (Rt Revd Tim Thornton): Thank you very much for calling me and thank you very much indeed to the diocese of Leeds, the place of my birth, for a very good motion. You would expect me perhaps to say that. I am actually standing now because I am anxious lest Synod pass this amendment without thinking through the consequence of doing so. I could speak at some length, far longer than the Chair would allow me obviously, about the Feeding Britain Report and the evidence that we have from that, which is very clear, that the prompt delivery of benefit and tax credit payments in full coupled with a fair and effective sanctions regime would more than halve the numbers of people relying on emergency food parcels. I am not going to make the speech I might have made. The speech I want to make now is simply to say that if we pass this amendment, I worry that we will not hear the full impact of the very powerful speech that Graeme Buttery made because I feel that this amendment leaves it far too open for Synod to walk away and not find the consequences of doing some action. With the unamended motion we request the Church of England Mission and Public Affairs Council to do something and we, as Synod, can then hold them to account. I feel this matter is too important simply to leave us all going away saying, "Wasn't that wonderful? We passed the motion".

In the wonderful work that I have been allowed to do with the Feeding Britain Inquiry, and I thank the Archbishop of Canterbury who invited me to get involved in that, I have gone all round the country hearing extraordinary stories, many of which you know, anecdotes about the sad reality of sanctions being imposed upon people. Yes, the Government have taken some action and it is very good indeed to see some of the action which we welcome, as the Feeding Britain Inquiry into what they have done already, but they have not done enough. I think it is very important that we as Synod do not simply pass a motion which, if we are not careful, sounds far too general to me and does pass a motion which has some way in which we can then as Synod keep up with it.

Somebody just mentioned about the whole of question of claimants wanting information. You might like to know that we recommended in our report the Department should phase out all of its higher rate 0845 numbers which charge claimants up to 41p per minute to call up about their own benefit claim. It is good that many of those numbers have been replaced but not all have yet been replaced. There is much work still to be done which we all know about.

In my day job I met two senior managers of the Department of Work and Pensions in Cornwall, both of whom were seeking to get out of their work because they were not allowed the discretion they knew they needed as human beings to deal with the human beings they were seeing day by day. I think I would like Synod to reject this amendment simply because I fear it will allow us too wide a motion which will not give us a way as

Synod of grasping this issue in the future and bringing back and saying, "What has happened next?"

Mr Philip Fletcher (ex officio): I was not going to ask to speak until Bishop Tim suggested we reject this amendment. I would like to urge on Synod that we do accept Nigel Bacon's amendment but I want to add that this will not for a moment mean that the Mission and Public Affairs Council and Mission and Public Affairs staff lose interest in this subject. They are already very focused on it; we shall continue to be focused upon it. I suggest that Bishop Tim's point could be met - you will correct me, Chair, if I am wrong on this - by looking at the Bishop of St Albans' amendment when we get to it. There is no question that the Church of England generally should not just be calling on Government to take action, it should be, and is, taking action itself and there is always a great deal more to do, but I will not repeat points that have been made and will be made by those better equipped than I to make them. On balance, following Kathryn Fitzsimons, I would support Nigel Bacon's amendment and do not think it has the consequences that Bishop Tim fears.

The Chair: I see no one standing so I put the amendment in the Mr Bacon's name at Item 23 to the vote.

The amendment was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: We move now to Item 24 and I call on the Archdeacon of Sheffield and Rotherham to speak to and move his amendment.

Ven Malcolm Chamberlain (Sheffield): Chair, thank you very much for inviting me to move this amendment to the motion from the diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales. As with others, I warmly welcome the chance to debate this important issue.

Last month the Sheffield Diocesan Board of Faith and Justice, which I chair, asked me to table this amendment in response to a deanery synod motion that we had received, which endorsed the recommendations of the March 2015 report *Time to Rethink Benefit Sanctions*. As we have already heard, there is a wealth of evidence to suggest that the current regime of benefit sanctions is having an adverse effect on some of the most vulnerable people in our society. We know that, as a result of the Welfare Reform Act 2012, sanctions lasting a month or more are now regularly imposed resulting in a serious loss of income for individuals and families dependent on benefit payments. In 2013-14 some one million sanctions were imposed and around a 100,000 children were affected. Furthermore, over 100 people already assessed as unfit for work due to mental health problems are sanctioned every day. This is a far more extensive use of sanctions than ever before and has made the UK sanctions regime one of the most severe in the developed world. Sanctions not only have a financial impact on individuals, they leave many feeling under constant suspicion and without value, simply because they are unable to find paid employment. As a Church, surely we must question whether this highly punitive regime can be justified and advocate a more flexible system characterised by human understanding and grace.

In my diocese, Sheffield Citizens Advice have recently produced disturbing case studies

of the experience of their clients, concluding that sanctions cause significant hardship for claimants often with serious personal difficulties. In December, the Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research at Sheffield Hallam University produced a report for the charity Crisis, concluding that in several cases sanctions had actually caused homelessness, and in many others wholly inappropriate sanctions had led vulnerable people to begging, borrowing and stealing in order to meet essential daily needs. Furthermore, the research we conducted in response to the Feeding Britain Inquiry showed that nine out of ten food bank providers in the diocese identify benefit sanctions as a principal, if not the principal, cause of food poverty. We have received many moving stories of hardship caused by sanctions, most highlighting the plight of vulnerable people who, despite their best genuine efforts, find it difficult to meet the stringent demands of conditionality. One parish involved in running a food bank in Doncaster wrote this: "Lots of clients reported that they had been sanctioned, often for lengthy periods of time, simply for turning up 15 minutes late for their scheduled appointment. Many of these people have very dysfunctional lives with mental health issues or substance addictions, so were unlikely to be able to turn up exactly on time for a precise appointment. One lady was sanctioned for attending a funeral when she had informed the authorities of this in advance, and another family was sanctioned for missing an appointment while they were sorting out with the police after a burglary in their home during the night".

There are numerous similar stories that illustrate how target-driven sanctions are being applied dispassionately and with no flexibility for personal circumstances and there is little evidence to suggest that sanctions are successful in encouraging more people into work.

The Feeding Britain recommendations at the heart of the West Yorkshire and the Dales' motion call for a greater clarity in how sanctions are communicated to job seekers and I am wholly in support of this, but I believe that we need to go further, that we need to call for a full independent review of the sanctions system so that evidence can be brought to bear on existing and future welfare policy. We will not be alone in calling for such a review. In addition to the recommendations of the Time to Rethink Report, an All-Party Work and Pensions Select Committee of the House of Commons last year called for "a broad independent review of benefit conditionality and sanctions to investigate whether sanctions are being applied appropriately, fairly and proportionately".

Chair, I ask Synod to support the addition of this amendment and the full motion so amended, adding our voice to the many others speaking on behalf of some of the most vulnerable people in our society. I move the amendment that stands in my name.

Mr Philip French (Rochester): Point of order. Chair, the text of the motion as was just displayed on the screen was misleading, in that it did not include the amendment we have already passed, and I wonder if that might be corrected to assist the Synod.

The Chair: I hope the technical people have heard that and no doubt will try to give effect to it. Kathryn Fitzsimons?

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

Revd Canon Kathryn Fitzsimons (Leeds): I am much clearer on this amendment. One of the strengths of General Synod is that it brings together the concerns of various dioceses. Sheffield and West Yorkshire and the Dales have been in discussion about how we best bring this together. I urge Synod to support this amendment.

The Chair: Item 24 is now open for debate.

Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford): I, too, want to speak in favour of this amendment. I, too, have been on benefits. I have had them questioned. It followed a very difficult time, sadly to do with my own sexuality and coming out, but it was a time when I really needed support and help, and I did not know the system and I felt terribly depressed but also a sense of lack of dignity. But what I recognised when I was being questioned was there were many who did know the system and they knew how to play the system, and the system is unfair and it is most unfair to those who do not know it well. I think an independent review will enable all those anomalies to come out. It will allow story, yes, but it will also allow the truth of those who can play it and those who cannot, and I do think it is up to the Government to get to the bottom of what is truly going on, so I would urge you to support this amendment and to ensure that we have a system that is fair and credible and there for all those who need it at a time of need.

Revd Canon Kate Wharton (Liverpool): I would urge you to support this amendment. I could tell you so many stories, they would last the whole day, of people I work with day by day who suffer through the sanctions system. Do not worry, I will not do so. I feel that the system is entirely without compassion, flexibility and humanity. The severity of sanctions is entirely disproportionate to the supposed misdemeanours. In our food bank and in our applications to Acts 435 we find time and again the reasons cited are benefit delays and sanctions. We are the Church. We will continue to help for as long as it is needed. We will provide food, clothing and necessary household items. We will attend meetings. We will advocate on people's behalf. We will support them financially and emotionally, practically and prayerfully. We will do this. We do do this because it is what Jesus would do.

But in Britain in 2016 it is simply wrong that we need to do this and so we must ask questions. We must stand up for those without a voice. We must act. We have privilege here at Synod. We can lobby, agitate and ask for reviews, so let us use our privilege in the service of those who do not. I wholeheartedly support this motion and I also support and urge Synod to vote for the Archdeacon's amendment.

The Chair: Mr Swattridge, following which I might be welcoming a motion for closure.

Mr Elliot Swattridge (Church of England Youth Council): David, aged 59 from Stevenage, Hertfordshire, served in the Armed Forces in the dark times of the Troubles in Northern Ireland. He began working for BT after this. Yet, when his mother became seriously ill with dementia he had to become a full-time carer, and once her illness progressed she had to be moved into residential care. He began earnestly seeking a job and, as Jobseeker's Allowance is intended, sought the support of this allowance in the meanwhile.

What would you do with £71.70 a week? Many of us spend more than that per day while we are at Synod. This was his modest allowance. One week he missed an appointment with an adviser, probably an honest mistake. Yet under harsh new provisions of benefit sanctions, this immediately signalled the axing of his allowance for almost a month as a punishment. With no income David could not afford food or electricity, and on 20 July he was found dead in his home, having died from diabetic ketoacidosis caused by not taking his insulin. His sister believes the pressures of money and rejected job opportunities resulted in him failing to properly regulate his condition. At his death he had just £3.44, six teabags, a tin of soup and a can of sardines that was out of date. His fridge, needed to chill his life-saving insulin, was not working as he could not afford the electricity. He was found to have no food in his stomach. Most ironically, a pile of CVs was found near his body. He was most certainly a diligent jobseeker. This man could still have been alive today. His sister need not be mourning his loss. It was the injustice of a deeply broken sanction system that resulted in his death. The idea of Jobseeker's Allowance is that support is given to someone in hardship, which may end up being any of us, on the condition that the individual is seeking to find work.

Yet what about that letter warning about sanctions that could not be understood by the recipient of poor literacy? What about the mother whose child suddenly fell ill on the day her appointment was due? What about those who out of fear and lack of understanding cannot pursue an appeals claim? The system is not just broken, it is cruel, even deadly. The Government continually blatantly evades responsibility. We must urge a full truly independent review and reform of the whole system. Can we just prove once and for all what many of the statistics point to, that we are a Church with a priority to the rich. In the end this goes down to the very heart of Jesus' message. If we do not side with the poor and needy, then we cannot in any sense claim to follow Jesus. Imagine the headline: "Church of England Synod votes to stop following Jesus because teaching is too challenging". These are not statistics. These are not scroungers. These are real people like you and I. I thus urge Synod to wholeheartedly support this amendment and to devote ourselves to advocating for the poorest of our nation.

The Chair: I see no one standing so I put the amendment at Item 24 to the vote.

The amendment was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: So we move now to the Bishop of St Albans' amendment, Item 25. I invite the Bishop to speak to and move his amendment.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of five minutes

The Bishop of St Albans (Rt Revd Dr Alan Smith): I do not need five minutes. I can be brief. I support the main thrust of this motion. I am convinced that we need to engage with Government to ensure we have a fair and equitable way of supporting the most vulnerable in society, and my amendment does not in any way detract from the main motion.

The American historian, Rodney Stark, has demonstrated that one of the main reasons that Christianity spread like wildfire across the face of the ancient world was because of the extraordinary altruism of the early Christian Church. It was not simply an ethereal pie in the sky pietism hoping for some future blessing, but was realistic, practical and it responded to plagues, famines and poverty. It was immensely attractive because people could see it made sense for the way that we should live together as human beings and make a difference in our society. This simple amendment highlights the wonderful practical work that is already going on in many churches in our nation, but it actually also calls for a step change. It calls for a much wider engagement for us to simply be involved in providing responses to some of these difficulties as well as Government and so I am calling for a more generous and practical Church committing to be alongside the most vulnerable in society. I beg leave to move the amendment standing in my name.

The Chair: Kathryn Fitzsimons to respond.

Revd Canon Kathryn Fitzsimons (Leeds): For most of my ordained life I have been working in the deprived parishes of Leeds, encouraging churches throughout the diocese to support that work. I thank the Bishop for bringing this amendment that the whole Church may stand behind those people who are working in some of the most difficult parts of our country. I support this amendment.

The Chair: The amendment at Item 25 is now open for debate.

Revd Catherine Pickford (Newcastle): I support this amendment but I wonder whether I might be allowed a “yes but”. I speak from eleven years as a parish priest in Benwell in the west end of Newcastle and Benwell has the rather dubious privilege of boasting the largest food bank in Britain. It feeds approximately 1,000 people a week. Many of the food bank users come as a result of receiving sanctions and that food bank has been enormously dominant in the life of the clergy and the people of Benwell. I was also brought up in Wath Upon Dearne mentioned in the background papers and so my first experience of a food bank was in the 1980s. The food bank was run for the miners during the miners’ strike and it was there running from the vicarage where I lived. I still remember that sense of the miners coming to the vicarage and my friends’ dads coming to receive food from our house and that sense of wrongness associated with that.

The system of sanctions which was initially introduced to make sure that people on Jobseeker’s Allowance are legitimately looking for work has become what often feels to claimants an arbitrary and dehumanising punishment for being unemployed. Another issue which I do not think is widely recognised, and is certainly not widely reported, is that often the very people who are keeping the food banks running are themselves running the gauntlet of benefit sanctions.

The pressure on those people is enormous. I have had conversations with volunteers at the food bank who were afraid of sanctions and losing their homes due to the bedroom tax, despite putting in a full week’s work as a volunteer. I fear that we are becoming increasingly dependent on food banks and that there is little chance of them disappearing as part of our society and part of our system for feeding people. I support

this amendment, but I would like to see a time when food banks are no longer necessary.

The Chair: Thank you for that maiden speech.

Mr Robin Lunn (Worcester): I want to enthusiastically support the Bishop of St Alban's amendment because I think it covers a couple of areas that have not previously come out this morning. The first one is the issue of stigmatisation. I think stigmatisation, unfortunately, is not helped by certain national newspapers, with the exception of the *Financial Times* and our own *Church Times*. Unfortunately, many national newspapers highlight what Jayne Ozanne referred to earlier as people who know how to "play the system". We do not see all the examples excellently put this morning of people who do not know how to play the system. What would be desirable is for us to offer the support the Bishop is speaking of to counter-attack some of this stigmatisation.

I think it is also important to stress that people often do not think it will happen to them. There are many people who probably were in decent jobs or in circumstances where things suddenly went wrong for them, and then they had to use a system which they did not fully understand. For many of these people, to use a parable, unfortunately, their barns were not full of grain, so they had to use the system. This is where we need to come in and help, when people are clearly being penalised for the most ridiculous of reasons. We need to look at making the system more efficient, but, with efficiency, should surely come more compassion. I think this is where some of the training needs to come in. The idea of people being penalised a month's benefit for being half an hour late, quite rightly, as the person said earlier, is just ridiculous. Think if our salaries were stopped for a month because we were half an hour late for work. We need to address the desperation that people feel. I fully support the Bishop's amendment and hope everybody else does this morning.

Canon Shayne Ardron (Leicester): I am really pleased to see this debate about food banks. I am part of the Growth Fund in the Leicester Diocese, and there are two levels of funding. At some of the lower levels, we give funding for things such as messy church. We had one messy church group come back to us to get more funding because the people who came to the messy church needed a food bank, and there was nothing available. I want you to look as a Church at what you are doing and build up those relationships with people so you know what people are facing and the struggles they deal with, because, once we know those struggles, we can then help and encourage. I hope that in your own dioceses you have funds that help people set up things such as food banks and encourage people to work in them. This is where it all ties in with evangelism and Fresh Expressions, because it brings us into contact with people, and that is where we can do our greatest work.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): Point of order: can I tempt you with a motion for closure on Item 25?

The Chair: As you know, Mr Freeman, I always find you very tempting, so after the next speaker.

Canon Peter Adams (St Albans): Synod, I declare an interest. I am Vice Chair of Luton Foodbank. My interest is purely that if recommendations 58 to 63 of the December report are implemented, my job gets easier. Like all food banks, people come to us in desperate need, for a complex variety of reasons, and, in my experience, benefit sanctions are perhaps the most pernicious, meanest, nastiest of those reasons. Luton Foodbank is not a Trussell Trust church-led food bank. We work across the huge, and often maligned, diversity of our town, so that as one community we can reach out to all who suffer across it. We are doing it well and showing real neighbourliness. We are not a wealthy town, but generosity is huge. As Christians we are deeply involved in that, and I welcome the amendment's encouragement to do that more. We love doing what we do, but where we are feeding people who are hungry because our Government has developed a system that is frequently unjust, unaccountable and punishes the most vulnerable, frankly, I find it hard not to resent it.

Dave is a recent client, disabled and out of work. His wife is on a low wage. He has two children. Just a few weeks ago, on his way to an interview for a job, the ramp enabling access to the bus was not working. The bus driver asked him to wait for the next bus. That bus was delayed and he was late. When the job centre found out, he was sanctioned immediately. He had already been yellow-carded a few weeks before for a reason, sadly, I was unable to find out. His partner's income had already been used up to pay the rent. They had nothing. It was the third time in the year the system had failed them and spat them out. Once again it was the vulnerable who were hardest hit.

Sanctions are of course necessary in any system, but they must be appealable, they must be accountable, and therefore, in such critical situations, they must be delayed in their impact, even if it is the third or fourth time. We increasingly hear of British values - the rule of law and democracy, et cetera - but they are underlaid by deeper values such as justice, transparency, accountability, mercy and the value of each life. It is these values that have been lost in the system, and we must call for them to be reassigned.

As a Church, indeed as other faiths and as a whole community, we need to surround our food banks, often the first point of call, with credit unions, debt advice, everything we can to reverse the downward, destructive cycle that people like Dave find themselves in. I urge you to vote for the amendment and for the motion.

The Chair: Thank you, Canon Adams, for your maiden speech. Sorry, did I hear you, 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 would have my consent. I put the motion for closure on Item 25 to Synod.

This motion was put and carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: I put Item 25, the amendment in the name of the Bishop of St Albans, to the vote.

The amendment was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: That is very clearly carried. We now return to debate on the main motion, Item 15, as amended by all three of the amendments. The speech limit remains three minutes.

Rt Hon Sir Tony Baldry (Oxford): I just want to make a very practical suggestion following on from the amendment before last, of something we can all do and every deanery can do. With 32 years of experience as a Member of Parliament, I think the most effective way of engaging with the system is to actually go and see your Member of Parliament in their constituency surgery. They cannot escape; you are not going to get screened out by their researchers; they are not going to be able to give you a standard reply; and they are going to have to do something. Most Members of Parliament would treat with great respect a delegation from their local deanery synod or their local clergy, or whatever, coming to talk about the Mission and Public Affairs Report, and so on and so forth. You could ask them very simply to engage with the Secretary of State to get this independently reviewed. In practical terms, that is something that everyone in this room could do and every deanery synod could do. I guarantee that every Member of Parliament you go and see will generate a personal letter from them to the Secretary of State, and that is quite a lot of correspondence that will go into the private office of a Minister. A number of those Members of Parliament will take up further initiatives with questions in the House, by tabling motions and getting some momentum going behind the initiatives that have already been taken in Parliament by the Select Committee on Work and Pensions and the All-Party Group on Child Poverty and the All-Party Group report on Feeding Britain.

Mrs Heather Black (York): I want to speak very strongly in favour of this motion. I live and work in Middlesbrough, where my work with the Church Urban Fund brings me into contact with the food bank and churches and projects which are picking up the pieces of the impact of sanctions.

I want to make two brief points. The first is to add to what the Bishop of Carlisle was saying about the impact of sanctions on children, who are innocent victims in this system. I am chair of Middlesbrough Foodbank. We provide food parcels to many families. I am mindful of a mum who recently came to the food bank. She had received a four-week sanction, but had not received any signposting or guidance from the job centre of where she might receive hardship support. Out of desperation, she went to Greggs to shoplift a pasty to feed her daughter. Something stopped her; an inner voice telling her it was wrong. And, thank God, she had the courage to tell someone. She was told about the food bank and we were able to provide a food parcel for her family and also minister to her deep sense of shame and distress that she had been on the point of stealing to feed her daughter. Recommendation 63 for adequate and prompt information and signposting by the job centre would have prevented all of this hardship and distress.

The Bishop of Carlisle also spoke about the need for advocacy, particularly for those with mental health problems and poor literacy and English language. In Middlesbrough, a group of us from the voluntary community and faith sector are exploring ways of working with local DWP staff to find a way of providing adequate advocacy. We have a meeting on 8 March to look at that, so that staff and volunteers can work with their clients to negotiate realistic requirements that they can be reasonably expected to adhere to. This might seem like a simple and obvious step and solution but, believe me, it has been a long time in coming.

I want to thank the Diocese of West Yorkshire & the Dales and offer my wholehearted support to this motion.

Mr Carl Fender (Lincoln): Chair, I note a considerable amount of work has been done by the Mission and Public Affairs Council already, and I pay tribute to that and thank them for the great perseverance they have shown thus far and explained in the paper they have put before Synod. I also note that the report submitted by West Yorkshire & the Dales does not question the justification for conditionality. Indeed, it endorses the need for sanctions where appropriate. The recommendations of the Feeding Britain Report concentrate on the unfair administration of benefits and how unwelcoming the system is for those most in need when they encounter it. An overview of those recommendations, inspired by direct testimony, leaves one with a deep sense of that unfriendliness. It demonstrates how the recession has engendered a mean spiritedness which has been allowed to creep into our benefits administration. Those who rely on the benefits system have to share in the pain of the recession a second time. Of course, they are already victims of the recession by the time they make contact with the Benefits Agency or Jobcentre Plus.

In supporting this motion I should say something about my own background. I have been a money coach for Christians Against Poverty for the last five years in Stamford, although I consider this more of a proper vantage point than a declaration of interest. St George's in Stamford is also a debt centre for CAP and so parts of this speech rely on information received from those serving Stamford and the area beyond.

I support the amended motion for these reasons: because of the hardheartedness, or the appearance of it, engendered by the current regime; the lack of proportionality in the penalties imposed, the length of the sanctions, which are just too long; and also because of the greater discretion that is needed for decision-makers, and I note, in particular, recommendation 61, which is in the Feeding Britain Report.

Of course, there is now a substantial body of testimony that has been received by various commissions that have inquired into the impact of sanctions. Children and the mentally ill in particular are the groups most affected directly, or indirectly, by sanctions. Those testimonies are contained within the reports that have been recommended to Synod in the paper prepared by West Yorkshire & the Dales, and the stories told to the Commission will have been repeated to decision-makers up and down the country. We are left wondering why one body of listeners is moved and the other not. CAP's work in Stamford exposes the need for work to continue to bring about reform in our benefits system.

If you will permit me some local story-telling just for a moment: the manager of the debt centre in Stamford has established a very good relationship with the local job centre, which has been built up over the last few years. He has been attending regularly at the job centre, making himself available for benefit claimants who also have debt issues. Currently, he has over 30 people receiving assistance from him, and, indeed, the team of befrienders supporting him. He has first-hand knowledge from his clients of the impact of sanctions, and the biggest single complaint he continues to receive about the impact of sanctions is the length of time they are imposed for. I am out of time.

The Chair: Thank you very much indeed for your maiden speech. Canon Taylor and Miss Cannings-Jurd and after that I may need to feel the tempter's power, Mr Freeman.

Revd Canon Dr Simon Taylor (Derby): I welcome this debate and I thank the Diocese of West Yorkshire & the Dales for bringing it to Synod. It has been a privilege to hear stories from around the country raising concerns about benefit sanctions and their effects on the most vulnerable. In Derbyshire too, we have found this to be problematic. Research on the impact of the benefits sanctions policy in Derbyshire from Rural Action Derbyshire has highlighted this problem. That research suggests a welcome drop in the number of people being sanctioned in Derbyshire, from a high point of 20% of claimants in some local authorities in Derbyshire in May 2013, to a lower, but still quite high level, of 7% of all claimants by the end of last year.

This should not be understood as a motion that is critical of the Government's welfare policy. Far from it. It is far too carefully worded and has been very carefully presented. The Government's aim of reducing dependency on the welfare system is one to be applauded, but the research in Derbyshire shows that this aim is being undermined by the way in which sanctions operate. Fifty-nine per cent of those sanctioned borrowed money from family and friends to tide them over. Not only does this highlight the vulnerability of those without such supportive networks, but it means that the impact of sanctions lasts far longer than the period of sanction. Over a quarter of those sanctioned in Derbyshire report that financial difficulties, due to the imposition of a sanction, last for six months or longer after the period of sanction is over. Sanctions are not removing dependency. They are perpetuating and increasing dependency. Synod, we have heard that the way that sanctions are operating is unjust. It is also a counter-productive system. Please support this motion.

Miss Fenella Cannings-Jurd (Salisbury): I would like first to declare an interest in this area as my mother is managing partner of a law firm specialising in child protection where I have worked every summer as a paralegal. What I would like to raise is the more long-term impacts of benefits sanctions. We have touched upon how sanctions impact children, but what we have not thought about is how sanctions impact families long term. A mother or father who, as a consequence of having their benefits sanctioned, cannot provide food for their children, may be seen as an inadequate parent. Often these families, as a result of their circumstances, are on the radar of social services. The perceived failure of these parents to provide for their children, a direct result of sanctions, can have a long-term impact on families. Parents may find their children removed from their care; families torn apart. It is all very well to say that actions have consequences, but the reality is that the current system is punishing

children, punishing families and punishing their futures. We talk about the sanctity of the family, and thus we need to remember those families for whom sanctions are not just threatening their income, but threatening their existence as a family. I would urge Synod to vote in favour of this measure as part of our Christian duty to protect the children of God; the children who are not just going without food, but who are at risk of being removed from their parents.

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. I need to test the mind of the Synod.

This motion was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: I invite Canon Fitzsimons to respond to the debate.

Revd Canon Kathryn Fitzsimons (Leeds): Thank you, Synod, for taking the time to gather the stories. Thank you for allowing voices to be heard here. We began with scripture: “Am I my brother’s keeper?” I would like to close with what does the Lord require: to do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with God. I beg you to support this motion.

The Chair: I now put Item 15, as amended by Items 23, 24 and 25, to the vote.

Mr John Wilson (Lichfield): Point of order. Because of the interest in the wider Church in this debate and the impact it will have on another House, I wonder if you would consider a count of the whole Synod?

The Chair: If there are 25 members standing, Mr Wilson. There are, so we will have a count of the Synod. This is a counted vote of the whole Synod. Those in favour should press ‘1’; those against should press ‘2’ and those who wish to record an abstention should press ‘3’.

The motion

‘That this Synod:

- (a) welcome the extensive work already undertaken by the Church of England in partnership with others to evaluate the impact of benefits sanctioning and to identify and promote recommendations for the reform of sanctions policy and practice;*
- (b) call on Her Majesty’s Government to implement the recommendations numbered 58-63 inclusive, made in December 2014 by the All Party Parliamentary Inquiry Report into Hunger in the UK Feeding Britain in respect of the use of sanctions upon benefit claimants;*

(c) *call on Her Majesty's Government to initiate a full independent review of the impact and efficacy of the sanctions and conditionality regime; and*

(d) *encourage every part of the Church of England to offer practical and pastoral support to those experiencing benefit sanctions, building on the Church's work with food banks, credit unions and debt advice.'*

was carried following a counted vote of the whole Synod. The voting was as follows:

<i>IN FAVOUR</i>	<i>320</i>
<i>AGAINST</i>	<i>0</i>

2 abstentions were recorded.

The Chair: Thank you very much for your attention in this debate. This brings this item of business to an end.

THE CHAIR *The Very Revd Andrew Nunn* took the Chair at 12 noon.

The Chair: The clock has just turned 12, so I presume I should say "Good afternoon, Synod", but I have not had my lunch so it still feels like morning.

Renewal and Reform

We now move to the next item of business, Item 16, which is a presentation on Renewal and Reform. I will be inviting a number of people to make presentations and, if they keep to the time allotted for this, then there will be an opportunity to ask questions of them.

The Business Committee has planned on the basis that this presentation will finish so that we can have our lunch, unless you, Synod, decide otherwise. Time will be limited. When it comes to questions and the answers given, I will be looking for real questions and concise answers. To begin, I ask Canon John Spence, who will then be followed by the Bishop of Guildford, the Bishop of Sheffield and Mr Jonathan Kerry, to give an overview and speak to the Resourcing the Future Task Group.

Canon Dr John Spence (ex officio): At one level, it feels quite strange to be introducing a presentation on Renewal and Reform when it has featured so heavily over the last two days, but I hope that we can use it as a mode of updating you with both the content and the progress.

In opening, can I just say three things. Firstly, to thank the diocese of Liverpool who have seconded their diocesan secretary, Mike Eastwood, to us for up to 50% of his time as our Director for Renewal and Reform. He is already performing a great function and today has the wonderful status of being the 'chief flicker' for the slides. Such is power.

Secondly, I am very conscious that the papers for this afternoon's debates have a copious amount of detail with them and I am sure you would agree it would not be our best use of time if we spend this afternoon's debates on points of detail. Accordingly, I will be accompanied by Philip James and Julian Hubbard in the coffee area throughout the lunch period and will be available to answer bilateral questions that you may have on such points of detail.

Thirdly, just to remind you that this agenda is entirely your agenda, not one of Church House or the NCIs, and I and my colleagues remain absolutely committed to coming out to diocesan synods or other suitable events should you wish to discuss what is going on, should you wish further clarification, and we look forward to receiving invitations. We will do our best to accommodate them all.

A reminder what Renewal and Reform is about. It is a multifaceted response to a commonly held need and a set of diocesan ambitions and strategies. Let me focus on that last phrase, "A set of diocesan ambitions and strategies". We are there to support, to facilitate and to enable dioceses and, thence, their parishes in the delivery of what they want to achieve.

Ambition implies stretch, it implies reach and it implies risk, and we accept that there will be risks that need to be taken and that, along the way, some things will not work. Why would it ever be otherwise? That word "strategy" is not, as sometimes portrayed, a corporate phrase. Any organisation that is trying to achieve an outcome, however spiritual that might be, will want to have a means, a plan of action, by which it gets from where it is today to the delivery of that ambition.

The commonly held need has been forged by a set of facts. I can just select four from here. Firstly, that now, today, only 18 people in every thousand visit a Church of England on a regular basis; that an 81 year-old is eight times as likely to go to church as a 21 year-old; that that number of 18 will fall to somewhere below ten over the next generation; and that, on all likely measures of success, given the demographics of the Church, it is unlikely that we will see a net growth in Church membership within the next 30 years.

I could have given you other facts but I think you get the point, hence the emergence of this multifaceted response as indicated by the work streams. I think early on in this process (and I am very grateful for the guidance you gave us) there was a danger that it sounded as if we were bringing a lot of managerial principles in here because we took for granted the understanding that this is deep-rooted in discipleship and evangelism.

This cannot and can never be about a numbers game. It has to be about a holistic growth within the Church which is both numeric and spiritual and which supports the quinquennial goals. I will speak very briefly about Resourcing the Future because we have a longer discussion about it this afternoon, but we should not underestimate how radical it will be to move from the previous opaque, general subsidy system to two distinct funding streams, one around lower income communities and one around intentional growth, with the peer review system assuring that this is a mutual learning process.

On those lower income communities, moving now to a position where the dioceses will have funding according to their presence of such lower income communities, the funds will be hypothecated into those places for the first time. This is a major change for many dioceses and to enable the impact to be maximised from day 1 we are, as you know, in dialogue with the Church Commissioners about transitional funding which will help dioceses move to that full space from day 1 while covering a period of up to ten years, depending on the degree of dependence they previously had, in order to wean themselves away.

Then, thirdly, that piece of funding which links to the intentional investment and opportunities for growth and for new Christian communities. That, of course, links to us working with dioceses around their own strategic capacity and development, facilitating and enabling, supporting, in order that where the tyre touches the road the impact is maximised.

Given the amount of financial and human resource being dedicated to this whole piece, we do have to work out how to measure success. To be frank with you, this is still work in progress. Only last night we were having further conversations about how we get to some really good measures of success: milestones which tell us we are going in the right direction, and measures which tell us that the outcomes, the impacts are what we want them to be.

You can do some numeric stuff. You can measure how the demographic impacts are changing, whether the number of new Church members is increasing, whether the number of baptisms and confirmations is growing. You can do those pieces. At micro level you can understand the impact that your strategic funding is having with the number of new propositions coming forward from dioceses, their geographical spread, the fact the number which are then progressing to implementation in line with the timescales that were outlined and that they are having the impacts intended.

More difficult and work that we still need to do is how you can truly measure that growth and spiritualism in discipleship, the depth of the evangelistic communities of which we become a part. I remind you again that Renewal and Reform has to be rooted in theology and in spirituality. I will share with you some words that are part of a draft narrative that we are just growing between ourselves as we try to think this through, how do we explain what this is about?

These words have been penned by said Mike Eastwood, so he can do things other than flick slides. I am assuming, Mike, you have kept up with me. Renewal and Reform seeks to bring a message of hope through changed lives and transformed communities, where people of faith and finding faith discover their vocation to love God and serve others. That loving service will find voice and expression in myriad of ways but will be underpinned by that phrase you heard in the last debate, by justice, mercy and a humble walk with God. Let us work together to bring that true.

The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft): Thank you, John. Good afternoon, Synod. Bishop Andrew and I are talking about Resourcing Ministerial Education, RME,

together, two aspects of it. A year ago we set five objectives in the paper we brought before you, GS 1979. There they are on the screen. Every minister equipped for collaborative leadership in mission, younger candidates, and I will let you read the five points there.

We will refer to these five objectives in the motion we will debate this afternoon. It is important to re-state that these five objectives emerged directly from listening to dioceses across the Church. We believe they represent a hopeful, positive vision for the future of ministry of the Church of England and that vision needs to be, and is, deeply grounded in prayer. Work has continued across those five objectives over the last year in five different work streams.

All of our work on renewing ministry is grounded in developing discipleship. We have a stream of work focused on growing vocations, encouraging a culture of vocation for all, as all are called, and more specific work on growing vocations to ministry. We have Task Groups, as you will know, working on Lay Leadership and Lay Ministry. A great deal of work is focused on developing the new RME funding arrangements.

Together, the Church of England, its dioceses, its TElS and national bodies are committed to improving the quality of what we do in six different areas for lay and ordained ministry: Discipleship, Vocational Development, Discernment and Selection, Initial Ministerial Education, Deployment and Ministry Development. That is the whole picture.

Today, in this presentation we are focused in detail on two linked areas. The first is growing vocations to ordained ministry. The second is the funding arrangements for initial ministerial education. We are focusing on two parts of a greater whole. We will be back in future Synods to update you on the progress of all of it and to consult you about the whole of this agenda.

The Bishop of Guildford (Rt Revd Andrew Watson): At the heart of the RME stream of Renewal and Reform, as we have heard, is a vision to develop a stronger culture of discipleship and vocations across the Church, both vocations to ordained ministry and a sense of vocation more generally. That conviction of every single Christian woman and man, young person and child, has a calling under God which needs to be recognised, trained up and pursued with vigour.

We are the Body of Christ, each with distinctive gifts and abilities to bring to the party for the building up of the Church and the blessing of the world God loves so much. That is the theological conviction behind this part of the vision. RME, therefore, calls for an increase in the number and range of vocations, lay and ordained.

Note that word, "Range". It suggests that there may be people whose gifts we have been ignoring up until now because of a faithless, unimaginative or unconsciously prejudiced approach to what we look for in a leader. It suggests too that the tendency to favour some ministries within the Church and some jobs within the world over others, to talk of vocation only in terms of ordination, licensed lay ministry and the so-called caring professions, is far too myopic and limited a world view.

When the whole people of God are summoned to go in peace to love and serve the Lord, that challenge is equally applicable to the nurse, the teacher, the vicar, the cleaner, the student, the pensioner, the farmer, the IT specialist and the high-flying executive at Goldman Sachs.

My own piece in the RME jigsaw though focuses on a particular challenge within the Church right now which calls for the kind of flexibility and decentralisation envisaged by the rest of the programme; that is, to increase the number of ordinands, both stipendiary and self-supporting, by 50% in 2020 and beyond. That is 600 ordinands in total per year which makes for 6,000 by the end of the decade.

The maths here is fairly straightforward. None of us is getting any younger and 70% of our existing clergy workforce will have retired by 2030, myself quite possibly included. In case you think that 50% is a rather conveniently round number, it is. The real number to keep clergy levels at their current size is nearer 70%.

If we still want a significant cohort of ordained men and women in the Church of England beyond the clergy boomer generation, in other words, our vocations work is going to have to step up a couple of gears and to do so pretty sharply. Already, we are finding it hard to fill clergy posts in some parts of the country, which has partly to do with deployability and partly with numbers. As things stand, it will only get worse; all of which calls not for a sense of panic which only clouds our judgment, but for a sense of urgency which helps to focus it.

What then is the approach that we need to take? Because we are talking here about a common endeavour from Truro to Newcastle, from Canterbury to Carlisle and all points in between, and not some clever strategy emanating from the Ministry Division, let alone from the feeble brain of Andrew Watson, 20, Guildford.

The first is to pray for vocations, to ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers, lay and ordained, into the harvest field. The crops are ripe. That is both our conviction and our experience, and yet the labourers are few; so that without a deep, urgent renewal of our prayer life, the disparity between the work that needs to be done and the workers willing to do it will simply grow too wide.

Confidence is a vital part of the equation too, a confidence in the Gospel itself, combined with a leadership which imbues confidence in others, enabling the whole people of God to stand tall as friends of Christ and fellow workers in God's Kingdom.

Where there is a proper confidence in churches, and especially where clergy believe in what they are doing and even seem to be enjoying themselves, there tends to be a culture of vocation that emerges, a sense that people are proactively seeking to discern their own callings and to release and bless the callings of others. Never forget that major research from the Gallup organisation that demonstrates that we can so often see other people's strengths far better than they can see them themselves.

So what next? Well, there is good news and bad news. The good news is that we already have the clergy workforce that we need to lead the Church in 2030 and beyond.

The bad news is that they mostly do not know that they are being called.

The working group that I chair is, therefore, looking to identify, celebrate and disseminate good practice in parishes and dioceses so as to resource the whole Church in its recognition and release of ordained vocations. Some parishes, for example, have a steady trickle of ordinands flowing out from there year after year, while other parishes, even parishes of a similar size, have no one, as decade succeeds to decade.

Some dioceses have good, positive systems for recognising and progressing vocations, while others are slow and under-resourced, putting unnecessary blocks in the way of some of our most able candidates who then get snapped up by someone else. In one place, a proactive approach to seeking vocations may be clearly embedded; in another, a purely reactive approach holds sway as the DDO metaphorically sits by the phone. I know that is not really quite what happens. Are these disparities the work of God or the work of man? I very much suspect the latter.

Do some of our systems, including our national systems, need to change to become clearer, simpler and far better communicated? They most certainly do. What about those whom God is calling but who do not seem to fit the standard mould, who cannot tick all the boxes in our current ordination process and do not pretend that they can.

Clearly, there are some boxes that every potential clergy person needs to be able to tick: integrity, prayerfulness, holiness, the ability to communicate their faith clearly and attractively are all integral to priestly ministry. What are the special gifts additionally required of a church planter? Of a vicar of a scattered multi-parish benefice? Of the leader of a large city centre ministry? Of a self-supporting minister heading up a daughter church?

Why is it that the new churches or black-led churches are so often thriving in inner urban or state contexts in a way that the Church of England simply is not? It is partly perhaps that we are looking at younger and black and minority ethnic candidates. It is also white working class candidates, under-represented groups, who may be more specialist than GPs but who can open up whole swathes of the population to the Gospel of Jesus Christ in a way that this archetypal, white, middle class, middle aged, Oxbridge educated Bishop simply could not hope to do.

How can people give it a go? How can they see and we see their suitability for ordained ministry? Some of the larger churches have intern schemes which are a great blessing, but how do potential ordinands get an experience of other forms of ministry? That is the third strand of the working group that I chair, scaling up the Church of England's ministry experience scheme so that every diocese can benefit or, at the very least, has an analogous scheme of its own.

Finally, how do we hold together the ordained and the lay? How do insights from one work stream help to inform the other? How might we develop a more sophisticated approach both to vocational discernment and to theological and ministerial training which does not artificially perpetuate the silos, but which looks to break down the unnecessary dividing walls between lay training and that of the clergy. That conversation has already started and will continue in the months ahead.

Just a brief postscript, because people keep asking me, "Won't this all be rather expensive?" Not just a 50% increase in initial training costs which should be funded, but a 50% increase in curacies. How on earth are the dioceses, especially the poorer dioceses, going to pay for that? Here is the answer. Nationally, as the number of curates on the diocesan payroll increases, so the number of more experienced clergy on the diocesan payroll will decrease.

It is not so much that the stipend bill will go up, in other words, it is rather that the more experienced will be replaced by the less experienced. Whether that is a good thing or not remains to be seen, but here is another inevitable consequence that has come from decades of under-recruitment, consequences which the RME vision is blessedly now seeking to address.

The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft): And so to the RME funding proposals. A year ago we brought 12 original RME proposals to the Synod. Annex B of GS 2020 details what has happened to those proposals through five separate rounds of consultation with dioceses and with TEIs.

The funding proposals presented to this Synod have been developed through an iterative process of testing proposals and assumptions, feedback and consultations. That process will continue in the coming months, as I hope is clear from GS 2020. In brief, we are proposing a block grant to dioceses out of which the diocese funds the candidates which it sponsors.

We believe we have developed a system which is fair to candidates, to dioceses and to our TEIs. We believe that the new system will build a stronger sense of partnership between dioceses and theological educational institutions and that, under the new system, dioceses will have the flexibility they need to make intelligent decisions about candidates' pathways and the control over finance that reflects the fact that this money is derived from the diocese and given by parishioners. At present, that control is lacking.

For those who may think we are pressing ahead too quickly, let me remind you that we began this process two years ago. It will be another 20 months before it begins to be implemented and it will be a further three years after that before all candidates are in the new system. Only an Ent could regard this as hasty.

The more we have examined the present system of Vote 1, the more it seems unfit for purpose. A fog hangs over its operation. It is hard to understand and not many claim to understand it. There is only limited accountability. It is inflexible. It is unable to accommodate change, particularly the development of context based training. It does not provide a secure basis for growth. Dioceses will not invest more, unless they can see where their money is going, and it is hard for a diocese itself to choose to invest more in training.

Here are some of the perverse outcomes from the present system. Wealthier dioceses are, at the moment, being subsidised by less wealthy dioceses for the pathway choices they make, not because they produce more candidates. The new system will continue

to encourage and incentivise an increase in numbers. Some less wealthy dioceses with a lower number of ordinands pay considerably over the cost of training, even though their projected ministerial requirements are likely to be met by that lower number.

Some pathway choices are currently made on the basis that it is cheaper for the diocese but is actually more expensive for Vote 1 in order to reduce diocesan costs. Overall, it is clear most dioceses view Vote 1 as a tax and benefit system, not as a fund to invest in ministerial education for the future of ministry. The funding arrangements we present this afternoon require further work to move forward from the clear principles of how they will work. The details are still in development and need to be worked out collaboratively between dioceses, TEIs and national bodies.

There is some work to do in a number of different areas: In finalising the age bands with the possible increase of the lower age to 32, and also to address concerns raised by the TEI principals and others about fairness to women candidates; guidance and controls over what IME funding can be used for, initially only IME 1, though we hope to work on ways in which some funding can be spread in time across IME 2; developing the financial and educational infrastructure to support dioceses and TEIs and the transition; reviewing the funding for mixed mode or context based training and reviewing family maintenance; not the principle of pooling support or providing it but ensuring it is targeted to areas of need and to help those who would otherwise be unable to participate.

There will be a robust monitoring of all outcomes in initial years with regular reports to the Archbishops' Council. These will focus on the areas of concern raised in this Synod and elsewhere about unforeseen consequences. These will be carefully monitored and redressed.

I would say, in conclusion, this is not a cost-cutting exercise. There will be no reduction in funding and, as an increase in numbers occurs, God willing, there will be further investment. These funding arrangements lay a secure foundation for growth in vocations over the coming year for increased investment and flexibility in IME, for the sake of the candidates, for the sake of the Church and for the sake of the mission of God.

Mr Jonathan Kerry (Diocesan Secretary, Diocese of Leicester): Good afternoon, members of Synod. My name is Jonathan Kerry and my day job is as chief executive and diocesan secretary in Leicester, but I am here today to introduce the Lay Leadership Task Group, of which I am a member and which has been established by the Archbishops' Council as one of the work streams of Renewal and Reform.

The Group is chaired by Matthew Frost, a member of the Council, and has nine members, mostly lay, who exercise leadership both within and beyond the Church. Matthew is unable to be here today, which is why you have got me. Alison Coulter, a Synod member from Winchester, is also a member of the Task Group and will assist me in taking comments or questions in a few minutes' time.

You can find more about us and our precise terms of reference on the Renewal and

Reform pages of the Church of England website which will be updated as our work progresses.

So far the Task Group has met just once, last week, and we have begun to map out our plan of work. We have to report back to the Archbishops' Council at the end of September, so time is of the essence. We are well aware that there are varying expectations of us. On the one hand, we stand at a moment of crisis and opportunity, of seismic shift perhaps, in our understanding what it is and how to be church as the Renewal and Reform process unfolds. The time is right for a fresh consideration of lay leadership. On the other hand, this is territory which the Church has looked at many times before, notably in the reports *All Are Called* and *Called to New Life* in 1985 and 1999 respectively. Some will say that little has changed as a result of that work and so the challenge to begin a process of real change this time is huge.

Now lay leadership is a vast area and there is a wealth of information and experience to draw on. We want to consult as widely as possible within the timeframe available and we plan to do this in a number of ways. First, by gathering a wider reference group to work with the Task Group. We are looking for around, say, 35 people from a wide variety of backgrounds involved in lay leadership inside and beyond the Church, and we would welcome suggestions as to the membership of the reference group.

Second, we want to engage with members of Synod. Today is just an introduction, and Matthew Frost, Alison Coulter and Jacqui Philips, Clerk to the Synod, will be your main contacts going forward. Given the importance of this issue, we will find ways to enable Synod members specifically to input further with members of the Task Group and you can of course always email or write the Task Group, care of Jacqui Philips.

Then, thirdly, we will undertake an extensive and open consultation process. This will be launched after the next meeting of the Task Group in March and will last around about six weeks or so.

In conclusion, although we are still at the very early stages of our work and will be much more up and running after our next meeting, we have already identified four key areas of inquiry.

Vision. What is our shared vision, especially our theological vision, for lay leadership and why is this a critical issue to tackle now? What is working well today to realise this vision for lay leaders? Why is it working and what lessons can we draw out?

Overcoming barriers. What do we need to do to see more of what is working and what needs to change at national, diocesan and parish levels in terms of funding, structures and culture?

And implementation, action planning and review. How will we make sure that change actually happens this time?

In all this we will keep in close communication with the other Renewal and Reform work streams, and the Task Group is only the beginning. All we can do in six or seven

months is set out the issues and draw up an initial action plan. Changing the culture of the Church will be a significant task for the whole Church for many years to come.

The Chair: Members of Synod may be interested to know that the slides we have just seen are going to be made available on the pages of the Renewal and Reform part of the website.

Now we move to questions. As I said, they need to be questions and not speeches. Remember that we have got a whole afternoon of Renewal and Reform when you can make your speeches so please make them concise and then we can get through a few. We are going to take them in groups of three and of course when you are speaking please to go to a lectern and remember to give us your name, diocese and any interest that you might want to register when you are speaking. Would those who are wishing to ask a question please stand to indicate that.

Mr Martin Sewell (Rochester): A question really aimed at John Spence. John, you may have heard when we opened the Business Report that I put a marker down that I would be very concerned if we were back here in July and did not have a proper budget for what we have been calling “the social media project”. I am slightly worried about that because we seem to be quite comfortable taking £50 million, and I do not mind this at all, to do the things with which we are familiar - training clergy, building up lay leadership - but at the moment it sounds as if you are still wandering around, cap in hand, trying to find 5% ---

The Chair: Can we have your question, please?

Mr Martin Sewell (Rochester): The question is first of all would you update us on what the financial situation there is, and will you be able to solve this problem by July because my anxiety is if we do not have it by July, we do not get to look at it until February next. That is the first question, and the second question is I wonder whether we need to actually change the wording. We are calling it “the social media budget”. Yes, optional extra. Let us call it “the budget for the evangelization of the unchurched young”. Can we get that right?

Mr Tim Hind (Bath & Wells): One of the things that I have appreciated over the last five years as a member of the Archbishops’ Council is that we have grappled a lot with the words that we use and the question I have of the lay leadership group is have they now found the correct vocabulary to enable to us move forward with a distinction between ecclesial lay ministry and non-ecclesial lay ministry?

Mrs Penny Allen (Lichfield): I would just like to ask about the composition of the working group which has a wider reference for lay training. Will it include those people who spent their working lives outside church? Will it have some way of looking into the vision for the lay training? Will there be any joint training between clergy and lay people?

The Chair: Thank you. Panel?

Canon Dr John Spence (ex officio): I will deal with the first question from Martin Sewell. I will ask Alison and John to deal with Questions 2 and 3. Martin, I do not think I am walking around cap in hand. I have an obligation to come to the entire Synod with the entire budget for 2017 in July. There are many facets of that which need to be addressed. I will be disappointed if we have not by then not only found a budget for 2017 and onwards through to 2019, but actually not found a funding stream that will enable the work to start this year rather than next. We do not call it “the social media project”. As far as we are concerned it is digital evangelism. It does not expressly talk about the young unchurched, but we fully understand that a key part of it will be ensuring that we have a way of maintaining a relationship with young people, particularly those who have left church schools but all young people, so “digital evangelism” is the brand title, if you like, of this particular piece.

Mrs Alison Coulter (Winchester): Mr Hind, you are quite right to point out that we are wrestling with vocabulary and, as part of our vision, I think we will need to come up with a series of clear definitions about what we are talking about and that is work in progress. If you would like to help us, please do.

Secondly, there is a lay ministry working group, and Matthew Frost and I met with them yesterday to try and work out how we are going to try and work together but, as I understand it, at this time our brief as the lay leadership task group is not to look at ecclesial ministry. That is for the lay ministry working group.

Thirdly, my colleague asked about joint training for clergy and lay people, and I would just like to say that we are considering everything. We are looking at everything at the moment and we will be considering that and if you have ideas on that, then again please get in touch. If I am sounding like everything is open and we are up for everything, that is because we are at the very early stage at the moment and we want not to shut down too quickly, so at this moment in between our first and second meetings we are really asking for any helpful input, please, from you because we want to make sure we get it right.

The Chair: More questions?

Mrs Enid Barron (London): As a new member of Synod, I have probably not got my head round Renewal and Reform as much as I should, but I just wonder if we could do something about the general negative public perception of the Church, variously described as “irrelevant”, “in terminal decline” and, as I heard yesterday, “a toxic brand”. This must surely be a huge hindrance to growth. I would like to ask, and I have possibly not followed the point on digital evangelism so maybe that needs explaining to me a bit better, in the light of this negative publicity, which I am sure hinders growth, are there any plans within Renewal and Reform to really take direct action to counter this negative image? In particular, are there plans to improve the Church’s interaction with the media to get across the more positive, and I believe more attractive, reality of what the Church is about, and secondly, to encourage and equip the Church at all levels to make creative use of the internet and social media as a way of getting across to the unchurched the many good things that the Church is doing in communities? In my own church I have seen how effective that can be.

Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford): I was very struck in the working group on the study on evangelism yesterday the small group I was in, which was predominantly clergy, that we were talking about the business of everyday life and how that stood in way. I appreciate there is a lot happening in the task groups at the moment but it all seems to be based on the assumption that the organisational structure of the Church is right. I am wondering is the Archbishops' Council giving enough leadership to the process? Are we thinking the unthinkable or are we simply trying to put new wine in old bottles?

Mr Martin Kingston (Gloucester): These three outrageously provocative questions arise from the report yesterday that quoted Bishop North expressing the view that people in urban areas felt isolated, lonely and forgotten, and my questions are directed towards rural areas. The first one is, is the objective of Reform and Renewal to get the money away from rural areas and put it into urban areas on the basis that there are not in rural areas people who feel isolated, lonely and forgotten?

Secondly, what account will the programme take of the very distinct problems in rural areas that arise from dispersal, distance and at the same time the very visible presence that the Church has in so many communities and therefore the very visible opportunity to be present in so many different ways?

My third question is what account will be taken of the fact that by some measures rural poverty is increasing significantly and in ways that would allow the Church to function in accordance with what we have been previously discussing this morning?

Canon Dr John Spence (ex officio): A great set of questions. I should have thanked Martin for his question as well earlier. Let me deal with Gavin Oldham's first. Gavin, and to all of you, I do think we are trying to think the unthinkable. The Archbishops' Council declined to have any sort of steering group underneath them because they felt they must take the personal, corporate, collegiate I should say, steer of this whole piece of work, and if any of you think there are things we are not thinking about that we should be, please feed them in and they will go into the mix.

Enid Barron's excellent piece about the image of the Church; Renewal and Reform is of course only a response. It is business as usual, if you like, that we need to work, through the Secretary General William Nye, on the image of the Church in society. Yes, we have got to do better at doing the piece through social media which is that digital evangelism piece, but we know that we have got to continue working and making sure that the Church is seen in the very positive light it should be. The debate you held this morning is part of that piece. We need to ensure that gets well reported. So ongoing work under the aegis of the Secretary General and through our communications department to really keep pushing hard on people understanding the very positive force that we are, inclusive rather than exclusive, that we are reaching out, not locked behind walls. I will ask the Bishop of Sheffield to deal with the rural piece.

The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft): Thank you, Martin, for an important series of questions about the rural church. I think they are really important and I acknowledge the poverty and isolation which is often there in rural areas. I think in answering them I want to make reference to a very important principle which runs

through all the Renewal and Reform work which is the principle of subsidiarity and the importance of enabling dioceses to respond creatively to the particular challenges each face which are different. Certainly as we studied and reflected on the accounts of the initial listening exercises for Resourcing the Future and RME, it was helpful to distinguish between the future ministry needs in rural dioceses in mixed small town and rural dioceses, in the large dioceses dominated by large conurbations and in the metropolitan areas. Those social factors determine quite a lot of the spread of ministry needs that are there and legitimately variable. It is helpful to recognise that. As a national church and as a community of dioceses, we want to help one another reflect on those different needs and resource them.

In some instances we are talking about finite resources which can only be distributed once, a zero sum equation, but in many instances, particularly the renewal of vocations, the increase of giving, we are talking about the liberation of resources which are already there in different communities for the purposes of mission according to locally perceived need.

The Chair: Thank you. Questions?

Ven Pete Spiers (Liverpool): Do you expect the peer review system to look at the way in which dioceses spend their Vote 1 money under the proposed arrangements?

Revd Canon David Banting (Chelmsford): I think my question is for Bishop Steven. In an early slide you referred to attention being given to the development of ordinands with reference to church tradition. I believe deeply that part of the richness of the Church of England is its diversity of tradition and that if people are to be confident in collaboration and flourishing in this diverse church and deployability, they need to be comfortable in their own tradition, formed in their own tradition. Can you comment on the place of residential training, which at least historically has been understood as the best way - learning in community - to develop the sorts of depth in tradition, in formation, that enables people to be confident to flourish and operate in a very diverse church?

Canon Shayne Ardron (Leicester): During the growing vocations discussion that was presented earlier a lot of the aims were towards just work in the Church, though I know that Jonathan Kerry's work is moving on from that, but for me from my understanding the Church is part of God's kingdom but it is not whole of it. We regularly pray "Your kingdom come". What is Reform and Renewal doing to equip and encourage those who are called to work in God's kingdom in business, politics and finance? This morning's debate surely highlighted the desperate need for the world to have people in those areas who are working with God's kingdom hard.

Canon Dr John Spence (ex officio): I will ask the Bishop of Sheffield to deal with the second question; the Bishop of Guildford to deal with the third. In terms of the first, Pete from Liverpool, I do not think it really is intended that the peer review group should be dealing with that for two reasons: firstly, the peer group is for us all about mutual learning rather than policing and supervising; secondly, the matter of how RME funding and Vote 1 funding is spent is a matter, I believe, for the diocesan bishop and Bishops'

Council and through that to the ministry division. I will ask Steven Croft to deal with the second question.

The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft): That does not mean that there will not be scrutiny, and careful scrutiny, of how dioceses invest pooled funding that is available through Vote 1. We will expect dioceses to give account for it. It will not be the case that dioceses can save money and spend it on paperclips or other essentials in the diocesan office. We do expect the money to be invested in training and we will scrutinise that very carefully.

David Banting's question, diversity of tradition, is really important and we want to continue to affirm that and to affirm the place of residential training as one of the places where those traditions are nurtured and where people are formed in them. It is for that reason that we are maintaining the present level of funding across the whole of Vote 1 in order to continue to invest in residential training. As I said in answer to questions on Monday, the funding is more generous for those who are younger but 36% of those under 30 and 30% of those between 30 and 40 do not need on present balances the allocation of funding for them. There will be surplus in the system and a very important place for residential training going forward.

The Bishop of Guildford (Rt Revd Andrew Watson): Shayne's point is well made and it is extraordinarily important that all our vocational work is done in the context of God calling all the people of God to work in the world as well as engaging in the Church and that has been part of the thinking of the lay leadership stream being divided into two, so that we are not simply focusing on readers or whatever else, other ministry within the Church, but we are very much saying we have that broader call to bring and pray in the kingdom of God and of course even those involved in church work. We are not just about trying to grow the Church, we are actually trying to be a kingdom presence in the community.

Just one other linkup, I think, between these various streams. The vocation stream obviously needs to link with the discipleship work because actually discipleship and vocations are really two sides of the same coin, and that is work that needs to be done further. We need to have further discussions between us, but thank you. It is a very good point well made.

Revd Eleanor Robertshaw (Sheffield): I speak as somebody who went to see the DDO when I was 20 and was sent away to go and get some life experience and a fallback career. It was a good thing, but I am actually after that experience surprised that I came back to the DDO. It was a very scary experience. I know that the vocations process, particularly to be a deacon or a priest, is particularly rigorous and I ask if we want 50% of new ordinands, can we be assured that the rigors of selection will still be there because I think it is important. I am worried there is a danger perhaps that we might just think, "Oh well, we'll have them because we want to increase our vocations".

Dr Angus Goudie (Durham): It was good to hear about a hope to scale up the ministry experience scheme which is extremely useful for supporting our young people looking at vocation. It would be nice to know whether that is likely to be possible to be scaled

up within dioceses and not just in dioceses who are not taking it up at the moment, so there are places, I am sure, where that would be useful.

Revd Peter Breckwoldt (Salisbury): Thank you for calling me. Thank you for the presentation. What thought has been given to the place of church planting and the issues around it? How might this be drawn into the Renewal and Reform process? In particular, how may the leaders of those involved in church planting be encouraged to explore ordination, because many of them are not actually on that track and maybe they could be drawn into the process?

The Chair: Thank you. Some good concise answers, I think.

The Bishop of Guildford (Rt Revd Andrew Watson): Yes. Thank you very much. I think one of the real questions we have in the whole discernment process is unnecessary delays. Sometimes people do need to go away and get other experience; sometimes they need to meet a number of vocations advisers or whatever, but we are picking up all round the place unnecessary delays: people just not knowing where they are in the system, not knowing what the system is and, as a result, getting put off and discouraged and drifting off, and that is happening to some very able people who are really wanting to discern God's call on their life.

I do not think upping the numbers means decreasing the quality or the quality of discernment at all. I just think we need to be a lot more proactive in seeking out vocations and praying that we will have eyes to see those whom God is calling and I think there is a lot of work to be done on that.

Ministry experience scheme: absolutely no reason why it cannot be scaled up within dioceses as well as spread out to other dioceses. The great thing is if people are getting ministry experience across a whole range of different contexts - rural, urban, suburban, whatever else - because so often actually people will return to the context where they have ministerial experience so do think about that, whatever your diocese is like.

And church planting, absolutely. I think we are looking for entrepreneurial clergy and so often church planters do have that entrepreneurialism about them, and we need to be looking out for them and again suitably for those whom God is calling to encourage them towards ordination.

The Chair: Canon Spence is going to give the final answer and then sum up this session.

Canon Dr John Spence (ex officio): I am grateful to the Bishop of Guildford who has somewhat addressed the church planting question. Can I point out that we have already through the strategic development funding work stream provided funding for a piece that is encouraging church planting and the learning from it and a critical measure surely is the growth in the number of flourishing Christian communities across this land.

It has been brought to my attention now I have said two things this morning that were either slightly incorrect or capable of misinterpretation. Firstly, I talked about the peer groups being about mutual learning. I should have said “mutual learning and accountability”. Quite clearly the urgency of what we are doing means that we have to move at a pace and at a depth and at a quantity and at a quality, and the whole point of the peer groups is that they do not merely spread the mutual learning, but in that spirit of mutuality hold each other as dioceses to account.

Secondly, that I may have implied an inevitability of decline; far from it. The Renewal and Reform piece is about changing a major change of trend and the demographic pattern of this Church and of ensuring that we really do now engage in an ever-increasing dramatic and almost revolutionary way with different age groups and different parts of the population - with those minority ethnics, with the youth - but equally we continue to nurture those older people who have relied on us and the traditional and loyal congregations, so sticking with and nurturing those who are with us, reaching out to those who are not yet aware of the great things we can do. In this space of five to ten years we have to measure the success of this piece in the major change of impact we have on this land in the demographics of our membership and in the centrality of Christ in the communities of England.

In that period of time we had 12 questions. There are over 300 of you in this hall today so can I just remind you again, the rest of you who have questions, we will be available in the coffee area throughout the lunch period, but thank you as ever for the quality, thoughtfulness, positivism and the desire of the questions you have given.

The Chair: Thank you, Synod, for those questions, thank you to those who have made that presentation and thank you to those who have been supporting us with prayer this morning, members of the Chemin Neuf Community and members of the Community of St Anselm, and remember that we can join that praying presence in the chapel at any time. That brings to a conclusion this item of business and we can go and have the lunch that we have been waiting for and we resume at 2.30. Thank you.

THE CHAIR *Mr Geoffrey Tattersall QC (Manchester)* took the Chair at 2.30 pm.

Renewal and Reform: Resourcing Ministerial Education (GS 2020)

The Chair: Good afternoon. My colleague from Manchester, who is sitting right at the back and who called me to order for being quiet last time, is going to regret it. At least I hope he is. I need to tell you that the continuous praying presence is resourced this afternoon by the Chemin Neuf Community. I need to tell you about declarations of interest.

A Speaker: We are having a sound issue again.

The Chair: My wife said it would all go wrong one day, and of course she is always right, so there we are. I will try and be noisy. You already know about declarations of interest because the Archbishop of Canterbury told you about that this morning, so be careful what you say. Timing: if you looked at the script you would see that this debate is due

to run until quarter to four. With four amendments and 50-plus people wanting to speak, you will understand that I am going to have a bit of a challenge, and so what I am going to do is, first, call the Bishop of Sheffield and then have a general debate about the report. All speeches are going to be no more than three minutes. I am then going to call the movers of the amendments, who will have five minutes. We will call the movers of the first two amendments, Mr Dotchin and Mr Tanner, to speak consecutively, but not to move their amendments, then a bit more of the debate, and then we will take the amendments one-by-one, and hopefully you and I will be home for something to eat later on. If it does not work, we will not.

First of all, I call the Bishop of Sheffield to speak to motion 17. I should remind you that there is financial comment on this item at paragraphs 14 to 19 of the Sixth Notice Paper, which is the financial memorandum.

The Bishop of Coventry (Rt Revd Dr Christopher Cocksworth): I beg to move:

‘That this Synod:

- (a) reaffirm the five objectives set out in GS 1979 for achieving the vision of a growing church with a flourishing ministry;
- (b) note that work on Resourcing Ministerial Education and on enhancing quality in all stages of ministerial development, set out in GS 2020, contributes to these objectives;
- (c) welcome the proposed new funding arrangements for initial ministerial education, agreed by the Archbishops’ Council following wide consultation, set out in GS 2020; and
- (d) request the Archbishops’ Council to report back to the Synod by July 2018 on the progress being made to secure both a step change in the number of ordinands and continuing improvement in their quality and deployability.’

Thank you, Chair, and good afternoon, Synod. The vision of RME, as we heard this morning, is of a growing church with a flourishing ministry. In order to grow and to flourish, the body of Christ needs ligaments and sinews: ordained and lay ministers. The dioceses have told us about the qualities required in those ministers. We need ordained and lay ministers who are collaborative, missional and adaptable. We need younger ministers, and those from a wider range of backgrounds, with a greater diversity of gender and ethnic and social background. The Church needs ordained and lay ministers who have been deeply formed into the likeness of Christ, learned in scripture and tradition, able to be apt ministers of word and sacrament, agents of God’s love in the world, sharing in the oversight of the Church, delighting in its beauty and rejoicing in its well-being. Collectively as dioceses we want to invest in their formation and training, and, collectively, we have confidence in our mixed economy of residential

college, course and context-based training.

The dioceses have told us about the number of such ministers (ordained and lay) we need. In order to grow the body, to make and sustain disciples and to equip the whole people of God, we need to grow these ligaments and sinews. We know that on our present projections we are falling short of the ordained ministry the Church needs to sustain a presence in every community and grow the body of Christ. As we heard this morning, 70% of those presently serving in ordained ministry will have retired by 2030. Already, it becomes harder year-by-year to fill vacant posts, particularly in the most disadvantaged communities, of which the Bishop of Burnley spoke so eloquently yesterday.

Should we simply accept that we will not have ministers of the right quality and background and therefore that retreat is inevitable? Of course not. The consequences for our nation would be immense. We need prayerfully, steadily and faithfully to call workers to the harvest. Should we simply accept that we will have far fewer clergy in the future? By no means. We need courageously to seek vocations of all kinds, in every place, but especially among the young, and invest in those whom God is calling. We should offer them the highest quality of formation and training in initial education and their first years of ministry, and for their lifelong support and learning. Let finance not be a barrier. Should we accept the gradual ageing and retreat of our lay ministers? No. We should pray and labour to equip God's people as evangelists, and pioneers, as pastors and teachers, as leaders in the workplace and the world. RME is about renewal and reform in every part of formation for ministry. This is not the work of a single year, but a five or ten-year process which is both urgent and critical for the future health of the Church.

Today in this report we explore a vital next step. We are shaping the way in which together we fund the vital investment we make each year in initial ministerial education for ordained ministry. Our present way of funding this through Vote 1 is no longer fit for purpose. There is no accountability, no flexibility, no capacity for change, and it provides no foundation for the growth we need to see. We have developed through extensive consultation over the last year a different model of block grant funding to dioceses. This block grant will give dioceses the flexibility to provide training on the basis of candidates' needs while incentivising the needs of the younger candidates.

The block grant system is about more than the distribution of funds for training. It has the capacity to build stronger relationships between dioceses on the one hand and TEIs on the other, to bring them into a living conversation about formation, which is needed and offered, and to increase trust across the Church. This is emphatically not a cost-reduction exercise. The total investment is the same and set to grow.

There has been some significant anxiety around these proposals in some parts of the Church over the last week or so. That is understandable. The changes are significant. The funding arrangements are still being adjusted and there is more work still to be done on detailed implementation. Even as we settle some questions, new ones appear, so the conversation continues, and safeguards, reassurance and clarity will all be needed, and will be provided. There is a real need to continue to build trust. That will

not happen instantly. It will grow over time as we bring our TEIs and our dioceses and the national bodies into ever-closer conversation; exactly what these new arrangements will do.

Our TEIs do a remarkable job. They have to do it on scarce resources. Their staff are highly skilled, they work long hours and they invest in the ordinands committed to their care. For eight years I was a college principal. At the end of every single term of those eight years, I was exhausted, such are the demands of working with people in formation and change. Dioceses need to understand that better, and to enter into richer relationships with colleges and courses, to trust those who work in this area and help them refine what they do. Our dioceses are wanting to invest in this area. Bishops, dioceses and parishes know what kind of clergy are needed. Dioceses are not wanting to reduce costs on something which is vital. The Church gives sacrificially so that formation and training can happen year-by-year, and I believe it is willing to make the resources available. Colleges and courses need to enter into a richer relationship with dioceses, to trust those who are working daily, wrestling with the ministry the Church needs, to offer their expertise in all kinds of training.

Synod, I urge you this afternoon to vote for this motion. I will be resisting the amendments to be brought by Andrew Dotchin and Ian Paul. I recognise it is important to affirm the contribution of TEIs and keep on working hard at the implementation of these proposals, so they continue to improve further. For that reason, I welcome and will be accepting the important amendment brought by Mark Tanner, Emma Ineson and Mark Chapman. The RME process is as much about lay as ordained ministry overall and I welcome the amendment being brought by Christine Corteen.

Synod, help us this afternoon to take a key step further in the journey towards becoming a growing Church with a flourishing ministry. I move the motion standing in my name.

The Chair: This matter is open for debate.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

Revd Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich): I have just come from a marvellous fringe meeting where people from Israel, Palestine and Jordan are facing a huge challenge because there is a shortage of water. It is great to see the three nations working together with a limited resource, and there is hope that real, lasting peace is coming out of this effort. We face a similar challenge with too limited resources; money and people. We all want the same thing. We all want everybody, whether they are called to the ordained ministry or non-ordained lay ministry, stipendiary, non-stipendiary, employed or unpaid, to flourish and grow, and we all want each one to have the right access to the right course or college or institution that is good for them, irrespective of where they are in the country. However, we are starting from a very difficult place, and the difficult place is that there is a long history of antagonism and difficulty in this place over how we fund things.

I am guilty of this, too. I have stood on the floor of Synod arguing for more money year after year. I was there for the Hind debacle and the compromise amendments then. I

heard Anthony Thiselton say there is “no point in standing for election in the Ministry Division because it is a total stitch-up”. His words, not mine. It is a toxic legacy and we have to bring it to an end, and I think this is a very good way forward.

Later on my colleagues will bring an amendment. I am sad to hear it is resisted because it is supposed to be friendly. We just want to give the centre a little bit more time to get the figures right, which they have already indicated they want to do, because they do not quite work yet, but I am confident they will. Many of us are confident that they will.

As we come into this building, we pass a stone, and on that stone is written the words that just after the Second World War the people who held the early consultations over the United Nations met here to build a new model of trust. If we are going to go forward together as a Synod and a Church, we have to put the past behind us and build new trust between dioceses, training institutions and the central administration. Let us hope we can do that today. Let us take a giant step forward. Yesterday I antagonised some by saying we should grow up. I apologise, I did not mean to upset anybody, but perhaps it is time to move on.

Revd Barry Hill (Leicester): Let me declare an interest. I am part of a Mission and Ministry training team and part of my job is to help respond to the cultural change of dioceses having fewer clergy over the next decade.

It is my maiden speech. I had not intended to say anything. I was rather moved by the Archbishop of Canterbury’s words this morning in relation to how we reject fear and embrace hope. I would like to say a word more about tone than content. Others are far more qualified to speak on the detail of the content. I suspect all that I am able to say may be coals to Newcastle, or indeed Premiership trophies to Leicester, but I am reminded that, in Jesus, medium is so often message.

The risen Christ came and stood among his disciples and said, “Do not be afraid”. We know that fear is contagious. There is of course an appropriate place for the right scrutiny. There is no doubt, as has been acknowledged, that tweaks will need to be made. There are things we will fail at and change.

My question is given that fear is contagious and it is everywhere, how do we help each other to resist it? There is right fear within dioceses. We want flexibility and innovation. Many of us would prefer not to have IME 1 funding ring-fenced. There is fear within Min Div and I am sure within the national Church institutions about how we have a system that helps train and develop the whole people of God, and clergy in particular, for the kind of church God is calling us to in the future? There is fear within the TEIs of unintended consequences, which is completely understandable, and of course there is fear within our churches that we have fewer and fewer clergy and we are busier and busier.

The trouble is, as we know, fear is contagious, and fear, like toxic water, will flow into every gap there is. If it is at the heart of how we train our leaders, it will flow everywhere into all of our churches. The challenge is how do we help each other and remind each

other of the words of the risen Lord, “Do not be afraid”?

Let me offer a story that a colleague shares. He used to work with Richard Foster in the States, and Richard Foster would sit in meetings, introvert and silent, and the meeting would get worse and worse. Eventually, after some hours, he would throw his hands up in the air and say - I cannot do an impression very well - “And yet the kingdom of God is in no danger whatsoever”. How might we help each other to resist fear and to embrace the hope and the providence of God?

Revd Dr Emma Ineson (Universities and TEs): A few weeks ago I got a phone call from the manufacturer of my tumble dryer informing me that, due to a design fault, my model had the unfortunate tendency to catch fire in the middle of the night and would I like a shiny new replacement model at a cut-down price. Imagine if the conversation thereafter had gone like this: “Me: Yes please, but how much will it be? Manufacturer: We will let you know upon delivery. Me: What functions will it have? Manufacturer: You can find out after it is delivered. Me: And will it be any less likely to burn my house down? Manufacturer: Well, we are not entirely sure, but we hope you will find out after delivery”. Unamended, that is what it feels like we are being asked to do with GS 2020: take delivery of a shiny new set of funding proposals for ministry training without really knowing how they will work or what effects they might have.

As principal of a theological college, Trinity College in Bristol, which delivers residential, context-based and part-time course training, there is much in the proposals that I warmly welcome. Amen to a guiding vision of a growing Church with a flourishing ministry. Amen to a younger, larger, more diverse cohort of ordinands, offering collaborative leadership in mission in a rapidly changing context. Some of the proposals have the potential - and I stress potential - to damage the very aspirations that the report itself espouses. Allowing the block grant to be spent, for instance, on training at any stage before or after IME 1, despite assurances about temporary ring-fencing, means further stretching of an already overstretched budget, and a potential reduction in the quality of training. IME 2 clearly needs to be better funded, but new money must be found to do it. At the very least, we need robust checking mechanisms to prevent pathways being decided on purely financial grounds. That is why I will be supporting Mark Tanner’s amendment because it does two things: it ensures that those who are responsible for the delivery of training, the TEs, will be more fully involved in the ongoing development of the proposals; and it gives Synod a chance to check again, before full and final implementation and practice of the proposals, that the detailed work has been done satisfactorily.

I am not inclined to spin this out indefinitely. The uncertainty surrounding RME has been very hard to live with, and to plan for, over the past two years, but we do need to ensure that the details are worked out with robust mechanisms and shared guidelines in place before, and not after, the tumble dryer has been delivered.

Mr Anthony Archer (St Albans): I declare an interest, Chairman, as Chair of the Council for Discipleship and Ministry in the Diocese of St Albans, and it is in that context, as a buyer of theological education and training, I want to make some remarks on RME.

We spend £1 million a year on vocations, ministerial development, MDR, stewardship and the resources we offer to parishes. I hope we do that wisely because we are spending parishioners' money. I have just been reading Charles Moore's magisterial second volume of Margaret Thatcher's biography, and was reminded of her mantra, "There is no such thing as public money; only taxpayers' money". It is the parishes that pay the lion's share.

We recently invested in a further DDO provision and expect to be investing more in our IME phase 2 and CMD work. By "investing" I mean more people, so new machinery such as that proposed by RME and GS 2020 is to be welcomed. The current system is not transparent and, crucially, is not scalable. Fifty per cent more vocations by 2020 - and the Bishop of Guildford this morning reminded us the scary number is probably 70% - needs more investment, and there must be clear links between training choices and their financial implications. We need flexibility to meet diocesan strategic needs, but there also needs to be mutual support in the system. This is not throwing out Vote 1, but it is Vote 1 modified so as to be fit for purpose.

The colleges in particular tell me - and I served on the councils of two of them in the past and I know they have concerns - that Min Div's answer to their concerns is, "Don't worry, there'll be so many more ordinands in the future bringing funding with them, depending on their training pathway, that your future is secure". Let us be clear, the health of the colleges and courses is crucial as we train our future leaders. Where will these ordinands, especially the younger ones, come from and what will their training needs be? It is stating the obvious, but vocations is a task for the whole Church. It is not just something that DDO teams do. We heard yesterday that evangelism is not a department; it is a task for the whole Church. We need increased flexibility and transparency in the system. The one concern I want to raise with the report is that we need to ensure that the tariffs, which will be fixed, do not straitjacket the dioceses and to ensure they have to pay what the block grant is. There needs to be flexibility in the system so that dioceses can actually negotiate and do deals with TEIs. There is no time to explain further that argument.

I welcome these proposals and believe they will serve all dioceses better. Let us go the whole way and release the funding to the dioceses. They will be able to negotiate themselves with the colleges and courses and probably need to develop closer relationships with the TEIs anyway.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of five minutes.

Revd Andrew Dotchin (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich): Warburtons - that wonderful British institution - has for some years now improved the health of our nation by producing their "Best of Both" sliced loaf, a means whereby we are finally able to not only eat our cake (or BLT sandwich) but have it as well. It looks like tasty, unhealthy white bread but is chock full of healthy, and yummy, brown bread.

Thank you, Bishop, to you and your team for your diligent work in this area. From where I stand, the intention of the RME task force is to ensure that the Church of England takes a leaf - or a slice - out of the Warburton cookbook and provides not one,

not two, but three ways of nurturing future ministers of the Church. In setting out a scheme that encourages and values residential mixed-mode and part-time initial theological education, the Church should be served well. We should end up with the best of all worlds. The question I have is not so much about the shape of the loaf but how it is sliced.

Personal anecdote can be odious, but it is also normative for the person speaking, so please indulge me while I take you on a Cook's tour of my journey into priesthood; how I believe I received the best of all worlds.

I was ordained in South Africa in the dark years of apartheid. The first part of my training was by extension on something akin to a regional course. Still in full-time secular employment, I did not have much time to read and study, but was active in my local parish as a licensed lay minister, and the courses I studied were mostly in pastoralia and practical theology. I was learning from Gustavo Gutiérrez the importance of drinking from our own wells. It was good and it was exciting and I valued that mode of learning.

Then my wife and I were sent to seminary and the wonders of a dedicated library were mine to explore. The privilege of studying all day, every day was mine. This was the place to study doctrine and homiletics. Discourse with others of different beliefs - we were both multiracial and interdenominational - was my meat and drink. Living in a community with others of different views and beliefs helped to shape me, and I hope taught me generosity and humility in ministry. It was good and it was exciting and I valued that mode of learning.

However, if I were to offer myself for ordination training in the Church of England under the current plan, just a few years later than I did in South Africa (I was 29 when my vocation was first discerned), my training for ministry would have been impoverished. I would have remained on a regional course and never, save for the occasional sabbatical, been able to access formal theological education again.

In my experience of those who did not have the opportunity of a varied path of theological education, two things happened. One, those whose training was purely by extension were extremely good pastors, they met the immediate needs of God's people, but did not always have the tools to question, challenge and transform their circumstances. Those whose training was purely residential, regardless of plunge exercises on placement parishes, akin to the mixed-mode model, tended to become good theologians, but often needed further immersion to make connection to experience.

In the Church of England if we do not handle the RME process carefully we run the risk of creating two sorts of priests and impoverishing the ministry of the Church instead of enriching it.

With the proposed banding provision two things are likely to occur as unintended consequences. On the one hand, those receiving full-time training for three years will be overwhelmingly young, under 30 and male. On the other hand, candidates over 40,

of either sex, will lose the option of two years of full-time training, a choice suitable for and currently taken up by many. Smaller dioceses such as ours will suffer particularly.

All our amendment asks is that those involved have another look at their plans, not just the task group but the TEIs and the DDOs as well. Let us get together. We have time to do this before going ahead. Warburtons do not make their best of both by selling a loaf with alternate slices of brown and white bread, but by baking a whole loaf in one. The whole lump is leavened. To borrow a phrase from a Passover ritual, and to intentionally mix metaphors: Warburtons bake a unity; a *matzah tosh* that contains all of the goodness and all of the flavour. We have before us an opportunity to provide our ordinands with the best of all worlds. Please support this amendment to ensure that we grow healthy priests to feed a hungry Church.

Revd Canon Mark Tanner (Universities and TEIs): I declare two interests. I am both warden of Cranmer Hall and I also chair the TEI Principals Steering Group. I did not imagine that my maiden speech would be seeking to amend something proposed by one of my most eminent predecessors, but the amendment standing in my name is a friendly one arising from robust and honest conversation with Ministry Council and Ministry Division, to whom I pay tribute for their patient and faithful integrity in what is a vastly complex task. I am particularly grateful for the written response to Dr Ineson's and my briefing paper which many of you will have seen. As the responses given verbally and those in the Bishop's blog become a formal part of the funding proposals, then many of my concerns will be allayed. We are clear that theological colleges and courses, like any other healthy part of the church of Christ, exist to serve the Church and the world in Jesus' name. You have heard that the TEIs have concerns about the proposed funding package, and we do. Our concerns are not mainly with the overall direction of travel.

On the contrary, we are passionate about the vast majority of RME. We are utterly committed to the growth of the Church, our effective witness to Christ and to our service of the common good. We are though wary of unintended consequences. In any sphere, the way that legislation reshapes society is by defining the boundaries of a space within which those who are governed by it then improvise. You see this in sports, in the motor industry, in banking and, yes, in the Church. I spend a large proportion of my life improvising within the current frameworks governing theological education to provide a huge degree of individualisation for those who are training. This is what enables us to invest on the ground with staff and ordinands alike in evangelistic initiatives such as the East Durham Mission Project, a partnership with the diocese of Durham in one of the poorest areas of the North East of England, still not recovered from the closure of the coal mines.

This Project reflects my own passion to take the good news of Jesus to all, including those who have least, who are considered lowest and who feel the most lost. I think the East Durham Mission Project is good improvisation but, unamended, this proposal allows for more troubling improvisations; for example, vastly differing practices between dioceses training for a nationally ordained priesthood, or the re-purposing of funds on purely financial grounds. We are assured that this will not happen but the structure allows it to.

We can, and I do, trust particular post-holders not to misuse their freedom, but legislation should always shape a space within which we offer freedom and imagination. That is how we innovate. Safeguards will be put in place. We are a Church which is episcopally led and synodically governed. Here is strong episcopal leadership, but the greater the leadership the greater the need for good governance.

That is what Synod is here for. We embody an important feature of our Anglican ecclesiology, and this matters because RME raises bigger ecclesiological questions than I have time to address here. We are a national as well as a diocesan Church. Synod, we have a profound duty of care here and I would be deeply uncomfortable at the idea that we agree this funding package with the blind contingency that safeguards will be implemented later. The safeguards are precisely what we are here to oversee.

That is what governance is for and this is why my amendment requests two things: Firstly, robust conversation as we work towards implementation; and, secondly, that Synod is informed about the results of that work. Today, we do not even know, for example, whether the first band runs up to the age of 29 or 32.

TEIs want to work with you for the greatest good of the Church in the world, and together we can do this. I have no desire to overcomplicate these proposals but we do need to be able to exercise our duty of oversight and, to enable this, I commend to you the amendment standing in my name.

The Chair. We are still on Item 17, the general debate. I would like two more contributions before moving to Mr Dotchin's amendment.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

Revd Prof Mark Chapman (Oxford): First of all, just to declare an interest. I have taught in a TEI for the last 24 years and I do it because I love the stimulation of teaching future ministers about the Church and about God and, usually, they quite like hearing from me as well. I welcome the general thrust of the RME proposals. We certainly need more clergy more able to respond to the needs of a missionary Church.

I am particularly thankful that there has been a step change in consultation as the process has moved on. The TEIs and the dioceses have been fully involved in what the Bishop of Sheffield has called, "An iterative process", but as I read the Report there is a sense in which it is not yet ready. Annex B makes that very clear. There is far too much unfinished work for us to pass the motion unamended.

As the Bishop said, it is actually only two-thirds finished. We should not be welcoming promises but facts and figures and details. That is what scrutiny and governance is all about. We have some, but we do not have others, so I think as a Synod we need to see it again sooner rather than later. Just one example, Proposal 5 says that the, "Revised proposals assume that the standard grant may be used pre-IME and in IME 4 to 7 as well as in IME 1 to 3."

That is contrary, incidentally, to what was said to us during the consultations and it

could mean a cut in funding for all the TEIs and that, inevitably, would mean a reduction in the quality of theological education. At the moment, the amount of money that TEIs get for students, both non-residential and residential, does not cover the costs of training and TEIs do not get a penny for capital expenditure or regular maintenance either.

It is a very hand-to-mouth existence in a TEI. I am very anxious about any suggestion that less money might go into the system. That is just one piece of unfinished business about which we need to know far more before we can go ahead. I simply cannot welcome a proposal that could mean a significant cut in funding for TEIs.

I would urge you to vote for Canon Tanner's amendment that will bring the proposals back. I like an iterative and a consultative process, but we need an end point, which we have not yet reached, before we can sensibly vote on these proposals. Let us see the proposals again, let us have an end point and then we can move on in this crucial area of Renewal and Reform.

Mrs Angela Scott (Rochester): I must declare an interest that, until recently, I have been the internal nominee for our Rochester diocesan lay ministry training. I am excited by the Renewal and Reform agenda and I am encouraged that there is a greater focus on formation and support for lay as well as ordained vocations. The first amendment may give space to consider funding for lay as well as ordained ministry.

Rochester diocese sees the need for the funding in formation and training for lay vocations in its entirety, growing out of the previous practice to licensed readers, authorised pastoral assistants and commissioned evangelists, following selection and a three-year training process for each. However, only those with a licence are recognised and able to transfer this to other dioceses.

Recognising that, as with lay vocations, laity are called to a wider rather than specific ministry, in the last five years Rochester has developed a vision for lay ministry and a new training scheme has been in place with the first licensed lay ministers licensed in 2014. There is now the opportunity for those with previous recognised specific ministry to transfer, and I am currently in that process and will be licensed in 2017.

Since 1995 I have been closely involved with the developing ministry pattern in Rochester and have first-hand experience of observing how Ministry Formation Division funds and embraces the training and continuing ministerial development of both ordained and lay vocations in one department, and has led to many parishes having effective team ministry which are enabled and encouraged by the diocesan ministry and formation team.

I would encourage the Ministry Division to consider widening their current focus on ordained, reader and Church Army ministry, broadening it to include LLM, for those called to lay ministry are often fulfilling pastoral, evangelistic roles, as well as teaching, and need wider nationally recognised funding, formation and training for vocational lay ministry in the local context.

If there was a nationally resource-focused LLM programme, the vision set out in paragraph 8 of the Report would enable effective collaborative leadership and development of lay ministry to serve the whole Church, both geographically and in terms of Church tradition, overseen in one national Ministry Division.

Let us show some joined-up thinking in the Church of England, encouraging both lay and ordained vocations, so that the desired outcome of Annex I of the Report, to create and sustain value in ministerial education, development and deployment of ordinands and lay ministries, then the desired outcome may be achieved for sufficient ministers, lay and ordained, of high quality, deployed, where required, for the mission and growth of the Church of England.

The Chair: Mr Dotchin, do you formally move your amendment at 26?

Revd Andrew Dotchin (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich): I beg to move my amendment.

The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft): Thank you, Mr Dotchin, for your amendment. I do urge Synod to resist this amendment, though I will be very content to accept the amendment from Mark Tanner, although I have to say I enjoyed the Warburtons' analogy and, also, if I may so, your own story in ministry.

You did say, Mr Dotchin, that you would not have had the experience you had if this proposal had been introduced. I, with respect, do not think that is the case. I think it would have been eminently possible for you to be funded for residential training under this proposal. As we said on Monday and this morning, there is capacity in the system, even if the age stays at 30, for additional funding to be given for those in different bands - 36% of candidates in that profile currently under 30 do not train residentially, which creates capacity. 30% of those aged 30 to 40 do not train for two years residentially, which creates funding capacity. This will be perfectly possible to do.

The reason I want Synod to resist this amendment but I am content to accept Mark Tanner's amendment is the wording, "Not yet satisfactory". I think that moves us back a very long way from where we have actually come to and where the consensus is. I want us to affirm the progress that has been made, whilst acknowledging that there is still some distance to travel and dialogue needs to continue, and I accept that further scrutiny will be needed and safeguards will need to be made explicit.

We do need to be sure of the direction of travel or else we will move backwards, even as we are trying to move forward. Prolonged uncertainty would not be good for the sector as a whole. I would underline, again, that the block grant funding is distributed to dioceses not attached to individual students. Dioceses will have the capacity to make the right decisions on training for each candidate and we have the capacity, which we will do, to build in safeguards and monitoring into the system year by year.

Revd Damian Feeney (Lichfield): I speak as a former vice principal of one of our theological colleges, as well as being a parish priest and missionary in the diocese of Lichfield and a parent of a current ordinand. Nobody can say I am not trying. It seems that this debate, which is too important to be left to chance, has, in part, been

constructed in an unhelpful way prior to this meeting of Synod.

The principals of TEIs have issued a statement which provides considerable background to the consequences of implementing the strategy of GS 2020, and the Bishop of Sheffield issued a response online - I think it was last Friday. One of the contentions contained in GS 2020, that TEIs have been consulted and are in agreement with the proposed changes, does not appear to be entirely accurate. It is also unfortunate that the papers I have referred to do not formally constitute part of the resourcing of Synod on this occasion, as it is equally unfortunate that the motion was published by notice paper.

In spite of the reassurances the Bishop of Sheffield has sought to give in his response to the TEIs, there remain concerns with a number of aspects of these proposals which have been made. Emma Ineson and Mark Chapman have already mentioned the question of virements as a very real concern for those who provide IME 1.

There are also issues for courses offered by colleges with either full or partial exemptions from the Common Awards syllabus and assumptions as to how dioceses will or will not respond to these proposals as resources come under increasing pressure. There are questions regarding pathways which do not fall under Common Awards, such as the Oxford Schools Course or the Cambridge Tripos for suitably qualified candidates. Will the funding of these courses become more restricted as dioceses juggle and vire the amounts of money available for individual candidates?

For those suitably qualified candidates seeking to undertake the research as part of the formation process, how will the role of Research Degrees Panel alter from its present status? There is further concern caused by the typical admissions round which affects certain TEIs. It is already the case that completing the admissions round satisfactorily is a very difficult and challenging thing in an academic year. My fear is that these proposals will exacerbate this, placing further stress on TEIs and on dioceses and, potentially, candidates in one diocese having a variety of admission deadlines to complete.

It will not simply be dioceses who have administrative concerns in this area. It will be TEIs who will be further burdened by an inability to plan and resource strategically as final decisions about pathways and, therefore, student destinations are further delayed as students may have to apply from three separate pots of funding. I am in support of the amendment standing in Andrew Dotchin's name and I urge you to vote for it so we can have another run over the targets.

The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker): A declaration of interest, I am the Chair of the Council at Mirfield but I am not speaking in that capacity this afternoon. As longer serving Synod members know, I am by training a mathematician. My love of formulae excels anybody else's love of formulae in this room - well, possibly Canon Spence. The funding and proposals that we had before us essentially amount to a formula.

I have watched those proposals grow and develop and be nuanced and amended

through a quite extensive process of consultation over the last year and a bit, I think. We may not have got them absolutely perfect yet, but actually the search for a perfect formula I believe (a) is probably impossible, and (b) will just keep us going far too long.

What this formula is to achieve is a block grant. As the Bishop of Sheffield has said, this is not a sum of money that follows each individual ordinand. It is a block grant. What I as a Bishop will do, with however much money comes from that block grant to help me, is, with my diocesan director of ordinands and my colleagues, plan what we think, along with the candidate, is the best pathway for that individual candidate's training.

If there is enough money in the block grant to cover it, brilliant; if there is not, we are not going to muck up the future priestly ministry of the Church of England for the sake of the marginal costs over the formula figure of what it will take for us to train all those people. We will train people the way they need to be trained. For that reason, I want to resist this amendment.

The washing machine analogy, entertaining yes, but actually when I buy a washing machine or when my wife buys a washing machine, we do so with the intention - ah, but I look after the tumble dryer and the dishwasher - of not going back and buying another one for a long time. Training is about a relationship between the TEIs, the dioceses, the Ministry Division, this Synod.

Synod, scrutiny and governance do not stop today if we give this motion a fair wind going forward. They continue as they will always continue: If the formula does not work in practice, we will amend it, we will change it, we will develop it. Ten years from now, it will no doubt not look like what it does at the beginning of the first year.

But we can do that because we are a church in relationship with one another. We are the Synod so, please, let these proposals go forward. Resist Mr Dotchin's amendment. I am very happy with Canon Tanner's for the reasons the Bishop of Sheffield cites. Let us get on with it.

The Bishop of Chester (Rt Revd Dr Peter Forster): Point of order, Chairman, and to give Mr Freeman a rest! Would the Chairman take a motion for closure on this item?

The Chair: I would rather it had been Mr Freeman! But the Standing Orders do not prevent you from doing it, so that has my consent. Does it have the consent of Synod?

This motion was carried on a show of hands.

We move to vote on Item 26 and you need to appreciate from the rubric that if Item 26 is carried, then we will not debate Item 27. That is why we debated them together. So I put Item 26 to the vote.

The amendment was lost on a show of hands.

We move to Item 27 and I ask Mr Tanner to formally move his motion.

Revd Canon Mark Tanner (Universities and TEs): Thank you, Chairman. I beg to move the amendment that stands in my name as Item 27.

The Chair: Remembering what the Prolocutor said, I shall call on the Bishop of Sheffield to respond, although he may not want to. I do not know.

The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft): Thank you, Chairman, and I would like to respond, if I may, but more briefly.

Synod, as already indicated, I am very content to accept this amendment, notwithstanding the long subordinate clause it creates in the motion which is worthy of the Epistle to the Hebrews, I think.

It is vital to the Church as a whole that we affirm and value our TEs who do remarkable work and that we continue to engage them fully in this conversation and clearly the concerns remain. We are already committed to a programme of further discussion and implementation outlined in annex F. I welcome the opportunity to make that even clearer. We need to be realistic about the amount of scrutiny which the whole Synod is able to give to the fine detail of theological education and funding. I am grateful to Father Feeney for his speech. However, there were several things even in that on the detail which were incomplete or fears articulated which are not there: higher degrees, pathways, higher cost pathways, research degree panel. All that of that funding is ring-fenced clearly within the new proposals and will not be affected by them. This area, as Synod already perceives, is immensely complex in terms of the detail.

I am very content with the wording of the motion and content to bring back further reports as soon as they are available so that we can move forward with all speed, but I would caution Synod against over-scrutiny even at that stage of the smaller details.

The Bishop of Chester (Rt Revd Dr Peter Forster): Point of order, Chairman, and to give Mr Freeman a slightly longer rest. Would you take a motion for closure on this item?

The Chair: I would like to hear two speakers, I think, before so you may have to try again, Bishop, but you are in practice now. I want somebody who wants to speak against the amendment and somebody who wants to speak for the amendment.

Revd Dr Sean Doherty (London): Thank you, Chairman, for calling me for my maiden speech. My interest: as a tutor in a non-residential theological college responsible for pastoral care and training, both part-time and mixed-mode ordinands.

I share the concerns raised by several previous speakers, but I would like to mention two things which have not been mentioned so far. I have concerns about the unamended motion not because I am against the proposals but because I support them. I, too, want to see the step change in numbers and diversity of ordinands. This is not about institutional health or survival but because we are passionate about seeing that happen. But at the moment the proposals as they have come to us do not adequately address the need to resource for starters context-based training properly. I say they do

not yet address it properly because I want to place on record our gratitude to Min Div and the Bishop of Sheffield who have been open minded and highly responsive to our concerns, but if we are serious about increasing the number of vocations, mixed-mode or context-based training is one form that has shown significant growth over the last ten years, both at my institution, St Mellitus College but, lest that sounds like too much of an advert, this is flourishing in a number of other TEIs as well and we rejoice in that.

We welcome the steps taken in RME towards recognising mixed-mode training as full-time training and we would ask that we continue to work towards financial arrangements which reflect that. For example, just the other day we all nodded when the Bishop of Burnley challenged us to be more engaged with and resourcing ministry in estate churches. As the assistant clergy person in an estate-based church, as things stand, we would find it very difficult to afford a mixed-mode, context-based ordinand training with us, but I am sure we would all agree that we want people to train in those kinds of contexts and not just in well-resourced suburban middle class environments, important of course as they are to God as well. We welcome the moves towards treating mixed-mode training in this way but we need to do more.

As someone furthermore with pastoral responsibility for ordinands on a day-to-day basis, my concern here is that it will create a system where there is a lot of diversity across the Church of England without a common national framework to channel that diversity. Already within the Bishops' Regulations we have a great deal of flexibility to tailor training towards the needs and circumstances of particular ordinands and we work with that. They are, after all, the Bishops' Regulations, so let us reform them rather than abolish them.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): Point of order.

The Chair: Mr Freeman, I thought you had lost your voice.

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. Does it have the consent of Synod?

This motion was carried on a show of hands.

We move to a vote on Item 27.

The amendment was carried on a show of hands.

We move to Item 28. This is the amendment in the name of the Revd Dr Ian Paul and I invite him to speak to and move his amendment.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of five minutes.

Revd Dr Ian Paul (Southwell & Nottingham): I declare an interest which was that nearly

15 years ago I was involved in a debate about the then known Hind Report and I still bear the scars to prove it. I like eggs. I do not mean Monday night's meeting chaired by John Dunnett, I mean the things that come out of chickens. Eggs do lots of good things. It is a long time since I was a curate, but I still remember that curate's eggs do have exceedingly good parts to them. I felt that the RME, as a number of people have said, contains some really important and some excellent proposals. When the first draft statements were issued over a year ago I welcomed many of them enthusiastically. In fact, I think along with the Bishop of Sheffield, I felt rather sad to see the list of the 12 original proposals with, so often, the word "abandoned" written next to them. The Bishop of Sheffield and I actually had a bit of correspondence over the last decade about September ordinations but that one has gone, so there we go.

But amongst all the really good and important initiatives, especially the ones in encouraging vocation, I have always struggled to see exactly what the strong push to diocesan and regional decision-making is aiming to achieve. Time and again we read in the Report comments about diversity and about decentralisation. My amendment is really wanting to ask a question about the boundaries, the limits of that diversity and all that decentralisation. In his opening speech the Bishop of Sheffield said at one point, "In the current system there is no accountability and no flexibility". I can understand his reaching for hyperbole but is that really the case?

I began my involvement in theological education as a local tutor in STETS in Salisbury diocese. I currently teach as a visiting lecturer in a context-based scheme in his own Sheffield. In between I spent nearly a decade in a residential college and every summer, after Easter right through to admissions, I spent a considerable amount of my time devising flexible pathways of training, building on prior learning experience in order to meet the existing bishop's guidelines, triangulating between candidates, dioceses, bishops, DDOs and Ministry Division itself. I have asked the question several times in the last few days, what is it under the current system which cannot be done which wants to be done under the new proposals in terms of flexible training? And it has been interesting to find a diversity of answers, even amongst those who are involved in the RME process.

We are not a church of Liverpool, a church of Winchester, a church of southern Nottingham in a loose federation. We are a Church of England. Those who are ordained are ordained into the Church of England. We are partners in mission, not competitive rivals in experiments for church growth. In the Ordinal we have a shared articulation of what it means to be ordained and on good days I think this might perhaps even express a shared understanding.

My amendment is not about derailing nor about the protection of vested interests, nor looking back nor delaying, nor asking for more detailed scrutiny unnecessarily. It is about making sure that we have that shared vision. I am all for chucking out the bath water of complex and incomprehensible regulations, but my amendment is simply asking that in our enthusiastic swish we actually check we are not also throwing out the baby of the coherent national vision for formation for ministry.

As the Bishop of Sheffield said in the beginning, training is not about simply the

acquisition of a toolbox of skills for ministry in a particular context. It is about deep formation and transformation of a candidate, the start of a lifelong journey of inhabiting the theological and missional vision of the coming of the kingdom of God. Reject my amendment if you think the theological perspective is not important. If you think we must do this in parallel, please accept it. It may be the work is already being done, in which case I see no reason not to acknowledge that. I move my amendment.

The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft): Thank you, Mr Paul, for your amendment.

Synod, as indicated, I do urge you to resist it, not because I do not think this line of thought and reflection is important but because I think it adds complexity to the process. At least half of the TEI sector at present - the regional courses, context-based training - works closely with particular dioceses in each region which will of course continue in the new development. No TEI, even among the residential colleges, works with every diocese so we are not talking in this change to our funding mechanisms about a radical change in the engagement of dioceses with TEIs other than, we hope and pray, a rise in ordinands across all sectors. We are undertaking theological work already on various aspects of renewing ministerial education, including a major piece of work undertaken by a group of bishops, theologians and theological educators led by the University of Durham for the Common Awards on developing a shared understanding of ministry discipleship and Christian formation. We will happily introduce some elements into this and other processes which I hope will meet Ian's concerns, but I do not want to attach too many conditions that have to be fulfilled and then subsequently scrutinised by Synod to enable this work to move forward. Therefore I would encourage you to resist the amendment.

Revd Charlie Skrine (London): Thank you, Chairman, for calling me. I am very excited: the first time I get to speak in Synod is in a debate about how to find 50% more younger ordinands. I was the generation told to go away and grow up and I still have not and have been ordained 12 years.

I welcome a great deal in this Report and will be busting a gut to raise up that extra 50% of ordinands. My parish ministry includes work with university students and young graduates, and there is a significant number currently bothering the DDO at the moment. Thank you, that I can go back to them today and say that Synod enthusiastically wants them in the Church of England.

My concern, however, is that the funding proposals without this amendment will actually make it far harder for me to encourage them forward. The Bishop of Guildford was kind enough to say sending churches should be listened to, so I hope Synod would do me that kindness.

I know that everyone should want to be ordained and it is the best job in the world, but for many I am talking to the decision is finely balanced and a significant part of that decision is about where they will train. For many they are not two separate decisions, "Shall I be ordained?" and then much later "Shall I be trained and where?", but one choice, "Given where I will be trained, shall I go forward for selection or not?" I am

afraid I agree with Dr Paul, I do not think these proposals will lead to a great liberating freedom and devolution of choice from Church House to the diocese. I think it would take choice from DDOs and candidates deciding what is best for the candidates and place it in the world of diocesan budgets and hard financial choices. I think it will very significantly adjust the conversation between our candidates and their friendly neighbourhood DDO. I think this will make young ordinands look elsewhere.

I cannot support the motion unamended because it will make it far harder for me in parish to achieve the main goals of the Report. I would like to see a far stronger emphasis on candidates being able to choose nationally and their strong views on where they would like to train being taken into account in a clearly safeguarded way. Thank you very much.

Mr Tim Hind (Bath & Wells): There are two reasons why I want to resist this. First of all I want to support what the Bishop of Sheffield said about not overcomplicating things, but the second thing is that we have not got any financial statement on what the impact of this amendment will be and I cannot believe it will be zilch. As a slight aside, I do not like the woolly wording of this amendment which I am surprised, given it has come from Ian Paul. Either we have a common understanding or we have a catholic understanding maybe and I notice it is a small c but if it is a common catholic understanding, that is probably a tautology.

The Chair: Prolocutor?

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): I want to build slightly on Tim's point. I have just been in a meeting with Ian at which he has rightly criticised the "long grass" on some other issue, and I do not think he means to, I do not think he is somebody for the long grass, but I fear that if we do the sort of thing that Ian asks us to do, we will come back and have a debate about whether the proposals reflect the theology that we hold in light of the theology we have discussed, and we will have a different conversation about the nature of order rather than the resourcing of ministerial education. That will, as the Bishop of Sheffield says, confuse matters.

Where I share a concern with Ian, and I think it is a wider concern around Synod about the whole Renewal and Reform initiative, is that somehow we have not yet quite grasped a compelling theological vision for what we are doing, and some people want that before we start. I think what is going on, as someone said to me the other day, is a bit of tilling and digging up of the ground so we can start doing some work and discover on the journey what our theological vision is. In the light of that, I would want to ask Synod to reject Ian's proposal, recognising that both he and I will have the opportunity in Archbishops' Council to ask these tough questions that he is raising for us as well.

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. Does it have the consent of Synod?

This motion was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: We move to vote on Item 28.

Revd Dr Jason Roach (London): Can I request a count of the whole Synod?

The Chair: If 25 people stand? Yes. You have the amendment in front you, Item 28. It is a counted vote of the whole Synod. Those in favour should press '1', those against should press '2' and those who wish to record an abstention should press '3'.

The amendment was lost following a counted vote of the whole Synod. The voting was as follows:

*IN FAVOUR 154
AGAINST 202*

5 abstentions were recorded.

The Chair: We move to Item 29. I call upon Christine Corteen to speak to and move her amendment.

Mrs Christine Corteen (Salisbury): This time last year, RME report GS 1979 told us that lay ministry plays a significant part in the vision for future ministry as articulated by dioceses, the aspiration being to grow volunteer lay ministers of different kinds by 48%, and of paid ministers by 69%. We heard this morning that the proposal is for additional national funding for lay ministry education to secure rapid lay ministry development. Recently, a clergy colleague of mine said to me that even if we have clergy vocations coming out of our ears, lay ministry should be resourced in any event to ensure the incarnational functioning of the body of Christ. Those words, I have to say, were very welcome to my ears.

An increase in lay ministry is not to be seen as a way of plugging the gaps of shortfalls in ordained ministry. That should not be the factor in diocesan strategies for developing and increasing lay ministry. Yesterday, in our work and debate on evangelism, we heard that those who are at the coalface are often lay people ministering as pioneers, youth workers, family workers and many other creative, authorized ministries, to say nothing of the "lay" lay ministers who are leading Fresh Expressions.

Dioceses are being encouraged to be more intentional in increasing vocations, both lay and ordained. I would just like to quote from our GS 2020 report, page 2, paragraph 5: "Dioceses are not simply seeking replacement but a wider range of kinds of ministry, both lay and ordained". And in paragraph 6: "The change of culture which we seek and the development of a shared understanding about the place and contribution of lay people require more focused work". Let us keep this issue on the radar and request a review and report back to Synod by 2018 as to how this work is progressing and how successfully the dioceses are engaging with it. I encourage Synod to support this amendment and I so move.

The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft): I warmly welcome this amendment.

I think it is helpful to keep bringing items back to Synod and its proper scrutiny and governance. Perhaps I could say a couple of things to help. In terms of the progress since last year, those figures in the original report were taken from the dioceses' own descriptions of their aspirations in respect of lay ministry. We went back and enquired more closely what the dioceses meant by lay ministry in those figures, and we found a significant variance between what we were saying, and it seemed that further work was needed. In consequence, a Lay Ministry Working Group within Ministry Council has been established to look at this and will be reporting back to Ministry Council in December 2016, and other work will flow from that.

The other thing that is worth saying to Synod, and this is relevant to our second debate this afternoon, is that a great deal of the investment of strategic development funding flowing through the Church Commissioners has already been invested in part and full-time paid lay ministry in dioceses, or else in equipping and training lay ministers in dioceses. Work is already going on, and of course that fund is to be multiplied several times in the new Resourcing the Future arrangements that we will be debating later this afternoon. There is no understanding that the lay ministry is simply about plugging gaps, it is vital, and I welcome this emphasis for our future debate.

The Chair: Item 29 is open for debate. Does anybody wish to speak against the motion?

Mr John Freeman (Chester): Point of order: motion for closure.

The Chair: That has my consent given that nobody wishes to speak against the amendment.

This motion was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: We move to vote on Item 29.

The amendment was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: We are now back to the main motion, as amended by Items 27 and 29.

Mrs Vivienne Goddard (Blackburn): My declaration of interest is that currently I am the lay representative from this Synod on Ministry Council. Just now the Bishop of Sheffield said there is a problem in scrutiny being done by the entire Synod, and I entirely agree with that, but I think that one of the problems that we are facing is the way Ministry Council works and its make-up. It only has me to represent the entire laity and it only has Judith to represent the entire clergy, and I really feel that it would be very helpful if this were changed. I did serve on Ministry Council for the previous five years before the last five years, but it was a very different place because there were many more members of this Synod. I just do not think it is good for checks and balances to have so few folk on the council who are not staff. We do of course have four, or even five, bishops, who I suppose represent us, but there was a previous meeting when I actually asked how many people in the room had a right to vote, and it turned out to be the four bishops and me. That does not seem to me to be satisfactory. It has only been in the

last few meetings that we have even had representatives from the TEIs present at the meeting. They are now invited, and of course they can speak, but not vote. I did mention this last November, but obviously nothing has happened and the elections are due. This is not a bid for re-election – honest! I do feel that we need to extend the grass-roots membership on Ministry Council if we are to scrutinise properly and do all the work that we need to do.

The Bishop of Chelmsford (Rt Revd Stephen Cottrell): I need to declare an interest that, with the Bishop of London, I am one of the co-chairs of St Mellitus College. I want to speak in favour of this motion, but also want to make it clear that I would have had trouble speaking in favour if it had not been amended, so I really want to welcome the amendments that have been made, because I think they give us a much greater way forward, both as a Church, but also as a Synod, for the reasons that have been eloquently given.

I particularly want to speak about one area of development where I have great experience, both with St Mellitus College and in the Chelmsford Diocese, namely the development of context-based training. Over recent years this has proved to be a way of producing more ordinands; not shuffling the pack of existing ordinands but producing new ones. We need urgently to develop this as a Church and, with Ministry Division, to get the financing of this right. We really welcome the fact that they will now be treated as full-time students, but we also are anxious that some of the arrangements over payment, particularly of maintenance, have not yet been worked out. Synod, I welcome the fact that we will now be involved in that ongoing scrutiny, although of course we cannot endlessly scrutinise everything; we have to let Min Div get on with it.

The other reason I want to now speak in favour of this amended motion is I need to make a slight correction to a speech that was made earlier. People in the Church of England are not ordained into the Church of England; they are ordained into the Church of God. This is a very important theological and ecclesiological distinction. The way the Church of God works within the Church of England is through the dioceses. Dioceses need more freedom, not less freedom, to make decisions about training pathways and deployment of clergy. We need to be more experimental and more daring. I believe these proposals, as now amended, point a way forward for us doing that. Some things we try will fail, but we urgently need to be able to try new things, and context-based training is one of the ways that we are doing that. I believe there will be many others, although I do not have time to talk about them now.

Revd Preb Simon Cawdell (Hereford): On a point of order, Chair, I beg to move:

“That the question be now put.”

The Chair: I suppose so. It is getting a bit free this, is it not, with all the people? It has my consent, does it have the consent of Synod?

This motion was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: The motion was clearly carried. I call upon the Bishop of Sheffield to

respond to the debate on Item 17, as amended by Items 27 and 29.

The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft): Thank you, Synod, for an excellent, good-humoured debate. Thank you to all those who have spoken with passion and integrity, to all those who brought amendments; those that were accepted by the Synod and those that were not. It has been excellent and very helpful.

In the nature of the debate, because of so many amendments, I have responded already to quite a lot of what has been said during the afternoon, so I am not going to respond in detail to many of the remaining points, except to say two things. First to Mrs Goddard, and her advocacy of the scrutiny of the Ministry Council, personally, I would support that greater scrutiny and that richer representation. I think we will look at that as a council when the new council is elected and see how that evolves.

Then if I could come back to the very helpful speech made by Jonathan Alderton-Ford at the beginning of the debate, commending this as a good way forward, wanting more time for reflection, which I hope the Mark Tanner amendment has now given, but arguing persuasively, as I argued in my opening speech, that we need a new model of trust and relationship to grow in the way that we think together as a whole Church about ministerial training, and, in particular, the way in which the hopes and aspirations of dioceses connect with the hopes and aspirations of the Church nationally, and connect with the training that is offered through our theological education institutions.

Trust is easily lost and only grows slowly. I welcome the measures we have taken this afternoon to ensure fuller consultation and debate, greater scrutiny and the slow building of trust. I still hope that we will be able to keep to our original timetable for implementation, but we will need to do some more work and consult with those who need to have further conversations to estimate just how long this further conversation will take. We will update everyone as soon as we can.

We return to where we began. Our vision is for a hopeful, confident, outward looking Church with a vibrant, diverse, growing and flourishing ministry. The proposals before us this afternoon will help us greatly to move in this direction. I move the motion, as amended, and urge you to support it. Thank you.

The Chair: We now vote on Item 17, as amended by Amendments 27 and 29.

The motion

'That this Synod:

- (a) reaffirm the five objectives set out in GS 1979 for achieving the vision of a growing church with a flourishing ministry;*
- (b) note that work on Resourcing Ministerial Education and on enhancing quality in all stages of ministerial development, set out in GS 2020, contributes to these objectives;*

- (c) *welcome the proposed new funding arrangements for initial ministerial education, agreed by the Archbishops' Council following wide consultation, set out in GS 2020 and, recognising the vital contribution of TElS and the importance of their full involvement in developing with dioceses a shared understanding of ministry and ministerial education and in implementing as set out in Annex F of GS 2020 the funding arrangements, request the Archbishops' Council to report to the Synod by July 2017 on progress towards achieving these objectives;*
- (d) *request the Archbishops' Council to report back to the Synod by July 2018 on the progress being made to secure both a step change in the number of ordinands and continuing improvement in their quality and deployability; and*
- (e) *request the Archbishops' Council to report back to the Synod by July 2018 on the progress made by dioceses to secure a step change in both the number and variety of authorised lay ministries.'*

was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair. That concludes this item of business.

THE CHAIR: *The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker)* took the Chair at 4.03 pm

Renewal and Reform: Resourcing the Future (GS 2021)

The Chair. Synod, will you take your seats again as we move on to the last substantive item of this group of sessions. This is Item 18, for which you will need GS 2021. Apologies, in the title of this on the yellow order paper it is down as Resourcing Ministerial Education again. This is not groundhog day. We have done that. This is Resourcing the Future.

You will also need to pay attention to the financial comment on this item that is at paragraph 20 on the Sixth Notice Paper, along with all the other financial notices we have been looking at during the course of this week. This is a 'take note' debate so there are no amendments possible to the motion. Canon John Spence is going to introduce it. He has ten minutes to do so.

Canon Dr John Spence (ex officio): I beg to move:

'That the Synod do take note of this Report.'

Well, it has been an interesting afternoon, and what has got into the House of Bishops? We actually had one bishop offering to give a lay person a rest, which I thought was terrific really; while another beside me declared a love of formulae and spreadsheets, which my experience of the House of Bishops has always been there has been a very strong correlation between spreadsheets and glazed eyes.

This debate stems from the synodical decision a year ago to approve the proposals of Resourcing the Future in principle, but ask that we bring back the detailed proposals prior to implementation for further scrutiny. I think you will see the progress that has been made during the last 12 months in developing very detailed work. I give my thanks and pay tribute to all the members of staff who have been involved and to all the members of this Synod and at diocesan level across the country. I must particularly thank Philip James who has been really pivotal in that whole process.

To remind you, if we go back, we had previously a Darlow Formula which, while well-intentioned and had stood the test of time over a period, no longer seemed to be doing the job intended. It was opaque, it penalised success and enabled the subsidisation of old models, because if you actually tried to change things you were likely to lose flows of funding. We went out in that famous diocesan consultation over the winter of 2013 - you have heard about this endlessly - and we were told almost universally that dioceses wanted to grow.

They wanted to reverse the trends of the past. They saw an urgent need to do so. In order to do so they needed to unlock the talents of lay people, which we talked about earlier. They needed to find younger and a more diversified force of priests in greater numbers, which we have been talking about just now. They needed to create strategic capacity, to really develop strategies, and they needed a flow of funds that would support that process. That, of course, enabled us to have a great debate about what good growth looks like. I will always be grateful to Adrian Newman, the Bishop of Stepney, who held me to the fire on that piece, actually.

We have an understanding now that good growth is that which is holistic, it is spiritual, it is based on discipleship, which is universal, which can be seen in every part of the Church in every community in this land, particularly those with the lowest incomes - and I will come back to that; thirdly, which is sustainable, where the growth becomes that which is self-standing over time and does not need further external funding.

We moved forward on that and the first piece was to really think about those low income communities. We went outside in order to get objective challenge as to what would be good definitions of low income communities. That has now been done. Why are they particularly important? It is not necessarily because the spiritual need is greater. We would be well aware of some very high income communities where the Church could do a great job over and above what it is doing already. It is more the challenge that there is less likely to be the infrastructure or volunteering support of senior professional support of particular skills. There may be many willing volunteers but the mix may not be what it would be elsewhere. So 50% of the funding becomes hypothecated on the basis that it will be used in those low income communities. The funding goes to the dioceses based on their share of that piece, according to those externally agreed formulae and measures.

What then about the desire to be intentional in investment and growth? That was the next piece. We have been working with dioceses throughout the last two years, where they have asked us to do so, in helping them think through the strategic challenges that

they have and how they develop a coherent strategy which is consistent with the achievements of their own ambition. This is back again to what I said this morning, enabling and facilitating and supporting. That will continue.

We have already used funding streams to release resource both from inside the Church and outside, where dioceses have asked us, in order that they can create those strategies. It is then that you seek to do the intentional investment and growth in particular places or across particular sectors of the world which are in line with that strategic thinking.

That is where the other 50% of the funding will come through, approximately £20 million per annum, which can be spent according to the ways in which dioceses wish to really change things, to really express the urgency that we all feel about creating a different demographic pattern and the growth of this wonderful institution, the Church of God.

That is, as you have heard, something of which we already have experience through the strategic development funding work stream, fund flows which have been part of the current triennium and administered through a liaison between the Archbishops' Council and the Church Commissioners which is called the Spending Review Task Force. That has been a very good learning piece and it has led to some of the projects that you will be able to read about in your papers, which are underway.

We now have the very detailed proposals. Core to these, as we heard this morning, is the creation of the peer review process. We have already begun to ask dioceses to nominate people who can be trained to be part of that peer review process. It will be critical that we get the balance right between a group of people who are well trained and to ask enough to be able to hold the dioceses to account for their plans and for their spending without creating an onerous bureaucracy.

Key to this will be the fact that those people come from each of your dioceses. Over the period of the next two triennia, we would hope that every diocese has had participation in the peer review process with members on it; that they have the real experience of being on the ground doing the things that everybody is doing in a parish and diocese; and that, in that mutuality, they, yes, achieve accountability, they achieve mutual learning, they achieve that sense of the Church of God through its different dioceses working in unity and cohesion.

It is a risk. It is a risk because it is a new way of working and we will all learn from it as we go along and we will need to be ready to modify and touch pieces. It will be underpinned by a secretariat who do the quality control process in here. I believe that with that going on our side it will be a very rich pattern for the future and far better than the alternative, which would have been things coming through to this place alone.

We have talked about the urgency. One of the wonderful things about being in this Synod is to understand the near unanimity there is about the desire to grow this Church again, to attack those trends of the past, to achieve that real burst of acceleration and growth among the younger demographic groups and parts of the community we do not reach. Critical to that has been the work we have been doing with the Church Commissioners, under the aegis that you gave us, to look at releasing funds for

transitional funding so that we could move to the full impact of these funding flows from 1 January 2017.

I reported to the last Synod in November that dialogue with the Church Commissioners was underway. After two periods of scrutiny from them, lasting about four hours in total, I think, they agreed in principle in November to that, subject to us agreeing further detailed measures of how we will chart the success of these funding streams. That is a piece of work which we are now embarked on. We will look forward to taking proposals to the Church Commissioners during March. Their final sign-off date for the whole of the funding flow has to be at their AGM in June. That should enable us to have absolute certainty as to where we are going. It will also coincide with them having had the results of their triennial actuarial review so that they know the totality of their spending plans. We are working in anticipation of such an agreement being achieved. That is a risk but it is right to do so.

It takes me on to the third risk, ladies and gentlemen, which is that we then have to achieve a flow of propositions which can be gone through the quality process here but then which receive the agreement and support of the peer review groups across the country in such a flow as to take up that full flow of funding.

Let me remind you, 50% will go to the dioceses as of right. I expect that to be spent and we will be able to monitor how it is spent. It is the other 50% where we will need a step change in the flow of such proposals coming forward, proposals which need to be strategic of nature. We are talking about investments which we believe will typically, but not always, be above £300,000 to £500,000 and maybe a million pounds or more, those coming through on an annual basis.

I am very conscious there will always be a gap between the funding being agreed and your ability to start the actual work, which is why I lay such emphasis to every one of you about the importance now of developing your diocesan proposals in line with your diocesan strategies so that we can have a flow of stuff coming through. It is why the peer group must be ready to start work very soon. Ladies and gentlemen, I have spoken for too long but you understand the complexity. I commend the Report to you and ask you to have a very good debate.

The Chair. Thank you. This item is open for debate.

Mr Keith Cawdron (Liverpool): I need to declare an interest as a former diocesan secretary of the diocese of Liverpool. We do rather get everywhere. That was many years ago, during which time the diocese of Liverpool received, I think, the highest or second highest level of funding from central funds. I do have to say that I resent when it is suggested that what we were doing in spending that money was subsidising decline. So far as we were concerned, we were sustaining the ministry and mission of the Church in its most deprived areas and we do ourselves no favours if we promote good proposals for change by belittling what has gone before.

We are to have a grant scheme. That is fine. I have no problems with that. I have applied for a lot of grants in my time and, frankly, I am rather good at it. You see, I

know how to learn the rules of the game, whichever game it is, and then play by them. I have seen the consequences that can arise from a new grant scheme and for that reason I want to offer a warning and ask for vigilance.

Let me explain the sort of thing that I mean. If you look on the document that is annexed, you find, for example, that, "The concern is to test that a diocese is fully committed to its proposal, whether it flows from its longer-term strategy." Well, I was struck by those sorts of lines because you then need, obviously, if you are going to ask if those criteria are met, to test that a diocese is fully committed; then, you need to say what kind of information, where we need to ask for it, let us make sure we assess everybody equally.

What I am concerned about is we will develop a new ecclesiastical industry of writing and assessing proposals. We will start producing checklists: "Has your plan been to the diocesan Synod? Good, but that was four years ago. Should it not be going again? Does it cover X and Y areas that we require? Does it arise from your long-term strategy? Let us see your long-term strategy. Let us make sure it meets our requirements." A few paragraphs by an archdeacon on the back of a fag packet will not cut it.

What we then end up doing is we say you need to be ticking boxes. Later on, if you turn over you will find there is going to be a request for evidence, evidence, evidence. We have all, or many of us, have come across that: We request for evidence, it means we have got to be able to see it, paperwork. "Send us in the paperwork that shows the evidence that we are looking for. Tick the box. Find the evidence. Show us the paperwork. Where is your policy on X item or Y item" - the cry of Ofsted and Care Quality Commission inspectors in our time and, frankly, one of the most pernicious developments, in my view, of our day and much damage have they done. Alternatively, "But we did not get a grant for our application but the diocese of X did. Oh, who wrote their application? Oh, can we get that person in? They clearly know how to play the game."

This is not a job application. When Liverpool got European funding, in which I was involved, I was told that you could tell which consultant had prepared which different application. We do not need a new priesthood with expertise in grant writing and criteria meeting.

These consequences that I have suggested are not inevitable. They do not have to happen, but we do need vigilance and to watch what is happening. Canon Spence has just given assurances, sincerely meant, I know, that these things will not be allowed to happen, but it is so easy to find that they do when we start digging into the detail. I am requesting, asking, urging, for close monitoring to make sure that we do not get the development of that kind of industry as an unintended consequence of these otherwise excellent proposals.

The Bishop of Durham (Rt Revd Paul Butler): I warmly welcome this Report and trust that we will take note of it. In doing so, can I first thank the staff of Church Commissioners for the way in which they have conducted the consultations with the

dioceses. Our experience in Durham has been entirely positive and, indeed, the way in which they have conducted themselves and helped us with strategic development funding in the current round suggests that the previous speaker's concerns should not worry him too much.

However, my main point is to turn to the extra Church Commissioners' funding and paragraph 19. I am delighted that the Church Commissioners have agreed that they are prepared to break the inter-generational equity. I had hoped that it might be a slightly higher figure than it is, but it is a plea which they have had from me in writing, as has the Archbishops' Council. If we are taking funds from the future generations, then it is those future generations in whom this money should primarily be invested in the present. I had hoped that the Church Commissioners themselves might have made one of the conditions that over 50% of such released money would be given to work amongst children and families, young people and young adults. I sincerely hope that the Archbishops' Council will in their considerations make sure that this is the priority that is given. My own children are now all in the 20s bracket. They I would include in this taking from their future. They happen to all be involved in Church life, for which I am deeply grateful to God. They are all committed to Church growth. They need support and help to reach their peers so, please, could we make sure that we do break the inter-generational equity but invest it in the generations for whom that money is intended.

Mrs Carolyn Graham (Guildford): I support the aims of Resourcing the Future but have some concerns about whether the arrangements for appointing the peer review panel will ensure that it is sufficiently diverse. I am aware that progress has been made to improve the composition of various groups and I welcome that. However, I note that the arrangements for the peer review panel are as follows - and I am paraphrasing slightly - dioceses will be invited to nominate peer reviewers; the Archbishops' Council may also nominate a small number; if more than around 20 people are nominated, the Council will seek to agree the composition of the pool seeking to provide some balance.

I am concerned that restricting nominations mainly to the dioceses in this way is likely to achieve geographical diversity but possibly not much more. This is partly because of similarity bias. Studies show that people are much more likely to appoint people who are similar to themselves, and also talented people with valuable experience, particularly lay people, are likely to be overlooked because they are just not that well known at diocesan level, even though they may well have relevant skills. I therefore suggest that the team casts their net wider and perhaps encourages individuals from under-represented groups to put their own names forward.

I am emphasising the importance of diversity partly because studies show that diverse groups make better decisions, even when compared to high achieving homogenous groups, are more likely to be creative and to challenge each other's opinions and in this way achieve better outcomes. I have to say in my own job outside Church I have certainly found that diverse groups are often much livelier but are often also much more effective. A diverse panel is also more likely to contain people with a variety of experience and so with a good understanding of issues arising in different communities and different traditions. For example, a team gathering learning from projects in a

multiracial community is likely to be more effective if it has members of more than one ethnicity and, equally, a team reviewing projects in different church traditions is likely to be more effective if it contains members from a variety of traditions. It also seems to me that if we are going to say that our mission as a Church is to the whole country, that God loves everyone, it might help evangelism if when people look at us they see all sorts of different people, including people like themselves active and valued in every part of the Church.

I would therefore ask the committee to look again at the proposals for appointing members of the panel and prioritise diversity to ensure it has members from different traditions with as many women as men, lay people as well as clergy, and people with disabilities, and of different ages, backgrounds, sexualities and ethnicities. In this way I hope a peer review panel can be appointed which is representative of the Church and has a range of experience to best ensure accountability and mutual learning.

Revd Canon Professor Paul Fiddes (Ecumenical Representatives): Thank you, Chairman, for calling an ecumenical voice. This guidance note is exciting. It promises to release resources for the mission of the Church in the poorest regions. It intends to provide funds for investing in new Church growth. It opens up a future in which the diocese can be more flexible about mission, responding more freely and quickly to need and opportunity. I hope then that my enthusiasm, and your enthusiasm, will not be dented if I ask for a little more attention to the theological golden nugget that we are given under the heading “The Vision” near the beginning of the note by the Archbishops’ Council. We read there about the process of renewing the Church which will result in, I quote, “a growing Church in every region and for every generation, open to everyone in England, building up the body of Christ through committed disciples and working for the common good”. That is well said, but I would like to ask some theological questions.

What is the Church envisioned here which is open to all people and which makes the body of Christ visible in any particular place? Is it just the Church of England or is it as far as might be possible the whole Church of Christ Catholic or, as Canon Spence made clear, the Church of God? If it is that, I wonder whether the vision can really be carried through without a partnership in mission with other Christian confessions. When a vision goes on to speak of the common good, does this have in mind the kingdom of God which is the work of the Spirit much wider than the Church and in which the Church is called to co-operate? That would mean that this vision cannot become actual without those of goodwill in other faith traditions. Of course there are many projects of the Church of England on the local level which are based on just this kind of partnership. Bishops, I know, will be using the new discretion given them to support projects which have an ecumenical and inter-faith dimension within the local community, but I wonder whether it might be possible to express something of this in a national strategy document in order to encourage such local developments. Perhaps something of the strategy being developed at the moment by CCU on the new local framework for covenant partnerships could be included in an overall strategy. Perhaps the criteria of evaluation to be used by the review panel listed at the end of the guidance note might include effective co-operation with other confessions and other faiths for the sake of the Church and the kingdom. Perhaps the pool of reviewers itself might contain some from other churches and even community leaders of other religions as our last speaker has

just emphasised by talking about diversity. Surely that is walking together, that is a risk, but then my own Church has used this phrase “walking together” in its covenant ecclesiology for some four centuries and traditionally this expression has been completed with the phrase “walking in ways already known and ways to be made known”. That is walking together into God’s future.

Revd Dr Jason Roach (London): A few years ago a man was born who was passionate, gifted, with an idea, and his idea, he thought, could be a catalyst for growth in the Church but he had two problems: the first was the culture was deeply sceptical of his plan; the second was he did not have the money to put it into practice, and so someone took a chance on this man. His name was Humphrey Monmouth, and he had heard about this man’s ambition and he took a risk to provide and to partner with him so that he could focus on his plan. Now Humphrey could not know the fruit of the risk that he took. There would have been huge pressure on him to save his money, huge pressure on him to invest wisely and yet he took a chance for the good of the nation. That young man’s name was William Tyndale and his work lit a flame that still burns brightly in this, our, generation.

I want to wholeheartedly support the efforts of the Archbishops’ Council and encourage the Church Commissioners perhaps to think of themselves as acting courageously as patrons, albeit anonymously, but encouraging dioceses to act as patrons who supported Jesus and who supported Paul and who supported Tyndale and others. There will be huge pressure to save, huge pressure to invest in ways that seem wise and not risk-taking but by taking this kind of risk for the good of the nation by God’s grace we might light many more candles for the future.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

Revd Sarah Schofield (Lichfield): Thank you, Chairman, for the chance to make a maiden speech, which is actually a maiden technical question rather than a speech. I was until last week a trustee of the diocese of Lichfield Church Urban Fund joint venture and, as an inner city priest with 19 years’ experience, I welcome the focus on areas of economic deprivation that this new agenda takes forward and it is why I stood for General Synod. I just want to ask the question, and I hope the answer is yes but I want to ask it, what is the role of the Church Urban Fund? You have significant expertise, you have enabled me to grow the mission and outreach of my parish like no other organisation. What is the role of their expertise in this process?

Canon Phillip Blinkhorn (Manchester): As Chair of the DBF, if I do not declare an interest then the Board will be quite right to sack me next time round in couple of weeks. Manchester has been one of the largest recipients on the Darlow Formula and it pays for at least a quarter of our clergy. It recognises our comparative lack of historic resources and our socio-economic complexion. It is a vital resource in funding mission. It does not subsidise paperclips in Church House. So do turkeys vote for Christmas? Most assuredly, yes.

I welcome these proposals and I am absolutely in favour of us having to be accountable for the funding we receive, for having to think deeply about what we, as a diocese, fund.

We do need to put into place systems that can show clearly what the results of that funding have been, and in saying that I acknowledge that sometimes we will not have the results we prayed for and they will have to stop or change things that we did want to do, but that is life. A personal view is that our Church is creative. We have new ideas. We put them into action, but we are very bad at letting them die when they do not work out. We leave them in a half-life that helps nobody. We all need to be accountable, however uncomfortable that is.

One plea: as our dioceses set about to change management process - and I divert there and I say "change management", although Bishops' Council did not really like that because it is management language, so we called it "transformation" - I have become aware of our lack of strategic capacity, the professional expertise to help with change management and resourcing strategic thinking and planning. I thought we could do it ourselves but it is not so. We just do not have enough resource to achieve the velocity and the pace we need. Our diocese cannot afford to do this on its own. I would like to see more dedicated resource to help with thinking and delivery from the centre and not just with helping funding. This needs to be long term. We need partners.

Lastly, ten years is an awful long time. Even for the C of E, it is a long time. For some of us, it is a lifetime. It is a legacy. It is two Synods. Six years, please.

Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark): For this purpose I declare my interest as a trustee of Together Southwark, the joint venture with Southwark diocese and Church Urban Fund, and the Salmon Youth Centre in Bermondsey, a Christian youth club. I want to pay tribute to John Spence for his amazing and inspiring leadership in this matter and I wish this matter well and I hope that we will enthusiastically take note.

He has asked us and challenged us as to where the money might be spent and where the project might come from, and I would suggest very strongly that many of the answers to that question lie in the excellent work of the Evangelism Task Group which we heard about on Monday particularly, and I endorse what the Bishop of Durham said, in work with evangelism amongst young people and enabling them to witness to their peers they are the best evangelists for that group, work particularly in unpopular, deprived poorer areas, whatever word you like to call, urban and rural. We must try and find a way of encouraging the growth and ministerial leadership in all parts and if this means more contextual-based training, then so be it. Let it happen. We need to make, as is a major theme from the Evangelism Task Group - which of course is one of the personal priorities there from Archbishop Justin, again great leadership that he is showing - the importance of making witness and evangelism central to all we do.

I really commend this work to the Synod and hope that we will give it a strong message of support and wish John well in his continued negotiations with the Archbishops' Council and the Church Commissioners. Thank you for all you are doing, John.

Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford): Chairman, I cautiously welcome these proposals. I think they are excellent in their aims, but I am standing to speak on behalf of some of the poorer parishes and some of the richer dioceses. It was an election pledge I made to be a voice for those parishes from deprived areas that often do not have a voice

because they do not think people want to hear, and I know we have heard many stories here in this chamber of urban priority areas where we want to focus our resource.

I come from a parish called Littlemore. I often think of Oliver Twist: "Please, Sir, can I have a little more", and that is how it often feels. We are part of an area which scores on the multiple deprivation indices, we are in the 20% most deprived areas in England, surrounded by areas which are in the 10th percentile. It is very hard. You might ask why I am there. I sought refuge there about eight or nine years ago when I felt I had to move churches, and I got the warmest, most embracing and healing touch by being there. I could use my gifts. I often lead worship from my violin as there is no organist often.

It was when they asked me to be treasurer I started to gulp. I looked at our yearly accounts, what little there was of them, and realised that of our £24,000 income each year, £18,000 went on our diocesan share, leaving us £6,000 to pay an insurance bill for a Grade II listed building of around £3,000, therefore leaving us £3,000 to do the rest. I am sure that is a story that many of you know. The trouble is it had been like that for many, many years, and although we have now changed that quite dramatically and we have looked at new ways of resourcing the parish share, what we have had is a lack of investment for many, many years. Before many of you rush and say, "Look, there's all sorts of things you can apply for", you need people to help apply. You need vision among the laity as well as among very over-stretched clergy. We have some of the highest numbers of marriages, baptisms and funerals in our parish. We are certainly connecting, but we have a building that is completely unfit for purpose.

I applied for some of the Church Commissioners' funds when I first arrived and received money for what I called the "new kitchen". That was a fridge, a coffee machine and a water carrier, so that my elderly ladies did not have to walk to a standpipe 100 yards down the road. I tried to get a Portaloo but that was a little bit too much for a listed building. We have no toilet. That again may not be new to you, but in an urban priority area, where you are doing a lot of baptisms and marriages, that is a real hindrance to mission. The odd £10,000 or £15,000, which is terribly welcome, will not help us there. We have started to look at trying to get English Heritage Lottery funding, but that is far too much. When we look at these proposals, please remember those poor parishes in rich dioceses that need to be monitored to ensure they do not lose out.

Revd Stewart Fyfe (Carlisle): The Resourcing the Future agenda delights my heart. It is high time that we invest in growth, and it is entirely proper to prioritise the poorest communities in this land. As a rural vicar, I am also very pleased to see a reference to rural poverty. Cumbria, where I minister, ranks in EU poverty tables alongside parts of Bulgaria as one of the poorest regions in Europe. Rural poverty is usually hidden. It is less often recorded, as people rely on friends and family, and find it harder to access help such as benefits or food banks. In dividing up our support to the poorer communities, we must remember that global statistics will not tell the whole story of rural poverty. It is also important when resourcing growth in rural areas to note the need to work smaller scale, and with greater creativity.

In Carlisle, we have a strategy to enhance rural mission in the face of a declining budget

and declining numbers of stipendiary clergy. It is radical, creative and inspiring, but so radical and creative a vision also is going to make huge demands of clergy and parishioners as they learn to operate in a radical new way. They are operating in an increasingly complex environment, often with little support or equipping. We should pay tribute to these heroes and heroines and support their creativity. Their efforts inevitably affect fewer people but they can transform whole communities. Since we believe in the sacred value of every soul, let us make sure that we do not under-value creative projects in rural areas, simply because they are, necessarily, smaller in scale, and let us make sure that we take into account the complexities of rural poverty.

Let us support this motion wholeheartedly, but let us also take note of the need for a deep understanding of mission in rural areas so that we can enable them, too, to flourish.

Revd Barry Hill (Leicester): I have a couple of interests to declare. With colleagues, I led a process for a first tranche of teacher development funding, and we got almost £1 million, and I think I have been nominated as one of the peer reviewers as well. I just wanted to speak briefly from our experience of going through that process, just to maybe allay some of the fears of earlier speakers. It was one of genuine discernment. It was probably the most rigorous bidding process that many of us had been part of, but it was not onerous, and I think it was far better because it was rigorous. Where we have ended up is closer to where God is calling us than where we started, and for that we are indebted to the Spending Plans Task Group and to Philip James and the team in particular.

I guess if I were to add one gentle critique, it is probably to stand with the words of the Bishop of Durham. I wonder if we might go a little bit further and a little bit faster, probably a little bit further in particular. I hear the point of Jayne Ozanne, the money we have in the Church of England is not fairly distributed, and it is not also locally distributed, but we have an awful lot of it. We are loaded. I think it was Sam Wells who said the biggest problem the Church faces is dealing with the “superabundance of God’s goodness”. We have an awful lot and - dare I say - I wonder if we could spend a little more of the family silver now to ensure that the generations that I grew up with and those who are younger come to know the redeeming love of Christ and their communities transformed, rather than find that we are a very wealthy Church in some decades to come, but with not many people around us.

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 approval. Does it have the approval of Synod?

This motion was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: That is clearly carried. Therefore we come to Canon Spence responding.

Canon Dr John Spence (ex officio): What a fabulous debate. Thank you, ladies and

gentlemen, for all the words of encouragement. I have Philip standing beside me so that I can try and remember all the points you have made.

To Keith Cawdron, thank you. You have pointed out absolutely the risks that we could face. We do need to be vigilant to make sure this process works well. I did not mean to imply that every diocese subsidised decline. I merely observed that, in the view of our own officers, this process enabled it.

The Bishop of Durham and Barry Hill, the final speakers, both raised the issue about intergenerational equity. We just did not feel it was right to, at this immediate time, put in a formula that said 50% has to be around younger people. We will take particular note of these proposals, and of the propositions coming forward, and, clearly, where they address whole communities, including younger people, that will be a strong argument in their favour. I must make clear that the agreement in principle the Church Commissioners have given addresses all that they have been asked. We have not asked them for more than they have accorded us, and I am hugely grateful to them for their consideration. If and when there is another proposition which is developed to the point where it is right to go to the Church Commissioners to seek further support, which might, for instance, happen should we see that increased flow of ordinands coming through (but we cannot go until we see it) then we shall begin that dialogue. Always remember the scale of the decision it would be for the Church Commissioners to break the intergenerational equity which is written into their founding documents.

To Carolyn Graham, that is an excellent point about diversity. Nobody would want us to have diversity at the expense of ability, but I think it is critical that we have a peer review group which represents the face of the Church. It is not that we are limited to a number. I think what we should do, Philip, and I am making up policy now - he hates it when I do this, you know - is see what comes through in terms of diocesan nominations, and then seek to balance that by reaching out, possibly beyond the Church, but certainly out into under-represented parts so we do not just have the ability; we have the diversity as well.

To Professor Fiddes a gold star for taking me by surprise. I would not have predicted that contribution to the debate, and I am afraid I will need to consult with colleagues about how far we can go. Of course, we all applaud the principle of different Churches of Christ walking and working together in their communities to maximise their impact. I think we need to give consideration to some of your particular points.

No fewer than four speakers raised the issue about rural and urban deprivation and low incomes. To Sarah Schofield I can give you the reassurance that should a diocese wish to liaise with the Church Urban Fund, and sponsor a proposal involving both parties, that will be warmly received.

To Jayne Ozanne I would say you do come from a rich diocese, Jayne, so rich that you have never had any Darlow Funding, which does leave one with the view that there may be funds within the diocese that could be used to help. Should you as a diocese wish to put forward a proposal aimed at helping communities such as the one in which you work, for the first time you can do so, where you could not have done so before.

I absolutely agree with Stewart Fyfe from Carlisle about the need to recognise rural

poverty and, again, if you have something so creative and exciting that you might even need some help in developing the proposal to the point that you have a proposal, come and talk to us. We are there absolutely to help.

Adrian Greenwood, thank you very much for your kind words. To Phillip Blinkhorn, thank you. You feel that it is a long time to have ten years of transition. I would stress that the transition of ten years will only apply to the two dioceses left which have the greatest reliance on it. What we wanted to do was to enable everyone to walk forward together in confidence knowing that we had addressed every concern. I believe we have. Jason Roach, thank you for the historical perspective and for the encouragement to take risk.

I have taken great encouragement from this debate. I have taken succour from your understanding of the work that has been going on. We will now proceed with full steam. I urge every one of you to apply pressure on your dioceses to come forward with those strategies, and with the propositions that ensure the funding that we have worked so hard to put in place gets properly spent, starting next year - which means proposals now.

Thank you, Synod. I go home with an even greater spring in my step than usual. The trouble is if I get a spring in my step, and walk fast, I usually walk into a wall. Thank you very much.

The Chair. I therefore now put Item 18 to the vote.

The motion

'That the Synod do take note of this Report.'

was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair. That brings us to the end of Item 18. Can I next thank Chemin Neuf, which has been leading the continuous praying presence during the course of today. I think we have had a good Synod, and I am sure the fact that we are now constantly supported by prayer all the time we are in here doing our business has a major part to play in that. Having thanked them, that completes the business of the group of sessions, and I therefore call upon the Archbishop of Canterbury to prorogue us.

Prorogation

The Archbishop of Canterbury prorogued the Synod

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