

Report of Proceedings 2013

**General Synod
November Group of Sessions**

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Full Synod: First Day Monday 18 November 2013

THE CHAIR *The Archbishop of Canterbury (The Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby)* took the Chair at 1.45 p.m.

The Prolocutor of the Lower House of the Convocation of Canterbury (Ven. Christine Hardman (Southwark)) led the Synod in prayer.

Introduction of New Members

The Chair: In a moment I will read out the names of the new members of the Synod. Would they please 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: Ms Christina Baron (Bath and Wells) replacing the late Dr Cherida Stobart; Revd Mark Barker (Rochester) replacing Revd Dr John Perumbalath; Mrs Heather Black (York) replacing Mr Richard Brown; Revd Dr Hannah Cleugh (Durham and Newcastle Universities) replacing Revd Dr Miranda Threlfall-Holmes; Revd Canon Julie Conalty (Rochester) replacing Revd Canon Gordon Oliver; Ven. Michael Everitt (Blackburn) replacing Revd Peter Law-Jones; Revd Amanda Fairclough (Liverpool) replacing Revd Jacqui Stober; Revd Dr Gulnar Francis-Dehqani (Peterborough) replacing Ven. Christine Allsopp; Rt Revd Julian Henderson, the Bishop of Blackburn, replacing Rt Revd Nicholas Reade; Canon Elizabeth Holdsworth (Peterborough) replacing Dr Dennis Allsopp; Revd Paul Hutchinson (York) replacing Revd Andrew Howard; Canon Dr Adanna Lazz-Onyenobi (Manchester) replacing Mr James Townsend; Ven. Jonathan LLoyd (Europe) replacing Revd Canon Dr Gary Wilton; Revd George Newton (Guildford) replacing Ven. Julian Henderson; Revd Richard Poole (Chichester) replacing Revd Alastair Cutting; Canon John Spence (*appointed*) replacing Andrew Britton as Chair of the Finance Committee; Rt Revd Dr David Thomson, the Bishop of Huntingdon (Ely), replacing the Bishop of Dudley; Rt Revd David Walker, the Bishop of Manchester, replacing Rt Revd Nigel McCulloch; Revd Marcia Wall (Manchester) replacing Revd Canon Sarah Bullock. May we greet them all? (*Applause*)

I should also mention that Rt Revd Dr David Thomson (Bishop of Huntingdon) is acting as commissary in the diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich.

I will now read out the names of the bishops who are attending this group of sessions because the diocesan see is vacant. I remind members that these bishops have the right to speak but not to vote and do not form part of the quorum for the House of Bishops. That sounds like a slightly horizontal comment! Again, would they please stand in their places when I mention their names and remain standing so that we can greet them with applause together?

The bishops attending this group of sessions are the Bishop of Jarrow (Rt Revd Mark Bryant) for the diocese of Durham; the Bishop of Taunton (Rt Revd Peter Maurice) for the diocese of Bath and Wells; the Suffragan Bishop in Europe (Rt Revd David Hamid) for the diocese of Gibraltar in Europe; the Bishop of Ludlow (Rt Revd Alistair McGowan) for the diocese of Hereford; and the Bishop of Warrington (Rt Revd Richard Blackburn) for the diocese of Liverpool. May we greet them all? (*Applause*)

Progress of Measures and Statutory Instruments

The Chair: I am required to report to the Synod as follows: that the Clergy Discipline (Amendment) Rules 2013; the Clergy Discipline Appeal (Amendment) Rules 2013; the Ecclesiastical Judges, Legal Officers and Others (Fees) Order 2013; the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2013 and the Legal Officers (Annual Fees) Order 2013 have been laid before Parliament.

The Dioceses of Bradford, Ripon and Leeds and Wakefield Reorganization Scheme 2013 was confirmed by Her Majesty in Council on 9 October 2013. The Archbishop of York has announced his intention that the appointed day for the purposes of the Scheme should be 20 April 2014, Easter Day. For the convenience of members, the matters I have reported will be set out in a notice paper.

THE CHAIR *Revd Canon Dr Rosemarie Mallett (Southwark)* took the Chair at 2.05 p.m.

Presentation

The Archbishop of Canterbury (The Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby): A few months ago the Business Committee requested the inclusion of a presentation of Archbishops' activity to Synod, as an experiment. The activity is not an experiment; the report is the experiment! If the Synod feels it to be of no value, no doubt it will tell the Business Committee, who will discontinue us. (*Laughter*)

The last couple of months have seen the terrible atrocities in Peshawar and Nairobi and the typhoon in the Philippines. The first was aimed at an Anglican church; the second deeply affected Anglicans, among others. I offered to visit both. The Primate of Pakistan felt that that would not be helpful in the light of the security situation at the time. I was able to get, fleetingly, to Nairobi for a condolence visit, where I had an emotional and warm welcome from Archbishop Wabukala.

In the light of the terrible casualties in Peshawar, I hope that the Synod is happy if on behalf of us all I send a further message of support to our suffering sisters and brothers in Pakistan.

The attacks in Pakistan are amongst many which have been afflicting Christians around the world. Many parts of the Anglican Communion are suffering greatly and the Synod will, I trust, acknowledge both the suffering and courage of many of our sister and brother Churches in places like Nigeria. The issue of how we support each other and how we understand and confront violent attacks in the light and grace of Christ is certainly one of the greatest of our age.

Earlier this month I was at the World Council of Churches in Busan, South Korea. If I am being really honest (which occasionally I allow myself to be when I am in private), I confess to being surprised, having believed the propaganda about the uselessness of such events, yet being confounded by the reality of a world Church gathering seeking to express love for Christ and for each other. I shall believe less propaganda in the future. The WCC certainly has its issues of unity and coherence – who does not? – but it holds together an extraordinary diversity, united in the main by love for Jesus Christ.

The last few months have seen changes in the leadership of ecumenical work. In particular, efforts to reduce costs have led to seeking to avoid overlap between Lambeth and the Council

of Christian Unity, with the weight of ecumenical work at Lambeth being taken by the Bishop at Lambeth together with the lead bishops for each dialogue or conversation. This development of closer working relationships is not only cost-effective but, much more importantly, is liberating a fresh impetus and imagination in ministry.

In dialogue with the Catholic Church as well as very positive work in ARCIC and English ARC, there will at the end of this week be a joint bishops' meeting, with the focus being on evangelization.

One very important and major initiative can be announced today. It is not large but it is symbolically significant. For 24 years, three different Anglican orders have had sisters at Lambeth, supporting the spirituality there. This has been a gift of almost immeasurable value. Sadly, for reasons within the orders, this is no longer possible for them. Accordingly, from January a Catholic order with an ecumenical and teaching vocation will be created, initially with four members, at Lambeth. They are called the Chemin Neuf. This arrangement has been put in place by Revd Dr Jo Wells, my chaplain. It is an ecumenical step of some significance.

In October, I was at the Porvoo primates' meeting in Reykjavik. This was a first for me and the meeting was notable for its great warmth, constructive purpose and hopes for a significant level of further visible unity. The dialogue with Porvoo has been led by the Bishop of Newcastle, whose work has been absolutely exceptional in this regard.

In January I hope to meet the Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch.

Within the Anglican Communion the schedule has also been busy. The Archbishop of York has made a significant number of visits, most notably recently to Canada and to Cairo. I have started a programme of visiting all the primates of the Anglican Communion very briefly, on a personal and private basis. Out of the 37, 10 have so far been visited and 27 therefore remain – for those of you who, like me, struggle with arithmetic (I do not know why I put that sentence in!) – with the aim of completing the visits by about a year from now.

I was in Nairobi for the condolence visit just before the beginning of GAFCON and I had the opportunity to benefit from meeting a number of primates who had already arrived for it. This was a great pleasure and, as always, an education. As leader of GAFCON, Archbishop Wabukala was as gracious as could have been wished. There were naturally, as members of Synod may have noticed, different views expressed about different aspects of the Anglican Communion while I was in Nairobi and subsequently, including views about me, which it has to be said were not invariably warm and cuddly. However, I was genuinely most glad to have had the opportunity to meet, and I have to say that the overwhelming response was not only kind but also deeply encouraging.

In the political sphere, the last few months have been very busy indeed. The Parliamentary Banking Standards Commission, initially intended to be all over by Christmas – like other things about 100 years ago, but in this case *last* Christmas – continues in its final stages (which it has been in since January of this year) with a major debate next week on the more than 1,000 pages of reports which the Commission produced during the time I was with it. I remain on it, although it is technically coming to an end. It is also heavily involved in resulting legislation, in which I am also inevitably involved. It has been a good opportunity for the Church to contribute to national thinking in an area where we are not always

institutionally visible; but I will be more than delighted when it is buried, ideally with a stake through its heart and garlic between its teeth!

At the same time there has been the same-sex Marriage Act, which again took much time for both the Archbishop of York and myself and a significant number of other bishops. I have spoken of this at other points and do not intend to say any more about that now.

As always, there have been a number of meetings with political leaders, part of an ongoing dialogue in which most bishops are involved in one way or another. It is clear that these discussions are almost invariably warmly welcomed by both sides and a great privilege for all of us who are involved in them, even when there is disagreement.

Lastly, I want to draw the attention of Synod to a new initiative that accompanies this meeting: a pattern of continuous prayer that is operating in the Church House chapel, just along the hallway, along with parishes and other communities from around the country. I encourage you warmly to drop in there. It is rolling from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. the whole time we are in session, and you can drop in for two minutes, 20 minutes, or whatever seems appropriate. Prayer reminds us of the big picture: that what we are doing here is all about God, a reminder we sometimes need more than ever in the midst of our legislative processes.

Let us therefore hold a moment of silence and, in particular, hold before the Lord those who have suffered and are suffering around the world from persecution, violence and natural disaster. (*Silence was held*)

The Chair: The Business Committee has not given its agreement to the possibility of questions to the Archbishop's presentation, so that concludes this item of business.

THE CHAIR *Mr Geoffrey Tattersall (Manchester)* took the Chair at 2.15 p.m.

Report by the Business Committee (GS 1916)

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

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

I would like to begin by thanking the Synod for the privilege of standing here to serve as the Chair of the Committee, to convey our congratulations to my predecessor, the Bishop of Blackburn, and our appreciation for his work and wisdom.

It is not unusual for the Chair of the Business Committee to say that we have a full Agenda and important business ahead of us, and that is certainly true this November. Much will be required of us in terms of our concentration, the quality of our listening and talking to one another, and our attention to the prompting of God's spirit.

I want to begin by sharing with you the way in which we formed the Agenda. Although we met before the Steering Committee on Women in the Episcopate had reported, it was very clear that we should give time, space and due attention to their work, and that if we did so we would have the outline of an Agenda. This has meant that some items, such as Private Members' Motions, have had to be postponed until a future Synod. The Business Committee will be discussing at its next meeting how we schedule Private Members' Motions and other business into our future groups of sessions.

We are indebted to the members of the Steering Committee on Women in the Episcopate. It is significant that their report outlines an overall package that has been carefully crafted around the prayerful conversations of committed men and women representing a wide spectrum of views.

Although it is unusual to hold group discussions during London sessions, we have planned to meet in this way tomorrow. We were convinced that we should go ahead with this, following the generally positive feedback from groups in July and the experience of the Steering Committee. After Questions this evening, the Bishop of Rochester will outline how the groups will work. I feel sure that each of us has noticed the terms in which the Steering Committee has framed its report, emphasizing to us the importance of holding together the creative tensions in their work and of nurturing consensus. In spending time together in groups, we can hear about and honour their work, as well as sharing our own reactions and listening to others.

We are asked to look at a whole package and members of Synod will have seen that we are being encouraged to undertake the revision stage for the draft legislation in full Synod. The Steering Committee has presented a carefully balanced package, which offers the potential to frame the way we live and work together in the future. I hope and pray that we can work together towards a clear resolution to this legislative process that will set us free to meet for mission.

To help maintain the focus on mission, which was so important at the last Synod, the Business Committee has prioritized and scheduled as the first item of business a significant debate on intentional evangelism. This debate presents us with an opportunity to exercise the shared leadership to which Synod is called. By talking together in public as laity, clergy and bishops, and supporting formally the Archbishops' Task Group, we can send a clear message about the priority of our mission in God's world to and on behalf of the Church.

Mission is a lens through which we should view the whole of our Agenda. I am sure that the Bishop of Oxford will remind us that our Church schools, which touch the lives of many children and families, represent a significant area of mission today. Our mission is also served by demonstrating that we can work together and take care over the totality of our business. This week that business includes the detail of the Miscellaneous Provisions Measure and other Measures dealing with the care of churches and ecclesiastical property, as well as the bigger picture debates I have already described. We welcome the opportunity given by the London Diocesan Synod Motion to consider the manner in which we do our business together.

Members will be aware that the question of talking about topical issues on the Agenda is one that is raised in this debate from time to time. A small, but I hope significant, experiment has just taken place. The Business Committee hopes that, by scheduling an opportunity at the beginning of the Synod for members to hear from the Presidents about issues of concern, we are taking a step towards finding a regular place where topical issues can be raised. We would welcome the Synod's response to this development.

At its September meeting the Business Committee welcomed Archbishop Justin and the Chaplain to the Synod, each of whom offered papers reflecting on their role and experience as relative newcomers amongst us. Our conversation was underpinned by the conviction that we must seek to work together as Christians who are efficient and attentive to the Spirit,

businesslike and prayerful, seeking unity in our diversity. One result of these conversations is a meeting between members of the Business Committee and current and former members of the Panel of Chairs to consider Archbishop Justin's reflections further. In the coming months, the Committee is setting aside time to consider these ideas and I look forward to reporting to the Synod and to providing opportunities to discuss them more widely.

Worship is a touchstone of the quality of the Synod's activity and our work together. Conversations about the ways in which worship and prayer can be embedded in the business of the Synod will continue. I urge members to stay and worship together at the end of each day, before heading off to their exciting evening meetings. As usual, the Eucharist will be celebrated in the Chapel each lunchtime and, as members have heard, our work together this week will be underpinned by a constant cycle of prayer, organized by the chaplains, to which we are all invited.

I would like to conclude with some important Business Committee news. In our recent election we have increased our membership from the Northern Province by 100 per cent, and we welcome Joyce Jones among our number. (*Applause*)

Addicts of what one of my parishioners calls 'Bookface' will also know that it is Simon Butler's birthday today, and I am sure that the Synod would wish to send him our greetings.

I would like to end my first speech as the Chair of the Business Committee as I began – with thanks, expressing my gratitude to my fellow Committee members and to the staff, who serve us all with commitment and good humour.

The Chair: The item is open for debate. It will be in order for members to identify issues which do not appear on the Agenda but they must not go into the merits of those issues.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

Mrs Christine Corteen (Salisbury): I thank the Chair of the Business Committee for her report. It says in the notes accompanying the report that the Committee has given priority to the other legislative business and to two items of business: the system for electing the House of Laity and the workings of the synodical system. I was somewhat disappointed that, given the priority attached to looking at a review of how the House of Laity is elected, this item has been put right at the end of the Wednesday afternoon session, at the end of what could be a very busy and exhausting day debating the bishops Measure – the women bishops Measure.

If we recall, this item was put right at the end of the July sessions and we did not have enough time to debate it because, again, it was put at the end of a very important day of business. It therefore seems to me that in the normal course of business this item should have been given a position nearer to the beginning of this group of sessions, as a brought-forward, unfinished item of business.

Item 10, the Review of the Workings of the General Synod, is again a very important item and, I suggest, connected with the review of the House of Laity elections. This again has been put at the end of a very long and busy day.

My point is this. If these items were to be given the priority they deserve, they should be put on the Agenda in a place which reflects that.

Revd Canon Chris Sugden (Oxford): Two items on our Agenda have a very happy connection, which might not at first be apparent. The first is the very welcome debate this afternoon on the excellent paper on intentional evangelism. The second is the Measure on ecclesiastical jurisdiction legislation.

I invite those to whom this might not appear immediately obvious to come with me to an extensive Oxfordshire country churchyard in the late summer of this year; join me and my wife, sitting on a bench eating our fish and chips in the early evening. As you entered the churchyard you will have noted a number of posts and signs explaining that this was the site of one of the abbeys that Henry VIII knocked about a bit and, indeed, the residents of Eynsham completed by looting the stones to resource their kitchen and bathroom home renovation projects in the latter century.

While enjoying your chips, please notice two or three lone figures and another with a child, come either with some flowers, a trowel or watering can to tend a grave. Would it not be pastorally valuable, in addition to telling such visitors of a regrettable phase in the history of Church–State relations, to provide them with some comfortable words from Scripture, as they recall a loved one and deal with their grief? Some words from Psalm 23 or Jesus’s words about ‘many mansions’ or Paul on the hope of the resurrection spring to mind.

Now consider the current procedures for such pastoral signs –

The Chair: Mr Sugden, is this a speech about an item which you wish to be on the Agenda or is it identifying the issues?

Revd Canon Chris Sugden: It is to encourage us with two items that are on the Agenda.

The Chair: I think you must be brief then, must you not?

Revd Canon Chris Sugden: I will conclude very soon.

Consider the current procedure for such pastoral signs that are tasteful and of appropriate quality, even if temporary, to be erected. I trust that the new proposals before us will make it fairly straightforward for PCCs to use this opportunity of witnessing to our hope in the resurrection to those who visit their churchyards but not their churches. Thus our legal processes could, perhaps to our surprise, assist our intentional evangelism.

Mrs Andrea Minichiello-Williams (Chichester): The statement by Canon Sue Booy with regard to the Committee thinking about topical issues and how they can be presented at the Synod is much to be welcomed.

My Private Member’s Motion on the public doctrine of Christian marriage between a man and a woman as the only basis for engagement in public policy on marriage and family life was laid in February 2012. Since then, Parliament has drafted and passed legislation to introduce same-sex marriage, and the voice of the Church of England in the public space was, at best, unclear. Is the denial of time on the Agenda, not just at this Synod but previous ones,

to prevent us from debating the same-sex Marriage Act and the massive ramifications for the Church of England?

For example, a recent government consultation has just closed on what will happen in buildings shared between different denominations, where one welcomes same-sex marriages and the other does not. I ask who has responded for the Church of England in this matter and who are we to go to in order to find the answers that the Church of England is giving on the many and new issues which this legislation presents?

Revd John Cook (Oxford): I am very glad that we have a debate on the Church school of the future but in the last few days an issue has been raised related to Church schools about admission criteria, which I believe is a very important issue for the Synod to discuss. I do not think that we can do it during this particular session but I do hope that we can discuss it as a whole Synod before there are any changes, because responsibility in law for entrance criteria belongs to the governors.

The vast majority of our primary schools are community schools, but may I give one example? I am in a parish with five Church schools and the governor of a school in Bracknell called Ranelagh. It is a school attended by children from across the two deaneries; it has very high standards. The Archbishop's comments, which I am sure have probably been misquoted, have given some concern to parents, clergy and others. Ranelagh has existed for over 300 years, before the founding of the National Society. The concern has been that any change in entrance criteria might make what is a very good school not so good. Therefore, I hope that at some stage we are able to debate the criteria for entrance to Church schools, before any changes are made.

Miss Vasantha Gnanadoss (Southwark): I would like the Business Committee to consider how we might better monitor the response of the Archbishops' Council and its staff to Synod resolutions and Questions, and to make proposals.

I was prompted to speak about this on hearing the Archbishop of Canterbury's view that the Archbishops' Council is accountable to the General Synod. I am sure that the Archbishop was not only referring to the 19 individuals who are members of the Archbishops' Council but also to its structure and staff, as set out in the Council's Annual Report, GS 1913.

While grateful for the good work done by many on behalf of the Archbishops' Council, I hope that we can all aim for a culture of assistance to the Synod's aspirations in place of the culture of avoidance that sometimes seems to have influenced responses to Synod's requests in the past.

I will give two examples from my particular area of interest; I am sure that other members of the Synod could similarly give examples. My first example concerns the response to a Synod resolution. In 2011, an amended CMEAC motion, carried overwhelmingly, asked the Archbishops' Council to collect certain statistics from dioceses, to provide a baseline against which to measure any progress achieved by 2014. It seems obvious that a direct request to dioceses would have been the only way to obtain the data in a timely way but the Mission and Public Affairs Division did not take any action of this kind, despite promptings, and insisted that the results could only be provided by the ongoing work of the Research and Statistics Department. Yet the Bishop of Rochester, as Chair of Turning up the Volume, later carried

out his own survey and obtained information from every diocese, showing that it could have been done by the Archbishops' Council, as requested.

My second example concerns the response to Questions asked by Synod members.

The Chair: Is this not dealing with the detail? I thought that we were not supposed to be going into the detail but identifying the issues.

Miss Vasantha Gnanadoss: I am sorry. I believe that the accountability of the Archbishops' Council to the General Synod could be enhanced by a systematic monitoring of actions requested by the Synod and the responses that are made. Of course there will be occasions when actions cannot proceed exactly as requested, but in those cases we should expect a readiness to explain the reasons openly and to make constructive suggestions about finding a way forward. I ask the Business Committee to consider this matter of accountability.

Revd Prebendary Stephen Lynas (Bath and Wells): I would like to draw the attention of the Chair of the Business Committee to paragraphs 46 and 47 of the report. I am sure that it will gladden your heart, Chair, that I am being very specific here. It has to do with the visual appearance of the Synod.

Some of us have been here long enough to remember the days when this chamber was saucer-shaped rather than flat. It meant that if you sat in the back rows you could see who was speaking and what was going on. That all disappeared some time ago; so may we congratulate the Business Committee and the folk here at Church House on the installation of the electronic stuff that we are seeing and appreciating today, which makes it possible to see what people are saying, makes it possible to try to read into their faces what they really mean and whether they are trying to make a joke or are failing badly, and suchlike.

Could we ask to have a bit more information about what is intended by this visual appearance matter? I am slightly frightened at the thought of this turning into a party conference backdrop, but it would be interesting to know exactly what the Business Committee has in mind in improving the visual appearance and to ask who they are taking advice from. We could perhaps give them a list of people from whom we do not want them to take advice!

I congratulate whoever is responsible for the stuff that is on the screen; in particular, the little captions that tell you who you are watching and what the item number is. You can put up another one if you want to, because I just love seeing my name in lights! However, may I point out a slight hiccup, which I am sure will be fixed by the time we get to York. There is a lip synch problem. If one watches the screen very closely, one can see that the picture is about half a second behind the words. I know why that is. It is because at GCHQ they are monitoring what we are saying! (*Laughter*)

The Chair: As if!

Mrs Alison Ruoff (London): How do I follow that?

I was hugely disappointed to discover only this morning that my request for an emergency debate has been turned down. I wrote the letter on about 5 November, it was posted on the 6th and it took until this morning to hear the result from the Archbishop of York.

I come before the Synod to raise a matter that is a serious topical issue – which I think were the words of the Archbishop of Canterbury – namely about the Girl Guide Promise and the Church of England. This came into being from the Girl Guides from 1 September, to remove ‘God’ from their Promise and to replace it, for half a million Girl Guides, with ‘to be true to myself and to develop my beliefs’ – whatever that might mean.

I think that this is a very serious matter for the Church of England. It is a gospel matter; it is about more than half a million girls, mostly meeting on church premises, not only the Church of England, and not being able to hear about God on those premises. As we are not able to debate it in this group of sessions, I would ask that our Archbishops, and indeed any member of the Synod, encourage the Guide movement, as the Scout movement has, to keep their Promise with ‘God’ in it and the secular promise. I would very much hope that we could say the same thing and not be distinguishing between boys and girls. The boys can have ‘God’; the girls cannot.

We are talking about the gospel later this afternoon. We have to be able to talk about God in Church of England premises without fear or favour. Surely half a million girls need to hear about the Lord Jesus Christ?

Revd Canon Jane Charman (Salisbury): I want to develop a point that Mrs Chris Corteen started to make. My feeling about this Agenda is that it probably contains all the right things but, as Eric Morecambe would have said, not necessarily in the right order.

There are at least three potentially overlapping items coming up. Tomorrow evening we will be discussing a new item, the London Diocesan Synod Motion requesting a review of the workings of General Synod. On Wednesday afternoon we will be discussing an item that has been in process since the start of this quinquennium – the work of the Elections Review Group on the electorate of the House of Laity. We are being asked to make up our mind about a particular option. Waiting in the wings is the Wakefield Diocesan Synod Motion on the nature and structure of the Church of England.

These items are not identical and they are coming to us for different reasons but, as the Clerk to the Synod remarks in her background note to the London motion, questions about the role of the Synod and how it operates are not wholly separable from questions about how the Church of England runs more generally. It seems to me that we will now struggle to make an intelligent decision about the electorate for the House of Laity in advance of a review of the workings of the Synod in general, let alone a debate about the nature and structure of the Church as a whole, always assuming of course that we decide we want to discuss these things.

That is part of the reason, although not the main reason, why on Wednesday I hope to propose an amendment to Item 12, asking for a fresh review group to be set up with a wider remit. I say ‘hope to propose’ because what happens at Item 12 may be affected by what happens at Item 10; but it would be too late at that stage to table an amendment, and that is part of the perplexity of this Agenda.

The Business Committee has no doubt already foreseen all these difficulties but it can only serve things up in roughly the same order in which they are dropped into the cooking pot by us. I have two requests. First, that the Business Committee has a further think about these items and how they might best be held together when it next meets; second, that as we

discuss these items over the next few days Synod members bear in mind the ways in which they may bear on and intersect one another.

Mr Philip French (Rochester): I would echo many of the previous speaker's very helpful suggestions but want to draw attention to one particular thing. Those of us in this chamber who are used to giving speeches at conferences will be familiar with that dreadful slot between lunch and when people are allowed to go home. The equivalent in this Synod seems to be between weighty legislative business, typically on women bishops, and the mischievous farewell tributes to bishops.

Last time we spoke about the elections process for the House of Laity it was in just that slot in York and we were not able to conclude the business. It is scheduled for the same slot this time. If this Synod and the previous one have taught us anything, it is surely that the make-up of the House of Laity matters. I am surprised not to see that business given the priority that the Business Committee report claims for it.

The Chair: I see no one else standing, so I call upon the Chair of the Business Committee to reply.

Revd Canon Sue Booy, in reply: When we considered the position of the electoral review debate we were conscious that it was a difficult one to place and that we were putting it in a similar position, and we did not particularly want to do that. However, as I explained in my speech, we were trying to run a number of things that needed gaps between them. Jane Charman is quite right that there is not time, although the London DSM and this debate are linked, for one to prompt an amendment in the other.

I can assure Christine Corteen that we will be monitoring our time carefully, in order to ensure that this is given an appropriate amount of time, and I can assure Jane Charman and Philip French that it is already part of our intention to be trying to look at these things together when we meet for an intentionally longer time at the Business Committee's next meeting.

There was another issue about timing for business. We knew that Mrs Minichiello-Williams would be disappointed about the Private Members' Motions. As we have explained, we think it important to consider these two Private Members' Motions together. Our business in the Committee is about ordering business so that Synod members have as much of the right amount of time as possible, rather than to deny Synod's time. It was with that very distinct intention that we took the decision to delay our consideration of these Private Members' Motions.

John Cook's comment about the criteria for admissions raised a certain amount of support in the Synod. I cannot give a commitment here that we will debate this. John Cook has the possibility of bringing a Private Member's Motion or perhaps bending an appropriate ear; but it is clear that people are concerned to discuss admissions to our Church of England schools.

Mrs Ruoff will be delighted to know that for me, as an ambassador for Girl Guiding Oxfordshire, this is not the first time that I have heard this concern. Since I happen to live with, because I am married to, our local District Commissioner for Scouts, it is a debate that has even raged at the breakfast table. I heard of Mrs Ruoff's letter only today, but I think it is something that we would be best advised to invite her to bring as a Private Member's Motion.

She will have heard the support for her speech, which suggests to me that there would be people willing to sign such a motion.

Responding to Vasantha Gnanadoss, I am not absolutely clear – and I have to claim the excuse of being a newbie – about exactly the responsibility the Business Committee has to manage the monitoring of the Archbishops' Council. I can only promise her that I will look into this and give a response at a later time.

Unlike my good friend Stephen Lynas, I was a bit disconcerted to find myself looking at myself but glad that he was enthusiastic about some of the ways in which the Synod has changed, and we welcome that. In our conversations on the Business Committee the desire not to look like a party conference was raised by a number of members, so I can assure Stephen that it is something that is on our mind. I do not know about who is monitoring us. I am not paranoid, but perhaps it is just that they are out to get me!

The motion was put and carried.

THE CHAIR *Canon Ann Turner (Europe)* took the Chair at 2.50 p.m.

Challenges for the Quinquennium: Intentional Evangelism (GS 1917)

The Archbishop of York (Dr John Sentamu): I beg to move:

‘That this Synod in the light of the priority of evangelism and making new disciples:

- (a) support the formation of an Archbishops' Task Group on Evangelism with the terms of reference and timetable as set out in GS 1917;
- (b) call upon the Task Group to make its first priority a new call to prayer;
- (c) commend to the Task Group an initial programme for its work around the seven disciplines of evangelization as set out in the same paper; and
- (d) call upon every diocesan and deanery synod and every PCC to spend the bulk of one meeting annually and some part of every meeting focusing on sharing experiences and initiatives for making new disciples.’

Today's theme is nearer to my heart than any other theme. It is vital that we consider how to approach the re-evangelization of England. How do we rediscover the wellsprings of our solidarity and partnership in the gospel? What must we become in order to rekindle the fire of God's 'love, abundantly poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit given to us'? [*Romans 5:5*]

Next to worship, witness is the primary and urgent task of the Church. 'Come to Jesus', wrote St Peter in 1 Peter 2, 'and like living stones be yourselves built into a spiritual house'. Why? First, 'to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ'. [*1 Peter 2:4-5*] That is worship. Second, 'to proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light'. [*1 Peter 2:9*] That is witness. Therefore, worship and witness in

the power of the Holy Spirit are the Church's reason for being. Like breathing is to the human body, the Body of Christ lives to worship and to witness to what God has done and is doing in Jesus Christ. As the late Canon David Watson said many years ago, 'Evangelize or fossilize.'

Compared with evangelism, everything else is like rearranging furniture when the house is on fire. Tragically, too often that is what we are doing: reorganizing the structures, arguing over words and phrases, while the people of England are left floundering amid meaninglessness, anxiety and despair.

Intentional evangelism – are we up for it? The truth is that not every Christian is an evangelist. An evangelist is the person who stands at the intersection where human need and divine love meet. Evangelists are specially gifted by the Holy Spirit to proclaim. But every Christian *is* a witness. Witnesses are empowered by the Holy Spirit simply to tell the story of their encounter with Jesus Christ, to share what they have experienced.

'You are my witnesses', said God through the prophet Isaiah in his day; and 'You shall be my witnesses', said Jesus when he promised his disciples the power of the Holy Spirit.

All people in Britain experience weather and they talk about it readily and repeatedly. If only disciples of Jesus Christ in England did the same thing about him – and he is infinitely greater than British weather!

We are witnesses of these things, because we have encountered, learned and experienced Jesus Christ in our own lives. All the best communication is done through story: the story of relationships; the story of events and new happenings; the story of perception and understanding; the stories of our past, present and future.

For the past two years during the summer I have spent several days in silence on the Holy Island of Lindisfarne. Each morning I have joined in prayers at St Mary's Church, then have walked to St Cuthbert's hermitage as soon as the tide is out. In those days my question was how did Aidan, Cuthbert and their monks build communities of prayer, worship, hospitality and care for the poor, so radically transforming and converting the North of England, spreading as far as Essex, where Cedd ended. What was it that drove these tough men, who were sustained by a diet of prayer, study and manual labour? Paulinus, Aidan, Cuthbert, Hilda, Cedd and Chad learned the psalms by heart and recited them as they walked from community to community. When they met people on the way their question was 'Are you a follower of Jesus Christ?' If the answer was Yes, they taught them a psalm before moving on. If they were not, they presented the Gospel of Christ to them – and Aidan was known for not letting go until the person was converted. Their discipline was rooted in sanctuary, journey and welcome; forever going in to prayer, going out on the road, and always being open in their offer of loving hospitality.

From the time I became Archbishop of York I have been inspired by these northern saints. Their story has made me focus on making Christ known throughout this land. In my inauguration address in November 2005 I stated that the first priority of my ministry, as a 'Watchman for the North', would be 'to take a lead by preaching, by public address and by informal discussion, in sharing this good news of God with the people of England'.

Like the early northern saints, at a time of economic hardship for many in this country, Archbishop William Temple called on the Church both to make disciples and to convert the social order. If a choice had to be made, making disciples was paramount because there would then be more people to make the social order more Christian.

Northern bishops are gathering in Lindisfarne next May, to encourage and support each other in a shared evangelistic responsibility for the North. We hope to recreate communities of prayer, worship, hospitality and care for the poor and lonely, as well as communities of proclamation. Like Our Lord, 'going through all the towns, villages, neighbourhoods, churches, teaching and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and illness among the people'. [Matthew 4:23; 9:35]

If we do this, we will see what God did in the lives of Aidan, Cuthbert, Hilda and Paulinus happening in our own generation, calling the Church back to the good news of the kingdom.

We each have a story to tell of how God in Jesus Christ has met with us and changed our lives. My own story of faith began when I encountered Christ at the age of ten. I could not keep silent but had to talk about Him. Before long, I was part of a mission with Bishop Festo Kivengere, delivering an evangelistic address to 30,000 people gathered in Kabale. I was only seventeen.

This debate is about *how* rather than *whether* we witness. The paper begins by focusing on the inestimable value of the gospel, the Pearl of Great Price, and we propose that across the English nation at every level – diocese, deanery, parish, chaplaincies – we focus on the task given to the Church by Jesus Christ to make disciples of all nations, making disciples of all the people of England, presenting the good news of the kingdom in word and deed.

I suggest that we are not here to come up with ideas and ask others to do something; we are here to share good news stories from each of our dioceses. How are people becoming disciples of Christ where you live? How confident are you in the gospel? The Lord is calling us to respond to his call of worship and making others his friends. Let us not respond by saying 'Here I am Lord, but send my brother, send my sister.' Nor in this debate should we wallow in discussion of the inadequacy of the doctrine of salvation or some other doctrine in the paper.

Do not avoid the challenge of intentional evangelism by calling for a fuller elucidation of Christ's saving work. Why? Because it is Jesus Christ himself who, from within, impels us. As the Apostle Paul said, 'Woe unto me if I do not preach the gospel.' [1 Corinthians 9:16]

Making disciples is at the heart of our Christian faith and our Anglican tradition, both Catholic and Reformed. Christ died for our sins once and for all. He rose again for our justification and in his name he sent the Holy Spirit for our glorification. That is good enough doctrine for me to get on with the business.

I urge the Synod to give its resounding support for today's motion. It will signal a lasting culture change and a fresh commitment to make Christ known in this generation. May this debate encourage and inspire us all, as we hear stories from one another of what is happening in our varied contexts. Evangelize or fossilize!

The Chair: This item is now open for debate.

Revd Canon Dr Tudor Griffiths (Gloucester): This is a maiden speech, in which I want warmly to welcome this report and the motion, and I will refer to paragraph 27, which speaks about the global challenge.

The global context is one of challenge but it is also one of inspiration. I think that we are being encouraged that, with all the disciplines, we have much to learn from the Churches of the Anglican Communion. Part of the challenge of this motion is that we integrate evangelism into all that we do and all that we are as a Church.

Some years ago I was Diocesan Missioner in Monmouth and went to the diocese of Sabah in east Malaysia, where they experienced tremendous growth. The Church there has invested in a programme of church planting, training and the employment of evangelists, especially young evangelists. That investment is to the extent that no one goes forward to be trained for ordained ministry without two years' experience as an evangelist.

That story is not one for us to emulate but it is one to inspire, because that is a Church where the diocese has doubled within ten years. I hope that all of the disciplines mentioned in this motion will look for inspiration from the wider Anglican Communion.

Ms Susan Cooper (London): While welcoming this report and the motion, I want to make a plea for those parishes that do not carry the word 'evangelical' in their title and way of looking things. We do our evangelism but we probably do it in a slightly more oblique way.

Our best evangelist is our director of music. He wants to keep his traditional choir up to scratch. Today, he has to go out and find people to join the choir and sometimes goes into junior schools, talks to groups of eight- and nine-year-olds and persuades them to come. He makes it all sound very exciting; they come along and quite often stay, despite the fact that they have to behave extremely well and are strictly disciplined.

The area in which we live is one that is becoming fuller of what I call dual-faith families; not all the parents are Christian. One of the ways in which we most need help and encouragement is in how to explain to the non-Christian parent, who we are not directly evangelizing, what we do in the Church, how we do it and what the implications are if the child wishes to be baptized or confirmed. We have to bring the parents along with us. We do not have to worry about levels of education or of English in our area but we cannot make the assumptions regarding the cultural background of children in our choir that we might have expected to do 50 years ago. We therefore need help with speaking to people whom we are not evangelizing themselves but who need to have explained to them what their children may be doing when they become confirmed, so that they support the child when the child decides they wish to be Christian.

Revd Canon Giles Goddard (Southwark): I am undecided about whether or not to support this motion because I am wondering about the question that it is asking. I am also wondering about the answer it is giving to the question.

I have been reading the work of Linda Woodhead, a very strong sociologist, who has identified the presence of a huge amount of latent faith within our society. However, that faith does not communicate itself or transform itself into attendance in the Church of England.

The main question that this report should be asking is why people do not identify an affinity with the Church of England in the way they used to. I think that it has to do with the brand and the way in which we present ourselves. If you ask anybody under 50 what they think of the Church of England, they will either shrug or say, 'It's homophobic, isn't it?' or 'It's misogynistic' or something like that. They will also wonder what we are doing that is useful. If you look at mass membership organizations, they are doing clearly useful stuff. I think of the RSPB or the National Trust. In a sense, people join them because they can see that they are making a difference.

There has been a lot of very excellent work from the Archbishop and others recently on credit unions and addressing poverty, but that work is only just beginning to seep through into the public consciousness and it is only half of the challenge that we face as a Church. I think that for many of us evangelism happens in spite of the Church of England rather than because of it.

I am very encouraged by what the Pope is doing. He has just sent a questionnaire to all Catholics, asking them what they are doing in pastorally difficult situations in order to support those who have been damaged by the Roman Catholic Church. I think that he is preparing the ground for change. I wonder whether we should not be asking at ground level how people perceive the Church of England and what we should do in order to make a difference. I think that should be the first question for the Task Group: how do we make the C of E something desirable for people to belong to? How do we make it clear that we are trying to live up to Jesus's Gospel?

That is my question about the question. My question about the answer relates to Sunday morning worship and fresh expressions. Of course I support fresh expressions; they are very successful in lots of different situations. However, I have been in parish ministry for 20 years and during that time I have tried a lot of fresh expressions. Some of them have worked and some of them have not. What has really worked well throughout my experience has been improving Sunday morning worship, making sure that it is as good as it can possibly be and making sure that the community is as strong as it can possibly be. It is very good that in some dioceses 10 per cent of the church population have come through fresh expressions, but it still means that 90 per cent are from Sunday mornings.

I hope that we do not forget the importance of our heritage. I hope that we do not forget to stick to the knitting, and focus entirely on fresh expressions at the cost of Sunday worship. That is where our community flourishes best and that is what we should be celebrating.

The Bishop of Southwell and Nottingham (Rt Revd Paul Butler): In giving this report and motion an extremely warm welcome, I would like to speak to two areas in particular. First, I would like to speak up for the role of bishops as leaders in mission and as evangelists, or doing the work of an evangelist.

It has been my privilege in the last four years partly to deliberately plan things so that my colleague the Bishop of Sherwood could give several weekends a year to what he entitles 'seed-scattering weekends'. These have been remarkably successful as an example of the bishop as an evangelist and, in doing so, encouraging ordinary members of parishes to be witnesses to the good news of Jesus Christ in their settings. I am pleased that Bishop Tony is now being encouraged to help new bishops think through their role as evangelists.

I have personally just completed a five-week series entitled 'The Gap' in Nottingham city centre, where we have sought to do apologetics in a different way. We have used a chat show style; we have used comedy, drama and music. We have not had a sermon in sight. This has also proved to attract numbers of people from outside the Church, indeed with nothing to do with the Church, who want to come and engage with what we might have to say around current issues. One of the things that was deeply encouraging at the end of the series, though, was from church members who came up to me at the end and said, 'You have helped us be firmer and clearer in how we will witness to Jesus Christ in our places of work.' Bishop Tony and I have also sought to seek confirmations and ordinations as opportunities for evangelism as well as the task in hand.

The bishop therefore needs to be a leader in mission and involved in evangelism. Perhaps one of our regular prayers ought to be for all of our bishops: that, whether or not we are natural evangelists, we will be given the charism of evangelist in our calling as bishops. We are here to help church members be humbly confident about their faith, sharing it in their places of work, with their next-door neighbours, in their sports clubs, and so on.

Secondly, I am delighted that we have reference to the fact that all ages must be included. Those who know me well will realize that there would have been an amendment coming about children and young people if it had not been there already.

Going for Growth has called for a life-enhancing encounter with the person of Jesus Christ for every child and young person in this country. That is what we have been working on and continue to work on, and it needs to be integrated into the work of the Task Group as it unfolds. This life-enhancing encounter with the person of Jesus Christ will come from the surrogate grandma who lives next door to a family; it will come from the young person who mentors a younger child at school or after school; it will come through after-school clubs; it will come through drama, music and dance; it will come through residential activities in all kinds of ways. However, the priority of making Jesus Christ known to children and young people must remain high.

If we were to survey ourselves, most of us would say that it was something that happened in our childhood or our youth that brought us to Jesus Christ personally. Even if we came to faith as an adult, very often it is childhood memories that are stirred. We must therefore make a priority of evangelism amongst children and young people – wisely and thoughtfully, but we must do it.

Revd Ruth Hind (Ripon and Leeds): I would first like to thank those who brought the report to us and say how delighted, dare I even say how excited, I am by it and its potential to energize Church re-evangelism.

Eighteen months ago, I was asked to take part in *Ambition for Mission*, a strategic review of mission at a diocesan level. I was part of a task group that was asked to look at the deployment of clergy and lay ministers in the light of the fact recognized in this report –that there are fewer clergy than there used to be.

In my context this means a multi-parish benefice. I work in rural North Yorkshire. I understand that this is becoming increasingly the case across the wider Church of England. Taking as our priority the need for numerical and spiritual growth, the task group wished to

find ways of deploying clergy to maximize this. In particular, we wanted to find out if models of deploying clergy and lay ministers were more conducive to growth than others, and sought answers to questions such as ‘Is the minster model effective? Does amalgamating parishes accelerate decline? Are there examples where joining parishes together has invigorated them and made for more effective mission? Does the model of a parson in every place, using a combination of ordained, licensed ministers and others, have any merit?’ Whilst acknowledging different contexts, we thought it would be helpful to have answers to these and similar questions.

Sadly, 18 months ago such answers were not available and the task group in which I was involved was left working in the dark. The only information available came from Bob Jackson, who suggested that team ministries were not ideal and, on occasion, caused parishes to look inward.

I hope that since then research into the area of models of ministry in order to facilitate effective evangelism and Church growth has begun; but, if not, I would hope that the work is commissioned with speed, either under the auspices of this Task Group or another body. Without the knowledge of what works and what does not, I am unsure if we could describe our evangelism or our mission or our ministry as ‘intentional’.

I hope that we are able to endorse this report overwhelmingly but also to hope that, as well as commending prayer and action, it will commission some evaluation of present practice and future initiatives.

Revd Angus MacLeay (Rochester): I warmly support this report. My amendment relates to the membership of the proposed Task Group, and I would like us to turn our attention first to a couple of sections in 1 Corinthians 3.

Verse 6 says, ‘I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.’ It is a reminder of the importance of prayer and of dependence on God. We want folk within the Task Group who will have that similar desire, who are not driven by pragmatics, by numbers or by anything like that, so that there would be that healthy dependence and prayerfulness as they seek to guide and lead us in this vitally important task.

Within this chapter there is the recognition by the Apostle Paul of division. Paul says, ‘When one says, “I follow Paul” and another “I follow Apollos” , are you not mere men?’ He resolves that issue at the end of the chapter by saying, ‘All things are yours; whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas, or the world or life or death or the present or the future. All are yours, and you are of Christ and Christ is of God.’ He is saying that it is very easy for us to identify with a particular strand and to think about particular people as leaders. However, it is not that you belong to them, the individual leaders, but that they all belong to you as the Church; all of these different leaders, whether Paul or Apollos or Peter, are gifts to the whole Church.

My amendment aims to strengthen the Task Group in two particular areas. There are all sorts of people with great gifts, and they are God’s gift to the whole Church, so why not use their rich resources within the Task Group?

We have had a long history of Anglican voluntary mission agencies being involved in innovation over many years and even centuries. My hope is that the Task Group will use this

resource once again, whether it is the CPS, Church Army or many other different initiatives; whether it is the burgeoning Gospel Partnerships around the country, doing great work in encouraging evangelism among the youth or older people, rural parishes or inner cities. There is great expertise there; let us draw upon it. They belong to all of us.

Further, there are other people at local level, laypeople, incumbents, chaplains, bishops, doing outstanding work in evangelism in all sorts of different settings. We want all sorts of people with a proven record, whose vision, energy and ideas can be a catalyst to help others in similar situations. We therefore need the Task Group to include some who have planted churches, who have seen gospel growth, who have led people to the Lord Jesus Christ, who have turned situations round, who have that passion for the gospel and for the Lord Jesus Christ.

I hope that I am pushing at an open door here. I hope that the Task Group will include people of this sort of calibre, in whom we can have confidence under God as they prayerfully get on their task, as a catalyst for all of us to engage in this great work of the gospel.

Mrs Shayne Ardron (Leicester): I want to draw the Synod's attention to paragraph 9. It says, 'Jesus Christ offers forgiveness for sin for those who are alienated from God and a renewed relationship with our creator and with one another.' It is very easy to overlook those last three words 'with one another'.

The church I am a part of had had a mission statement for decades, but in the past few years we have developed mission values. This is the way in which we do mission. We can see and hear the difference it makes. We have a fresh expressions church which happens fortnightly on a Saturday morning called 'Tomatoes', at which there is a cooked breakfast and a chance to talk to people and to build up relationships. There is a short talk and time for prayer. We also have a weekly pre-school parents and toddlers group which we call 'Shake, Rattle and Roll'. In both places, a regular comment made by new people is how welcome they feel. It is not just what we do; it is how we do it. They feel accepted as they are. They do not feel a burden to join a rota. They do not feel that we have just invited them in for what they can do for us. They are there and they are part of what we are doing because we want their company and we want to share God's love. When you have a background like that, it is a really good basis for being able to talk about the gospel, but not just by what we say but by what we do, how we live it.

In the Leicester diocese we have a growth fund. It was set up only a year ago. There are two levels to this growth fund. There are applications up to £3,000. This has been used to help different parishes all over the diocese to run and create things like Messy Church, Open the Book, toddler groups and resourced youth groups. I have to admit that we are not quite as creative as we could be yet, but I am sure that will come with time.

The second level is for up to £15,000 a year for three years. This has been mainly used for employment: for a youth worker, a family and church worker, a ministry assistant and an Edge Project worker. We encourage parishes to resource these roles to 50 per cent or more if they can afford it, but in special circumstances we move that aside. We also try to support them through their application and the first stages of the project through a critical friend from the committee. The diocese is managing to do this with the money it has put aside from the Church Commissioners and from the sale of Church property. We try to encourage the

churches not just to rely on that worker but all to be part of it. It is trying to gain growth in three areas, like many other dioceses, in discipleship, in service and in numbers.

To go back to the beginning, there is no point in trying to increase mission if we do not have the values that accept those who will walk through the door or who we go out to meet. We have to be prepared to change to accommodate them. I urge the Task Group to encourage values of mission as well as mission itself.

Revd Philip North (London): Every time I open up the Church of England website and see the proud boast that we are maintaining ‘A Christian presence in every community’ my mind goes at once to the vast white-majority social housing estates in Sunderland and Middlesbrough, because on many of those estates that Christian presence has reached its eventide; in some it has been vanquished altogether.

I am a huge enthusiast for this paper, which is outstanding, and a strong supporter of the plan to form a Task Group. I would like to place an absolutely vital question high up the agenda for that new group. Why is our evangelism failing the poor? We are rightly proud of our new catechetical resources; yet many in our urban and outer estates clergy find they cannot use them because they presume in their participants a high level of literacy or the learned discipline of listening to a long lecture. We are rightly proud of new techniques to engage with families, yet many urban clergy find that these techniques presume a certain form of stable family life which on many estates is fast disappearing. We delight in new church plants, yet it puzzles me how the majority of church planters go for areas where the fruit is hanging low, in particular the vast number whom the Lord appears to be calling to entrepreneurial ministry – as long as it does not require a move outside Zone 2. (*Laughter and applause*)

We claim to be developing a new generation of pioneer clergy, yet when my old parish on a large Hartlepool estate fell vacant recently it was two and a half years before the diocese could find anyone to fill the post. Compare that to a recent vacancy in a richly endowed parish near Paddington that attracted 123 firm applicants and you will see the true measure of the spiritual health of the Church of England.

Urban clergy too often face ageing, dwindling congregations, a lack of lay leadership and semi-derelict buildings. When they look for resources to help there is very little that they can find. The battle for the Christian soul of this nation will not be won and lost in Guildford or Kensington. The battle that counts will be on the large urban estates where Church life, especially in white majority areas, is failing fast. A vital priority for this new Task Group must be to work out why this is so and what we need to do to address the problem.

We need research to understand where we are going wrong in urban ministry and why it is so hard to make new disciples in areas where poverty and social deprivation are rife. We need to develop contextually appropriate evangelistic models and techniques, perhaps by experimentally focusing resources on one or two areas of the country and allowing a group of clergy and laypeople to try new things out, with plenty of permission to fail. Above all, we must not lose hold of the emphasis on the Christian call to transform not just individual lives but whole communities.

In this respect the only aspect of this paper that disappoints me is that the emphasis on social justice, which is so eloquently described in Section Two, is then lost when it comes to the

seven disciplines of evangelism, which means that it is also lost in that area of this report which is most commended for study.

Following a recent sabbatical, the Bishop of Stepney outlined this problem brilliantly in his report *So Yesterday*, which is published online, asking why we have lost hold of the urban priority and how our rightful preoccupation with growth must not lead to the accidental abandonment of the poor. His voice is a prophetic one in this regard and I would urge the new task force to rise to the challenge that he poses.

The Chair: I call on the Revd Stephen Pratt to speak to his amendment.

Revd Stephen Pratt (Lichfield): I warmly welcome this motion, and this is intended to be a friendly amendment to express more clearly what I believe is the intention of paragraph (d). There is a danger that the PCC can spend the bulk of a PCC meeting discussing evangelism but never really getting out and doing any, yet it is the doing that is of great urgency at the present time. The national census shows a marked decline in the number of people who call themselves Christians. There is an increase from 15 to 25 per cent of those who claim to have no religion. In another ten years' time, what will the figures be then if we simply talk about evangelism?

It will soon be Christmas. In my parish Christmas starts in November, because the lights go up and we will be reading and hearing again about the people walking in darkness. Our nation does seem to be groping in darkness at the present, lost and unsure; yet we have good news. It is noted at page 3 of the report that the gospel offers hope and forgiveness. St Paul reminds us in Romans 10, 'How can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?' The Great Commission is about going out and making disciples, not about staying in and talking about making disciples.

This is not just about saving the denomination but acting in obedience to Our Lord. It is important that we see this matter of doing as 'an urgency', both because we do need to halt the decline of our denomination but more importantly because time is running out. Jesus will return and we must be found busy doing the works of Our Lord. Hence this amendment seeks to urge each local church – by which I mean whatever we see as the local church: parish, church plant, fresh expression – to try at least one new way of seeking to make disciples. Of course, as the report states very clearly at page 14, prayerful listening to God has to be the first prerequisite to evangelism – hence the word 'prayerfully' there – so that we are not simply involved in activism but rather engaging in evangelism that is dependent upon the Holy Spirit both for guidance and for power.

The report says that in the past things have been left to parishes and mission agencies. There are times when it seems to suggest that those have failed and that the answer to the problem is down to an institutional approach. I would say that institutional top-down approaches generally lose out. What is needed is a national policy or a strategy to change the culture of the Church of England and to put the whole Church on a disciple-making footing as though the answer lies with our greatest resource: the people of God.

The discussion and action needs to be done at a local church level, so each local church needs to equip members for this task of evangelism that is appropriate to their context. There are plenty of ways in which we can do that. In our parish, along with other churches in

Stoke-on-Trent, we are taking part in A Passion for Life and we will be using Easter as a means of providing focus for our mission and evangelism. Prior to that, in Lent, we will be running courses to train our individuals, young people and older people, everyone, in giving them the confidence in sharing their faith. We will be using *Six Steps to Talking About Jesus* but there are others.

I welcome this report and the motion but invite you to accept this amendment, which seeks to encourage churches not only to talk but to try some new ways of evangelizing in their context. That word 'try' is important. It need not be big or slick or impressive, because we are not called to that. It may not appear to be successful, but we are not called to be successful, merely to obey what Jesus commands and, as we do what he commands, we leave the results to him.

Dr Angus Goudie (Durham): I made my maiden speech in July 2011 on the subject of the Mission Action Plan, a Private Member's Motion. When I first came into General Synod three years ago I was very encouraged by the quinquennial goals that we debated and which we debated again in July. It has been exciting to see the way things have moved on over the last two and a half years, going from the initial paper to the mission action planning and a very positive debate, and then to the present paper.

It is good to see that one of the purposes of the Archbishops' Task Group on Evangelism is to 'Enable the Church of England to work in ecumenical partnership in evangelism wherever possible'. This seems to be a real place where we can add value to what we do. The outside world so often sees a Church that is fragmented. When churches in our area work together it can be very powerful, in that it can change that perception.

We have all been encouraged, I am sure, by working with the Methodists, particularly in fresh expressions, but it has also been good to see that many of the initiatives mentioned in the paper – Alpha, Emmaus, Christianity Explored, for example – have been used across a very wide range of denominations and churchmanship. In relation to this last point I would add a plea that there should be an attempt to enable and encourage evangelism and evangelistic initiatives that look for opportunities to cross barriers of churchmanship at a local level. However, the enabling and encouragement should not just be to work with the Methodist Church but also to work with the high church or the evangelical church down the road on a local basis.

Despite the fact that we have differences on what are considered primary and secondary issues of the faith, I believe in all our traditions there is a sincere wish to be able to say that we want to share the good news about Jesus, even where individuals in congregations may have found it difficult or been discouraged at a practical level in the past. The fact that Alpha has been used in such a wide range of settings, Catholic, Anglo-Catholic or evangelical, shows that there can be a real common cause.

I am sure that seeking to find room to work or to encourage each other locally across such divides is the way to improve our mutual respect, to learn from each other probably far more than we encourage the other and to reduce the silo mentality. We often recognize this in our own areas of churchmanship but it is also seen from outside the Church, and it is very unhelpful for people to see squabbling or differences of opinion and people not standing up together in the way that they should.

I wholeheartedly support this motion but hope that it may be an opportunity for even wider local working together in the gospel.

Canon Zahida Mallard (Bradford): – for the time being for Bradford. I want to say thank you for bringing this report to us. I am particularly grateful for the mention in paragraph 51 to the evangelists for the North. Roger is coming to speak at our parish weekend next year and we are already looking forward to it. I am somewhat concerned, however, that I may be one of those people described in paragraph 54 as ‘bland’. I am not sure that I am.

I want to speak, having asked a number of people before I arrived whether I should speak or not and them saying, ‘Go on, because you’re our voice.’ The voice is that of a first-generation convert and disciple of Christ. It somehow perturbs me that in paragraph 76 it states, ‘rather than converts’. I do not know what it means or what the inference is there but that was the bit that struck me, because I have heard speaker after speaker referring to the Great Commission and to making disciples of all communities, and we are part of the community that makes up the Church of England. This is a place where cultural change needs to happen and evolve, as said in paragraph 70. If culture is to change and evolve, it needs to include those voices of converts, taking from that ‘Those who come to faith need to be incorporated into living, growing, supportive and Christ-like Christian communities’ as mentioned in paragraph 78.

The Chair: I call upon Mr Gavin Oldham to speak to but not move his amendment.

Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford): Paragraph 12 of this excellent report calls upon the Church to proclaim the gospel afresh in each generation. The Church is the vehicle for carrying the Christian faith from generation to generation. The Church is not the faith but, like the runners in a relay race, it passes the baton of faith on to the next generation.

I have distributed, so far as is possible, a chart of religious affiliation by year of birth. It was produced by David Voas of the University of Essex and has already been seen by the House of Bishops and the Diocesan Finance Forum. If members do not have a copy, ask me for one later. It shows that in our generation we are doing that job of being the vehicle for carrying the Christian faith from generation to generation spectacularly badly. If members have the chart before them, contrast the collapsing blue band at the bottom of the chart, which is the Church of England, with the red Roman Catholic band above it. Whereas the thickness of the latter holds steady throughout the generations, ours has fallen dramatically.

Fewer than five per cent of the under-30s recognize the Church of England as their religious affiliation. It is not correct therefore for paragraph 27 to describe the problem as ‘not peculiar to the Church of England’. It is not good enough for paragraph 26 to blame ‘growing wariness and antipathy towards faith’. We should not guess at the reasons; we should discover them by asking, by researching. It may be a failure to give reason second place after Scripture, in a society which teaches its children to ask ‘Why?’ until they get an answer. It may be a failure to engage through the social media. It may be that we offer services on Sunday mornings when young people play sport. It may be all of these. We do not know. We have to ask.

David Willetts in his book *The Pinch* says that, outside the family, we are divided more horizontally by our age group than ever, working with and living in communities of people our own age. He says that the family is shrinking and we now have tall, thin families in a wide, flat world. That is why families, so important for connecting the generations, are

becoming less effective and why family disintegration is so serious. In chapter 5 of his book Willetts tries – not very well, in my view – to explain the social contract between generations in secular terms. Getting generations to care for one another is not some psychological fix, and ultimately it cannot be done by government. Children's homes for the young and assisted suicide for the very old come to mind.

No, it is the unconditional work; it is the work of the unconditional love, which is God. If the vehicle for carrying the Christian faith is running on wonky wheels, God will act directly. Perhaps that is why the 'Christian – no denomination' band in the chart has widened out to over ten per cent for the under-30s. With all our resources, an Established Church, direct presence in 16,000 locations and some £16 billion in assets, surely we can help God better? However, we will not do so without a real priority for engaging with young people, not just children but 20 and 30-year-olds. If we do not do this, the Church of England is likely to be literally squeezed out of existence over the next 50 years. I urge Synod to vote for my amendment when it reaches that point.

The Bishop of Sodor and Man (Rt Revd Robert Paterson): I, like I suppose most people here, am very grateful for the paper and the proposals to make Christ visible in our nations – the Isle of Man is a separate nation! The key today is discipleship.

There is, as somebody said a little earlier, a great deal of residual faith in this country. You have only to meet people in hospital, people who are sad from the death of those they love, people who do not turn up on Sundays in church but who ask us to pray with them. It can be seen in the example of such things as the lay Christians in my own diocese who have started to invite friends and colleagues to share food and prayer, such that these friends and colleagues have found themselves, in their words, 'in the circle'. There is power in discipleship.

The most important question is often asked behind the Christian's back. 'Why is she like that? Why does he behave like that?' And, when trust develops enough, 'Why are you like that?' Christians need to be those kind of question-mark people, because the old question has changed from 'How can I get to heaven?' to the question 'How can God's will be done in my life as it is in heaven?' or 'What kind of person could I become in Christ?' There is power in discipleship.

The trouble is that what is on the label of the Church tin is still not what is in the tin. On the label the Church tin says, 'Open here for salvation, peace, hope, purpose, love, kingdom' – and probably down at the bottom it says, 'Caution, this may contain nuts' – but, when it is opened, inside the tin we so often find humbug or, if we are Anglicans, fudge!

People outside the Church have noticed that internalizing tendency and they do not want to belong to an apparently useless and self-orientated organization. Symptoms of this can be seen in the general decline of the self-preserving parts of the institutional Church and, in contrast, growth among the more visionary and less self-defensive. For me, it all points towards the same basic problem in the declining Church: internalization, guilt-inducing ministry displacing discipleship. What we need is transformative discipleship, making Christ visible.

The Chair: I ask Revd Angus MacLeay formally to move his amendment.

Revd Angus MacLeay (Rochester): I beg to move as an amendment:

‘At the end of paragraph (a) *insert* “and urge that its membership include:

- (i) staff of Anglican home mission agencies with expertise in helping local churches engage in effective evangelism and disciple-making, and
- (ii) those with a proven record in those disciplines at local level”.

The Chair: I ask the Archbishop of York to respond to the amendment.

The Archbishop of York: The Task Group to be set up must include, for example, the Church Army, including staff of home mission agencies. How many? They must be brought on board to be members of the Task Group. One has to ask if that is the best way of doing it.

Under (ii) the Task Group must surely be made up of people with a proven record in making and nurturing disciples. For me, it is up to the Synod to decide whether this addition strengthens the motion or not.

Given the two Archbishops of this Task Group, I think we wanted to be slightly more flexible, to ensure that we keep everybody in this task of evangelism. I want us to be able to get on with it and not think about who is in and who is not, because in the end we want to bring everybody on board with their skills. If you think this bit helps the motion, then vote for it. We want every Anglican to come on board. I am in Synod’s hands but I am not very enthusiastic about the amendment.

The Chair: This amendment is now open for debate.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

The Bishop of Willesden (Rt Revd Peter Broadbent): I am grateful for the Archbishop of York’s response on that. Mr MacLeay has made a point about the way in which we make these task groups work. A task group is different from a committee. I think that we are about changing the culture of the National Church in how we do these things.

I make a shameless plug for my blogspot, bishopofwillesden.blogspot.co.uk, where I argue the case precisely for having flexible ways of working, which will break down the barriers.

Mr MacLeay is saying that we should bring on board people who have expertise. A task group does not have to have a fixed membership. The best way to learn about how we do evangelism is not by having – as used to be the case at the National Church level – something which is monolithic and hands down its ideas about how we do things. I agree with what the Archbishop was hinting at in his response. Let us get people on board who have a track record in doing these things. Let us use them as consultants. Let us invite them in and they can tell us how they have done these things. We all clapped heartily when Fr North got up on his hind legs and referred to the realities of what it means to be ‘doing church’ in our inner urban areas, but how will we get the expertise of people who are good practitioners involved in this?

Let us put Mr MacLeay's amendment in, because it does give us a steer to the fact that this is a different way of working. It will enable us to draw on experience from people who know what they are doing and who know what works, and we can get on with something that will resource evangelism properly. Otherwise, it will just be a talking shop at national level and it will not have any effect on the parishes, which is where evangelism takes place.

The Bishop of Jarrow (Rt Revd Mark Bryant): I want to pick up on the point that has just been made but also say that Synod will have heard that real applause for everything that Philip North said. The problem for a number of our communities is that there is a real desire for evangelism but very few resources.

Stories about clergy who come to a church where there were three people and half a cat and, five years later, there are 5,000 there every Sunday can be really quite disheartening to people who have a real vision but are very low on resources.

It will be really important that there are those in this Task Group who understand the situation of people where resources are very thick on the ground and I hope that Synod and those responsible for setting up the Task Group will note that.

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

‘That the question be now put.’

This motion was put and carried.

The amendment was put and carried.

Revd Stephen Pratt (Lichfield): I beg to move as an amendment:

‘At the end *insert* as a new paragraph –

“(–) urge every local church in 2014 prayerfully to try at least one new way, appropriate to their local context, of seeking to make new disciples of Jesus Christ”.’

The Archbishop of York: I never know what the Bishop of Willesden will end up saying, but that is another story!

This amendment seeks to urge every local church in 2014 prayerfully to try one new way of seeking and making disciples. The sense in which it strengthens (d), which says ‘every PCC to spend... some part of every meeting focusing on sharing experiences and initiatives for making new disciples’ is ‘prayerfully to try... one new way of doing it’. I am in the hands of Synod whether this is necessary or not. I thought it was already implied in the paper and the material, but it is for Synod to decide.

The Chair: The amendment is now open for debate.

Mrs Christine Corteen (Salisbury): I would ask members to support this amendment. HOPE 2014 is part of the initiative to encourage Churches to get into the community and join in with what God is doing in the community. That may not necessarily mean coming up with

a new initiative, but certainly one should know what is going on in the community and join in with it.

Bearing in mind that next year is the 100th anniversary of the start of the First World War, that is just one of many things that will be happening in our communities and I am sure that we can join in with that. I suggest that we can pin quite a lot of good ideas on this amendment and that it does join in with that general HOPE 2014 initiative. I would urge Synod to support this.

The Archdeacon of Tonbridge (Ven. Clive Mansell): I am minded to support this particular proposal because I think it adds something that is graspable at the local church level. The sharing of the faith is one of the most exciting and enjoyable things we can do. In parish ministry we can do it in all sorts of ways, through visiting, through special events and through all the things we do in the life of the parish as hospitality, worship and so on.

When I was a country parson, we used to have an item on the PCC agenda that I put on each time. It said 'Mission Matters'. You can read those two words as a noun and a verb or as an adjective and a noun, but under that item we grouped together some of the things we were doing and some of the new things we might do. It began in a small way, I suppose, to help people think in mission terms about what we were doing as we lived out our lives in our Christian faith in a rural context. There is so much to do. Some people need the chance to recognize what they are already doing, because they are already being Christian witnesses in their parish lives, and we can notch that up under our 'Mission Matters' item on the agenda. Sometimes we can add something new to what we are doing in a creative way. Having that agenda heading allows us to do that.

I urge Synod to back the amendment. Read it as 'at least one new matter' to mission initiative. You could take on two, three, four or five, as you wish, but let us begin where we can with at least one new item and encourage our folk, whether in town or country, to share the faith with great joy and enthusiasm.

The Bishop of Bradford (Rt Revd Nicholas Baines): I want to support this because it brings in that phrase 'appropriate to their local context'. My brother bishop earlier referred to the dearth of resources. The resources that we have are the people who have a story to tell, but in what language do we encourage them to tell that story? That will be different in very different contexts. We have heard this said already, but anyone who lives in the North knows that the North is a different country. Some of the resources that come up from the South are not appropriate – and I speak as a northerner who has lived in the South for a long time.

We need to find ways and languages that can be understood and heard by the people among whom we serve. To vote for this and that phrase 'appropriate to their local context' will mean that we do not get away with ignoring the differentiation which we need to apply ourselves.

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

'That the question be now put.'

This motion was put and carried.

The amendment was put and carried.

Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford): I beg to move as an amendment:

‘At the end *insert* as a new paragraph –

“(–) call upon all within the Church of England to fulfil their duty to proclaim the gospel afresh to each generation, particularly acknowledging the significant fall in its affiliation within the younger age cohorts of the population”.’

The Archbishop of York: Mr Gavin Oldham’s speech was very good, better than what the motion seems to be doing. Certainly we must have research, because without research we are lost. That bit of his speech needs to be taken on and I must acknowledge its reality. Yes we definitely want to call upon everybody within the Church of England to fulfil their duty to proclaim the gospel afresh in each generation. That is why this motion is here – so there is a bit in which that is already happening.

As to acknowledging the fall in affiliation with the young, we know that as a fact. Do we need to put it in a motion? Do we need also to refer to the younger age of the population? Why are we having this debate? We are having this debate because we want to set up a task group that will embody everybody in the Church of England and involve them in making Christ visible and Christ known. Older people also need to hear the gospel of Jesus. I recall those wonderful words by Cardinal Basil Hume when he said that the Roman Catholic Church in this country was so sacramentalized that a time had come for it to be evangelized. We may still have people in our churches for whom discipleship does not seem to be a reality. I do not want to single out one particular age group. I want everybody who dares call themselves Anglicans to be involved in this task. Again, I am in Synod’s hands.

The Chair: The amendment is now open for debate.

Sister Anne Williams (Durham): Sixty years ago I joined a youth organization. Synod will know the one I am referring to. It was the Church Girls’ Brigade, which has now joined with the lads and is the Church Lads’ and Church Girls’ Brigade.

Fifty years on from that I was at a meeting where a lady spoke of the work the Church Army does with young people. I said to the lady afterwards, ‘I’ve done that work in my spare time all my life and I never thought I could have done it full time.’ Two days later I received a phone call from a gentleman saying, ‘Can I come up for a chat?’ I said, ‘Come up from where?’ and he said, ‘London’. You do not go from London to County Durham for a chat! Anyway, he did. He asked me what I had been doing part-time most of my life and I told him about Brigade, how I had learned from the leaders and we brought young children in, and I was running the thing. What happened was that, while we were having fun and running round, playing games, drawing and all sorts of things, we also talked about the faith. The parents would come along and say, ‘What was it you were talking to my little one about?’ What I started to do each month was have an evening where the parents would come and I would talk to them about what I had been talking to the children about. As a result of that, we had parents starting to come to church. When I told him this, he turned to me and he said, ‘Oh, yes, you are an evangelist, but I think that we had better have you into Church Army training and get it right.’ (*Laughter*)

So off I went. I think I have got something about uniforms, actually! During my training there I discovered the many things that I needed to know to enable me to do evangelism more widely. It is because of all of this that I am so adamant that it is for all ages. However, there are things that we need to realize. One of the things that I realize up in the North – and I do not know what it is like in the South, I am sorry – is that a lot of people do not have the confidence to think that they can do anything. Yet if you spend time with them, talk with them and help them, they come to realize that they do have the gifts to be able to show God's love to the world and to bring people to know Him, to bring both children and their parents and their grandparents – and, in a couple of cases, great-grandparents, I have to say.

Dr Phillip Giddings (Oxford): I would like to reflect on the willingness of the General Synod to extend the length of motions by a desire to add every little dot and cross, in order to make sure we have it exactly right. In the paper before us, in particular page 22, the purpose of the Task Group covers virtually everything that is in Mr Oldham's amendment, with the exception of a very specific reference to young people. I doubt that we will change anything by passing this amendment, except to make the motion longer and more difficult to report on and enthuse people about.

To become an evangelizing force in our community we need the ability to get across to people that faith in Jesus Christ means so much to us that it communicates to them the desire to share it. That is not achieved by adding another cross or dot to a motion; it is achieved by the way in which we go out to 'sell' this to our brothers and sisters in the Church, and a shorter motion is likely to be better at that. I would invite Synod to reflect carefully on what is already there before we pass yet another amendment.

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

'That the question be now put.'

This motion was put and carried.

The amendment was put and lost.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of two minutes.

Revd Canon Dagmar Winter (Newcastle): Of course I welcome this report. I should add that I welcome especially the appreciation of the role of academic theology for the task. I would like to frame what I say in this principally positive light.

I have a slight concern that we will get into a 'golden age' narrative. We know well that people in the past were far more familiar with Biblical literature and more people sat on our pews, but I am concerned that this language of decline masks the truth of the past, as though we were ever a Church full of committed disciples, who could not wait to discuss the Bible, would meet in the house group and prepare the next sermon, et cetera. I do not think that kind of middle-class manifestation of Christian life is what we should necessarily be aiming for anyway – see Philip North's powerful speech.

I am absolutely committed to the key importance of Christ inspiring us at the centre of our lives, so that a Christian ethos will not be hollowed out; so that we will receive both the

comfort and the challenge of the gospel and live out God's mission in the world. When I think of every parish in which I have ever been, I wonder in which way our intentional evangelism will take account of the fact that, from the earliest days of the Jesus movement, a core of people who were the fragile vessels, if not cracked pots, spread the good news of God. There is also another group of people that does not do lots of religious things but is fundamentally supportive, encouraged by the message of God's love and involved in all sorts of good stuff, from personal neighbourliness, to community activism, to simply leading good lives raising a family, and which is sometimes seen by what I have crudely called 'the core' as not quite properly committed Christians. There is of course the whole other group, which is quite untouched, apathetic, to whom the Christian faith is either quaint or ridiculous. There is a job to be done here.

Yes I share the concern about not reaching people but my anxiety is that, in our zeal, we do not let go of the spirit of generosity for our country and alienate those who appear to be on the periphery by giving them the message that if they are not right in, they are out.

Before Mr Ireland speaks, I understand that the motion as amended can be displayed on the screen. If that is possible, it would be very helpful.

Revd Mark Ireland (Lichfield): It has been an excellent debate and we welcome the initiative of a new Task Group on Evangelism, particularly the very personal lead from our two Archbishops and from members of the House of Bishops in preparing this debate.

I want to ask the question how we are resourcing what we are willing and if we are willing an object without willing the means. The Task Group has no budget. We are not asked to approve any budget this afternoon. It is not clear if the group will have any paid staff or if the ten members appointed by the Archbishops will simply be those effective practitioners on the ground who are already working in more-than-full-time jobs, who will be asked, in addition, to take on responsibility for turning round the Church of England's challenge of evangelism over the next few years in their spare time. The danger is that we could end up with high-powered church committees without anyone with the time and energy to lead on this vital priority between meetings.

The paper also draws attention to the serious under-resourcing in the whole area of apologetics. It would be a real pity if as a Synod we failed to resource this Task Group in the way that it needs to be. If we are to achieve any substantial change in the organization there will be a cost. If we simply vote for the good idea, let us set up a committee but, if we do not release people with the time to lead and to work on this, we may just be putting an unrealistic expectation on a group of already willing and perhaps overcommitted volunteers.

Members of Synod, if we are to be truly intentional about evangelism, let us not only pray about it; let us not only will the object but also will the means.

Revd Catherine Nightingale (Deaf Anglicans Together): I support the whole idea of this motion of evangelism, yet I would make the point that it should have been slightly broader. It has been slightly narrowed by the wording in paragraph (d) because there is reference to PCCs and deaneries and things, but there are also organizations such as our own and there are things like fresh expressions, which do not necessarily fit under the structure detailed in section (d). That is the point I wanted to make: that there are wider areas where this should be discussed.

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

‘That the question be now put.’

This motion was put and carried.

The Archbishop of York, in reply: First, I want to begin by thanking the Bishops of Chelmsford, St Albans and Sheffield, who have worked hard in producing this particular paper. They were also joined on another report, *Pilgrim*. I want to pay great tribute to the three of you. Continue doing it. It is wonderful that you have been able to do what you have brought before us.

It will be very difficult to respond to everybody. To Tudor Griffiths in his maiden speech, yes, we face a lot of global challenges but, he is right, we need to integrate everything we do in every part of our life. After all, we have an incarnational faith and also a faith in which the Son of God died and rose again. Experience of evangelism and witness from all over the place needs to be brought in. We look forward to the wider Anglican Communion and learn lessons.

To Susan Cooper, we are not saying that people cannot do evangelism in different ways. Evangelism is for the whole Church, not just for evangelicals. The word ‘*evangel*’ is good news. It is for everybody in the Church. We are here to witness for Christ. Pope Francis, who is a Jesuit and Bishop of Rome, has said that if we do not engage in evangelism and caring for the poor, the Church will collapse like a pack of cards. You would not accuse him of being an evangelical, would you? We had better be careful when we hear this word. I want to liberate this word from one particular group. It belongs to the whole Church and the Body of Jesus Christ.

To Mr Goddard and why people are not identifying with us, he believes it is our brand. Experts in advertising tell us that no amount of advertising or change of our brand will compensate for the content of the product. I believe that the Church of England, both Catholic and Reformed, has a fantastic conduit in the gospel and, of course, Jesus is a conduit himself.

Synod will realize that Section Seven of our report refers to ‘Incarnational mission (following the pattern of Jesus)’. That is what we want to do. For me, worship and witness are two sides of the one coin and you cannot have one without another. The call for traditional worship is already there in the things that I said.

To the Bishop of Southwell and Nottingham, yes, bishops as leaders in evangelism but, again, remember that I want to draw a clear distinction. There are witnesses who say they are Christian but not everybody is an evangelist.

Bishop Tony, what you are doing in your diocese is just amazing. We need to be clearer in the way we give witness to Jesus Christ. We need to be more confident in the gospel, you are quite right, and we must include all ages. He used a phrase which I did not like, ‘life-enhancing’ and that many people are going into life-enhancing things. I think the Gospel of Jesus is not life-enhancing; it is about life transformation. He bids us to come and die that we

may rise to newness of life. The Holy Spirit is not in the business of life-enhancing but making sure that we die to sin and rise with Jesus.

Ruth Hind is absolutely serious in the things she says in terms of models of ministry. The Church Growth Research project will be published early next year and the Church Pastoral Aid Society is now carrying out research in the multi-parish benefices. We hope that this will be able to support our making and nurturing disciples.

To Angus and his amendment, yes, we are calling on everyone in the name of Jesus Christ to make Jesus visible. Again, the warmth of welcome and friendship is quite important. I think that he is quite right about brightness. As on a warm summer's night a bright light attracts many different insects, the warmth of the fellowship and the quality of the relationship is vital if we are to do this.

Philip North is quite right. We say that we are present in every community and he is right that we have failed poor communities in terms of the gospel. Urban clergy facing tough relations, tough work – what do we do about all of this? All I can say, as somebody who has worked in an inner city parish, Brixton, which was very tough, is that I discovered there was only one way of doing it: prayer, worship and parties. In the end, we did break the ice.

I would agree with Stephen that the urgency of the task is important and, to Angus, yes the Church of England needs to work ecumenically.

To Zahida, the words there need to be very carefully read. We are not against converting; we are about growing the communities of the bodies of Christ into maturity so that in the end they are capable of welcoming in new believers, those who may be converted, those who are becoming disciples. To Gavin I would say yes, we shall be there.

The Bishop of Sodor and Man is quite right. We are there to make Jesus Christ visible. It is about discipleship and stopping being self-referential. In one of his sermons after his inauguration, Pope Francis referred to a Church that is so self-referential that it will destroy itself.

To Sister Anne Williams, yes, we need to know and take a view of things. To Philip Giddings I would say that I am sorry his amendment did not succeed.

Dagmar Winter is glad about academic theology and is quite right to warn us against decline, as it has already been successful. However, my dear sister, I want to say this. I come from a third world country and I have lived in this country. When people have known Jesus, they are hungry to know the Bible. They are hungry to go and spread the news. I do not think it is always the middle class. It has to do with whether you want to be a disciple of Jesus.

To Mark and resources – give me a tenner and I will give you another tenner!

To Cathy, I did include in my speech about chaplaincies, other groups and other communities. Although it is not in the motion, I can assure you that the Archbishop of Canterbury and myself will make sure we take that on board.

I urge members of Synod to give this motion a resounding Yes, and then we shall come back to you to tell you where we are in terms of our Task Group. God bless you.

The motion was put and carried in the following amended form:

‘That this Synod in the light of the priority of evangelism and making new disciples:

- (a) support the formation of an Archbishops’ Task Group on Evangelism with the terms of reference and timetable as set out in GS 1917 and urge that its membership include:
 - (i) staff of Anglican home mission agencies with expertise in helping local churches engage in effective evangelism and disciple-making, and
 - (ii) those with a proven record in those disciplines at local level;
- (b) call upon the Task Group to make its first priority a new call to prayer;
- (c) commend to the Task Group an initial programme for its work around the seven disciplines of evangelization as set out in the same paper;
- (d) call upon every diocesan and deanery synod and every PCC to spend the bulk of one meeting annually and some part of every meeting focusing on sharing experiences and initiatives for making new disciples;
- (e) urge every local church in 2014 prayerfully to try at least one new way, appropriate to their local context, of seeking to make new disciples of Jesus Christ.’

THE CHAIR *Mr Geoffrey Tattersall* took the Chair at 4.30 p.m.

Legislative Business

Draft Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure (GS 1866B)

Draft Amending Canon No. 31 (GS 1877B)

Draft Measure and Draft Amending Canon for Final Drafting and Final Approval

(Revision at the July 2013 group of sessions)

Report by the Steering Committee (GS 1866Z/1877Z)

Final Drafting

Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn): I beg to move:

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

This draft Miscellaneous Provisions Measure and draft Amending Canon No. 31 received their first consideration at York in July 2012. They were then committed to a Revision Committee, whose report Synod took note of this July. In July, Synod went on to complete the revision stage of both the Measure and the Canon. Since July, the Steering Committee has conducted its business by correspondence and now brings its report to Synod in respect of final drafting.

The Steering Committee has made a number of drafting amendments to the Measure where only the wording of the Measure is altered and not its substance. These are explained in Annex A to the report and either make the intended meaning clearer or make the wording consistent with other parts of the Measure.

The Steering Committee proposes one special amendment to the Measure, which I will speak about if we reach the stage where I move that special amendment. There are no proposed amendments to the draft Canon.

The Chair: The matter is open for debate. I see no one standing. I assume that Fr Benfield does not wish to reply. *(Laughter)* You never know! I need to remind members that if this item is carried, the drafting amendments are deemed to have been made without having been moved.

The motion was put and carried.

The Chair: We move to the final drafting stage and the final amendment. There is one special amendment proposed by the Steering Committee. It is set out as Item 512 on the Order Paper.

Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn): I beg to move:

‘Page 22, after line 24 *insert –*

“(6) In section 37(1), for the words ‘shall be in the prescribed form’ there are substituted the words ‘shall, where the form of the notice is prescribed by the Patronage (Procedure) Committee, be in the prescribed form’.”

This special amendment is also set out in Annex B to the Steering Committee’s report. In part 2 of that annex is a detailed explanation as to why this is necessary.

Clause 12 of the draft Measure inserts a new clause 16A into the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986. This new section 16A provides a shortened procedure that may be used, but need not be used, when a priest in charge is to be made incumbent of a benefice. If the shortened procedure is to be used, then it involves the giving of certain notices by the bishop and the patron. Since these would be notices given under the 1986 Measure, they must be in the prescribed form. This is defined elsewhere in the 1986 Measure as being in a form prescribed in rules. Those rules are to be made by the Patronage (Procedure) Committee. That Committee has not met for many years and so it would have to be reconstituted to prescribe those new forms which are necessary. Those new forms would have to be made in rules, which would have to be approved by General Synod and laid before Parliament. This would take a considerable time and delay the coming into force of the new section, to say nothing of effort and expense.

It is therefore proposed in this amendment that section 37(1) of the 1986 Measure be amended, so that where the 1986 Measure requires notices to be given they shall, where the form of notice is prescribed in rules made by the Patronage (Procedure) Committee, be in the prescribed form; but where there are no prescribed forms it will be open to the Legal Office

to draft standard forms on a non-statutory basis, which can be used in connection with the shortened procedure.

The amendment also removes the difficulty which currently exists concerning presentation to benefices, in that no rules were ever made in connection with Part 2 of the 1986 Measure. The only rules made were concerned with the registration of patronage in Part 1. Standard forms are used in connection with presentation to benefices but they have no statutory authority. This amendment will allow those standard form notices to continue to be used.

The Chair: I am sure that is all very clear to you. *(Laughter)* It should be. The matter is now open for debate. I see no one standing. We put the special amendment to the vote.

The special amendment was put and carried.

Draft Measure for Final Approval

The Chair: That concludes the final drafting stage for both pieces of draft legislation. We come now to final approval stage. Before the motion for final approval of the Measure can be moved, we need to hear from the Archbishop of York to signify the Queen's and the Prince of Wales's consent.

The Archbishop of York (Dr John Sentamu): As a Privy Counsellor, I have it in command from Her Majesty the Queen and His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales to acquaint the Synod that they, having been informed of the purpose of the draft Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure, have consented to place their prerogatives and interests, so far as they are affected by the draft Measure, at the disposal of the Synod for the purposes of the draft Measure.

Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn): I beg to move:

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

When this draft Miscellaneous Provisions Measure was given its first consideration in July 2012, it ran to 12 clauses and 18 pages. It now comes before Synod with 21 clauses and 30 pages, making it the longest-ever Miscellaneous Provisions Measure. This increase in length is not due to poor drafting in the first draft but, rather, that various matters have been added at the revision stage, the need for which was not apparent 18 months ago.

I would like to thank the members of the Steering and Revision Committees for their hard work on this complex piece of legislation. Above all, I would like to pay tribute to the staff of the Legal Office who have guided us through all the changes. Some of those staff are sitting on the platform behind me. Among them is the Deputy Legal Adviser, The Revd Alexander McGregor, who has had oversight of this whole Measure. I am sure that members of Synod would wish to join with me in congratulating him on his appointment as Chancellor of the Diocese of Oxford. *(Applause)*

Members of Synod need only look at the contents page of the Measure to see what a wide variety of matters are dealt with: burials and benefices; cathedrals and Church Commissioners; ecclesiastical commissioners and ecclesiastical jurisdiction; faculties and

fees; overseas clergy and offices; parochial church councils and patronage. The legislative provisions tidy up some earlier provisions, rectify mistakes in legislation not previously noticed and make new provisions where it is necessary or expedient to do so, to take account of changes in technology, Church life and the world around us. Though often technical, the provisions of this Measure will help the administration and functioning of the various bodies that make up the Church of England and thus aid its mission.

The Chair: The motion is now open for debate. I would remind members that under SO 61(a) motions for closure, speech limit or Next Business are not in order in this debate but I retain discretion under SO 21(c) to alter the normal speech limit of five minutes.

Revd Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich): I rise primarily to congratulate Paul, as a colleague and friend, for an absolutely fantastic performance from the platform in getting us through an awful lot of complicated stuff in a way that I think was clear and helpful.

I also want to thank the legal team for having tried over these past months to streamline our procedures so that we become a more effective and efficient Church. What saddens me is that, having had a debate in which we have accused ourselves of being inward-looking and incomprehensible, for the last ten minutes we have been incredibly inward-looking and incredibly incomprehensible. The less time we spend on this and the more time we spend on the right stuff, the better it will be for everybody and the Church we are trying to reach.

The Chair: I see no one else standing. I call upon Fr Benfield to reply.

Revd Paul Benfield, in reply: I would, perhaps not surprisingly, agree with everything said in the last speech.

The Chair: Under SO 36(c) a division by Houses is required for the vote on final approval of a Measure, unless I give my permission and the Synod gives leave for that requirement to be dispensed with. However, it is important to have accurate voting figures for the vote on final approval of a Measure to establish how far it has the support of all three Houses and in that respect to make the provision clear for the Ecclesiastical Committee and both Houses of Parliament. Therefore, I do not give my permission to dispense with the requirement for a division by Houses and accordingly order a division by Houses. The motion requires a simple majority in each House.

The motion was put and the Chair, pursuant to SO 36(c)(iii), ordered a division by Houses, with the following result:

	<i>Ayes</i>	<i>Noes</i>	<i>Abstentions</i>
House of Bishops	18	0	0
House of Clergy	74	0	0
House of Laity	85	0	0

The motion was carried.

The Chair: The draft Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure now stands committed to the Legislative Committee.

Draft Amending Canon for Final Approval

Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn): I beg to move:

‘That the Canon entitled “Amending Canon No. 13” be finally approved.’

Just as the Miscellaneous Provisions Measure tidied up and made amendments to various statutory provisions, so this Amending Canon tidies up and amends provisions in various canons. Most of it probably makes little sense unless one reads it with the Canons in one hand and the Amending Canon in the other, but it has been subject to the full revision process in committee and on the floor of Synod, so members should be assured that it has been closely scrutinized.

It adds a new Canon C 19 about guardians of spiritualities, rectifying changes made by Amending Canon No. 23, which repealed Canon C 19. This has now been seen to be unwise. Apart from this, it makes various changes to bring the canons into legislation, such as the provisions relating to the revocation of licences of deaconesses, Readers and lay workers who are subject to common tenure. The Amending Canon will aid the administration and thus the mission of the Church of England.

The Chair: The motion is now open for debate. I remind members again that under SO 61(a) motions for closure, speech limit or Next Business are not in order in this debate, although I retain discretion to alter the normal time limit of five minutes.

I do not see anybody standing. I assume that Fr Benfield does not want to reply.

Under SO 36(c) a division by Houses is required for the vote on final approval of a canon unless I give my permission or unless the Synod gives leave for that requirement to be dispensed with. Again, it is important to have accurate voting figures and therefore I do not give my permission to dispense with the requirement for a division by Houses and order a division by Houses.

The motion was put and the Chair, pursuant to SO 36(c)(iii), ordered a division by Houses, with the following result:

	<i>Ayes</i>	<i>Noes</i>	<i>Abstentions</i>
House of Bishops	23	0	0
House of Clergy	76	0	0
House of Laity	95	1	0

The motion was carried.

Adoption of Petition for the Royal Assent and Licence

Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn): I beg to move:

‘That the petition for Her Majesty’s Royal Assent and Licence (GS 1877C) be adopted’.

The motion was put and carried.

THE CHAIR *The Bishop of Willesden (Rt Revd Pete Broadbent)* took the Chair at 4.55 p.m.

Legislative Business

Draft Diocese of Leeds (Temporary Provision for Membership of Convocation and the House of Laity) Resolution 2013 (GS 1918) Resolution under the Dioceses, Pastoral and Mission Measure 2007

The Chair: Under SO 68 the Business Committee has made a determination that the Resolution is to be considered under the one-motion procedure, which makes it simpler, and no notice has been given of any amendments. For those members who want to check it, we are using SO 70(a).

The Archbishop of York (Dr John Sentamu): I beg to move:

‘That the Diocese of Leeds (Temporary Provision for Membership of Convocation and the House of Laity) Resolution 2013 be approved.’

Among the Measures, regulations and other instruments listed in the report on the progress of legislation that was read to the General Synod by His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury earlier today was one item to which it gives me great pleasure to refer again.

On 9 October Her Majesty the Queen was pleased by and with the advice of her Privy Council to affirm the Dioceses of Bradford, Ripon and Leeds and Wakefield Reorganization Scheme 2013. That being so, yesterday I appointed 20 April 2014 as the date on which the main provisions of the Scheme will come into operation, including the central provision founding the new bishopric and diocese of Leeds.

The process to choose the first bishop of West Yorkshire and the Dales has already begun. It is hoped that an announcement can be made around February next year, with confirmation of the election at Pentecost in York Minster, at a celebration of the Eucharist, marking the inauguration of the new diocese. Work is well underway to ensure that the transition to the new diocese is smooth, and I am thankful for the very positive spirit in which clergy and laity in all three dioceses are working towards their shared future within the diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales.

There remains one further item of legislative business for the General Synod, which puts in place the final piece in the jigsaw. Provision is to be made for the representation of the new diocese in the Convocation of York and the House of Laity. That provision takes the form of a resolution of the General Synod made under section 10 of the Dioceses, Pastoral and Mission Measure 2007, and the draft Resolution (GS 1918) is therefore before Synod.

The proposed Resolution is quite straightforward. Between them, the existing dioceses of Bradford, Ripon and Leeds and Wakefield have a total of 10 proctors in the Lower House of the Convocation of York and 10 members in the House of Laity of this Synod. The draft Resolution provides that with effect from Easter Day next year, until the dissolution of this Synod in the summer of 2015, those 10 proctors and 10 elected members of the House of

Laity remain members of the Convocation of York or the House of Laity that represent the new diocese of Leeds instead of their former dioceses.

The Bishop of Leeds will of course automatically be a member of the Upper House of the Convocation of York, and the Bishop of Knaresborough retains his seat as an elected member of that House. The Resolution does not need to deal with them.

The proposed Resolution is a temporary provision for the remainder of the current quinquennium. The allocation of elected clerical and lay members of the diocese of Leeds for the next quinquennium will be part of the usual process that will be undertaken under the auspices of the Business Committee in preparation for the election in 2015.

These are exciting times for West Yorkshire and the Dales. Our beloved Church of England is all about mission and ministry, living and proclaiming the good news of Our Lord Jesus Christ in every part of our parishes and communities – in some we are not doing it very well – and the new diocese will give us flexibility to deliver afresh God’s message of love, justice and mercy to this generation. I pray that the proctors and the elected members of laity from West Yorkshire and the Dales will be blessed in their important new roles.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of five minutes.

Revd Canon Joyce Jones (Wakefield): I am one of the representatives involved in this and I support this motion, but I would just like to place on record that I hope the level of the representation of the new diocese will continue when a permanent arrangement is made for it, because it is important that the northern province is well represented. Actually we are losing two voices in the House of Bishops. I believe that there is a weighting towards the Province of York, and it is important that that continues because sometimes there are fewer clergy proportionally in the Province of York, and sometimes lower numbers on electoral rolls that can be under-represented if the usual provisions apply. I would therefore express the hope that the same level of representation will continue when the arrangement becomes permanent.

The Archbishop of York, in reply: Yes!

The motion was put and carried.

The Chair: I therefore inform Synod that the Diocese of Leeds (Temporary Provision for Membership of Convocation and the House of Laity) Resolution has been approved.

THE CHAIR *Mr Aiden Hargreaves-Smith (London)* took the Chair at 5.04 p.m.

Questions

The Chair: I remind members that supplementary questions must be strictly relevant to both the original Question and the answer given, and must be questions. This is not an opportunity for comment by questioners.

Questions asked in accordance with Standing Orders 105–109 were answered as follows, those for written answer being marked with an asterisk.

Ministry Council

1. *Revd Canon David Banting (Chelmsford)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: What ability do DDOs have to restrict an ordinand's choice of theological college, particularly in ways which bear on the candidate's theological integrity?

The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft), in reply: The DDO Handbook is clear that the role of the DDO is to advise ordinands about their choice of theological college or course. While the preference of the candidate is significant, it needs to be balanced against other considerations. One consideration is the future needs of the Church, i.e. how the candidate might best contribute to the ordained ministry of the Church of England. Another is the educational needs and potential of the candidate in the light of their future ministry, i.e. what sort of educational setting and programme would be most conducive to a candidate's learning and formation for ministry. The decision should always be a balance between the needs of the candidate and the needs of the Church. However, in highlighting the DDO's role in the process it is important to state that ultimately the decision as to where a candidate trains rests with the sponsoring bishop.

Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford): Does the bishop's reply apply equally to non-residential courses as to theological colleges?

The Bishop of Sheffield: Broadly speaking, yes, except that the choice of non-residential course by particular candidates will of course be determined partly by geography – and realistically there may not always be a choice – also within the parameters of the existing bishop's regulations for training.

2. *Revd Canon Jennifer Tomlinson (Chelmsford)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: In the past five years, how many ordination candidates have not been recommended for ordination by their training institution?

The Bishop of Sheffield, in reply: The Ministry Division is aware of two ordination candidates who were not recommended at the end of the academic year 2012-13. The annual figure for candidates who are not recommended is estimated at between none and three. The circumstances under which candidates are not recommended are often complex and make gathering accurate statistics difficult. For example they may involve extension of training, delay in ordination or deferring a decision rather than final decision against ordination. The process for placing deacons run by the Ministry Division tracks the cohort of those to be ordained in a particular year. The statistics for that process confirm the estimate. The People and Pay system to be introduced in early 2014 will facilitate the process of tracking ordinands and improve the gathering of statistics.

3. *Revd Canon Martin Wood (Chelmsford)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: Has consideration been given to how the Church of England can ensure that stipendiary clergy are deployed proportionally across the dioceses given that the Sheffield formula no longer provides the constraints that it once did?

The Bishop of Sheffield, in reply: Before I give the answer, I should say that the Sheffield formula is named after one of my illustrious predecessor bishops in the 1970s, which shows how far back it goes.

It is widely recognized that the Sheffield formula has become less effective as a means to assist with deployment both within dioceses and across the Church of England, though many dioceses still use their Sheffield figure as a way of tracking stipendiary clergy numbers. As part of the Transforming Ministry agenda arising from the quinquennial goal of re-imagining ministry, the Ministry Council is establishing a deployment task group to provide better statistical information on projected ministry resources and requirements. This will both support dioceses in their strategic work and contribute to the formation of a national framework for ministry deployment. This group will be established at the start of 2014 and will work in liaison with dioceses and other groups in the NCIs so that there is coherence in reviewing the resources of the Church as a whole.

Revd Canon Martin Wood (Chelmsford): That answer is good news. I wonder whether the task group will have on its agenda an item to bring together patrons, bishops, archdeacons and other interested parties to discuss the problem of recruitment to some rural parishes, some parishes in pockets of deprivation, some northern parishes and some coastal parishes.

The Bishop of Sheffield: The task group will engage in research and conversations of that kind. It should be said that one of the pieces of research that has informed the emergence of this task group is concerns raised about recruitment particularly to dioceses to which the Church Commissioners' spending plans task group members have conducted the visits, and recruitment has been a consistent theme throughout that process.

4. *Revd Prebendary Stephen Coles (London)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: Will advice be issued to dioceses on the content and use of the Register of Ministers form, which is in widespread use throughout the Church, including with a view to ensuring compliance with legal requirements concerning the obtaining and use of information, especially as regards a cleric's marital status?

The Bishop of Sheffield, in reply: The Register of Ministers form is not one for which the Ministry Division is responsible. Dioceses that use the form are responsible for ensuring that its use is compliant with legal requirements and good practice. Guidance on clergy personal files was issued in April 2013, with the approval of the House of Bishops. Paragraph 19 of that document covers the use of personal information kept in such a form. A copy of that paragraph has been placed on the notice-board for members to inspect. The guidance on parochial appointments published in May 2013 is also relevant. Paragraph 62 refers to the use of material about marital status, and that item is also available on the notice-board.

Extract from *Guidance on Clergy Personal Files* (April 2013) approved by the House of Bishops:

19. In the past a composite 'Register of Ministers' form has been used in many dioceses both as a record for the clergy personal file and as a Curriculum Vitae to be shared with patrons seeking to fill a vacancy. While the bishop may, if he wishes, prepare and use a standard form within his diocese to collect, and periodically update, basic biographical details about his clergy for their personal files, the practice of using such a form as a CV for the purpose of appointment is no longer recommended.

Extract from *Guidance on Parochial Appointments* (May 2013) issued by the Clergy Terms of Service Implementation Group and approved by the House of Bishops:

62. A sample application form is at Annex F. Any information asked for must be strictly relevant to the application, and any personal information given, e.g. marital status, should not be used as part of the selection process unless it is directly relevant to a requirement imposed by the parish on grounds of strongly held religious conviction (for example in relation to civil partnership or remarriage after divorce). Many dioceses require the personal section of the application form to be sent direct to the bishop.

Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee

5. *Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee: Given that Regulation 2(3) of the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Regulations 2009 states that ‘where an officeholder holds an office in pursuance of a contract to employment, these Regulations shall not apply to the officeholder in respect of that office, without prejudice to the application of the Regulations in respect of any other office held by that officeholder, what guidance has been issued to diocesan human resources staff to ensure that all contracts of employment given to clergy afford them rights that are at least equivalent to those they would enjoy under common tenure?’

The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker), in reply: The purpose of this regulation is to ensure that the provisions of the Terms of Service Regulations do not conflict with terms of the contract of employment. The NCIs have not issued specific guidance on the terms of the contracts of employment for clergy diocesan staff, but there would be a general expectation that DBFs would want to follow good employment practice for both their clergy and lay employees. Ministry exercised under a contract of employment is necessarily quite different from that which constitutes officeholder ministry. Employed clergy are subject to, and benefit from, the full range of rights and responsibilities embodied in employment legislation, some of which are not appropriate to officeholders, whose duties are defined in law rather than by contract. The key is that the duties of officeholders and the duties of employers are very different because the duties on employees are defined by contract whereas for officeholders they are defined by the law of the land.

Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford): The bishop says that guidance has not been issued. Will he now issue guidance to diocesan HR staff and so on to ensure that clergy maintain some of the benefits and responsibilities that they have under common tenure when they move on to contracts of employment, including pension contributions, housing, retreats and so on?

The Bishop of Manchester: The answer is that being employed and being an officeholder involve very different forms of working, and housing and pension equality could be quite difficult to achieve. If for example a clergy employee post is also open to lay candidates, it is important to ensure fairness of the package offered to both. Once you try to equalize in that way, then to try to equalize between parochial clergy and clergy who are employees of DBFs is quite difficult, and I would therefore be reluctant to push from the centre to request dioceses to do something that actually might conflict with their being fair as between lay and clergy employees.

6. *Revd Charles Read (Norwich)* asked the Chair of the Deployment, Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee: What conversations have been undertaken with HRMC regarding the ability of clergy who minister wholly or partly under a contract of employment

to claim heating, lighting and cleaning allowance and to avoid being taxed on the value of their housing as a benefit in kind?

The Bishop of Manchester, in reply: There have been no recent conversations on the two specific issues raised in the Question, although a meeting with HMRC is currently being scheduled. However, I will say a few words about them, and for those of us who wear anoraks a detailed note has been put on the notice-board.

The heating, lighting and cleaning allowance is a concession for Church of England ministers only. It is for HMRC to determine when it is allowable. It is available only to payees paid through the central payroll. However, the statutory provisions on which that concession is based apply to all ministers of religion; they just happen to be delivered by different mechanisms.

The statutory provisions relating to benefit-in-kind tax on accommodation provided for performance of duties are even wider. They apply not only to ministers of religion. All taxpayers who occupy such accommodation are eligible for it. The law applies in the same way to clergy as to other taxpayers in similar situations with provided housing.

Tax on Provided Accommodation

(this section is based on a note issued June 2011 by:

Payroll Services (Clergy Team), Church House, Great Smith St, London SW1P 3AZ)

Legal position

Under the provisions of Part 3, Chapter 5 of the Income Tax (Earnings and Pensions) Act 2003, where living accommodation is provided to an employee by reason of the employment, a tax charge arises on the value of the benefit. For tax purposes “Employee” includes an office-holder.

However, Section 99(2) provides:

“This Chapter does not apply to living accommodation provided for an employee if –

- (a) it is provided for the better performance of the duties of the employment, and
- (b) the employment is one of the kinds of employment in the case of which it is customary for employers to provide living accommodation for employees”.

Both tests must be satisfied for exemption to apply.

(a) *Better performance*

It has to be shown that the duties of the post are performed better, to a material degree, than they would be if the employee lived elsewhere. This would include pastoral duties performed in or from the accommodation (e.g. holding meetings; offering spiritual counsel; being available outside normal hours). It would also apply if the house was the sole place of work. It also covers posts where the employee has to be on call outside normal hours, is in fact frequently called out and needs quick access to the place to which called. However, the test is not passed if the accommodation merely enables the employee to travel more easily to a place of work.

It is accepted that clergy in parochial appointments living within their parishes meet this test. Other situations that would normally satisfy this test might be a university chaplain living on campus; a bishop's chaplain living close to the bishop's house; a director of ordinands who worked solely from home. An example that would fail the test might be a director of education who commuted to work at the diocesan office or clergy who live a considerable distance from their benefice.

(b) Customary

It has to be shown that it is the general custom for accommodation to be provided in the particular kind of employment (i.e. for employees holding similar positions with other employers where failure to provide it would be regarded as exceptional).

It is accepted that ministers of religion with a pastoral role satisfy this test.

For lay workers, the position is less certain and the facts in each case will need to be considered. The Revenue has customarily regarded lay workers as akin to social workers: on that basis the customary test fails. If there are significant liturgical or spiritual duties, it may be possible to argue that a post is akin to a minister of religion, or even unique.

The financial implications arising from the benefit:

Any tax charge which arises from the benefit is the personal liability of the employee. The provider of the accommodation has to pay Class 1A national insurance on the amount on which the employee has to pay tax.

If the Church owns the property, tax is charged on the property's rateable value (or an estimate thereof). In addition, where the original cost of providing the property exceeded £75,000, there is a further charge. The amount by which that cost exceeded £75,000 is multiplied by HMRC's Official Rate of Interest, and tax is charged on the result. However, in cases where the property had been owned for more than six years before the present occupant moved in, the market value at the date of occupation is substituted for the cost of provision, as far as the actual calculation of tax is concerned.

If the Church rents the property, tax is charged on the actual rent paid by the Church. If the employee was not in post for the whole year, the charge is reduced pro rata.

Heating, Lighting, Cleaning & Garden Upkeep Scheme (HLC)

(this section gives selected paragraphs from a briefing note for diocesan boards of finance issued April 2012 by the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee in consultation with members of the Diocesan Secretaries Liaison Group)

This Scheme, agreed between the Church Commissioners and HMRC, is an interpretation of the rules set out within Section 290 ITEPA 2003. The rules allow for payment or reimbursement to the minister of running costs for heating, lighting, cleaning and garden upkeep. Therefore, although the interpretation of the rules is unique to the Clergy Payroll and

the HLC Scheme, the rules within Section 290 ITEPA 2003 apply to all eligible ministers of religion⁴.

Current HM Revenue & Customs' interpretation of a Minister of Religion within the Church of England is someone who is ordained or is a lay minister in a stipendiary role as part of recognized training towards ordination. For those in lay ministry the Revenue will consider each case separately to identify if the duties of the role are similar to those of an ordained minister.

The HLC Scheme offsets part of the gross stipend as a reimbursement free of tax and national insurance for the running costs of heating, lighting, cleaning and garden upkeep at the official house. The amount of HLC allowance is reported to the cleric as a P11D benefit in kind at the end of each tax year and this amount must be included within the cleric's tax return. As a result, although the cleric receives a tax-free payment through the Clergy Payroll, part of the payment becomes assessable for tax. However, the amount paid through the HLC Scheme always remains free of national insurance contributions.

The general eligibility test to receive the HLC allowance is for the duties to be full-time and for the cleric to live rent-free in a provided house. Section 290 ITEPA 2003 requires that the minister must be provided with a house from which to perform the duties of the post for which the duties are fulltime.

Clergy holding part-time appointments, house for duty posts or clergy who do not live in a provided house are not eligible to participate in the HLC Scheme. Tax relief, via the individual's tax return, may be available providing the cleric receives income from the post and incurs costs for working from home.

There are, of course, some options available to a Board of Finance to help a clergy employee with the running costs of heating, lighting, cleaning and garden upkeep:

- it could agree a compensatory payment in addition to the salary to offset the drop in net income; or
- if it believes the cleric is entitled to have the HLC costs met, it could pay the running costs or reimburse the employee for the running costs. Any payment or reimbursement of HLC must be reported as a P11D benefit in kind.

A clergy office holder in a part-time parochial role and employed in a part-time diocesan role would receive a stipend to reflect the part-time parochial duties. It may be that income from the diocesan role would provide the cleric with a combined 'full' stipend but this would not meet the eligibility test for the HLC Scheme, which requires the office to be held full-time.

Revd Charles Read (Norwich): Is the Committee aware that the financial burdens of these changes have to be borne by diocesan boards of finance where people move from being officeholders to being employed on a contract of employment?

The Bishop of Manchester: As I said in answer to the previous Question, where people move from being officeholders to being under a contract of employment very different terms and conditions apply, and necessarily so. Different dioceses have different ways of doing their best to ensure that clergy do not suffer a major downgrade in terms of their emoluments, but

it is important to maintain good parity between lay and clergy employees of a diocese so that we do not create two tiers.

The Bishop of Willesden (Rt Revd Pete Broadbent): The bishop's first answer alluded to the fact that there are problems in persuading the Church Commissioners' payroll department to pay through the payroll system many people who are on the edges of common tenure and particularly those who are in employed status but might be on common tenure. I would ask that DRACSC and the Church Commissioners' payroll department have a serious conversation about this, because many of our clergy who are locally supported – chaplains and others – find it quite difficult to be remunerated through the Commissioners' payroll department and actually it becomes quite a problem for dioceses. Therefore, a conversation about what we expect and what the rules are, with a little more flexibility –

The Chair: Are we coming to a question, bishop?

The Bishop of Willesden: – would be very helpful, so I am looking for a conversation, please, question mark!

The Bishop of Manchester: I am very happy to have that conversation. We have had conversations about it previously. In recent times HMRC have applied pressure to narrow the number of people who are paid through the central payroll, because the central payroll really means that awkward questions are not asked. The quid pro quo is that we do not put people into that system for whom awkward questions ought to be asked, and I think that is where it becomes a little dodgy round the edges.

Mission and Public Affairs Council

7. *Mr Robert Key (Salisbury)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: Where do matters stand in relation to the Churches' Mutual Credit Union, and can a full report on its work be provided to the Synod at the July 2014 group of sessions?

Mr Philip Fletcher (Archbishops' Council, appointed), in reply: The proposed Churches' Mutual Credit Union is an independent venture currently led by a shadow board. Mission and Public Affairs has kept abreast of developments but is not responsible for the project. However, I can report that the CMCU business plan has been finalized in consultation with the Association of British Credit Unions Limited and the Financial Conduct Authority, and that the application for authorization has been lodged with the Prudential Regulation Authority. The Church of Scotland is a full partner and has contributed towards the start-up capital. Discussions are also under way with the Methodist Church. The shadow board is currently communicating with dioceses and parishes to update them and seek their help with closing the gap in capitalization. They are working towards a launch of CMCU next summer, possibly at Synod. In any case a report will be provided to Synod then, although GS Misc 1063 includes a note on the current situation.

Mr Robert Key (Salisbury): Whilst welcoming that very positive report on this very important issue, can I ask the chair of the MPA Council to have a word with the chair of the Business Committee to ensure that the presentation, which will be in the form of a report to the Synod, is a debatable presentation to the whole Synod next July in York?

Mr Philip Fletcher: I shall certainly take that hint and have a conversation with the chair of the Business Committee. I expect July next year to be very significant in taking forward the initiative on Credit Unions, which of course is not confined to the CMCU. There will be more to say, I have no doubt, as we go forward over the next few months.

8. *Mr Robin Lunn (Worcester)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: How many food banks in which the Church of England is involved now exist, and what growth has been seen from a year ago?

Mr Philip Fletcher, in reply: We have no data for the total number of food banks that the Church of England is involved in, or how this has changed over the year.

The Church Urban Fund recently carried out an online survey of church-based responses to food poverty; 466 incumbents replied. The research found that: more than a quarter of the parishes that responded help to manage a food bank – just over half are Trussell Trust food banks, a third are non-branded food banks, and the remainder are organized ‘food cupboards’; that nearly two-thirds of these food banks have been running for less than two years, indicating the rapid growth of the food bank network in recent years; and that, extrapolating from the research, 81 per cent of parishes support food banks in one or more ways, 75 per cent collect food, 38 per cent provide volunteers, 29 per cent help to manage a food bank, and 21 per cent help to distribute vouchers.

Mr Robin Lunn (Worcester): In response to that answer, does Mr Fletcher think that actually we should ask this question and store the information, particularly when the Church is commenting on a very –

The Chair: Mr Lunn, you are asking for an expression of opinion.

Mr Robin Lunn (Worcester): My other question, linked to that therefore, is: should the Church also ask the question ‘How many people using the food banks are in paid employment?’ I sense that quite a few are.

Mr Philip Fletcher: At the moment we do not know a great deal about the profile of the people who depend on food banks. However, we are very sceptical – and this may apply – about claims that sometimes have been made that using food banks is a kind of lifestyle choice. The MPA Council, in partnership with Oxfam and the Child Poverty Action Group, has just begun to conduct research to find out precisely who uses food banks and why, and we hope to report on that work next year. I am sure that it will pick up on the issue of people in work who are not paid enough to get by.

Revd Prebendary David Houlding (London): Is the Mission and Public Affairs Council aware of the increasing number of homeless night shelters that are springing up in many of our cities, particularly in the capital, where many churches are opening their doors to house homeless people overnight, giving them dinner, bed and breakfast, and how important these food banks are to assist us in that work?

Mr Philip Fletcher: The Mission and Public Affairs Council is aware, as I guess are most of us in this room, of the spread of night shelters. I cannot resist a plug for the Robes project in south London, but we know that this is happening in other dioceses, and very necessary it is to help homeless and roofless people through the rigours of the worst part of the winter.

9. *Mr Andrew Presland (Peterborough)* asked the Chair of the Ministry and Public Affairs Council: What steps is the Council taking to respond to the recommendations made by ResPublica in its July 2013 report *Holistic Mission: social action and the Church of England* that the MPA should set up a social action unit which, among other things, should encourage each diocese to set up its own social action team ‘to review the social needs and assets of the locality, and draw up a co-ordinated local response to them and plan of action for their local community’?

Mr Philip Fletcher, in reply: The ResPublica report came out in July and the MPA Council will discuss it at its December meeting. It is an extremely interesting report which reveals the tremendous extent of the social action undertaken by the parishes of the Church of England in different social contexts. It contains much important data and some powerful case studies. I will be interested in the reaction of my colleagues on the MPA Council to the recommendations.

ResPublica has its own political position on the respective roles of State and voluntary action, but that position is contested, not least in the Church. We shall also need to consider whether ResPublica has accurately assessed the Church’s capacity to take on very large projects. The idea of diocesan social action units is interesting and we shall consider it carefully. I found it odd that the report did not mention the Church Urban Fund’s excellent work either centrally or locally.

10. *Revd Canon Giles Goddard (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: In the light of the diocesan environment officers’ recent declaration on Shrinking the Footprint and General Synod’s 2005 vote on energy reduction, how will the Church’s energy reduction programme be financed from now on?

Mr Philip Fletcher, in reply: The Shrinking the Footprint campaign is working to achieve a measurable reduction in the Church of England’s energy use by increasing the efficiency of churches and the renewable power options available. This work, including for example alternative means of recording energy use in the new Research and Statistics database, will continue as part of the Vote 2 commitment each year, but of course more could be done faster if we could attract additional resources.

Our recent bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for additional funding was unsuccessful, although a second bid is being prepared. There are significant potential cost and carbon savings that could be delivered by further reducing our energy demand, and although we can encourage this from the centre real change needs local enthusiasm and commitment, with stronger diocesan backing. The more we can cut our energy demand the greater the saving will be to the local church.

Revd Canon Giles Goddard (Southwark): I thank Mr Fletcher for his answer. I am however a little concerned, because this is one of the very few central Church initiatives. How are we making sure that we are on track to hit the General Synod agreed target of an 80 per cent reduction in carbon gases by 2050?

Mr Philip Fletcher: Clearly the financial resources need to strike a balance between effective use where we can have the greatest bang for our buck and the restrictions on the total bucks available. Going wider than that, I suggest that Shrinking the Footprint is very valuable as evidence that the Church of England takes climate change seriously. Beyond that we shall be

looking, I suspect before too long with a diocesan synod motion in prospect, at the wider issues of climate change, and I hope that Shrinking the Footprint will enable us to bang a drum with great vigour.

11. *Revd Canon Richard Hibbert (St Albans)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: What number and types of meetings has the House of Bishops or a Church of England representative had with Government ministers in regard to the formulation of the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals?

Mr Philip French, in reply: Since 2012 a number of bishops, including the Bishops of Bath and Wells and Derby, have been active in the House of Lords on issues concerning or related to the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals. We do not have any information about the number or types of meeting they may have had with ministers, some of which are likely to have been confidential. In addition, the MPA Council made a submission to the House of Commons International Development Select Committee on the post-Millennium Development Goals Agenda in October 2012. MPA organized a roundtable with mission and development agencies on the post-Millennium Development Goals in June 2013.

Revd Canon Richard Hibbert (St Albans): Will the Mission and Public Affairs Council bring these discussions and their results to the Synod before 2015 in order to inform the Synod and for the Synod to inform these discussions?

Mr Philip Fletcher: That will depend partly on what Synod itself asks of the MPA Council, but certainly the Council is very seized of the importance of the new set of goals to be established and will be very happy to seek to continue to push the need for support for the least well off in our global society, bearing in mind again the importance of enabling those societies to cope with the impact of climate change. MPA will play its part in that.

12. *Mr John Freeman (Chester)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: What progress has been made towards implementing the November 2012 resolution of Synod regarding the living wage, and what in particular is the situation for workers employed by companies contracted to the National Church Institutions to provide services?

Mr Philip Fletcher, in reply: Lambeth Palace and Bishopthorpe already pay the living wage to directly employed and subcontracted staff.

From April 2014 all the MITIE cleaning staff at Church House will receive at least the London living wage. The extra cost will be included in the service charge paid by the tenants, including National Church Institutions. All other members of staff working regularly in Church House, including the Conference Centre, are already paid at or above the London living wage.

Within three years all staff directly employed on the Church of England's Hyde Park Estate will be paid at least the London living wage, including annual increases. This commitment does not cover sub-contracted staff.

Some of the staff working for the Church's supported housing schemes for retired clergy are currently paid less than the living wage. This issue is to be considered as part of a forthcoming review of supported housing provision in the second half of 2014.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): I thank Mr Fletcher for his reply regarding the progress to date. What is being done about sub-contracted staff not covered because the National Church Institutions sets the contract with A, who then employs sub-contractors? What is the Council doing to make sure that the sub-contracted members of staff are also paid the living wage?

Mr Philip French: I am sure that that supplementary will have been heard by the Church Commissioners. With respect, it is a question that they need to answer.

Revd Charles Razzall (Chester) – and a member of Unite, the union. Has there been any appropriate information-sharing with the relevant trade unions as representatives of people working for the NCIs and other parts of the Church, and does the MPA Council also recognize the importance, as Lord Glasman suggested at the recent Church Urban Fund conference in east London, of the trade unions as natural partners for us in an age of growing inequality?

Mr Philip Fletcher: As a member of a trade union for all my working life – this is a personal response – I fully share the point about the importance of the unions. I am confident that unions and staff associations have been fully involved in the action taken to fulfil the Synod motion on the payment of the living wage.

13. **Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: What arrangements are in place throughout the country to provide support and ministry for looked-after young people and their carers, and do these arrangements extend to providing a point of stable reference for care leavers for example through lay chaplaincies?

Mr Philip Fletcher replied: There is no formal system providing specific support for looked-after young people or their carers. Their main points of contact with the Church would be through parish clergy, youth ministry or Church of England schools. National Society policy is that admissions applications for looked-after children should be given priority and their educational outcomes are specifically monitored within schools to ensure that they have every opportunity and encouragement to achieve.

The Children's Society runs an independent visiting service in six projects in Cheshire, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Lancashire and Torbay. These provide children in care with a trusted adult to visit, advise and befriend them. The independent visitor will take time to get to know a child and spend time together in activities which they both enjoy. Research indicates that such a long-term safe and trusted independent adult can make a significant difference to the well-being of a child in care. Independent visitors receive training and support from the Children's Society and make a commitment to support a child for at least 12 months, but many relationships continue beyond that, in some cases into adulthood. The Children's Society projects support some 150 independent visitors.

We know of no examples of formal chaplaincy, lay or ordained, specifically geared to work with looked-after children. MPA is awaiting the results of a major research project on the scope of chaplaincy in the Church of England across all sectors, including innovative chaplaincy projects. This is being conducted for us by the Cardiff Centre for Chaplaincy Studies in partnership with OxCEPT at Cuddesdon, and it is possible that the report may give us a clearer picture of chaplaincy with vulnerable young people when it is published next year.

14. **Mr Robin Lunn (Worcester)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: How closely does the Church engage with Citizens Advice Bureaux around England, and could we work more closely together to assist those in our parishes who desperately need assistance?

Mr Philip Fletcher replied: There is considerable anecdotal evidence that many church members are volunteers with Citizens Advice – which, incidentally, has now dropped ‘Bureau’ from its title. We are also aware of some parishes that have built a relationship with their local CA who know that they can refer some cases to the churches for help. Citizens Advice offers advice on a multitude of topics and different types of case, and the most effective partnerships seem to be at local level, matching local church resources to certain kinds of cases dealt with by Citizens Advice.

Some of the ways in which parishes are now supporting local credit unions could be applied to relationships with CA – particularly in terms of suitably qualified volunteers and, possibly, through offers of suitable premises in some cases, but such support needs to be based on local circumstances.

15. **Revd Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: Is it known whether all cathedrals that pay children for their work ensure that they pay the children’s minimum wage, and is any advice offered to them to help them ensure that they do?

Mr Philip Fletcher replied: No information on rates of pay at all cathedrals is kept centrally. The Association of English Cathedrals advises cathedrals of both minimum and living wage rates. A number of cathedrals already pay the appropriate living wage to staff, and more are committed to achieving these pay rates within the next few years. All cathedrals comply with minimum wage legislation.

Children sing in cathedral choirs but are not employed by cathedrals. Some cathedrals pay scholarships to choristers attending their choir schools, others give scholarships to help choristers pay for music lessons, others provide assistance with travel expenses, and others make no financial contribution. Each cathedral determines what is appropriate to its situation.

Business Committee

16. **Revd Jonathan Frai (Chichester)* asked the Chair of the Business Committee: Has any thought been given to using ‘AD’ (anno Domini; in the year of Our Lord) with the first mention of the year in the date on every piece of synodical literature as a way of witnessing to the reality of the risen Lord today?

*Revd Canon Susan Booy*s replied: The Business Committee has not discussed this. The general policy is to keep documents as short as possible, and since the term ‘anno Domini’ is implicit in all dates used by the Church there are no plans to change present practice.

Crown Nominations Commission

17. **Revd Canon David Banting (Chelmsford)* asked the Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission: Whose role is it to monitor the wording of advertisements and statements of needs for diocesan episcopal appointments and, if necessary, to ensure that they are re-written

to comply with the non-discrimination provision in the Episcopal Ministry Act of Synod 1993 and with the clear recommendations of the Pilling report of 2007, *Talent and Calling*?

The Archbishop of York: Before each consultation exercise during a vacancy in see, an announcement is placed in the church press inviting the submission of comments and names to the Prime Minister's and the Archbishops' Appointments Secretaries as recommended in GS 1465 'Choosing Diocesan Bishops'. The terms of the announcement are standard and comply with the Act of Synod. The Pilling report made no comment on the announcement. The responsibility for drawing up the diocesan statement of needs rests with the relevant vacancy in see committee.

Revd Canon David Banting (Chelmsford): Forgive me, but I did not ask about the announcement or the procedure; I think I know that already. The Question is about who monitors the result of the advertisement, the personal profile and the statement of needs. As the Question implies, I have evidence on paper of two such statements failing to comply with the Act of Synod. Therefore, my question is: who monitors the final words of the statement of needs? I knew that the relevant vacancy in see committee is responsible for drawing up the statement of needs, as the Archbishop mentioned at the end of his reply, but who monitors it to ensure that it does comply?

The Archbishop of York: If matters did not comply with the Act of Synod, the relevant Archbishop in the chair would rule that section of the vacancy in see committee out of order. As those who have been involved recently will confirm, when it has appeared that a particular matter has not complied with what the Pilling report and the Act of Synod are all about we have advised that it would not be acceptable.

I can tell members that the Archbishop of Canterbury and I are committed to upholding the tradition in the Church of England and in the House in relation to the appointments process, ensuring that participants act democratically; that is not something that we can leave alone. When chairing the Crown Nominations Commission, every Archbishop has a duty to make sure that discriminatory matters are not included in personal profiles, and members will discover that actually a person's spec is very neutral; it does not say *this* or *that*. I have been a member of the Crown Nominations Commission for seven years and we have persuaded people that discriminatory points based on theological convictions will not be acceptable.

Revd Canon David Banting (Chelmsford): Chair, may I have another supplementary?

The Chair: I think you are probably testing the Synod, Canon Banting. We will move on to Question 18.

18. *Mr Andrew Presland (Peterborough)* asked the Chair of the Crown Nominations Committee: Has the Commission considered gathering evidence to establish whether Ven. Bob Jackson's finding that attendance levels tend to decline in a parish if an interregnum lasts for more than a minimal period applies also at diocesan level, in terms of there being an adverse impact on church growth within a diocese if it has no diocesan bishop for more than a minimal period?

The Archbishop of York: Not as yet, but I will pass this to central members to consider. If there were any decisions to progress this, the Archbishops' Council would need to prioritize any such work in the context of the existing workload of the Research and Statistics Unit.

Mr Colin Slater (Southwell and Nottingham): Picking up on the final two words of the Question, will the Archbishop say what he regards as ‘a minimal period’ for a diocese to be without a diocesan bishop, and what does the Archbishop propose should be done to shorten the appointments process, particularly where the minimal period is likely to be exceeded?

The Chair: Mr Slater, you are asking for an expression of opinion, which is out of order.

The Archbishop of York: Some parts of Mr Slater’s question do not ask for an expression of opinion. All I can say to him – and so that Synod knows, because it is important – is that next year the central members of the Crown Nominations Commission will consider seven vacancies, including the vacancy in Europe, in relation to which they play a different role. Considering that for some of them this would mean 21 days away from work, I should first thank them for their commitment to the work of the Crown Nominations Commission in choosing diocesan bishops. Apart from May and August, the Commission will meet every month during 2014, and indeed its members will be very busy especially in February and March. Therefore, I am afraid that if anyone wants to know how to stop this, he or she should make sure that no bishop retires in the next three years!

Dioceses Commission

19. *Revd Dr Patrick Richmond (Norwich)* asked the Chair of the Dioceses Commission: In view of the decline in people identifying in the Population Census as ‘Christian’ and the ageing Church demographic, leading to lower birth rates and higher death rates than the general population and a consequent fall in numbers of paying worshippers, what strategies and plans is the Dioceses Commission considering to help the Church face the impending human and financial resource challenges to its mission?

Canon Professor Michael Clarke, in reply: The Dioceses Commission is not, of course, the only body facing the issues that you mention, but it is very much committed to doing what it can to unblock perceived structural impediments to the Church’s mission.

Following the passage through Synod in the summer of its major reorganization scheme bringing together the dioceses of Bradford, Ripon and Leeds and Wakefield, the Commission is currently consulting diocesan bishops about possible further initiatives. In parallel, we are also keen to encourage joint working between dioceses; and I draw members’ attention to pages on our website covering that survey.

Revd Dr Patrick Richmond (Norwich): I thank the chair of the Commission for that encouraging answer. The Commission seems to have been set up before the very challenging actuarial projections of death rates were done and before it became apparent, as the Statistics Department tells us, that our parishes were in deficit, which they have been since 2009. Can the chair reassure me and the Synod that serious discussions are taking place about how the Commission and the other bodies that he mentions can respond sufficiently radically and rapidly to these growing challenges of resource and finance?

Canon Professor Michael Clarke: Those matters are very much on our agenda. I cannot stand here and guarantee success in the short term, but we are working on those issues and will ensure that they are pursued. I should however remind Dr Richmond that we are only one among a number of instruments engaged in that work.

20. **Revd Stephen Pratt (Lichfield)* asked the Chair of the Dioceses Commission: As the Church seems to be coping with so many vacant bishoprics, and given the strain on parish finances and the changes in parish ministry, can consideration be given to looking at the number of bishops we need, with a view to either cutting some posts or re-imagining the ministry of bishops, so that we have more bishops but with most remaining in parish ministry?

Canon Professor Michael Clarke replied: The Commission is of course aware of the resource pressures facing the Church at all levels. It is however important to take account of the role and responsibilities of bishops in terms of the pastoral care and support which they provide for stipendiary clergy and many others exercising ministry in the diocese; and the expectations of their prophetic ministry in the public square. In practice it is often the case that dioceses, while open to re-imagining episcopal ministry, seldom favour reductions in episcopal oversight.

Having said that, we are very much engaged with reviewing episcopal oversight. As a matter of course we scrutinize each proposal to fill a suffragan vacancy. We are conscious of pressure to review what bishops do and are proposing a symposium on episcopal oversight next year to examine the issues more thoroughly.

Diocesan reorganization schemes, such as the Bradford, Ripon and Leeds and Wakefield scheme approved by Synod last July, represent a radical way of reviewing the number and responsibilities of both diocesan and suffragan bishops. We are currently evaluating that scheme and consulting about any further such schemes.

Legal Advisory Commission

21. **Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the Legal Advisory Commission: When did the Commission publish its opinion 'Seeking the consent of the DBF to the sale of PCC property', which addresses the responsibilities of a diocesan authority under the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956, including the circumstances in which it may properly decline to act on the instructions of the PCC in relation to a proposed disposal of property, and will it make it available to members of the Synod in advance of the first consideration stage debate of the Church of England (Ecclesiastical Property) Measure?

Revd Canon and Worshipful Dr Rupert Bursell replied: The Legal Advisory Commission published its opinion 'Seeking the consent of the DBF to the sale of PCC property' in March 2009. It is available to download at <http://www.churchofengland.org/about-us/structure/churchlawlegis/guidance.aspx>, where copies of all of the Commission's opinions published since the most recent edition of *Legal Opinions concerning the Church of England* (Church House Publishing, 8th ed. , 2007) are available. Hard copies are available from the information desk during this group of sessions.

Liturgical Commission

22. **Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the Liturgical Commission: What advice can the Liturgical Commission give to dioceses and parishes in the increasingly frequent cases where parents seeking baptism for their children ask clergy if there can be a role for friends and family who are unbaptized?

The Bishop of Wakefield (Rt Revd Stephen Platten), in reply: Advice on appropriate responses to such enquiries has recently been circulated to the College of Bishops for wider dissemination in their dioceses and will be available shortly on the Transforming Worship website.

The Commission proposes two ways of recognizing the unbaptized supporters' role in baptism: by adding words of commitment to the Prayer of Thanksgiving near the beginning of the service, and again at the start of the Presentation, before the parents and godparents make their commitments. We suggest that they be referred to as 'supporting friends' or 'family companions' rather than 'sponsors', which has resonances with confirmation.

Local circumstances in which these requests occur will vary widely. Instead of prescribing words, the Commission points to models in the service of Thanksgiving for the Gift of a Child.

The names of unbaptized supporters are not recorded in the Baptismal Register, but parishes might consider giving cards reminding them of their promises.

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): As the then chair of the Liturgical Commission that asked for that work to be done, I thank the Commission for its work. May I ask, first, whether the texts provided require further authorization, particularly by diocesan bishops, and, second, whether the Commission might give thought to including them in the ongoing revision of baptismal liturgies perhaps through the use of a footnote or some other appendix?

The Bishop of Wakefield: The answer to the first question is: no, the texts do not need further authorization; they are simply forms of words that might be used. In answer to the second question, thank you very much and we will consider it.

Miss Sally Muggeridge (Canterbury): In 2010 we agreed that progress would be made by the Liturgical Commission in producing the new and better liturgy, to which some slight reference is made. I am concerned that still there is a lot of misunderstanding and misapprehension in relation to the baptismal offering, and I would like to know whether that progress has been made on the new liturgy. I have asked this question on several occasions.

The Bishop of Wakefield: It is a different question but I am happy to answer it. There is progress, but all these things need to be considered carefully. It has been to the House of Bishops, which has made some further suggestions, and we hope very much that we can put before the next House of Bishops' meeting in December some revised proposals which might then go out for, as we always call it, road testing.

Church Commissioners

23. **Ven. Jonathan LLoyd (Europe)* asked the Church Commissioners: What evidence do the Church Commissioners have that their large investment in Shell plc is providing an opportunity to question and challenge the board of Shell plc in relation to its new drilling operation in the Arctic regions and the major environmental risks associated with this?

The First Church Estates Commissioner (Mr Andreas Whittam Smith, ex officio) replied: We are advised by the EIAG, which last met Royal Dutch Shell representatives in April. At the meeting Shell executives (including the CEO and the head of its Upstream Americas

business, which has overall responsibility for Shell's Alaska programme) stated that Shell was aware of its responsibilities in the Arctic.

They gave an undertaking that Shell would adopt a very cautious approach to Arctic drilling and would incorporate multiple barriers into all wells in order to prevent spills. They stated that a dedicated capping stack would always be ready for deployment, as well as a dedicated Arctic containment system. They stressed how, in the wake of the BP Gulf of Mexico spill, the US authorities were regulating Alaskan offshore exploration activities very closely indeed.

24. *Mr Malcolm Halliday (Bradford)* asked the Church Commissioners: In the light of the recent suggestion by the Chair of the Charity Commission that high salaries risked bringing charities into disrepute, and of the vocational aspect of the work of the National Church Institutions:

- (a) how many staff of Church Commissioners are paid salaries in excess of £100,000;
- (b) how many appointments of such staff have been made within the last three years and how many such posts are currently vacant;
- (c) what benchmarks are used by Church Commissioners to determine salary levels; and
- (d) how do the Church Commissioners ensure that salary levels take account of salary levels at diocesan and parish level?

The First Church Estates Commissioner: Of those staff employed by or whose managing employer is the Church Commissioners, six are paid above £100,000 *per annum*.

One appointment at this level has been made within the past three years. There are no vacant posts at this level.

The Church Commissioners benchmark their salaries against all sectors using AON Hewitt, which has the largest salary database in the UK. The Commissioners' aim is to pay no more – but also no less – than is needed to secure and retain professional staff of the necessary quality.

We have no access to salary information from dioceses or parishes beyond what is published in their annual accounts.

Mr Malcolm Halliday (Bradford): Thank you for that answer. In this current economic climate would it not be more appropriate to use a benchmark towards charity rather than a commercial public sector range of benchmarking, particularly in relation to at least knowing what dioceses can afford to pay?

The First Church Estates Commissioner: I have sympathy with the point Mr Halliday makes but the fact is that, whether one likes it or not, the Church Commissioners' business is largely commercial, which is the managing of a very large portfolio of securities and property. We have to employ people who work in that sector, and their salaries are as you will well know.

Revd Simon Cawdell (Hereford): Would it help the First Church Estates Commissioner to know that I have seen a paper that in fact contains the comparative salaries of senior diocesan officials, which I am sure he would be able to obtain from the diocesan secretaries network?

The First Church Estates Commissioner: I thank Mr Cawdell for that help. We will certainly look at it.

25. *Revd Prebendary David Houlding (London)* asked the Church Commissioners: With the appointment of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Ecumenical Officer to the See of Ebbsfleet, what priority is being given to ensure that financial resources are available to the Archbishop to secure a full-time post for a priest to serve as the ecumenical chaplain on the Archbishop's staff at Lambeth Palace?

The Third Church Estates Commissioner (Mr Andrew Mackie, ex officio): Following three years of below-inflation funding increases of 2.0 per cent *per annum* being made available across the 2011–2013 triennium, the office and working costs budget for the Archbishops at Lambeth and Bishopthorpe will remain flat at the 2013 budget level for the next (2014–2016) triennium.

Revd Prebendary David Houlding (London): Is it recognized and understood how crucial personal relationships are in this area of the Church's life, which is not the responsibility of the Council for Christian Unity, which is already fully stretched, but for the Archbishop himself, especially now as the Church of England moves into the advent of matters of deep ecclesiological significance with the other great communions of Catholic Christendom?

The Third Church Estates Commissioner: I do not think it is for me to comment too much on the detailed content of that except to say that decisions on new staffing structures in Lambeth are for the Archbishop of Canterbury. My understanding is that the Bishop at Lambeth will have an important ecumenical role on behalf of the Archbishop, and I am sure that Synod will want to wish him well in that role.

Revd Tony Redman (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich): Will the Bishop at Lambeth's role include looking after the Romanian Orthodox-Anglican Consultative Council, which meets at Lambeth at present?

The Chair: I do not think it is the responsibility of the Commissioners to decide what the Bishop at Lambeth's role is, though I could be wrong. We move to Question 26.

Pensions Board

26. *Revd Canon Jane Charman (Salisbury)* asked the Chair of the Pensions Board: Can the Pensions Board undertake to provide full and regularly updated contact information for all retired stipendiary clergy to those responsible for the pastoral care of retired clergy in dioceses?

Dr Jonathan Spencer (Chair of the Pensions Board, ex officio), in reply: The information held on retired clergy by the Pensions Board is confidential and can be released only with the express consent of the individual concerned. We will shortly complete an exercise under which we are seeking this consent from all retired clergy. We will then provide updated information to dioceses. From 1 January 2014 we will seek consent from all retiring clergy as part of the normal retirement process. We will then provide dioceses with an update every six months, with monthly notification of the names of those who have died.

Archbishops' Council

27. *Ven. Jonathan Lloyd (Europe) asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Why was the Diocese in Europe not consulted, either formally or informally, before the Archbishops' Council decided on a formula for Commissioners' Funding for Dioceses 2014-2016, and why did the formula that was used not include a wider and more equitable range of indicators to take into account the distinct shape of mission in the Diocese in Europe?

Canon John Spence (Archbishops' Council, appointed) replied on behalf of the Presidents: It was, and the Diocese in Europe will be receiving more by way of distributions than in past years even after allowing for what it will be paying by way of apportionment. The Council's decisions were informed by discussions with diocesan representatives on the diocese's needs and opportunities. The usual formulae for grants and apportionment could not be used for the Diocese in Europe as most data is not available (e.g. average income statistics from HMRC) or not comparable (e.g. population, area). The formulae adopted by the Council were devised to weigh the relative needs of all the dioceses, as any additional funding for the Diocese in Europe would have resulted in lower distributions to some other beneficiaries.

The Diocese in Europe will also be eligible, in common with the English dioceses, to apply (in the second tranche) for a share of the £15million of strategic development funding available in 2014-2016 for projects that aim to enhance dioceses' financial and mission strength. The assessment of such bids will take into account the unique mission challenges of each diocese.

28. Mr Malcolm Halliday (Bradford) asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: In the light of the recent suggestion by the chair of the Charity Commission that high salaries risked bringing charities into disrepute, and of the vocational aspect of the work of the National Church Institutions:

- (a) how many staff of Archbishops' Council are paid salaries in excess of £100,000;
- (b) how many appointments of such staff have been made within the last three years and who many such posts are currently vacant;
- (c) what benchmarks are used by Archbishops' Council to determine salary levels; and
- (d) how does the Archbishops' Council ensure that salary levels take account of salary levels at diocesan and parish level?

Canon John Spence (Archbishops' Council, appointed) replied on behalf of the Presidents: As this is my first meeting, can I thank members of Synod for their welcome and the staff for their help. Nicholas was not there acting as verger but as human guide dog. One of the great advantages of being blind is that one does not get distracted when the screens are out of synch! [Laughter]

Of those staff employed either directly or whose managing employer is the Archbishops' Council, two are paid above £100,000 *per annum*.

No appointments were made at that level within the last three years and there are no vacancies.

We, like the Church Commissioners, benchmark against all sectors using AON Hewitt, which has the largest salary database in the UK, and like them, we are committed to spending no more – but no less – than is required to attract and retain professional staff of suitable competence.

Like the First Church Estates Commissioner, I look forward to receiving a document about diocesan officials' salaries that has been mentioned as previously we did not have access to such information.

Mr Malcolm Halliday (Bradford): I thank Canon Spence for that answer. I am glad that he has taken up the offer of the diocesan spreadsheet. I would suggest that the Archbishops' Council take cognizance of the Charity Commission chair's views expressed recently and move towards using –

The Chair: Are we coming to a question, Mr Halliday?

Mr Malcolm Halliday (Bradford): I would suggest that. Do you agree?

Canon John Spence: One always wants to be agreeable. One merely observes: first, that the roles for which we pay these salaries are very considerable, and the losses to the Church will far exceed the cost of the salary if we do not get the necessary competencies; and, second, that it is a fact that there has been significant inflation in the payments of salaries in the charity sector, which was one of the reasons for the Charity Commission chair's comments.

29. *Revd Canon Richard Hibbert (St Albans)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: What review arrangements are in place to allow the Church Commissioners and the Archbishops' Council to determine the continuing appropriateness of the dioceses' allocation from the Mission Development Fund, other than the annual need to ensure that expenditure from the Fund is in accordance with the requirements of the National Institutions Measure 1998?

Canon John Spence (Archbishops' Council, appointed), replied on behalf of the Presidents: The Archbishops' Council and the board of the Church Commissioners have recently agreed spending plans for the funds likely to be made available by the Commissioners in the period 2014-2016. Those plans were developed by the Spending Review Task Group created by the Archbishops, with membership drawn from both the Commissioners and the Council, and from wider afield, including a dean and a diocesan secretary.

Dioceses have been encouraged to place greater emphasis on the use of national funds for investment and growth. Over the next three years a £15 million funding stream will be made available for major strategic projects that will enhance either mission or finance (or both) at diocesan level. Those investments will be evaluated and the results shared with dioceses.

As the Bishop of Sheffield has mentioned, there is a continuing programme of visits by board and Spending Review Task Group members to dioceses to discuss with the leadership teams there the use and impact of national funds. The outcomes of those dialogues are already proving, and will continue to prove, very useful as we determine the appropriate distribution of funds in the future.

Revd Canon Richard Hibbert (St Albans): Considering the proposal to spend £15 million over the next three years towards the Mission Development Fund in the dioceses – money from the national Church but spent at diocesan level – does the Archbishops' Council intend to continue to inform the Synod of these evaluations and discussions?

Canon John Spence: Absolutely. There is a difference between the £15 million now being made available and that which was made available under the Mission Development Fund in the past as in relation to those projects the funds were fully delegated to diocesan level, and it is therefore the prime responsibility of the dioceses to evaluate. With the £15 million now being made available there will be an application process centrally, and as the funding will be given from the centre it is absolutely essential that the Archbishops' Council ensures appropriate evaluation; and yes, those results will be made available.

30. *Revd Christopher Hobbs (London)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: In view of the welcome news of more people being included in the great variety of fresh expressions, is a list of them kept centrally, and can consideration be given to the possibility of introducing a mandatory central register containing details of all fresh expressions?

Mr Philip Fletcher (Archbishops' Council, appointed) replied on behalf of the Presidents: There is not yet a central list of fresh expressions, whether for the Church of England or other denominations, and a mandatory register would be heavy handed and potentially counter-productive. There is still an experimental feel about many fresh expressions and the last thing we should do is bureaucratize them. That said, we do want a reasonably accurate picture of how and where they are developing and who is involved. We are looking for a more rounded picture than just the number of fresh expressions and are working with Dr George Lings of the Church Army, who is researching fresh expressions in 12 representative dioceses for the Church Growth Research Project. This research will give us a comprehensive picture of fresh expressions in those dioceses and, after it is published early next year, a decision will be made about whether to extend the research across all the other dioceses.

Revd Canon Martin Wood (Chelmsford): Chelmsford was one of those 12 dioceses and the research was very useful. I wonder whether there is a possibility that the research could be brought to the floor of General Synod at an early stage.

Mr Philip Fletcher: As a start, the findings of the Church Growth Research programme will be published and discussed at the Faith in Research conference on 16 January. Again, the question of what comes to Synod is above my pay grade – that is for the Business Committee and others – but I am sure that the point will have been heard.

31. *Miss Vasantha Gnanadoss (Southwark)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Table 6 of *Ministry Statistics 2012* shows 4.9 per cent of stipendiary assistant curates having minority ethnic backgrounds compared with 2.7 per cent of incumbents. Interpretation of this interesting result is hampered by the larger proportion whose ethnicity is not known (32.2 per cent against 18.2 per cent). What steps are being taken to achieve more complete ethnicity data?

The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft) replied on behalf of the Presidents: The People and Pay project is nearing completion. This project has produced the new Resource Link system, which brings together in one place information about clergy. The project team is aware that some of the information collected, including ethnicity, has many 'not stated'

values. The question about ethnicity is a voluntary question. Once the final stages of the new Resource Link system have been implemented, it is planned to review the missing information and make plans to approach clergy to encourage them to provide this information.

Miss Vasantha Gnanadoss (Southwark): I thank the bishop for saying that people will be encouraged to complete the forms. Does the project team have any first-hand information on why some sections are not being completed at the moment?

The Bishop of Sheffield: I have no information on what the project team knows about that, but I will endeavour to find out and let Miss Gnanadoss know.

32. *Miss Vasantha Gnanadoss (Southwark)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: The stipendiary clergy ethnicity data in Table 6 of *Ministry Statistics 2012* are helpfully presented for the various black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds. This is a welcome innovation, but the very useful diocesan tabulation for 2011, given for the first time as Table 22 in the previous publication, has not been repeated for 2012. Can the Archbishops' Council give an assurance that diocesan clergy ethnicity statistics will be included in future years?

The Bishop of Sheffield replied on behalf of the Presidents: Information on ethnicity is collected at time of sponsorship by the Ministry Division of the Archbishops' Council. In December 2012 the Research and Statistics team identified that the form used since 2006 states that the information will be made available only to the staff of the Archbishops' Council Research and Statistics Department for the purposes of producing statistics prepared on a national basis. The legal advice was that these data could not therefore be released at diocesan level. The Research and Statistics team is working with the Ministry Division to change the form used to collect information at ordination to enable statistics to be released at diocesan level.

Miss Vasantha Gnanadoss (Southwark): When can we expect to see the changed forms being introduced?

The Bishop of Sheffield: I have no specific information but I would hope as soon as possible and, if possible, with effect from the next ordinations.

House of Bishops

33. *Mrs Pamela Bishop (Southwell and Nottingham)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Whilst there have been, in recent years, some welcome developments in the appointment procedures for deans of Cathedrals, it is still the case that the interviewing process prevents candidates from meeting any colleagues from the cathedral community. What is the reasoning for this practice?

The Bishop of Ely (Rt Revd Stephen Conway) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: The panel responsible for the nomination of a new dean is responsible for deciding whether candidates meet chapter or administrative colleagues in the cathedral community and at what stage, pre or post-interview. A number of panels have decided that it is appropriate for candidates to meet chapter colleagues prior to interview; others have arranged meetings that include diocesan staff or the cathedral administrator. The purposes of such meetings

include the provision of information to enable the candidates to understand the strategic agenda for the ministry to which they have applied and to help them discern whether this might be the next ministry for them. Members of the chapter are not involved in the selection decision.

Mrs Pamela Bishop (Southwell and Nottingham): Are there any plans to evaluate and review the selection processes for deans of cathedrals so that agreed good practice, maybe also from the world of education or business, can be publicized and shared?

The Bishop of Ely: The processes are always being kept under review to ensure best practice and to enable each panel to make the decisions open to them. I shall pass on Mrs Bishop's suggestion about looking into what educational processes might have to offer.

34. *Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: In view of the dramatic fall-off in religious affiliation to the Church of England across the age cohorts in the UK population (over-70s more than 35 per cent; under-30s less than 5 per cent [source: David Voas, University of Essex]), will the House of Bishops undertake a survey, benefactor-funded if necessary, to establish the reasons why young people are more alienated from the Established Church than from other or unspecified Christian denominations (where the same survey indicates around 25 per cent affiliation for under-30s), with a view to establishing how better to engage the next generation?

The Bishop of Southwell and Nottingham (Rt Revd Paul Butler) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: Considerable funding has been made available for research into church growth generally, which we trust will bear fruit over the next few years. However those concerned with the question 'Will our children have faith?' are convinced that time is running out for understanding issues to do with children and young people and the Church. While affirming the work in parishes and schools with children and young people, much of which is excellent, there is still a lack of evidence regarding what encourages children to develop long-term relationships with the Church. The Sticky Faith research is valuable and work being done on it by Scripture Union is encouraging, but far from enough and obviously not specifically Anglican. The Board of Education, as part of *Going for Growth*, is developing a small-scale pilot project to produce some of that evidence. We hope that this will lead to fresh ideas, a larger-scale survey, and ways of better engaging the next generations.

Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford): My Question invites a yes or no answer. It is not only about children, as was rather implied by those comments, but also their parents. Now that we have passed the motion on intentional evangelism –

The Chair: Mr Oldham, will you come to your question, please?

Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford): – should I re-direct my question to the Task Group for a clear answer?

The Bishop of Southwell and Nottingham: Sticky Faith is not just about children; it is also about young people and young adults and about the role of parents. My answer, therefore, is: yes perhaps you should.

35. *Revd Philip North (London)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Given the unsustainable costs in terms of legal fees and time and the unacceptable levels of stress suffered by many clergy, what plans does the House of Bishops have to review the workings of the Clergy Discipline Measure?

The Bishop of Guildford (Rt Revd Christopher Hill) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: There are no current plans for such a review. The Clergy Discipline Commission conducted a consultation in 2008-2010 and there was, of course, a major General Synod debate in residential session in York, led by Fr David Houlding. Insofar as reform was thought desirable, the necessary changes were then made by the Clergy Discipline (Amendment) Measure and through amendments to the Code of Practice. However the review did not support the suggestion that the costs of operating the Measure were, in the words of the question, 'unsustainable'. Any legal process will necessarily incur expense, but the Measure's procedures are designed to deal with complaints justly and at proportionate cost – and the word 'proportionate' is important in that context.

Finally and most importantly, the House of Bishops and the Commission recognize the inevitable stress, strain and distress that clergy are under when disciplinary proceedings are issued. That is why, as the Code of Practice emphasizes, the provision of pastoral care for the priest respondent on behalf of the bishop is so important and essential, and the bishops take that very seriously indeed.

Revd Philip North (London): In coming to the view that the costs are proportionate, does the House of Bishops take into account the amount of time taken off for stress-related conditions by the many clergy who are victims of the inappropriate or malicious use of this Measure?

The Bishop of Guildford: Individual bishops will take very seriously indeed anything that looks like a vexatious complaint, and of course the preliminary scrutiny is designed to bring about a speedier resolution of such a complaint as is possible under the circumstances.

Revd Prebendary David Houlding (London): Would the Bishop of Guildford like to commend to my friend Fr North that the revised document outlining guidelines for the professional conduct of the clergy, which in is the process of being prepared at the moment, might well be of assistance? It refers to the stress that might be suffered by clergy, and we hope to bring it before the Synod in February.

The Bishop of Guildford: Indeed, the House warmly welcomes that and I am glad to hear Fr Houlding's supplementary.

36. *Revd Canon Giles Goddard (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Following the Bishop of Liverpool's retirement, which members of the House of Bishops will have responsibility for leading on environmental questions, particularly on the increasing risk of major climate change?

The Bishop of Bristol (Rt Revd Michael Hill) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: On behalf of the Synod, I am sure that we are all deeply grateful to the Bishop of Liverpool, who retired recently, for his very stalwart and consistent work on the environment. However I caution the questioner against being too hung up on the idea of a lead bishop. The Bishop of London has been very active on these issues, not least in the various stages of the Energy Bill, speaking on energy demand reduction and fuel poverty at report stage in the

House of Lords. The important thing is that as many bishops as possible take the threat to our environment seriously, raise their voices and use their influence to shift public opinion and policies.

Canon Goddard might like to know that at a recent meeting of the College of Bishops in September, 44 bishops sat down to an ‘environmental breakfast’ – I too wondered what might be on the menu – sharing locally-sourced boiled eggs and discussion about the Church’s commitment to promoting environmental sustainability. In the Lords bishops now work in clusters around particular policy areas rather than individually, including on environmental matters. There is plenty of episcopal energy on climate change.

Revd Canon Giles Goddard (Southwark): I thank the bishop for his answer. I am glad that the bishops enjoyed locally-sourced boiled eggs but I am a little worried that they might have been soft-boiled. I am a little hung up on the idea of a lead bishop – we have just appointed a lead bishop for prisons – and I wonder how the House of Bishops will ensure that it is ready to speak on crucial matters such as for example the recent report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, on which there was strong silence from the House of Bishops.

The Bishop of Bristol: I go back to the point that I have already made – that we are now working more with clusters of bishops around particular issues. Although a lead bishop is named, other bishops will work around him, but the House has heard Canon Goddard’s concern and I am sure will take note of it.

37. *Mr Gerald O’Brien (Rochester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Given that several senior members of the House of Bishops were present in Nairobi last month when over 300 bishops and archbishops of the Anglican Communion gathered with over 1,000 of their clergy and laity for the Global Anglican Futures Conference (GAFCON2), will the Standing Committee of the House of Bishops place on the agenda of the next meeting of the House a consideration of how the House might deepen and strengthen its links with fellow bishops in the global south?

The Archbishop of York (Dr John Sentamu), in reply: House of Bishops’ agendas regularly include a briefing on the Anglican Communion from the Archbishop of Canterbury, just as the Synod did this afternoon. All dioceses have Companion Links, and often bishops will have important matters to share arising from these relationships. Those who attended the Nairobi conference may report in this context. Our Companion Links, along with the work of the Anglican Alliance for Development, Relief and Advocacy as well as a variety of other ongoing formal and informal conversations, are integral to our common life. They deepen and strengthen both the bonds of affection and our partnership in the gospel across the Communion.

Mr Gerald O’Brien (Rochester): I thank His Grace for that very full answer and ask whether, in the light of that, he might consider whether it would be appropriate to invite one of the global south Primates to address this Synod at a future meeting, since they appear to have cracked the problem of Church growth in a way that we in England have not.

The Archbishop of York: The decision to invite other bishops to address the Synod rests with the Presidents. My fellow President has heard the question. There is nothing more to say.

38. *Revd Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Is the House of Bishops aware of the article by Will Adam, editor of the *Ecclesiastical Law Journal*, on ‘Women bishops and the recognition of Orders’ as posted in *Law and Religion UK* on 25 September 2013, and has this article played any part in its recent deliberations on the ordination of women to the episcopate and the scope of their ministry, given that there may be clergy ordained by women bishops from Ireland who will seek to be deployed in England?

The Bishop of Rochester (Rt Revd James Langstaff) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: The House of Bishops has not met since Mr Adam’s article was published on 25 September.

Revd Tony Redman (Edmundsbury and Ipswich): Will it consider it when it next meets?

The Bishop of Rochester: The issues highlighted in that article relate to the ministry in this country of women bishops from overseas and by those ordained overseas by women bishops. That is quite complex. It is, as members might imagine, a matter of which the Steering Committee has been aware during the course of the legislation on women bishops. Clearly the swift way to resolve this is to expedite that particular matter, because many of these things will then fall into place. Nonetheless the House of Bishops has this matter in mind in the context of those wider discussions.

39. *Very Revd Andrew Nunn (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: When will the report of the group chaired by Sir Joseph Pilling be published?

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby), in reply: Soon.

Very Revd Andrew Nunn (Southwark): I appreciate the economy of that answer but, given that potentially the report is so important for the life and mission of the Church, how soon?

The Archbishop of Canterbury: I can confirm that, as we all know, the Pilling group has completed its work. Synod members may be reassured that soon means not very long or fairly imminently – but not very soon!

40. *Mr Gerald O’Brien (Rochester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Will the House of Bishops give Synod an assurance that when the Pilling report is published it will carry a suitably prominent statement to the effect that any proposals or recommendations the report contains are not the official position of the Church of England unless and until they are endorsed by a vote of the General Synod?

41. *Revd John Cook (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Can the Synod be assured that if the House of Bishops, having considered the Pilling report, are minded to make any changes to the Church of England’s position on human sexuality, it will ensure that the Synod is given an opportunity to debate these matters before any changes are brought into effect?

42. *Revd Jonathan Frai (Chichester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Given General Synod’s resolution of 1987 affirming that adultery, fornication and homosexual acts are to be met with ‘a call to repentance’, what steps will be taken to make clear that the

Pilling report, when it is published, has not replaced this stance unless and until the General Synod itself so resolves?

The Archbishop of Canterbury, in reply: I shall, with permission, answer these three Questions together.

I can confirm that the Pilling report will offer findings and recommendations from the members of the group for the Church of England to consider. It will not be a new policy statement from the Church of England. That will be made quite clear when the report is published.

It is premature at this stage to speculate about any decision-making process at the end of the period of discussion and reflection initiated by the publication of the report. Who has the authority nationally to determine any particular issue in the Church of England always depends on the nature of the decision. Clearly if there were any question of looking again at the motion passed by the Synod in 1987, it would be a matter for the Synod.

Mr John Ward (London): Given our useful discussions on the Saturday of last July's group of sessions, before any vote by the General Synod on Pilling, would the House encourage the Business Committee to find time for facilitated discussions on this subject?

The Archbishop of Canterbury: That is a very helpful suggestion, Mr O'Brien, and I am sure that the House will consider it.

43. **Mrs Penelope Allen (Lichfield)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Is the House considering tasking the Liturgical Commission with the preparation of suitable liturgy for the blessing of civil partnerships in church?

The Archbishop of Canterbury replied: No.

44. **Mrs Penelope Allen (Lichfield)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: What progress has been made by the group established by the House to advise it on human sexuality in producing the report and, when it is produced, is it intended that it should be the subject of debate at the same time as the Private Members' Motions on the Public Doctrine of Christian Marriage and Registration of Civil Partnerships?

The Archbishop of Canterbury replied: The Pilling group has now completed its work. Its report will be published soon. It will be for the House of Bishops and the Business Committee to consider how best the report might be handled synodically, given the motions already awaiting debate. Both bodies meet next month.

45. **Mrs April Alexander (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Recent research by the Transformations Research and Implementation Group showed that young male ordinands outnumber female ordinands by seven to two. What, precisely, is being done to encourage more vocations in young women?

The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: Recent statistics have shown a consistent picture of vocations to ordination amongst young men outnumbering those of young women by a ratio of about 7:2.

Year	2009	2010	2011	2012
Total number of people selected 20-29	74	108	77	113
Male	62	82	60	88
Female	12	26	17	25
% Female	16	24	22	22

So while the total number of young adults being selected for training increased in 2012, the proportion of women to men is well below 50 per cent. The statistics for 2013 to date follow a similar pattern to 2012.

Both the Transformations Research and Implementation Group (TRIG) and the Young Vocations Strategy Group have collaborated over research and action to address this. Having noted a particular imbalance in the evangelical constituency, a group of women from a variety of organizations – Awesome, HTB, New Wine, CPAS – was drawn together.

This group worked with Ministry Division staff to organize a conference which was held in June 2013 in London. The conference tackled the issue from both a biblical and a practical perspective and about 50 young women from across the country and from a broad range of churches attended. Networks and social media were used to advertise the event.

At the event a questionnaire was used and the results of this have been used by the TRIG in developing proposals for the House of Bishops. The next stage is to broaden the sample by using the same questionnaire at further conferences for young women. The original group plans to hold such an event in Birmingham next year and will also support Guildford and Rochester dioceses and groups of dioceses in the south west and north in holding similar events.

In addition to this special provision, routine work in nurturing the vocations of young people is open to young women and the proportion of women participants is being monitored. The Church of England Ministry Experience Scheme has 14 young interns on a pilot year, six of whom are women. One of the criteria which the scheme must meet is that it actively seeks to recruit participants from under-represented groups, including women.

The annual Young Vocations Conference gives 16-19 year-olds the opportunity to explore their vocation. Eight of the 16 participants this year were girls. Two of the three leaders are women offering role models.

We are present at festivals (Greenbelt, Soul Survivor, Momentum, Walsingham) where we engage with a range of young people. Seminars with which we engage include one on women in leadership.

Publications and the website feature pictures of and stories about women.

Alongside these general efforts to nurture vocations among young women, TRIG has identified some of key areas to be addressed both nationally and in the dioceses. These include: active encouragement to increase the number of women incumbents in larger churches, where they would be seen as role models to young women in the congregation. Currently many women who are promoted to more senior positions (DDO, Dean and Archdeacon) become invisible to young women considering vocation. Dioceses will be

encouraged to monitor appointments to posts of enhanced responsibility on an annual basis to check that the ratio of men to women is proportionate; encouragement of teaching and learning in dioceses about the ministry of women; provision by dioceses of mentoring for younger women, especially in cases where their incumbent is not able or willing to provide it; and reviewing with dioceses their HR policies for flexible and part-time working

TRIG will provide a report to the House of Bishops in December 2013 with proposals for addressing these issues and for further research and action in the next phase of its work.

46. *Mrs April Alexander (Southwark) asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Recent research by the Transformations Research and Implementation Group also shows that young male ordinands are predominantly attending conservative evangelical and traditionalist colleges. What steps are being taken to match the intake to likely future requirements for clergy both in respect of numbers and deployability?

The Bishop of Sheffield replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: The statistics attached below show the pattern of attendance of ordinands under 30 at the start of their course at the colleges and those courses which have students in that category. Attendance at a particular college is not a definitive indicator of the theological views of a student, whose choice of college may be influenced by a range of factors. However, the broad indication is that the cohort of younger ordinands tends to be drawn from a range of evangelical backgrounds. This is borne out through the comments of diocesan directors of ordinands and the experience of BAP advisers.

The criteria for selection include reference to the suitability of candidates for ministry in the Church of England and their deployability across a range of contexts. These criteria form the context for exploration of a vocation in the dioceses as well as in national selection. As part of the Transforming Ministry agenda arising from the quinquennial goal to re-imagine ministry, dioceses are being encouraged to consider vocational strategies which reflect their overall strategic ministerial requirements. This includes the future need for a cohort of clergy and lay ministers who are equipped to serve in the range of contexts across a diocese. It means a shift from simply responding to those who offer a more proactive approach which seeks the kinds of candidate that the diocese expects to require for future deployment.

The Ministry Division actively encourages vocational work across a broad front in order to place before a wide range of young people the opportunities for ministry. This work includes attendance at several festivals which attract a rich mixture from many traditions and theological attitudes. Staff also liaise with chaplains in education as well as diocesan staff to make as broad an offer as possible which includes those theological stances that are currently less well represented.

Ministerial education in all of the courses and colleges is monitored through the system of inspection. In the case of all courses and colleges and in relation to all pathways, including both Durham awards and those of other universities, the curriculum is required to provide an adequate preparation for ministry in the Church of England as a whole and to provide placement experience which complements the current knowledge and experience of ordinands. An aspect of the design criteria for the modules in the Common Awards is to ensure that students work on issues around diversity, in recognition of the diverse nature of the church in which they will serve.

The Young Vocations Strategy Group, in liaison with the Transformations Research and Implementation Group, is continuing its research into the patterns of response among candidates under 30 in order to refine the methods and approaches used in dioceses as well as nationally and to help dioceses align vocational work with strategic requirements in terms of numbers and deployment. This is also linked to the work to encourage vocations among those of minority ethnic backgrounds, where an important focus is on encouraging younger candidates.

Ordinands aged under 30 in 2012/13				
	Male	Female	Grand Total	%
Cranmer	10	6	16	8%
Mirfield	5	2	7	4%
St John's				
Nott	5	2	7	4%
Oak Hill	23		23	12%
Queens	4	1	5	3%
Ripon	13	5	18	9%
Ridley	20	5	25	13%
St Stephens	16	2	18	9%
Trinity	16	4	20	10%
Westcott	20	9	29	15%
Wycliffe	24	1	25	13%
Totals (college)	156	37	193	100%
				%
YMC	1		1	7%
St Mellitus	10	2	12	80%
OMC	1		1	7%
SEITE	1		1	7%
Totals (course)	13	2	15	100%
Overall total	169	39	208	

47. *Mrs Mary Judkins (Wakefield) asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: As the cathedral is the seat of the diocesan bishop, has the House of Bishops issued guidance on the use of the sacred space in cathedrals for worship by other faiths which includes ceremonies that consecrate that space in the tradition of another faith?

The Bishop of Coventry (Rt Revd Dr Christopher Cocksworth) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: There is no guidance specifically given for ceremonies that consecrate space in a cathedral in the tradition of another faith. However, such a situation would be covered by the more general House of Bishops' *Guidance on Multi-Faith Worship* (GS Misc 411) which states in section 6:

'It is important to recognise that we are in a new situation which was not envisaged by those who framed our Canon Law. Nevertheless the principle stands that nothing should happen in an Anglican building which is contrary to the Christian faith. There should be no attempt to evade the force of this by describing an event as "a Celebration" or "an Observance". In cases of doubt the bishop should be consulted. Canon B 5 says that forms of service authorized by the bishop must be "reverent and seemly and ... neither contrary to, nor indicative of any departure from, the doctrine of the Church of England in any essential matter".'

Further guidance on the legal position is given in this section. There is also guidance specifically relevant to cathedrals in section 2:

'Cathedrals are often the kind of place thought appropriate for such events [i.e. multi-faith worship], yet if a cathedral is used it must be remembered that it "belongs" not only to Anglicans. Christians of all kinds have an emotional investment in the great national cathedrals, and see them as a focus for their own sense of identity as Christians. What happens in them is particularly significant for people in many churches and is likely to cause resentment if it is felt in any way to compromise the Christian faith.'

Secretary General

48. *Revd Charles Read (Norwich)* asked the Secretary General: When was the Pilling report *Talent and Calling* (GS 1650) debated by the General Synod, with what result, and where may current members find the report and the transcript of the Synod debate?

The Secretary General (Mr William Fittall), in reply: The debate took place on the afternoon of Monday 9 July 2007. The *Report of Proceedings*, a copy of GS 1650 and the text of the motion passed are on the Church of England website. I have placed a copy of the motion and details of the web links on the notice-board.

The report *Talent and Calling: Report of the Senior Church Appointments Review Group* (chaired by Sir Joseph Pilling) was debated in July 2007. The motion passed by the Synod was as follows:

'That this Synod, noting that proposals in the Government's Green Paper of 3 July (attached to GS 1650A) will necessitate further discussion with the Church:

- (a) welcome the prospect of the Church achieving the "decisive voice in the appointment of bishops" for which Synod voted in 1974;
- (b) affirm its willingness for the Church to have the decisive voice in the selection of cathedral deans and canons appointed by the Crown, given the Prime Minister's commitment to a "process of constructive engagement between the Government and the Church" (*The Governance of Britain* Green Paper, CM7170);
- (c) invite the Archbishops, in consultation with the Archbishops' Council and the House of Bishops, to oversee the necessary consequential discussions with the Government and

- to report to the February group of sessions, including on the implications for those matters covered by chapter 8 of GS 1650; and
- (d) subject to the above, endorse the recommendations in chapter 10 of GS 1650, invite those responsible to give effect to them and invite the Archbishops' Council to report to Synod during 2008 on progress with implementation.'

The report can be found on the General Synod website:

<http://www.churchofengland.org/media/1234417/gs1650.pdf>

The transcript of the debate can also be found on the Synod website:

<http://www.churchofengland.org/media/1636777/jul%2007.zip>

49. *Revd Christopher Hobbs (London)* asked the Secretary General: Is there is a consistent pattern across the dioceses in terms of the eligibility of those who are part of Bishop's Mission Order communities for membership of deanery synods and for the other usual rights in relation to participation in church governance and, if there is not, can consideration be given to the possibility of standardizing the position in that respect?

The Secretary General, in reply: The approach that the Synod adopted when passing the legislation on Bishop's Mission Orders was to confer an enabling power so that they could provide for representation on deanery synods in accordance with a scheme made by the relevant diocesan synod. A corresponding provision was inserted in the Church Representation Rules. Because of the potential variety of mission initiatives and their internal governance arrangements it seemed sensible not to be too prescriptive nationally. I understand that the mission orders of which the Church Commissioners have a copy provide for deanery synod representation, so I am not aware that there is any general problem. However if there are areas of concern over how the legislation is working, I would be happy to follow them up with diocesan secretaries.

50. *Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark)* asked the Secretary General: Has any assessment been made of (a) the policy case for requiring all land held or acquired by a PCC (other than a short lease) to be vested in the diocesan authority, including any legal, accounting or ecclesiological considerations, or (b) the cost to dioceses of doing so, including time spent on administration and fees for professional advice and services and, if so, can this assessment be supplied to Synod members before the debate on first consideration of the draft Church of England (Ecclesiastical Property) Measure (GS1921)?

The Secretary General, in reply: Following the passing of Mr Hobbs's motion the Archbishops' Council considered a number of possible options for change and consulted the Inter-Diocesan Finance Forum before deciding on the approach reflected in the draft Measure due for consideration tomorrow.

The Council's view was that the degree of deregulation proposed in the new measure was justified but that to go further and vest legal title in a PCC rather than the diocese would reduce the protection against misuse of the property through lack of expertise or against its removal from the Church of England. While PCC members who alienated Church of England property would be acting in breach of their legal obligations, the only means of recovering the property would be costly litigation.

The Synod will have the opportunity to ponder the balance of risks and advantages further in tomorrow afternoon's debate and, subject to that, in Revision Committee.

51. **Mrs Mary Durlacher (Chelmsford)* asked the Secretary General: What response has the Church of England made to the Ministry of Justice consultation on the process for using religious buildings shared by more than one religious denomination for the solemnization of marriages of same sex couples?

The Secretary General, in reply: The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 received the Royal Assent in July, though its main provisions are not expected to come into force until next year. The Act does not apply to marriages that are solemnized according to the rites of the Church of England or affect its doctrine of marriage, which remains as defined in Canon B 30 and the Book of Common Prayer.

The Act contains provisions that deal with the situation where church buildings are formally shared by more than one denomination under the Sharing of Church Buildings Act 1969. Where that is the case, a shared church building can be registered for same sex marriages only by a denomination whose governing authority has opted in to same sex marriage if the governing authorities of each of the other sharing churches give their consent to the building being used in that way. The new Act provides for informally shared places of worship (i.e. those that are not covered by the 1969 Act) to be dealt with by Regulations.

The Government's consultation document included a set of draft Regulations which contain provisions broadly equivalent to those that apply to buildings that are shared under the Sharing of Church Buildings Act. Essentially that would mean that the consent of the governing authorities of the other sharing churches would be required before one sharing church could apply to register an informally shared building for same sex marriages. A response to the consultation has now been sent on behalf of the Archbishops' Council confirming that we have no points to raise on the draft Regulations.

52. **Revd Canon Dr Simon Cox (Blackburn)* asked the Secretary General: Will advice be given as to whether, following the re-definition of marriage by the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act, an incumbent may decline to solemnize any marriages or make his or her church unavailable for the solemnization of marriages?

53. **Revd Canon Dr Simon Cox (Blackburn)* asked the Secretary General: Will advice be given as to whether, following the re-definition of marriage by the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act, it will be possible for steps to be taken so that a parish church ceases to be one in which any marriages may be solemnized?

The Secretary General, in reply: When it comes into force next year the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 will make it lawful, in England and Wales, for two persons of the same sex to contract a marriage in a register office, on approved premises (such as a hotel) and in certain religious premises that have been registered for the marriage of same sex couples by a religious body that has opted in to same sex marriages.

The changes that will be brought about by the Act do not apply to marriage according to the rites of the Church of England at all. It will not be legally possible for a same sex couple to marry according to the rites of the Church of England or for a clerk in holy orders to solemnize the marriage of a same sex couple. The Act expressly provides that if any persons

of the same sex consent to or acquiesce in the solemnization of a Church of England marriage between them, the marriage is void.

Crucially, while the Act changes the legal definition of marriage for many purposes, it does not change the legal definition for the purpose of marriages that are solemnized according to the rites of the Church of England. Canon B 30 of the Canons of the Church of England defines marriage as ‘in its nature a union permanent and lifelong, for better for worse, till death do them part, of one man with one woman, to the exclusion of all others on either side, for the procreation and nurture of children, for the hallowing and right direction of the natural instincts and affections, and for the mutual society, help and comfort which the one ought to have of the other, both in prosperity and adversity’.

The Canons of the Church of England (like the rest of ecclesiastical law) are part of the law of England. The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act expressly does not override Canon B 30, as is normally the case where statute and canon law are in conflict. Section 1 of the Act contains an express provision that preserves the effect of Canon B 30 and the right of the Church of England to make provision by canon about marriage being the union of one man with one woman. That means that after the Act comes into force English law will encompass two different definitions of marriage: a newly defined, gender-neutral definition and a different, traditional definition that applies in the case of marriage according to the rites of the Church of England.

That means that where a couple marry according to the rites of the Church of England after the Act comes into force, the religious and legal institution which they enter will continue to be the same institution of marriage that exists now, and which is described in Canon B 30.

As marriage according to the rites of the Church of England has not been re-defined by the Act, there is no reason why anyone who is concerned about the re-definition of marriage to include same-sex couples should want to decline to solemnize Church of England marriages or seek to make a church unavailable for Church of England marriages. For that reason, no legal facility has been sought or provided to enable them to do so.

On the specific question concerning parish churches, there are no steps that can be taken so that a parish church ceases to be one in which marriages may be solemnized. All parish churches are automatically available for the marriages of the parishioners and others who have a right to marry there. As to the question relating to incumbents, they will remain under a duty to solemnize marriages on the same basis as at present, and to make the parish church available for such marriages. That being so, it is not intended to issue advice on the matters referred to in the Questions.

Board of Education

54. *Mrs Mary Judkins (Wakefield) asked the Chair of the Board of Education: After the Ofsted report on RE and the review on RE published recently, what is the Board of Education doing as follow-up, and what can General Synod members do to keep up pressure on the Government?

The Bishop of Oxford (Rt Revd John Pritchard) replied: I will be writing to the Secretary of State again to seek his response to the issues raised in the Ofsted report, especially the lack of teacher expertise and confidence at the root of under-performance in schools. The Church of

England is a signatory to the RE Council's review and is working to follow up the recommendations with the RE community as a whole. However our most important contribution will be the Christianity Project, which will provide resources for a systematic study of Christianity for all pupils in both Church schools and others. We are also engaged in a project to develop training material for primary teachers focusing on the teaching of Christianity. Synod members can make two contributions: first, by offering support to their local schools especially in the teaching of Christianity, and secondly by working with diocesan education teams to evidence concerns over school delivery of RE.

55. *Revd Eva McIntyre (Worcester)* asked the Chair of the Board of Education: In answer to Question 63 at the July 2013 group of sessions, confidence was expressed about Church of England schools taking their responsibilities about combating racism seriously. Has any check been made whether there are any teachers in Church of England schools who are members of the British National Party or the English Defence League?

The Bishop of Oxford: There is no provision for the Board of Education to check appointments in Church of England schools. This is the remit of diocesan boards of education and their advisers. Appointments are taken very seriously and all teachers seeking a job in a Church of England school will be questioned about their commitment to the Christian values underpinning the school.

Revd Eva McIntyre (Worcester): I appreciate that we have an issue of autonomy here, but I do not believe that checking Christian principles answers this Question. Given that the lists of members of the BNP and EDL are now in the public domain, would the Board of Education be prepared to suggest to diocesan boards of education that they might check whether any employees are members of those organizations?

The Bishop of Oxford: Certainly the Board of Education is able to give general advice but, as the questioner has recognized and therefore knows, the autonomy of boards of education and governors is well known. Certainly it is up to the Board of Education to make sure that the Christian principles and foundation of all our appointments are very clearly drawn, and drawn to the attention of boards and governors.

Revd Simon Cawdell (Hereford): Can the bishop advise us whether in fact it is possible in law for us to exclude candidates from –

The Chair: I am afraid the bishop cannot advise you on a matter of law.

Revd Simon Cawdell (Hereford): Is the bishop aware, or not, whether it is possible to exclude candidates from consideration on the grounds of membership of a political party; and, if not, should we seek legislation for the purposes of Church schools that would enable us to safeguard our children in an appropriate manner?

The Bishop of Oxford: The bishop is not aware but is prepared to find out.

56. *Revd Canon Dr Chris Sugden (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the Board of Education: In his foreword to the RE curriculum framework of the Review of Religious Education in England by the Religious Education Council made public on 23 October, the Secretary of State writes on page 5 that 'the Review has the endorsement of a very wide range of professional organizations and bodies representing faiths and other world views.' Is the

Church of England Board of Education, which is listed as a member body of the RE Council, included among the bodies representing faiths and other world views which the Secretary of State says have endorsed this RE curriculum framework?

The Bishop of Oxford: Representatives of the National Society and Board of Education have been involved at every stage in the RE review carried out by the RE Council. The Chief Education Officer welcomed the review at the launch in the House of Commons, commenting especially on the centrality of Christianity in the curriculum framework contained within the review. While the review has no formal standing, it is a helpful updating of the non-statutory framework of 2004. She also welcomed the fact that the review raised questions about whether the particular statutory arrangements for RE were fit for purpose in a changed educational landscape and offered the support of the Church of England in such discussions as may ensue.

Revd Canon Dr Chris Sugden (Oxford): I thank the bishop for clarifying the Church of England's involvement. I still wonder whether or not actually the Church of England endorsed this report, and to enable us to get to the end of all the Questions, which may be a record, a one-word answer will suffice.

The Bishop of Oxford: Endorse, yes; not necessarily agree with all emphases. There is indeed another question behind Canon Sugden's question, and it might have something to do with non-religious world views. Certainly they have been in RE for some time; they have a place, usually at the top end of the school. All along we have resisted trying to put any kind of parity between religious education of faith and non-faith. We are absolutely clear about that and have consistently resisted it, along with all other faith groups, and I do not think there is any danger of that.

Canon Peter Bruinvels (Guildford) – and a member of Surrey SACRE. How can we be confident that RE will not be blurred following the Council's review and that the basic fundamental beliefs will still be re-emphasized in our Church of England schools?

The Bishop of Oxford: I think that probably relates to one of the coming Questions that will focus particularly on the Christianity project that we are producing, which will be of enormous value not only to Church schools but also to community schools. We know that Christianity is not being taught as well as it should be, and the Board has therefore placed a lot of emphasis on righting that wrong.

57. *Dr Rachel Jepson (Birmingham)* asked the Chair of the Board of Education: Which resources does the Board of Education recommend be used with both staff and students in all Church of England schools to address LGBT bullying?

The Bishop of Oxford: The Board does not generally recommend resources to schools except those produced by it. In this case the Board is overseeing a project to produce material for Church schools to help them to combat homophobic bullying within the framework of Christian values and belief. Currently the project consultant is writing materials prior to their being piloted in schools during the next term.

Dr Rachel Jepson (Birmingham): What is the timescale for the project to which the bishop has referred, who is the project consultant writing the material, and what is his or her relevant expertise?

The Bishop of Oxford: We have approached a lady who has been deeply involved in producing material in a particular diocese, so we know that she has expertise and a previous track record. The name of the person and the precise timescale escape me, but I will ensure that Dr Jepson is informed.

Mr Robin Hall (Southwark): In his July Presidential Address the Archbishop of Canterbury pledged to use ‘the best advice we can find anywhere’. As Stonewall is the leading charity committed to tackling homophobia, is the consultant working closely with Stonewall to make the most of its experience and expertise?

The Bishop of Oxford: Stonewall is indeed involved as one of the consultants, and other organizations too with a good track record in this field. We are committed to having the very best consultants and experience that we can obtain.

58. *Mr Robin Hall (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the Board of Education: Given the Archbishop of Canterbury’s call in July for a ‘commitment to stamp out’ homophobic bullying in Church of England schools, what work has been undertaken to log or track the number of incidents of homophobic bullying in our schools?

The Bishop of Oxford: There is no national collection of statistics regarding bullying in schools and the Board of Education does not have the capacity at this time to engage in such a survey. The Board’s approach is rather to resource teachers and governors to create a strong anti-bullying culture with a specific focus on homophobic bullying.

Mr Robin Hall (Southwark): I thank the bishop for that answer. As he will know, schools are already obliged to report each term the number and types of bullying incidents, so I believe that that data is readily available. If we do not understand the scale of the problem, how will the Archbishop’s campaign to tackle homophobic bullying be targeted and how will we know whether it has been successful?

The Bishop of Oxford: I hope that that will come out of the work being done by the group looking into it, and the Board will be ready to take any further action that is needed.

Mr John Ward (London): Will the Board take into account the useful debates in this place in February 2007, including the motion proposed by Revd Mary Gilbert which affirmed again that lesbian Christians are full members of this Church without reservation, and does the Board think that that might be useful in its reflections on how we tackle homophobic bullying?

The Bishop of Oxford: The Board is indeed fully committed to there being no homophobic bullying in any of our Church schools. We have made that very clear commitment and we do not intend to renege on it.

Cathedral and Church Buildings Division

59. *Revd Dr Patrick Richmond (Norwich)* asked the Chair of the Cathedrals and Church Buildings Division: ‘Fewer clergy are now ministering to a larger population and having to oversee a roughly similar number of buildings, with fewer worshippers to pay for them’ (GS Misc 1054). In view of the ageing Church demographic, leading to increasing retirement of clergy and lower birth rates and higher death rates than the general population, with

consequent further falls in numbers of clergy and paying worshippers, what strategies and plans are the Cathedral and Church Buildings Division considering to reduce the burdens of maintaining buildings and to aid mission in the future?

Mr Tim Allen (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich) replied on behalf of the Chair: The Cathedral and Church Buildings Division is well aware of these pressures and launched the Open and Sustainable Churches project in response. The main thrust is to encourage parishes to invite the local community to be stakeholders in their church building and use it for a range of complementary purposes, including community, cultural and commercial uses. We believe that this is a mission opportunity as well as a way of re-inventing our church buildings as assets for the community rather than as burdens for the congregations and clergy. The ChurchCare web site has a section devoted to this with advice detailing legal and practical options for achieving the step change, illustrated with case studies of parishes that have already done so successfully. In addition, the Cathedral and Church Buildings Division staff are always ready to give advice and support as resources allow.

Revd Dr Patrick Richmond (Norwich): I thank Mr Allen for that response, and I am delighted to hear that there is an awareness of this problem. I know that parish finances are already under strain and in deficit, and I have heard my diocesan bishop talking about hibernation. I wonder what more radical plans the Division is discussing when it is not possible to find community use in time, or at all?

Mr Tim Allen: The Cathedral and Church Buildings Council certainly does not have hibernation in mind. We firmly believe that the wonderful church buildings that are a presence in every community in England are essential assets to mission; they are not millstones round our necks but essential and inspiring bases for mission and ministry.

It is the Division's role to help, advise and encourage congregations in the maintenance and improvement of those buildings, which it does in many ways, one example of which is the Open and Sustainable Churches project, but there are many others. For example during tomorrow's debate members will see the proposals to speed up and simplify the faculty system. In July the Synod debated the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2013, which will take effect from 1 January 2014.

Members should also be aware that the Division is working to develop a nationwide online faculty system and has a website that contains valuable advice for clergy, churchwardens and PCCs on how to look after their church buildings. Also important in that regard is the casework in which the CBC advises chancellors and DACs in relation to applications from parishes for faculties to develop their church buildings so as to be more effective in promoting mission, and it does that in a way that is sympathetic to mission.

I should also say that the CBC is much involved in fund raising and awarding grants for fabric repair and conservation – and I am cut off in the list of the wonderful works of the Division by the red light!

Council for Christian Unity

60. *Dr Edmund Marshall (St Albans)* asked the Chair of the Council for Christian Unity:

What response is being made on behalf of the Church of England to the report *The Challenge of the Covenant: Uniting in Mission and Holiness*, published in September 2013 by the Joint Implementation Commission for the Anglican-Methodist Covenant?

The Bishop of Peterborough (Rt Revd Donald Allister), in reply: Following the publication of the JIC's report *The Challenge of the Covenant*, the Council for Christian Unity and the Faith and Order Commission are preparing formal responses to the report. The House of Bishops is being asked for comments especially concerning the shape of future work on the Covenant. In the light of these responses the JIC will produce the final draft of a short report in March next year. Based on the report, the CCU will sponsor a debate on the Covenant in the July 2014 group of sessions. A parallel process is taking place in the Methodist Church leading to a debate with a similar resolution at the Methodist Conference also next July. General Synod members may themselves comment on the report in this consultation stage. Comments in writing can be sent to the CCU before 14 January 2014. The report is available on the Anglican-Methodist website (www.anglican-methodist.org.uk).

Dr Edmund Marshall (St Albans): Bearing in mind that this month has seen the tenth anniversary of the signing of the Anglican-Methodist Covenant, will the various institutions at national level within the Church take the opportunity of giving new practical impetus to implementing the Covenant?

The Bishop of Peterborough: The phrase 'implementing the Covenant' includes a great deal and is rather difficult to unpick. I would be very happy to receive correspondence from Dr Marshall about what precisely he would like us to do and I will respond to it, consulting the CCU and others.

Dr Philip Giddings (Oxford) – and declaring an interest as a member of the JIC. Has the Council, and indeed the House of Bishops, given any thought to the failure so far to make any progress with the commitment in our existing Covenant relationships to joint decision-making?

The Bishop of Peterborough: We have not looked at that specific point recently. I am sure that we will now.

61. *Revd Tony Redman (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich)* asked the Chair of the Council for Christian Unity: In the light of the departure of the Archbishop of Canterbury's former ecumenical officer on his consecration to the episcopate, the vacancy in the See of Gibraltar in Europe and the main business before the Synod at this group of sessions, what strategic steps is the Council taking to maintain dialogue with the Orthodox Churches, especially the Russian Orthodox?

The Bishop of Peterborough, in reply: Maintaining high-level relations with all Orthodox Churches remains a priority and is being pursued strategically as an integrated team effort. The Bishop of London, as lead bishop, and the Archbishop's special representatives to the Orthodox Patriarchates all have essential roles. Making an appointment to the See of Gibraltar in Europe is also strategically important. The Bishop at Lambeth and the CCU, working together, are supporting the Archbishop's ecumenical ministry and are well placed to give expert advice and build on existing relationships. Admittedly relations with the Moscow Patriarchate have been strained as we consider women in the episcopate. Despite that, the Archbishop has recently met Metropolitan Hilarion (head of External Relations of

the Russian Orthodox Church), who proposed that the Joint Liaison Committee which has been in suspended animation for some years should be resuscitated. Meanwhile the Anglican Orthodox International Commission continues its work effectively.

Revd Tony Redman (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich): Is the bishop aware of the anxiety in the Moscow chaplaincy that the Anglican presence in Russia is dependent solely on the goodwill of the Moscow Patriarchate and of the need for appropriately courteous relationships to be re-established in this area?

The Bishop of Peterborough: Yes, we are well aware of that. The reconvening of the Joint Liaison Committee is a good step in that direction, but it may be that other steps need to be taken as well. We have heard the question.

The Chair: Members of Synod, that brings us to the end of this item of business.

THE CHAIR *The Bishop of Willesden (Rt Revd Pete Broadbent)* took the Chair at 6.35 p.m.

Women in the Episcopate Presentation under SO 97

The Bishop of Rochester (Rt Revd James Langstaff): We are ahead of time, but members will be glad to hear that I shall resist the temptation to speak for 25 minutes! In any case by the end of this group of sessions they may have heard rather too much from me and, if matters proceed as they might, after the end of this group of sessions they may have to hear more from me at other groups of sessions and so will have to exercise a degree of graciousness towards me in that regard.

On Wednesday morning I shall have an opportunity to speak more specifically to the motions in my name relating to GS 1924, the Steering Committee's report, and GS 1925 and GS 1926, the draft Measure and draft Amending Canon.

The purpose of this evening's presentation is intended to be rather more introductory, hopefully enabling us to use fruitfully the time set aside tomorrow for discussion in groups. I shall not say too much now about as it were the logistics for those groups, because the information has already been circulated to all members, so that hopefully they will know which groups they are in and tomorrow morning you can go straight to those groups at 9.15 a.m., which will begin with worship followed by discussion. Each group includes at least one member of the House of Bishops and either a member of the Steering Committee or a person who has been party to the Committee's discussions and therefore will be able to respond to some of the questions of detail that might arise in those small groups.

Because we have reached this item of business slightly early I do not know whether all the members of the Steering Committee have yet arrived, but a good number of them are arrayed

behind me, and I am hugely grateful for their support. We thought that it was important for them to be here on the platform this evening.

The intention is that the time in the groups tomorrow will give us an opportunity fully to understand the shape and content of the proposals that are now brought to Synod, and I hope that engagement will shape and form the debates that we are to have on Wednesday.

My plan for the next few minutes is to tell members something of the process that the Steering Committee has been through to reach this point and to make some comments about the overall shape of the package of legislative and other instruments that we bring to Synod, which hopefully will enable the discussions tomorrow to be the more fruitful.

In July the Synod gave instructions for a Steering Committee to be formed in order to prepare legislation on the basis of what was described as option one in the report of the previous working party. Synod further instructed that the proposals should include a mandatory grievance procedure (as it was then described) and there was a request to the House of Bishops to prepare a draft Declaration or Act of Synod. The Synod also urged that facilitated conversations continue as part of the process, and it heard, though did not vote on, a suggestion from our chair that the Steering Committee have more members than usual and include a wider range of viewpoints on the substantive issue.

The Steering Committee having been set up, the Standing Committee of the House of Bishops then asked it also to work on those elements of a possible package that are the responsibility of the House, notably the proposed Declaration by the House of Bishops. So I suppose that in addition to being a wider than normal Steering Committee we also became a kind of drafting committee on behalf of the House of Bishops, and thus it has been.

The Steering Committee has included five members who did not vote for the previously proposed legislative package, and some had not voted for option one last July. It has to be said therefore that the starting point of option one that Synod gave the Steering Committee was always going to be problematic for some of its members.

The process with which the Steering Committee has engaged has been fascinating, tough, and at times inspirational. We have been clear that our task has been to do what has not hitherto proved possible, that is to remove the bar to the ordination of women to the episcopate in such a way that it is clear that the Church of England is fully and unequivocally committed to all orders of ministry being open equally to all without reference to gender – no ifs and buts; and at the same time, not least because the Church of England continues to be part of a Communion and a wider world Church in which other views continue to be held, we commit ourselves to being a Church in which those who, on grounds of theological conviction, are unable to receive that ministry may continue to flourish within our life and structures – an impossible task, many of us may have thought.

The Steering Committee met over five full days in September and October. The discussion has been lengthy and very detailed; we have discussed and debated hard together. This has not been about seeking to change one another's theological convictions but about understanding those convictions and working together towards a way forward for the whole Church. We have thus moved away, for example, from the language of making provision for *this* or *that* viewpoint; rather we have sought to make provision for all of us together, to

provide for the Church. We have met together, eaten together, conversed together, sat together in the bar in the evening, but perhaps most importantly have prayed together.

Detaching myself slightly from the Steering Committee and looking on as it were as its chair, I have observed that people have treated each other as fellow Christians rather than as opponents. I have even observed them quite enjoying each other's company at times. I therefore want to thank the members of the Steering Committee for their graciousness, commitment to the task and sheer hard work over the past couple of months. With them, I also want to thank our three facilitators, the Dean of York, who has acted as a consultant, the Secretary General and the Legal Officers. They have worked with us all the way through and have been absolutely tireless in their efforts to support us.

As members will know from the final paragraphs of GS 1924, this package does not come to the Synod with the unanimous commendation of every member of the Steering Committee. Given where we started – something based on option one – I would have been extremely surprised if it had. However it comes with 13 members supporting and the other two abstaining, which I think that is pretty remarkable. It is worth noting that there have also been some generous – some of them cautiously generous – responses to the proposals from a wide range of people within and beyond this Synod.

That explains something of the process that the Steering Committee went through. So to the overall shape of this package of legislative and other instruments: the Committee was given a very clear steer that the legislation should be simple and that other material and processes should be in non-legislative forms. The draft Measure (GS 1925) contains four clauses and a schedule. It repeals the 1993 Measure and permits the Synod to make canonical provision for the ordination of women as bishops as well as priests. It makes a clarificatory addition to a schedule of the Equality Act.

The draft Amending Canon (GS 1926) has six paragraphs. It amends or revokes a number of other canons, removing from the canons – and we think that this is quite important – all language of gender in relation to orders. It adds a new canon (C 29) requiring the House of Bishops to put in place a procedure for the resolution of disputes – the grievance procedure requested by Synod – with any subsequent change to those arrangements requiring the consent of two-thirds of each synodical House.

Alongside those two pieces of draft legislation members have suggested texts for the regulation establishing that disputes resolution process (Annex B of GS 1924) and texts for a Declaration to be made by the House of Bishops (Annex A of GS 1924). It is important to underline the point that at this stage those two annexes are simply the Committee's suggestions to the House. The House will consider them in detail in December with the intention of bringing them back to Synod for substantive discussion and vote next February.

The documents contained in those annexes will give shape to the pastoral practice that will be adopted in relation to parochial and ministerial matters; and I suspect that it will be to those documents that members will wish to give a fair amount of space and time in the group discussions tomorrow morning in order fully to grasp and understand them and to see how they fit. They seek to give practical and pastoral effect to the five guiding principles, as we now seek to call them, which have been endorsed by the House of Bishops, and to do that within a setting of simplicity, mutuality and reciprocity – three words that have come to be quite important in the framework for all this.

As well the disputes resolution process, they address a number of matters including the provision of bishops who will and will not ordain women, the arrangements for parishes wishing to seek the priestly or episcopal ministry of men, the need for consultation between bishops and those parishes, the choice of bishops who exercise ministry in such parishes, and a number of other matters. There is also material about the bishop's role in securing and protecting the rights of parish representatives in relation to parochial appointments and some clarificatory paragraphs about the Oath of Canonical Obedience. Members may wish to give some attention to those and other matters in the groups tomorrow.

As with the draft Regulations for dispute resolution, it is suggested by the Steering Committee that the House bind itself to requiring a two-thirds majority in each synodical House for any subsequent amendments to the Declaration, so that the Declaration and the Regulations for dispute resolution procedure are as it were on the same basis.

Though at the moment these additional documents are suggested texts that the House has yet to discuss, and to which Synod will return, we have felt it very important to include them now both in the interests of transparency of process and because we think it is important that at each stage the Synod sees as much as possible of what the entire package may look like.

The Steering Committee knows that its work is not perfect. We know for example that the wording of paragraph 9 of the draft Declaration of the House of Bishops can be made clearer, and we will pay attention to that – or someone will! We also know that we need to put in place a process for the transition from the current to the new arrangements, and that will include the rescinding of the present Act of Synod.

No doubt other helpful changes and clarifications will come to light as this process hopefully moves forward. However, without wishing to appear too controlling, the Steering Committee is very clear in its advice to the Synod and the House of Bishops that this package of legislative and other instruments has to be seen as a whole, and that substantive change to any one of the elements, unless agreed across the spectrum of views, risks upsetting the careful balance that we believe we have achieved. Put slightly more bluntly, if such a substantive change were to be made, the extent of agreement reached across the Committee could well begin to fall away.

There is a careful balance here, which is dependent on all the elements before the Synod; and, to be absolutely honest, certainly the Steering Committee does not have a plan B. I am conscious that that may sound as though we are presenting Synod with a kind of *fait accompli*. It is not quite like that, because we are sure that certain aspects can by agreement be improved in terms of their wording and filling out some of the detail, but as matters stand we do not readily see a different sort of package that has the potential to achieve the same wide-ranging degree of acceptance that we believe this might.

Most of us who served on the Steering Committee believe that we have here a set of proposals that might just enable us not only to move forward in unity but even to celebrate that unity. At various points all members of the Steering Committee had to give; everyone will have paragraphs or clauses that are more or less difficult for them, but we dare to think that these proposals may lead not only to individuals or congregations flourishing but also to the flourishing of the whole Church in our shared mission for and to our nation and society.

We therefore ask members tomorrow to engage with this material, to question it, seek to understand it, see something of how it has come into being and how it hangs together and, in the light of the individual group discussion, on Wednesday express their minds through the motions that will be placed before them.

I hope that that sets the scene for tomorrow's discussions and for what will follow on Wednesday.

All I want to do now – and I am conscious that we are still slightly ahead of time – is encourage members to remain here for evening worship in order to hold these and other matters in our prayers as we seek to go forward with God's grace and blessing.

The Chair: That concludes Item 7.

After the closing act of worship, the Session was adjourned at 7 p.m.

FORTY-EIGHTH REPORT OF THE STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE (GS 1923)

Under Standing Order 39(c) the proposed amendments to the Standing Orders contained in items 15 to 17 of the First Notice Paper were deemed to have been approved by the General Synod without amendment with effect from 21 November 2013, no member having given notice of a wish to have the amendments debated.

Second Day

Tuesday 19 November 2013

THE CHAIR *The Bishop of Willesden (Rt Revd Pete Broadbent)* took the Chair at 11.45 a.m.

Legislative Business

Draft Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction (Amendment) Measure (GS 1919)

Draft Measure for First Consideration

The Chair: For this item members will also need the Explanatory Memorandum GS 1919X. I am also asked draw attention to the financial comment contained in the fifth notice paper.

The Dean of the Arches and Auditor (Rt Worshipful Charles George, ex officio): I beg to move:

‘That the Measure entitled “Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction (Amendment) Measure” be considered for revision in committee.’

Delivery of the proposals of the Faculty Simplification Group, which were endorsed by the Archbishops’ Council last December, requires not merely the adoption of better practice by all concerned but also three legislative steps. Step one was the new Faculty Jurisdiction Rules, which will come into force on 1 January 2014; step two is the enactment of the principal items in the draft Measure now before Synod; and step three will be modifications to the new Rules, probably in 2015, in the light of the new Measure.

The basic principle behind the simplification proposals is to retain what is best in the faculty system, the benefits of which received endorsement in the widespread consultation undertaken by the simplification group, whilst speeding up matters and devolving more to parishes and archdeacons, thereby reducing the overall regulatory burden. What is proposed is very much in line with what is currently being done in the secular system for listed buildings, and I am glad to tell the Synod that what we are doing has been discussed with and welcomed by English Heritage.

The numerical order of the individual clauses in the Measure is no indication of their importance or logical sequence; it merely reflects the order of the existing provisions of the Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1991, now proposed for amendment. The key provision is clause 5, providing for the first time procedures for a comprehensive system covering all dioceses, defining matters that do not require a faculty. The intention is that those matters should include, but be more extensive than, the contents of most existing minor matters lists, which vary quite widely between dioceses.

To achieve this, and as recommended by the Simplification Group, there will be two prescribed lists – Lists A and B – the former containing works that a parish can simply do without more ado, the latter containing matters that can go ahead only with the approval in writing of the archdeacon who is likely at least initially to be required to seek the advice of

the DAC or of such of its members or officers as the archdeacon sees fit in a particular case, usually consulting them by telephone or email. This should speed up the process considerably and reduce the burden on DAC agendas and diocesan registries while still ensuring that irreparable damage is not caused to churches and churchyards.

Chancellors will not be able to curtail the contents of the proposed pan-diocese Lists A and B, but they will have power to add matters or, where special circumstances exist, remove items from the lists in the case of a particular church or churchyard. Annexed to the Explanatory Memorandum members will find an illustrative list of matters likely to be contained in Lists A and B, but today is not the occasion on which to debate precisely what should be in each of the two lists, which will be for later decision by the Rule Committee in the light of consultation over next year with interested parties, including archdeacons and DACs, and the final contents of the lists will be contained in the modified Rules that will be brought back to the Synod for final approval as soon as possible after the Royal Assent is given to this Measure. I therefore urge members to hold their fire today and if they have views to transmit them to Janet Gough, the Secretary of the Church Buildings Council, who has kindly agreed to be a post-box to the Rule Committee on the subject matter of Lists A and B.

In future archdeacons will be much involved with List B matters, but in practice they are likely to be relieved of their traditional faculty jurisdiction under section 14 of the Care of Churches Measure, although they will retain the power to grant licences for temporary minor re-ordering of churches. I am pleased to be able to tell the Synod that there has been archidiaconal involvement on both the Simplification Group and the Rule Committee in drawing up draft Lists A and B. Furthermore, I personally am in close liaison with the chair of the Archdeacons Forum to ensure that appropriate training is provided to archdeacons in relation to their new functions.

Clause 1 simply substitutes pan-diocese guidance on tree issues for the existing, also non-binding, guidance which at present each chancellor has to issue.

Clause 3 enables the Rule Committee to widen the existing very restricted circumstances in which a chancellor can make a final determination on a faculty without seeking the DAC's advice.

Clause 6, arising from a proposal by the Simplification Group, gives the Dean of the Arches and Auditor power to give binding directions for the further conduct of proceedings in consistory courts where there has been inordinate delay or it is otherwise in the interests of justice.

This draft Measure also provided an opportunity to iron out various other problems that have arisen in relation to the faculty system.

Clause 8 prevents the need for the full appellate courts to be convened to make interlocutory orders.

Clause 7 extends the power of diocesan bishops to retain the services of chancellors beyond the current cut-off age of 71 in appropriate cases.

Clause 4 deals with the separate problem of disused burial grounds where the current restriction on building, except for the purpose of enlarging a place of worship, has proved troublesome for longer than I can recall, preventing for example the erection of free-standing church halls or buildings to house equipment used for the maintenance of disused burial grounds.

The General Synod is invited to trust in the good sense of planning authorities and chancellors to protect disused churchyards from unsuitable development subject to the conditions in clause 4(2), which mirror restrictions applying to non-conformist burial grounds under the Disused Burial Grounds (Amendment) Act 1981.

I ask for Synod's support for the progress of this draft Measure to Revision Committee.

The Chair: I remind members of the rubric that applies in relation to first consideration debates. Under SO 51(b) speeches must be directed to the general purport of the Measure rather than to points of detail. I intend to be fairly liberal in my interpretation of that, because this is such an interestingly detailed draft Measure that members might want to refer to the specifics of the various clauses, and I shall be generous about that. If I find that members deviate into minor points relating to what should be on the *de minimis* list I may stop them, but otherwise the item is now open for debate.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of five minutes.

Canon Tim Allen (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich): Clause 5 is a useful simplification of the too onerous faculty system. Simplification is much needed as the Archbishops' Council, the CBC and the Rule Committee have wisely recognized, in order to lighten the back-breaking, bureaucratic burden on the clergy and laypeople who look after our church buildings and to release energy for mission. I hope that further reform will soon follow.

Some may ask, 'Will clause 5 work in practice?' I am pretty confident that it will. I say that because for some time in St Edmundsbury and Ipswich we have successfully operated a very similar system with the approval and assistance of our excellent chancellor, registrar and archdeacons. The idea of what I call our Suffolk simplification came as a brainwave to me and James Halsall, a prince among DAC secretaries, as we wondered how to help parishes cope with the faculty burden. Having tried it out in Suffolk, James passed the idea on to the Faculty Simplification Group, of which, happily, he was a member; and so clause 5 was born. Like Adnams' beer, Benjamin Britten's music and so many other good things, it comes from Suffolk.

However I want to draw Synod's attention to one further matter in the context of this draft (Amendment) Measure, namely the pressing need, which could be answered by an additional clause, to simplify, clarify and tighten up Church of England law governing the sale by parishes of art treasures owned by their churches. Until recently permission was rarely given for the sale of major treasures, but there is now disturbing evidence that some chancellors are taking a more relaxed approach towards it.

The most disturbing case is the decision by the chancellor of the diocese of London to allow the PCC of St Stephen Walbrook to sell to an American buyer, it is said for \$2.85 million, the magnificent painting 'Devout Men Taking Away the Body of St Stephen', which was painted by Benjamin West in 1776 and hung specifically in that fine Wren church next to the

Mansion House. As the case is being appealed I shall say no more, save to explain that the chancellor's judgement provides that the proceeds of the sale should be shared between the parish and the diocese.

Since the matter is *sub judice* I do not expect the Dean of the Arches to respond, but I would like members of Synod to reflect on the danger that if the St Stephen Walbrook sale to the USA is permitted on appeal there may follow a rush of sales of major church treasures. If the St Stephen Walbrook precedent is allowed to stand, new legislation will be needed quickly since otherwise parishes, aided and abetted by their dioceses, which will share the loot, will see the sale of their church treasures as an easy way out of financial difficulties.

Members who have a leaking church roof might ask, 'Why bother with tiresome jumble sales or laborious applications to grant-giving charities when instead we can ask those nice young art dealers in Mayfair to sell the altarpiece instead?' They might add that if the Church of England is a church to serve the poor, surely selling off its treasures to America is perhaps the right and moral thing to do, but that, I submit, would not be right or moral, for these church treasures are held by the parishes in trust for the nation. To sell them would be as wrong it would be to sell the paintings of the National Gallery in order to finance the Government's welfare spending.

In some cases the appropriate course may well be to lend a treasure to a museum or gallery in England so that it may be protected and visible to the public. In other cases unimportant and unwanted objects with no lengthy connection to the church in question may reasonably be sold, but significant treasures should not be sold, especially not abroad. Those treasures are the nation's public heritage and should not be privatized. If necessary to prevent this, the law should be tightened perhaps by way of an additional clause in this draft Measure.

The Chair: Canon Allen, thank you for your self-censorship, for which I nearly had to call you to order! Thank you for the way in which you phrased that.

The Archdeacon of Hackney (Ven. Rachel Treweek) (London): In yesterday's debate on the Business Committee's report it was good to hear a few members refer to the issue of joining up the dots regarding our Agenda. I am a strong advocate of joining the dots, and in fact intentional evangelism and the draft Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure are related. All this stuff that we are now discussing is about enabling parishes to better live out their mission and ministry in sharing the good news of Christ, and that is why I welcome what is before us. We need good legal processes to ensure that we are good stewards of the resources that we have, including our land and buildings. Equally however some of our current processes can be life-sapping and time-hungry. Christ's disciples were simply trying to respond to a mission imperative.

I am now about to confirm what many people already think about me, which is that I need to get out more. My reason for saying that is that I was almost ecstatic to read clause 4 of this draft Measure relating to the Disused Burial Grounds Act 1884! It was not in my vocabulary before I became an archdeacon but, you never know, it might come up in a pub quiz! I suspect that I am not the only archdeacon who has lost sleep over someone playing the trump card of the 1884 Disused Burial Grounds Act. It can be used to prevent something good being built on burial ground that has not been used for many years, and on more than one occasion I have experienced the use of that trump card by those who simply do not like what is being proposed to block something good being built. What is proposed is eminently sensible. It

allows the faculty and planning process to be the vehicle for people's concerns and will prevent someone victoriously playing that trump card when every other avenue has been exhausted.

I am therefore delighted to note the attention that has been given in the paper before us to this matter and other issues, because it is about mission.

Revd Simon Cawdell (Hereford): In the octave of C.S. Lewis, it seems to me appropriate to reference the great vision of heaven that he brings before us at the end of his book *The Last Battle*. 'Onward and upward!' reads the text, as each new vista opens up, but just inside the gate there is a table set with food and squabbling dwarves who are inside the kingdom but blind to its benefits and the possibilities open to them.

In the concerns that I am about to express I hope I am not among those with their eyes closed to the full benefits of this draft Measure and I hope that they will be opened in due course as I seek to promote intentional evangelism in the midst of maintaining my nine listed buildings. This year I am on my fourth application, and in this package there is the possibility that a number of issues might need to be teased out. I am ready to give it three cheers but at the moment it is sort of one cheer and a squawk.

First, the issue of double jeopardy arises in a number of places. I am pleased to see that the duty to advise on trees is now to be devolved to DACs and I presume that this is a precursor to it becoming a matter that will now be resolved without faculty subject to an archdeacon's letter; the supervision of the local authority tree preservation officers is quite onerous enough without the additional burden of a faculty.

Second, although there is helpful provision for chancellors locally to designate matters that do not require a faculty, I am less happy about the provision in the draft Measure for chancellors to remove a particular church from the provisions for archdeacons' letters on the basis of particular merit. As drafted, this is an unfettered power. In my view it would be much better to delete it, but if it must be in I believe that it should be as a result only of advice from the DAC, which of course includes representation by heritage bodies.

Third, I am concerned to hear from the Dean of the Arches that the provision for archdeacons' faculties may be curtailed. Rather I would like to see a provision in the draft Measure that matters which do not alter the character of a church where a faculty is required would be subject to an archdeacon's rather than a chancellor's faculty, which would represent a significant saving in fees. At present, in each diocese this is a decision for chancellors, which places them in a position of conflict of interest where they are involved in the volume of fees that they receive.

Fourth, there is again an issue of double jeopardy where the amendment to the Disused Burial Grounds Act is welcome but emphasizes the fact that all buildings not connected to the church in fact require full planning permission without ecclesiastical exemption. Therefore, the need for two separate planning processes is an onerous burden to place on parishes, and I would like to see such developments again subject to an archdeacon's letter on receipt of planning permission, reserving of course the sensitive matter of graves.

Fifth, I hope that within the scope of the new Rules provision will be made to allow parishes or incumbents to include legal agreements, for example for grazing rights – I serve in a rural

diocese – again requiring only the consent of an archdeacon. To give an example from my diocese, a parish that wished to assign grazing rights to the churchyard, which is an excellent method of churchyard management in the countryside – I can give members very good pastoral advice on what to do when the sheep get under the electric fence and munch the floral tributes! – was informed not only of the need for a grazing licence but also that it needed a faculty to do so, all for an income of £60 *per annum* over three years.

Sixth, I hope that in the overall package something will be done to deal with the nonsense of the new Rule 14.3 on interim faculties. I have had experience of an emergency order following the theft of lead. It was indeed efficiently given, but then there followed the complete nonsense of a confirmatory faculty. Is this faculty really going to be refused? Is the chancellor going to inform us that our new roof for which he has given us an interim order now has to be taken off because he does not like its colour? I think the Rules can do a little better, or perhaps the Measure can deal with it.

I welcome the provisions of this draft Measure in general but look and hope for some clarification and improvement.

The Dean of Portsmouth (Very Revd David Brindley): – and a serving chair of a DAC. Church buildings are symbols of the Church's presence in communities and the more they can be open, usable, cared for, the more they become mission opportunities for us to use in our service of the community. I love being the chair of a DAC – like the Archdeacon of Hackney, maybe I need to get out more – because much of the work of the DAC is about making the buildings more accessible and a lot less about conservation than people imagine. Conservation is important but that is not the controlling factor. In our experience the number of times we are asked about ways of re-ordering our buildings for the 21st century in order to make them open and accessible for mission opportunities is increasing quite rapidly.

I therefore welcome the lighter touch that this draft Measure promises. It is to be commended and welcomed. Of course, once it comes into operation it will need proper monitoring and evaluation. It is also good to see that costs for the training of archdeacons are included in the accompanying budget paper.

But why are we doing it? We are doing it not just for conservation and building enthusiasts; we are doing it because we want to see an increase in the number of ways our buildings are used. In many dioceses church buildings already house post offices and are used for lunch clubs, places of prayer and refreshment. Recently I was approached by an incumbent who wanted to open a branch of Wonga in her local church. I advised her that it might affect her chances of episcopal preferment! I hope that was the right thing to say, Your Grace.

Churches have enormous potential and part of this draft Measures hopes to make that potential easier to use. Yes we need to look at the details and all the *de minimis* regulations and try to open up what parishes can do more easily and quickly, and this is a really important step towards that. I therefore urge Synod to support and vote for it enthusiastically as it goes to revision.

Revd Tony Redman (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich): Canon Allen has stolen much of my thunder in relation to my first point, which was to be about commending the draft Measure and this process to Synod particularly in the light of our experience in St Edmundsbury and Ipswich.

My second concern relates to clause 7 and chancellors. As an SSM I am subject, as are all ministers and priests, to regular review. I have to sit in front of someone and explain to them what I am doing, why I am doing it and how I could do it better, and then report that to my diocesan. I have to do the same in my other professional career as an accredited chartered building surveyor. I have to tell people what I am doing, why I am doing it, and make sure that I am doing it according to my professional standards. However when it comes to the Church, archdeacons – and I presume bishops and even archbishops – have in the same way to refer to other people to assess what they are doing in their professional lives, and in the previous Synod we did the same thing for registrars, but chancellors do not seem to come under the same sort of system.

I am privileged to work in a number of different dioceses and have been privileged to be involved in a number of consistory courts – thankfully in most of them as a witness rather than being up in front of the chancellor – and have met a good number of chancellors, who are a very diverse breed of people: the young, sparky ones; the middle-aged ones who are very determined to do the right thing for the parishes; and occasionally the old ones who are really quite eccentric. I remember one, not more than 10 years ago, who encouraged us on two occasions to have a snuff break in a consistory court – and none of us knew what snuff was, apart from the chancellor!

I wish that what we are considering now might have given bishops not only the opportunity to extend the time that chancellors can work within the diocese but also actually to bring in some sort of better review to establish whether what they are doing is consistent with the life of the Church.

Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn): I want to draw attention to clause 2 and the powers of archdeacons. In clause 2 there is a power to make rules in effect possibly to delegate the entire jurisdiction of the chancellor to an archdeacon. This may be necessary. Why is it necessary? I would expect to know why, yet in paragraph 4 of the Explanatory Memorandum there are no proposals to make such rules, so I wonder why this power is necessary. I am uneasy about granting a wide power until I am sure why we want it. What is wrong with the present system of the chancellor delegating to archdeacons in each case?

If archdeacons are to have greater powers in faculty matters, we need to be careful that when we appoint archdeacons we realize that we are appointing judicial officers. Sometimes the job descriptions for archdeacons contain all sorts of wonderful points about mission and so on, and then there is an add-on at the foot: ‘and the statutory duties’. If this clause is passed, we will be extending the statutory duties very widely for archdeacons. We need to be clear what we are doing and why we are doing it. I am not yet quite clear and I therefore have some reservations about clause 2.

Mr Paul Hancock (Liverpool): I am totally in favour this draft Measure. However, unlike two of the previous speakers, I am a member of a DAC and I enjoy it because I do get out. I end up climbing church towers, trudging round muddy churchyards and sometimes going into very nice churches, which in my opinion is quite a good thing.

I am in favour of archdeacons having greater powers. That could seem almost contradictory as recently when my own church applied for a faculty the only member of the DAC who

voted against it was the archdeacon, but I think that archdeacons should have greater powers in this respect.

I also think that we need to ensure that archdeacons have the time to exercise those powers. In the diocese of Liverpool we are very fortunate in that both of our archdeacons no longer have parish responsibilities and therefore have time for DAC visits, to see things, as well as having lots of time for all their other work; but I want to make sure that when we give archdeacons these additional powers, which I believe they should have, they have time to exercise them. I am totally in favour of this draft Measure, but we need to look a little further ahead. At this time probably all our clergy are under a great deal of stress, which will only increase. We need to be aware of not overloading any of our clergy, and particularly under this draft Measure our archdeacons.

The Dean of the Arches and Auditor, in reply: I thank members of Synod for a good debate. A number of interesting points have been raised.

To Tim Allen, I am very grateful for the experience that he brings to these matters and for his welcome of the simplification. As he recognized, I simply cannot comment on the matter of art treasures. Last week I gave leave to appeal in two cases concerning treasures, which will come before the Court of Arches, and it would be wholly wrong for me to say any more on that matter at present. I simply say that I think it would be quite difficult to deal with that matter by way of a provision in this particular draft Measure.

I am glad that the Archdeacon of Hackney accepts the need for good legal processes. She is quite right that there have been major problems in respect of disused churchyards. This matter came to the attention of a particular consistory court very recently, when the proposal in this draft Measure was welcomed, so I hope that we will make progress on that matter quite soon.

I am sorry that at present Simon Cawdell can give the draft Measure only one cheer and a squawk. I think that is a little hard, but we will see what proposals come forward at revision stage. It is not right that the duty to advise on trees is to pass to DACs; it is simply that greater powers will be given to archdeacons to approve works for trees in consultation with DACs.

So far as his other points are concerned, we will go away and give some consideration to them.

However I do not believe that any chancellors welcome petitions because they increase their fees; I am afraid that that is a slur on chancellors. They are paid retainers, and that includes however many faculties come up in the course of a particular year. Nor do I think it would be feasible to have a system whereby, merely because planning permission has been granted, the archdeacon can nod through the matter without reference to the chancellor. Those will be matters of major significance and if, as is usually the case, they involve a listed building, the whole of the principle of the ecclesiastical exemption means that the detail has to be looked at before the faculty is issued. It is the equivalent of a listed building consent, and that would not be an appropriate matter for archdeacons to deal with.

I am very sympathetic to the idea of grazing churchyards. The first edition of Garth Moore's book used to have an entry in the index: 'Giraffes in churchyard grazing'! I look out from my

house on to church grazing, a churchyard, but there are legal problems in settling licences, and that surely is precisely the sort of matter that should be dealt with by someone legally qualified, not by an archdeacon.

It simply cannot be right that wherever an interim faculty has been granted there will be no need for the further faculty. We have introduced provision for an interim faculty, but at that stage the DAC has not been consulted, the full implications have not been considered, and necessarily, as with any interim order of the court, the matter has to come back for a final order.

I am grateful to the Dean of Portsmouth for his comments on the matter. I am not so sure about Wonga in particular, but the question of varied uses for churches is particularly dear to my own heart and I think that we are beginning to make some progress in that direction.

I do not believe that Revd Redman's suggestion about chancellors and reviews is remotely possible at present; and I think the days of snuff breaks are really 20 years or so in the past! It is for others to consider whether there is a need for reviews. At present there are provisions whereby a chancellor can be dismissed but it requires a resolution of the Upper House of Convocation, and the principle of the independence of the judiciary is important.

I am grateful for Fr Benfield's observations. The entirety of what archdeacons at present do under section 14 will now fall into List B. That is why in reality probably no further matters will be dealt with under the old, traditional jurisdiction of archdeacons, but we are deliberately retaining the power so that if additional matters arise, section 14 (as amended by clause 2) can be used. The intention is that in future more matters are to be dealt with by archdeacons to speed up the process and reduce overall costs.

I appreciate all that Paul Hancock said about the demands on archdeacons' time. That is why I had discussions with various archdeacons about this matter. I have kept on saying to them, 'Are we likely to overburden you?' and I am glad to be able to tell Synod that I have received the very positive response, 'No, we can cope, and we welcome these proposals.'

I ask Synod to support the motion.

The motion was put and carried.

The Chair: The draft Measure is now automatically committed to a Revision Committee. As stated on page 10 of the Agenda, any member wishing to submit proposals for its amendment should send them in writing to the Clerk to the Synod, to reach her not later than 5.30 p.m. on Monday 23 December 2013 – and a Happy Christmas!

Diocesan Synod Motion

Bradford Diocesan Synod Motion: Names of Dioceses (GS 1927A and GS 1927B)

THE CHAIR *The Bishop of Willesden* took the Chair at 12.25 p.m.

Mr Ian Fletcher (Bradford): I beg to move:

‘That this Synod call on the Archbishops’ Council to introduce legislation to enable dioceses of the Church of England to be named by reference either to a city or substantial town or to a geographical area.’

This is a diocesan motion put forward some time ago by Bradford Diocesan Synod. A motion in similar terms was also put forward by Ripon and Leeds Diocesan Synod. The motion was parked by the Business Committee pending the approval of the new diocese. It is now un-parked and obviously in the fast lane, either of Silverstone or of some motorway in your vicinity. I am recovering from the shock of being called to speak on it at this particular moment!

The naming of any entity is important to its success and its local relevance. The Dioceses Commission acknowledge this in their paper regarding the reorganization in West Yorkshire and the Dales, but it was advised that any change in the law would have delayed the setting up of the new West Yorkshire diocese and so the Commission – quite rightly, in my opinion – felt that such a delay was not justified. We are now released from that constraint, hence the motion before Synod today.

I must confess to all the Church historians among the members of Synod that, when I put this motion forward to my diocesan synod, I did not realize that I would need to swat up on the happenings of the Council of Sardica in or about AD 343. However, I found it quite reassuring to discover that the early Church had to grapple with matters of governance that we are also facing some 1,670 years later. In a way, it is a reminder that 2,000 years ago Jesus faced the same issues of humanity as we face in his name today. I am not sure when General Synod last needed to review issues of governance rooted at such an early date. In my last sermon as a Reader, or my most recent – I am happy it was not my last – I referred to a church meeting as reported in the Church press, and an occasional member of our congregation put her hand in the air and told us all that she had been at that meeting. I feel confident that nobody here today was at that meeting in Sardica back in AD 343.

Some will want to know that Sardica is now known as Sophia, the capital of Bulgaria. In or about AD 343 that council was held there, apparently in a church building located where the current 6th-century church of St Sophia was later built. Sardica was of moderate size but magnificent as an urban concept of planning and architecture, with abundant amusements and an active social life. One of the problems which concerned the people at that Synod was the problem of bishops. There is nothing new at Synod, is there? Here we are talking about bishops again today. At that time there were concerns that every place large enough to have a priest also wanted its own bishop. I am not sure what our current members of the House of Clergy would make of having their own bishop on site. It was decided that there needed to be a limit on the appointment of bishops, so it was resolved to do exactly that, and villages and petty towns – whatever they are – were banned from appointing bishops. The synod resolved that bishops could only be appointed in cities in which there had been bishops previously and in cities with a large enough population as to be worthy of one.

This made perfect sense in the context of the time, when the local city was the sole focal point of the area. We are now looking at a situation where areas include more than one city. In England we have responded to this in the past by using multiple names for dioceses, for instance Ripon and Leeds. In other places, the Anglican Church has referred to areas, for example Southwestern Virginia. The diocese of Northern Ontario was created this year. From Easter 2014 there will be a new diocese bringing together the existing dioceses of Bradford,

Ripon and Leeds and Wakefield. This diocese is currently referred to in our official documents as the diocese of Leeds, also known as West Yorkshire and the Dales. Locally it is known as West Yorkshire and the Dales.

The media have picked up on the name West Yorkshire and the Dales. For us, it is the preferred option, not least because there is already a Roman Catholic diocese of Leeds. It appears to us locally that there is a great deal of sense to naming the diocese by reference to the area that it covers rather than by reference to one part of the diocese, which part is not the main focal point to many of us who live or worship within the borders of the new diocese.

The motion before Synod today is permissive. It is not calling for particular names but for the possibility of a diocese to be named by reference to either a city or a substantial town or to a geographical area. It is not seeking to change existing names but it does seek to enable the use of names that are recognizable to the area to which the diocese relates. The motion calls on the Archbishops' Council to bring forward legislation to enable the naming of a diocese to be by reference to a geographical area. I would urge the Synod to support this motion.

The Chair: The item is now open for debate.

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds (Rt Revd John Packer): I want to support this motion very strongly. The synod of Ripon and Leeds passed an identical motion to that of Bradford. In our discussions within our synod we pointed very strongly to the need to find a name to accurately describe the diocese we were in the process of creating. There was a collection of suggestions for names for the diocese. At one stage it could have been called the diocese of Wakefield. At another – which is what we have ended up with in our legal documents – it was described as the diocese of Leeds. There was very little enthusiasm indeed in the synod for the name ‘diocese of Leeds’. For a start, we felt that it did not accurately describe our own diocese and it certainly would not describe accurately the diocese that was being created. West Yorkshire and the Dales describes it well, though I am aware of those who believe that it should really be called Barnsley, West Yorkshire and the Dales. (*Laughter*)

I find the arguments of Colin Podmore in GS 1927B quite difficult. When I was appointed, I had to describe myself as ‘chosen Bishop of the Church and See of Ripon and Leeds’. Colin makes the point that the diocesan bishop is associated with a particular church which is his or her *cathedra*, but ‘Church of Ripon and Leeds’ makes no more sense than ‘Church and See of West Yorkshire and the Dales’. There is no Church of Ripon and Leeds. The new diocese is normally referred to as West Yorkshire and the Dales and we seek to do that on every possible occasion. Under the rules we have at the moment, the new bishop will have to describe himself as ‘chosen Bishop of the Church and See of Leeds’ – Leeds which does not have an Anglican cathedral or pro-cathedral. The Bishop will have three cathedrals but none of them will be in Leeds. This makes no sense whatever.

Our five areas do have city or town names and the bishops are rightly associated with those cities or those towns, but the present situation simply does not make sense. Let us change this provision so that we can make sensible decisions about diocesan names in the future.

Revd Paul Cartwright (Wakefield): – soon to be from the diocese of Barnsley, West Yorkshire and the Dales. I question whether this is really needed. Throughout our Synod our new diocese has been spoken about and referred to as the diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales, even though, as the bishop rightly points out, I am from Barnsley and we do not

feature in the title at all. We are happy with that. That is okay. I do see a problem with taking a regional name. I think about East Riding and Humberside – of course, Humberside being a new development historically.

The village I am from changed its name a few years ago. It was called Hamelsworde, which is from the Saxon, and it is now called Hemsworth. It has taken many years for it to change. I think there is more of a chance to change administrative titles such as West Yorkshire – as was the West Riding – compared to areas, and so I will resist this. I do not have a problem with Leeds. It is a sub-text that is used locally and I do not see a problem with that either. I urge the Synod to do the same.

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): My comment is rather on the hoof and slightly wanting to bring a southern perspective.

I serve in the diocese of Southwark and every morning I get up, open my curtain windows and look at the diocese of London. The diocese of London is named after a city but it represents only a part of that city – a geographical region, one might wish to argue. The bishops of Chelmsford and Southwark also have parts of London in their dioceses. When I was a curate in London I never found myself going to ‘London Cathedral’; I found myself going to St Paul’s Cathedral. I do not imagine that there are many people in the diocese of London who talk about going to ‘London Cathedral’.

My point is simply this: usage changes. There are episcopal sees that are now geographical areas. I think the simplification or the option to change may give us something to work on in London. I look forward to looking over the diocese of North and West London in the future. *(Laughter)*

The Chair: That sounds like a piece of ecclesiastical imperialism!

Mr Christopher Pye (Liverpool): I rise wholeheartedly to support this motion. To me, Leeds is a small part of Yorkshire and the title ‘diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales’ describes the area covered very well. It gives a different identity, and it is important to people if they lose their identity.

I hope that this motion is carried, not grudgingly but with acclamation because sooner or later it may well affect the rest of us. We will, I hope, reorganize our dioceses in a different way. If nothing else, numbers and finance will ensure that. This area, although it is the wrong side of the Pennines from me, is one which I know well, and I cannot understand the obsession that people have with a city that is not relevant to other parts of that diocese. It is a long journey from parts of the Dales to Leeds, and not everything is just off the M62. We need to be able to have things that are recognizable, and also, as I said before, to ensure that people do not lose their identity.

Bishop John has explained far better the different places where cathedrals are and the lack of a cathedral in Leeds; the enthusiasm for one name and a lack of it for another. Surely, for once, we should listen to what the natives are saying? Yes, we all have our tribalism. I do not like being referred to as coming from Merseyside. I am from Lancashire and that is important to me. For the people of the Dales and West Yorkshire it sounds as though a diocesan title is very important to them. If it is important to them, then it will have my support.

The Archdeacon of Nottingham (Ven. Peter Hill): I am Vice-Chair of the Dioceses Commission. The Dioceses Commission was surprised and disappointed by the legal restriction over the naming of a see after a town or a city and entirely empathetic to the title ‘diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales’. Having that title as the headline rather than as the subheading would, we believe, be much more helpful to mission and context. Anyway, as we have heard, that title is likely to predominate in the way people talk about the new diocese.

I believe that I speak for the Dioceses Commission in supporting the Bradford motion. However, we on the Commission are concerned that, if this is passed, there may subsequently be a queue of diocesan bishops and others wanting to change the name of their diocese. I am grateful that the motion before us adds geographical areas. Otherwise, the next Bishop of Southwell and Nottingham could be thinking of changing it to the diocese of Robin Hood (*laughter*) – or, even better, Maid Marian! I think that the words ‘geographical area’ in the motion are important.

Synod members and those who are thinking of a name change also need to be aware that, should this go through, under section 11 of the Dioceses, Pastoral and Mission Measure, I understand they have to come to the Dioceses Commission for the matter to change.

The Bishop of Chelmsford (Rt Revd Stephen Cottrell): I think I am in favour of this, but we need to be aware of the reasons behind the note that Colin Podmore gave us, which are serious ecclesiological and theological reasons about the nature of the Church and the way we organize ourselves. He was not Jesus of the Palestinian area; he was Jesus of Nazareth. There is a pattern in the Christian faith about the particularity of people and place, which I am slightly anxious about losing.

As somebody who worked in the Wakefield diocese for nine happy and stimulating years, I entirely support what is happening in West Yorkshire and the Dales but I am worried that there is no clear see, a place where the bishop has their seat. That seems to me to be a real weakness in the plan. I am the Bishop of Chelmsford and serve, as has already been noted, a vast and astonishingly diverse region. We always refer to ourselves as the Church of England in East London and Essex. The Barking episcopal area, were it to be a diocese in its own right, would be the eleventh largest in the Church of England. We serve a vast area, yet we are the diocese of Chelmsford with a particularity and a place. That creates tensions and I fear that, if we go down this road, there may well be a law of unintended consequences and we would regionalize the Church in a way that loses that awkward, uncomfortable particularity about a place.

I am thinking out loud and sharing my misgivings. I see why we are doing this. I see that it makes common sense on the ground, but I have to confess that I am worried about losing something about the way we have always organized ourselves. Right now, I am still not sure how I will vote. I felt that somebody needed to speak up for a very long-standing tradition about that particularity of place associated with the seat of the bishop and the ministry which flows from that. I certainly feel as if I need to pause before knowing whether this is a good idea or not. Whatever we do, just as we call our area East London and Essex, this region will be called West Yorkshire and the Dales. Is this really something that we need to vote on?

The Chair: After the next speaker I will be looking for a motion for closure. I was hoping that the Bishop of Sodor and Man might contribute, but he is not here.

Revd Canon Celia Thomson (Gloucester): I would urge us to support this motion. My credentials, though I serve in the diocese of Gloucester now, are that I grew up in Ripon. My mother lived for 14 years in a tiny hamlet, Newbiggin-in-Bishopdale. For those 14 years she was organist of Wensley church – it was probably the first and only time in her life she had been called an ‘answer to prayer’!

I am very familiar with that part of the world, and those rural communities in the Dales are a very long way from Leeds in all sorts of respects. Leeds is a wonderful, vibrant city with great things going for it. In the end, it is probably a good thing that the bishop will be rooted there, but there is a Roman Catholic diocese of Leeds as well, and I do have that concern at the back of my mind.

For the dioceses in the northern parts – the Bradford diocese that goes up to Wharfedale, Upper Wharfedale and all the Wensleydale dioceses – to be given back some identity of West Yorkshire and the Dales (Ripon and Bradford were both the gateway to the Dales) and to have that rooted in the title rather than in somewhere that is so different and so apart from those small rural communities, would give the diocese locus in context. I therefore urge the Synod to support this motion.

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

‘That the question be now put.’

This motion was put and carried.

Mr Ian Fletcher, in reply: First, I would like to thank John Packer for his support. I do not know if this will be his last speech in Synod before his retirement but, if so, I wish him a happy retirement, as I am sure that the rest of the Synod does.

Paul Cartwright opposed the motion. It is good that people did oppose. We heard a range of opinions about this. What we are seeking to do is to clarify things and to move on from something that was agreed an awfully long time ago.

Simon Butler says that we already use geographic terms and refers to the diocese of Southwark in that connection. Certainly we have moved from what was agreed back in 343! In England we have this combination of names that does rather say, ‘We are not where we were.’ It is quite right that that is the case.

Identity is important. Chris Pye made that point. We do need to understand identity and we do need titles that are recognizable to the people to whom they apply.

Peter Hill referred to the possibility of naming a diocese Robin Hood or Maid Marian. I am not sure that I would go with either of those possibilities. Certainly that is not what we are seeking with this motion. We are seeking merely to refer to place, geographically. West Yorkshire and the Dales is a geographical heading.

The Bishop of Chelmsford built on that with his reference to particularity of place. I do not think this motion takes us away from that established way of doing things; it merely broadens the choices available to us.

Celia talked about her connection with West Yorkshire and the Dales and her mother's situation. I am grateful to all those people who have supported this motion and I am glad that people have also spoken against it. I would ask that, when we come to the vote, the Synod supports what we have put forward.

The motion was put and carried.

(Adjournment)

THE CHAIR *Canon Ann Turner (Europe)* took the Chair at 2.30 p.m.

The Chair: Good afternoon, Synod. Before we move to our afternoon's agenda I have been asked by the Business Committee to inform Synod that this evening's act of worship will be approximately seven minutes. *(Laughter)*

We move now to our business for the afternoon, the Presidential Address by the Archbishop of York.

Presidential Address

The Archbishop of York (Dr John Sentamu): Do not start timing me, Chair. The comment about seven minutes reminds me of Mervyn Stockwood, who used to say, 'I don't mind high church, low church, middle church. I can't stand long church!'

Last month I visited two very different countries, to preach and teach and spend time with our Anglican brothers and sisters in the Churches. First I went to Canada, to help celebrate the 100th anniversary of the diocese of Edmonton and then to Huron University. A few days later I went to Egypt, to be part of the 75th anniversary of All Saints Cathedral in Cairo.

In Canada, the Bishop of Edmonton invited me to share Harvest Thanksgiving with her family and friends. What a celebration! Her little grand-daughter Olivia was most concerned that I was going to spend two and a half days in the Rockies. Aged three and a half, she showed a remarkable interest in currency exchange – 'His money won't work! How will he survive?' Olivia was relieved to hear that her grandparents were taking us there.

'His money won't work!' How do we help people in our communities whose money does not work; who cannot pay for the bare necessities; who have to make hard choices between heating their homes or having food on the table?

In Egypt, Bishop Mouneer shared with me some of the ways in which the diocese is serving the very poorest in their communities. One image stayed with me. It was the picture of a small child and the caption, 'My name is Today. Today I need to eat, today I need to play, today I need care, today I need love. Give me hope today for a brighter tomorrow.' These are not challenges which only those in other countries need to meet; they are crucial challenges for us all.

Something new and terrible is happening to our society. We see it all around us – poverty. More and more people are living below the breadline; some nine million people altogether. Parishes up and down the country are striving hard to tackle the consequences of poverty. It is this work that I want to discuss this afternoon. Indeed, for a parish not to be doing something about it is becoming the exception rather than the rule. Take Middlesbrough in my

diocese for instance, where Churches of all denominations are currently running 276 activities designed to help the vulnerable. It has been calculated that these Middlesbrough schemes amount to 800 hours of love in action each week.

The extraordinary feature of what I call the ‘new poverty’ is that many of the ‘new poor’ are in work. Once upon a time, you could not really be living in poverty if you had regular wages. You could find yourself on a low income, yes, but not living in poverty. That is no longer so. You can be in work and still live in poverty. Politicians often refer to hard-working families. They should speak instead of hard-pressed families.

We are an advanced economy, a first-world country, and we have been one for longer than most, but we suffer from blight: increasing poverty in a land of plenty.

The annual salaries of the chief executives of Britain’s 100 largest companies reached an average of £4.3 million last year, or 160 times average wages. Those packages have quadrupled in the past ten years, while no one else has had a proper increase at all.

Unlike the chief executives, many hard-pressed people find that they are on a ‘down escalator’. That phrase captures more than just a shortage of money; it adds a sense of descending the social scale. Formerly, each new generation enjoyed a higher standard of living than the previous one. That was the ‘progress’ that everybody was taught to expect. It was a source of hope. Now these gains are being reversed. Many people believe that their children will be worse off financially than they are. At the bottom of the escalator lies poverty.

It was shocking to read the conclusions of the recent report from the World Health Organization, which found that social inequalities are quite clearly related to health inequalities. Professor Michael Marmot, who led the review, noted in his introduction to the report that ‘social injustice is killing people on a grand scale’. Indeed, disturbingly, the report found that children are more likely to die in Britain than in any other European country. The report also goes on to state that, ‘A major problem ... is not only low income associated with unemployment, but employment that pays too little to lead a healthy life.’

For vivid evidence of what life is like for the working poor, you could do worse than go to the website of the Living Wage Commission, which I launched in July. Please note that the rate for the living wage is not an arbitrary figure but is based on a rigorous programme of research, funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, which used focus groups to determine what fellow citizens think people need.

People were asked to say what impact being paid less than the living wage had on their lives. John, for example, said that he loved his job and that he even cycled 20 miles each way to work to save £9 per day on travel. He added that he was 44 years old and that getting £7.20 per hour made things very hard. He was able just to scrape by, leaving no chance of saving for the future. He earned the same wage 13 years ago and nothing had changed other than the cost of living. One woman reported that she worked as a receptionist at a GP surgery, where her shifts were designed so that the doctors were not obliged to give her a lunch break.

For the unemployed it is harder still. Seven social housing providers, with help from the University of York, are monitoring what is happening in the North. One respondent to their study described the situation this way: ‘People I know go days without being able to eat.’

Health suffers in poverty too. One person told of making his fortnightly prescriptions last for a month, as he could not afford to get them as often as he should.

The inquiry found buffering systems, where people with differing dates for the payment of their benefits would lend to each other for a week or so at a time to make ends meet. Many households are in debt. One parent said, ‘I have to pay the loan shark each week because I use him to survive.’

Let me give two examples, one from Leeds and one from York, which disgrace us all and leave a dark stain on our consciences. The first is malnutrition. How can it be that in 2013, in the 21st century, the *Yorkshire Post* can report, as it did last weekend, that there has been a trebling – a trebling – of the numbers of people being admitted to hospitals in Leeds to be treated for malnutrition? How can it be that last year more than 27,000 people were diagnosed as suffering from malnutrition in Leeds? Not Lesotho, not Liberia, not Lusaka, but Leeds. How can it be that the Director of Public Health in the city has said that the increase in hospital admissions for malnutrition – just under 100 in the past year – is ‘in line with a national trend’?

The second is food poverty. We are a developed economy, we are a first-world country, and yet, as *The Press* in York recorded this weekend, in North Yorkshire alone more than 4,000 people were recorded as living in food poverty over the past six months.

We are a developed economy, a first-world country, yet such is the seriousness of the situation that a council, North Yorkshire County Council, is now to enlarge its emergency food parcels to cover five days instead of three and to begin offering emergency utility credits to households in need.

My brothers and sisters, we are a developed economy and a first-world country, so how can it be that in this day and age we are seeing malnutrition, food poverty and energy poverty at such levels in our country?

Underlying these experiences are two hard economic facts. In the first place, changes in the nature of the world economy mean that wage rises are likely to go on lagging behind price rises. It is important to understand this. We are not confronting a cyclical situation of bust today and boom tomorrow. Both globalization, which means that the whole world is almost a single market, and the substantial labour-saving qualities of the new digital technologies will keep wages down for a long time to come. At the same time, the rising demand for raw materials by growing countries in Asia and elsewhere pushes up commodity prices.

This is the new reality. Food banks are not going to go away any time soon. Prices are rising more than three times faster than wages. This has been going on for ten years now. For people slipping into poverty, the reality is much harsher. In fact, Sir George Bain, architect of the minimum wage, said in an interview with *The Independent* in July this year that a study by the Resolution Foundation showed that the national minimum wage could be worth less in 2017 than it was in 2004. Yet the Foundation estimates that if everyone were paid the living wage the Government would save £2.2 billion a year through higher tax and insurance receipts and lower spending on tax credits and benefits.

Meanwhile the statutory minimum wage, it should be noted, was raised by just 12p an hour – I will say that again, by 12p an hour! – to £6.19 an hour on 1 October. A living wage, it is

calculated, would be £8.55 per hour in London and £7.45 per hour elsewhere. In other words, the statutory minimum wage is now only three-quarters of a living wage in London and four-fifths elsewhere.

The second hard fact is that the impact of welfare reforms is now beginning to bite, with reductions in housing benefit for so-called under-occupation of social housing, the cap on benefits for workless householders and single parents, and the gradual replacement of the Disability Living Allowance with a Personal Independence Payment.

One of the victories of the UK was that, alone among the developed countries, we had managed to break the link between poverty and poor housing. In the last few decades it has become increasingly possible to be very poor but still live in a decent home. This victory is at risk, as overcrowding, poor housing conditions and insecurity once again become associated with poverty.

It may be that governments cannot do much more than tinker with the deep-seated trends that I have described. If that is the case, the requirement for love in action by the Church becomes more urgent. The Church will and must respond positively, for relieving poverty is part of what it means, for me, to be Christian.

In the Beatitudes Jesus taught, ‘Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh. Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of Man’s sake.’

St John, in a letter to a group of churches, asked ‘...if anyone has the world’s goods and sees his brother or sister in need, yet closes his heart against them, and refuses to help, how does God’s love abide in him?’ It does not, is the short answer. We must ‘Love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action.’

Through the centuries, poverty has often risen to the top of the Christian agenda. St Francis of Assisi, perhaps the best-loved saint of all, lived poverty as well as relieved it. It was surely significant that the newly elected Pope took the name of Francis. During his inauguration he spoke of the calling of a pope to be close to ‘the poorest, the weakest, the least important, those who Matthew lists in the final judgement on love: the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick, those in prison’. In emphasizing the necessity of the centrality of Christ, Pope Francis said, ‘If we do not confess to Christ, what would we be? We would end up a compassionate NGO.’

St Francis of Assisi famously dismounted from his horse and pressed a coin into the hand of a leper and kissed him. In the same way, Pope Francis recently embraced and comforted a disfigured man suffering from a rare disease. The incident made news round the world. To take a completely different example, John Wesley and the movement he founded, Methodism, was strongly focused on helping the poor in the name of the gospel of Jesus.

Two hundred years later we saw the development of what became known as ‘liberation theology’. It began as a movement within the Catholic Church in Latin America in the 1950s and 1960s. The Peruvian priest Gustavo Gutiérrez popularized the phrase ‘preferential option for the poor’.

The Church of England, I believe, has arrived at another such moment – ‘a preferential option for the poor’. Confronting poverty is again rising to the top of the agenda. How do we do it? Last month the Church Urban Fund published an interesting paper that contrasted two methods of tackling poverty. The first is needs-based, which is essentially handing out stuff to people. The Church Urban Fund criticizes this approach as having the unfortunate side-effect of developing a client mentality in those who are being assisted. Such ‘clients’, it fears, may come to believe themselves incapable of taking charge of their own lives.

It contrasts this with what it calls an asset-based approach. This starts with local individuals and organizations uncovering and identifying the assets and capacities already present within the community. It is founded on the belief that everybody has something to give to those around them. That is what ‘asset-based’ means. This leads to a second insight: that strong, sustainable communities cannot be built from the top down or outside in, but only from the inside out. As the Church Urban Fund describes it, this approach is also relationship-driven. It is based on people talking with and listening to others.

To what extent, then, are the Middlesbrough projects I mentioned adopting an asset-based approach to their work? I would say very largely indeed, for 1,000 volunteers from the local community are involved in the work. Middlesbrough also has a food bank. Volunteers sort the food. The local community is thus involved in the entire process. It is literally by the people, for the people.

I admire the research and tireless work of the Church Urban Fund. I am a devoted supporter. However, I do not think that we need to take an either/or approach – an asset-based approach or a needs-based approach. It is both/and. Yes, the starving person must be taught how to fish so that they can feed themselves for ever and a day, but in the interim they must also be given a fish to eat. As Jim Wallis of the Sojourners has said, ‘Our task is not only to pull the drowning people out of the river; it is also to go to the top of the river and stop those who are pushing them in!’

In his social insurance paper – a term that was sadly changed through the persuasion of Archbishop William Temple to ‘the welfare state’ – Beveridge argued for something for something, not nothing for something, and for full employment in order for the social insurance to work.

As I said at the beginning, the work that I have described in my own diocese is going on throughout the Church, so it is important to understand the full dynamics of what is happening. When Church volunteers are asked why they participate in love in action, they almost invariably reply that they are motivated primarily by their faith, by the desire to reflect God’s kingdom, and to demonstrate God’s love and care for all. But, take note, not all the volunteers are Church members – nor, except rarely, are those being helped.

Another significant aspect of the work is its effect on the volunteers themselves. As one project reported, ‘Many of our volunteers find this to be a life-changing, eye-opening experience.’ Furthermore, the work is often ecumenical. It links Church of England parishes together in single projects, but it also links congregations from different Christian traditions and it is, as a matter of fact, often conducted in a business-like fashion. Amateurism is not on the menu.

One can see that this work, directed towards relieving poverty, is more profound than it first appears. A large number of people in our communities never willingly darken a church door. The only possible way to reach them is by showing them what the good news of God's kingdom revealed in Jesus Christ looks like.

There is a famous story of St Francis of Assisi. One day he said to one of his young friars, 'Let us go down to the village and preach to the people.' So they went. They stopped to talk to this man and that. They begged a crust of bread at this door and that. Francis stopped to play with the children and exchanged a greeting with passers-by. Then he turned to go home. 'But Father', said the novice, 'When do we preach?' 'Preach?' smiled Francis. 'Every step we took, every word we spoke, every action we did, has been a sermon. So we go and preach the gospel. We use words if we must.'

In this spirit, one can surely call this work evangelism – signposting, albeit not by preaching but by example. It deepens the faith of the Church volunteers and it attracts and involves non-members. When we talk about the re-evangelization of England, this may be one of the methods by which it will proceed. *Faith in the City* was a bold attempt at addressing social disintegration, economic decline and housing decay as part of proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God.

What I have been describing is the real strength of our Church: its extensive presence on the ground in areas of economic stress and strain as well as in more prosperous places. Local initiatives, when multiplied a thousandfold, become a real force for good. This work is not directed from the centre; most of it is self-generated, parish by parish.

The Church can make an impact when its members, at every level, recognize that they have a responsibility to reflect the experience, the life, the troubles, the fears and the hopes of those among whom they serve, whether it is the individual local church volunteer helping their neighbour, the parish making representations to the local council, groups of Christian businesspeople challenging company ethics, bishops speaking to civic leaders in their dioceses or the Lords Spiritual raising the debate in the House of Lords. For example, the Bishop of Truro speaking on the Government's Spending Review; the Bishop of Derby asking, by way of a written question on food banks, what incentives are provided to supermarkets to donate waste food to food banks at the end of trading.

On the bedroom tax, the Bishop of Ripon and Leeds asked whether the minister was aware of the evidence that people who are leaving accommodation to avoid the under-occupancy charge are being rehoused in private accommodation at greater cost. The analysis and research done by the University of York Centre for Housing Policy suggests that the policy will cost £160 million, because the Department for Work and Pensions has underestimated the impact of the housing benefit bill on people moving to the private rented sector. I have seen this confirmed locally. The Bishop of Hull reports that Hull City Council's figures on housing benefit for seven months of this year indicate that expenditure has risen by 0.4 per cent, even though the number of claimants has fallen by 2.77 per cent, with housing benefit paid to the private sector rising by 3.8 per cent.

When Beveridge, Archbishop William Temple and Tawney tackled the five giants of ignorance, idleness, squalor, disease and want in the 1940s, they had a clear vision as to how things could be different. In part, they were also tapping into the spirit of the immediate post-war years, in which there was a great hunger to rebuild a more equitable, more caring world.

It is that vision we need to recapture today, but moulded in a way that is realistic for the circumstances we face now.

We can do it, but we need the political will as well as ethical and religious conviction – acting justly, loving mercy and walking humbly with the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

As well as the reality of poverty and growing inequality in our country today, we also face the problem of poverty of vision. Put simply, we have lost a vision of how we might transform our society to bring about changes that we wish to see. We need to recover a prophetic imagination and Christian wisdom, and not get bogged down with what does not work. Rather, we must concentrate on what works and breathe new life into it.

Poverty is costly, wasteful and, indeed, very risky. It seems to me that we in the Church of England must make the argument that losing human potential at a time when we need all the capacity we can gather is hugely wasteful; that paying people below the level required for subsistence fractures the social contract and insurance, and that is risky.

Poverty also renders our brothers and sisters invisible and voiceless. Our role, as members of the Body of Christ, is to give both voice and care for people in need. Their money is not working. They will not survive. Today needs to eat, needs care, needs love and hope. Give them their daily bread to live for a brighter tomorrow.

Our strength as a Church lies not only in our vision but also in our presence. Our place in every community of England gives us an unparalleled opportunity to make this new vision of freedom, service and fraternity a reality, through our care for people in the parishes we serve.

We share the virtue of Christian hope, born of the incarnation, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, which goes far beyond economic recovery and reaches into the heart of every man, woman and child. Yes we lament our situation, but we do so knowing that our song will finish in hope, the hope in Christ's message to us: 'Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, and the living one. I was dead and, see, I am alive for ever and ever; and I have the keys of death and Hades. Do not be afraid.' (*Applause*)

The Chair: I am sure that members of Synod will be interested to know that the Archbishop of York's address will be available at the members' desk in the main members' room. That concludes this item of business.

THE CHAIR *Revd Canon Dr Rosemarie Mallett (Southwark)* took the Chair at 3.04 p.m.

The Church School of the Future: A Report from the Board of Education (GS 1920)

The Bishop of Oxford (Rt Revd John Pritchard): I beg to move:

‘That this Synod, affirming the crucial importance of the Church of England's engagement with schools for its contribution to the common good and to its spiritual and numerical growth:

- (a) urge dioceses, in the light of *A DBE for the Future*, to complete the self-evaluation framework within twelve months and thereby review their support for schools;
- (b) invite dioceses to draw up plans for promoting the widest possible use of the new Christianity Project materials in both church and other schools;
- (c) request the Ministry Council to consider and report to the Synod in 2014 how training for lay and ordained ministers can include more school-related experience; and
- (d) invite the Archbishops' Council to report to the Synod by February 2015 the outcome of its discussions with the National Society on the national governance proposals made by the Chadwick Report.'

I would like to introduce the Synod to Connor. Connor was having a difficult time in school a few years ago. He was in Year 9 and having a tough time with bullying at his local high school in Blackpool, which is the most deprived seaside resort in the United Kingdom – and my home town. The school made every effort to support Connor, but the bullying continued, and perhaps inevitably had an impact on his grades and so he decided to move school.

He was welcomed into St George's, which is a Church of England voluntary-aided school in Blackpool. The next three years of his life saw Connor begin to flourish. He became a high-performing student across a whole range of academic areas. He joined the Christian Union and began an acting career with a number of lead performances in school productions. Last year Connor sat his GCSEs. Not only did he make up for lost progress from Year 9 but he outperformed expectations and gained A or B grades in all his subjects. He got baptized. He is now studying for his A-levels.

For Connor, for his family, for his school, this is a story of success against the odds. That success depended on the education that St George's could offer Connor being three things: effective, distinctive and inclusive. Connor relied on the excellent teaching available at St George's not only to bring him back up to normal levels of progress but to exceed expectations. That is why it is important that we focus on the effectiveness of our schools.

Eighty-one per cent of Church of England primary schools and 76 per cent of our secondary schools are rated 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted. That is above the average for non-Church of England schools by 3 per cent and 4 per cent respectively. In the new policy landscape of education, and with the reduced role for local authorities, the responsibility for school effectiveness is shifting to those who provide schools – and that is us. That is why our report *A Diocesan Board of Education for the Future* is here and is proving so useful. It is what it is all about. It was launched at a conference hosted by the Archbishop of Canterbury at Lambeth in July this year. It sets out the challenge and calls dioceses to respond proactively because, in the light of the changing educational environment, diocesan education teams will need to see rigorous school improvement and effectiveness as part of our Christian responsibility for all our children.

Synod members could doubtless relate different experiences about how the cuts in local authority funding are impacting on the schools in our dioceses. We are not seeking to replicate the role of local authorities but, in order to ensure the quality of provision in our family of schools, diocesan teams need to be equipped to analyse and assess performance,

and broker appropriate support where it is needed. It means that we have to ensure that our diocesan education teams have the right resources and staff to be able to fulfil this role. It is about building capacity, which is tough in financially constrained times and it does need imagination and courage. Remember, this is in the context of a renewed emphasis on the centrality of our work in schools that is absolutely core to our mission. It is the message we try to get out all the time. This is where the children, the young people and the parents already are. We do not need to attract them to church. They are already there if we embrace our Church schools fully.

Following the Lambeth seminar, we have recommended a self-review process to every diocese as a means of making sure that the diocesan board of education is carrying out its functions effectively in supporting our schools. Members have the checklist on page 3 of the Synod paper. That must surely be the proper basis for an evaluation of the level of resource to look for from the diocesan budget. The first part of the motion before Synod seeks to encourage each diocese to plan for a significant review of the education provision based on this self-review framework.

The second part of the motion is about RE and the teaching of Christianity. If a school has 'Church of England' over the door, then the Church of England through the DBE will be increasingly held accountable for the quality of provision within the school. Our firm conviction is that improving standards is not an added extra but inextricably part of the ethos and character of the school.

We cannot claim to be serving children like Connor properly if we are not offering them the very highest possible standards of education. Yet when we look at Connor's success, it is not simply his academic performance that we celebrate. In order to truly flourish, Connor needed to develop in other ways as well. It was on account of the distinctive Anglican ethos of St George's that Connor could feel welcome in the community, that he received the pastoral support he needed and that he could begin to explore a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Central to our support for children like Connor is to support them as they develop spiritually as well as academically and emotionally. In order to do that, it is vitally important that they are equipped to be able to engage with religious faith and practice, because faith is vitally important for at least five billion people across the world. If our children are to be truly global citizens, they will need to have the right tools to engage, to understand and to respond to questions of faith. I always say that you cannot understand the modern world without understanding what motivates 75 per cent of the world's population. It means that these young people need to be able to think theologically, to explore ultimate questions and to develop the skills to analyse, interpret and make well-informed responses.

Recently, Ofsted published the latest of its subject reports on RE, which confirmed that RE is in serious trouble. There are widespread issues of teaching not being done by specialists, or teachers not really understanding the purposes of RE or the nature of progress in RE. The teaching of Christianity is particularly singled out for criticism, suggesting that, from the evidence, the teaching about Christianity is 'one of the weakest aspects of RE provision'. The Board of Education's Christianity Project will ensure that the teaching of Christianity in our schools and in as many community schools as choose to use it – which I hope will be many – will be significantly improved. The rationale of the project is that all children, of all faiths and none, should be offered the opportunity of a serious engagement with the Christian faith. That is the way schools participate in the mission of the Church.

We look to the Synod to invite dioceses to ensure the widest possible use of the Christianity resource. Behind everything we do in schools, our goal is in our *Going for Growth* strategy: that every child should have a life-enhancing encounter with Jesus Christ.

The third part of the motion is about training for clergy and others. A recent survey of licensed clergy revealed that our clergy spend approximately one million hours in schools every year, leading worship, providing pastoral support and helping to ensure that our schools are underpinned with Christian values. One million hours. That is an awful lot and we are tremendously grateful for the contribution that they make in this way. However, in order to maximize that gift we need to provide high-quality training for our clergy and other licensed ministers; so we aim to provide that resource to equip them to understand children's spirituality, as well as to give them tools that enable them to have a thorough understanding of the way that Church schools work and the vital part they can play in their effectiveness.

In order to be serving Connor properly, however, it is just important that our schools are inclusive. St George's could be the most effective and distinctive school in the country but if Connor could not attend, if the Church school was not inclusive, the Church would be letting him down. That is why I am pleased to share fresh statistics today that emphasize our role in providing an inclusive education for local communities across the country. In Church of England secondary schools the number of pupils, like Connor, on free school meals is 15 per cent. With our mission to serve the poor and excluded, maybe this figure should be higher, but it is in line with the national average for non-Church of England schools, which is also 15 per cent.

Do not let it be said that we are looking after only the white elite. One of the great accusations against Church schools is that they are for predominantly white, middle-class pupils, but statistics tell a quite different story. Our secondary schools serve approximately the same percentage of black or minority ethnic (BME) pupils as non-Church of England secondary schools; that is, around 25 per cent.

The fourth part of our motion is that we need to look back at the boards of education themselves. Our role is to ensure that schools like St George's and its DBE in Blackburn have the support they need to offer people like Connor the education that is effective, distinctive and inclusive. We recognize that our effectiveness to do just that is sometimes confused by the complexity of our central organization, that is, the Education Division under the Archbishops' Council, and the National Society, a venerable charity going back 200 years. That is why it is important we explore new ways to streamline our organizational structures. We are on the case and I think that we are doing well.

It is important that we have someone like Connor in our sights as we discuss these things. In my case it is my little granddaughter, five-year-old Cora, who I saw into her first day in school a few weeks ago. She walked innocently into this education system that will have an immense effect on her life over the next 16 years. It was a vulnerable moment for me. This four-part motion is part of our collective response as a Church to the task of looking after Connor and Cora and giving them a future and a hope.

The Chair: The floor is now open to debate this report.

Revd Mark Steadman (Southwark): I want to start with Matthew 28: ‘Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations.’ How much more intentional can evangelism be than to see Church schools as an integral part of the mission and ministry of a diocese? The commitment to providing schools that are places of teaching, care and practical support, which are offered to all regardless of their background, prior knowledge of faith and social status, is an important part of our witness to the Lord who comes to us in loving service.

The Church schools I know best, in south London, work in areas of incredible diversity – diversity of social background, ethnicity, opportunity and attainment. Just like the parish churches whose mission they share, these schools reflect the communities in which they are set, for, whatever their entrance criteria, they manage to draw the full range of local diversity into their communities of learning. This is important. It is important that our Church schools, like any schools, are not simply monochrome institutions of the likeminded. Part of their flourishing comes from the embracing of the reality in which they are set. For those schools that I know, it is that joyful embracing of local reality that adds so much to the life of their learning community; for, beyond the commitment to offering education that is of the highest possible quality, these are also places of community that seek to support and nurture some of the most vulnerable children in society. They are places that, in offering their wrap-around care, are about the spiritual and physical flourishing of children.

Many of our schools are in the front line of coping with those many issues of poverty that the Archbishop of York powerfully addressed earlier. Often they are the only place where some children get a proper, healthy meal. Like our parish churches, our schools are also rooted in some of the most deprived and difficult communities of our land, and they offer an opportunity to be a transformational presence and a sign of hope. It is in the ethos of making disciples through a way of life that is caught and not taught that our schools model patterns of intentional evangelism so well.

If I do have a plea, however, it is that diocesan boards of education work more with this grain. Recently in the diocese of Southwark, the bishop issued a personal call to mission to individuals, parishes and deaneries under the banner ‘Faith Hope Love’. He also issued the same call to our schools. The effect has been amazing. The diocesan board of education has produced schemes of work, assembly plans, inset training and all other manner of resources to help schools engage. Schools have been able to reflect on and celebrate what it means to be communities in which the faith, hope and love we know in Christ is declared and lived out in loving service. Partnerships with local churches have been renewed, deepened and strengthened, and it has been clear to the schools that they are a vital part of the ministry and mission of God in our diocese.

I am sure that many similar things happen across the country but I would ask that, in the self-evaluation of DBEs and in the debates we hold in our diocesan synods, we continue to ask how our schools are part of our mission planning. How do we help them be communities of intentional evangelism? How do we continue to value and celebrate the excellent work they do in their core business of education and pastoral care? At the heart of this we must continue to encourage them in their practical demonstration of what it truly means to be a disciple of Christ.

The Chair called Mrs Susan Witts for a maiden speech.

Mrs Susan Witts (Blackburn): The well-used statement that we hear by Dearing, that Church schools are at the centre of the Church's mission, is clearly reaffirmed in this report. Making the gospel known is a mission statement that makes our Church schools distinctive and therefore should underpin all the challenges that this changing, contemporary educational landscape brings.

I welcome the review and the four points that we are supporting today whilst also realizing that not everything in the review has been addressed, such as admissions and teacher training. However, I recognize that there has to be some prioritizing. The documents emerging from the review are very good. *A DBE for the Future* now gives a broad, clear and helpful framework, with more precise recommendations and clear outcomes. It seems to me that, as a member of the Board of Education in the Blackburn diocese, this past year has been a bit like trying to keep Church schools involved in the game. To say that the ground has been a little shaky underfoot may be an understatement, with our director and the board wondering which way to jump.

In Blackburn we now have a newly created Cidari Academy Trust. It is still very new and shiny, but I am sure that it will be a great asset to our Church and community schools in the future once it has bedded in. As part of this new academy trust we have appointed two new members of staff to look after school improvement. We are viewing this very much as a partnership with the LEAs, as we cannot do everything on our own.

I would like to expand a little now on some thoughts that have already been raised in the debate on intentional evangelism and also in one of the questions to Bishop Paul yesterday. We are being asked this afternoon to affirm the crucial importance of the Church of England's engagement with schools, for its contribution to the common good and to its spiritual and numerical growth. How do we help faith stick? We know that research has shown that families who talk about faith together grow together in faith. How can we encourage our school families to find informal moments and intentional moments to talk about faith and help them to do that? In our local communities the school is the place that has become the focus for families – a meeting point, a place to find community that is real and relevant to them. Whether it is in the ten per cent of schools that are Church schools linked to their local parish or in one of the 90 per cent of other schools we have, there is a need for appropriately trained Church leaders, both clergy and laity. I am not convinced that the current amount of training that our clergy receive on children and families is enough for them to feel confident in school and family work. In fact, many have told me that it is not.

There is evidence that parishes which successfully work alongside their school – supporting the curriculum, leading worship, using schemes such as Open the Book and offering family activities such as Messy Church, after-school drop-ins and breakfast clubs – have grown. I have run Christian Family Time courses, to which parents with young babies came because they wanted to do the best for their family, and also parenting teenagers courses, to which parents of younger children came because they wanted to be prepared for the coming joys and horrors of teenagers. Families are seeking community and it is what we do well in church. We need to meet the needs of school families better than we are doing.

In Blackburn diocese, where I am the children's work adviser, we have nine high school chaplains – one of them at St George's, Blackpool – who work closely with their local parishes. In January we will be appointing our first primary school chaplain at St Matthew's, Preston, a school with multi-faith families in a very deprived area. This is an example of

church and school working hard together for their community. We have over 100 child-friendly churches and we also have – as I am sure others have too – lots of Messy Church springing up all over the place in many different guises.

Finally, I do have a little concern about where this informal education, the work we do with chaplains and volunteers in children and youth work, will sit once changes are made within the Education Division and the National Society. Mary Hawes, the *Going for Growth* adviser, currently sits in the Education Division. The review reminded us that the National Society was set up to build and promote Church schools, whereas the education remit in paragraph 28 is wider. The National Society remit may need to be broadened to accommodate these areas.

I welcome the motion.

Revd Dr Roger Walton (Ecumenical Representatives, Methodist Church): I welcome this report and the thrust of the initiatives and developments that it signals. The Christianity Project will be useful, and I think widely used, and the attention to RE teaching is timely and important.

I was a little disappointed, however, that there is no mention in the progress report of the growing ecumenical partnerships in the area of Church schools. There was a time in the 19th century when Methodism competed with the Church of England to be first to build a school in a particular locality. The reality, to be honest, was probably that we wanted to get there first so that you did not, and we could influence the children. Those days are long past. The 1,000 or so schools that we built passed, in the main, into the hands of the state. Our clergy believed that their best contribution could be made by being involved in community schools.

In recent years and in the changing landscape of the educational world, the Methodist Church has signalled its desire to be involved in sponsoring schools again, and to expand and support the schools that it already has. This time round, we do not want to enter this in competition but in partnership. My understanding is that locally, on the ground in diocesan boards, this partnership is increasingly represented and it forms a better witness to the Christian faith. I think that it would be good to signal, as we progress on this agenda, how we are increasing our partnership together and commit to further cooperation.

The Bishop of Blackburn (Rt Revd Julian Henderson): I am delighted that the Synod has another opportunity to focus on education, a key part of our service to the wider community. It is good to hear the story of Connor from the diocese of Blackburn. However, how have we got to the place where the state of our RE teaching, especially of the Christian faith, is so depressing? The statistics are not encouraging. In section 13 of GS 1920 we read that the quality of RE teaching in 60 per cent of schools across the country is judged to require improvement. Teaching Christianity is particularly singled out for criticism as ‘one of the weakest aspects of RE provision’.

In responding to this ‘serious trouble’, as it is described, I dare to suggest that there is another important under-emphasis in the report. I could find only brief mention of that remarkable group of dedicated Christian men and women who teach in our schools, often in very demanding situations. Members will find reference to them briefly in section 22, and there is no appreciation there for their work and ministry. While I rejoice in the production of good resources and teaching materials, such as the Christianity Project, I believe the key to

ensuring good RE is a praying, Christian teacher and the key to a strong Christian ethos in a school is a prayerful Christian faith in the staff room.

Part of my induction into the North and the diocese of Blackburn has been a number of visits to schools. We have heard reference already to the ten secondary schools in the diocese of Blackburn, nine of which have a full-time Christian youth worker, paid for in the school. The most recent was licensed just last week at St Wilfred's in Blackburn. I have been so impressed by the clear and confident ethos, often in settings where there is a strong other faith presence. It is obvious; it is unmistakable and it is usually down to the presence of Christian teachers.

I want us to applaud, give thanks for and support those Christians in the teaching profession who see it as their vocation and calling to be there for Christ, who bring to the school that important roundedness of education of body, mind and spirit. Can we encourage the Board of Education that part of our strategy must be to foster vocations to teaching, for dioceses and parishes to encourage Christians to consider the calling to teach? Schools, as we have heard, are central to our mission of making Jesus known.

If young people in the next generation matter, we need to be there, on the inside. I am grateful to the Christian teacher who made it possible for me to hear and respond to the gospel as a teenager. He happened to be the preacher at my consecration in York Minster. Christian head teachers are equally significant. We must pray for their appointment to these influential positions. If the work of reporting statistics and progress, and all the accompanying paperwork for inspections, that creates the unhealthy culture of fear and anxiety, were to be reduced I am sure that there would be more applications for the post of head teacher.

In the light of the New Testament reading this morning from the Sermon on the Mount about a narrow gate, that not everyone saying 'Lord, Lord' will enter the kingdom of heaven, and the need to hear and do the Word of God in order to build a wise and rock-like foundation for life, let us not forget the invaluable contribution of Christians in the teaching profession, who engage with young people on a daily basis. They deserve our massive thanks and support. Let us pray for new and more Christian teachers in our schools.

Miss Rachel Beck (Lincoln): I would like to speak particularly to paragraph (a) of the motion before us and to warmly commend the document *A Diocesan Board of Education for the Future*.

As Bishop John and other speakers have already outlined, the landscape of education is changing rapidly. This document is an extremely useful tool in helping diocesan boards of education to respond to this change in context, and to make sure that they are fit for purpose and are in a position to offer high-quality effective support to schools.

During a recent review of the board of education in the diocese of Lincoln, this document proved invaluable. In fact, the chair of the review panel has stated that the document had a fundamental influence on the review process, and that the clear central steer to raise the status of education within diocesan thinking and to sharpen self-evaluation had resulted in a much more radical set of recommendations than might otherwise have been the case. The ten marks of a high-performing diocesan board of education that are set out in the document were particularly helpful when the review team was working with focus groups of head teachers

and governors. This resulted in clear and specific feedback for the future development of the work of the board of education. The ten marks were also very helpful when sharing the review outcomes with the diocesan synod, as they provided synod members with clear, objective goals for not just the board of education but for the whole vision of the diocese in terms of the Church's involvement in education.

The full wording of mark 1 is 'There is a clear and compelling statement of why the diocese is involved in education that any person in the structure can understand and recite, as well as a strategic plan for the DBE which aligns with diocesan goals and helps to deliver them.' The evaluation framework, as referred to in paragraph (a) of the motion, therefore offers us a clear path to reviewing the work of the diocesan board of education but is also an opportunity for the diocese to revisit and recommit to the vision behind its involvement in education, and to have a renewed engagement and ownership of this vision. We have clearly seen this in the diocese of Lincoln.

If their diocese has not yet considered this document, I would urge members strongly to recommend that it is used. Ask the board of education to complete the self-evaluation framework, as suggested in the motion. It is not just another ticking-boxes, filling-in-forms process; it really is a valuable tool for making sure that the Church's involvement in education and support for schools is relevant, effective and of a high quality.

The Chair: I now call upon Canon Sugden to move his amendment.

Revd Canon Dr Christopher Sugden (Oxford): I beg to move as an amendment:

'After paragraph (b) *insert* as a new paragraph –

“(–) invite the Board of Education to undertake and publish a rigorous appraisal of the Religious Education Council's Review of Religious Education in England”.’

This is intended as a friendly amendment to extend the scope of Synod's concerns to address this recent report. The report's intention from a non-statutory body is welcome, in that it seeks to make sense of the RE curriculum alongside the national curriculum. I hope that the Bishop of Oxford will confirm that it is only one of a number of possible syllabi that could be adopted, as required by law, by local authorities' academies and free schools.

While not a Church of England report, it has serious implications for our Church schools and all schools. Since Church schools are, in Bishop John's words, to encourage pupils to have a 'life-enhancing encounter' with Jesus Christ, it is important that the curriculum be in the hands of those who love and serve him in his Church. It is important that pupils learn who Jesus is from those who love and serve him rather than from those who observe what Christians do as outsiders. I am grateful to the Bishop of Blackburn for his emphasis on this. It is important that pupils of all religious communities are helped to understand the best that all religions can be and that they are far more than one of a set of equally possible world views, whether theistic or atheistic.

If members agree with the first of my alternatives, then I would urge them to vote for a thorough review of this report, in which the view of religions is that they should be observed externally, rather than understood as religions understand themselves. This is of

great concern to people of all faiths. For example, the Sikh community in Birmingham has expressed its concern.

I urge the Synod to vote for a review of the report's position that religions are only one of a set of possible world views, among which students will study supposedly the equally valid claims of Marxism and humanism. I am grateful to the Bishop of Oxford for confirming that the Church of England does not endorse this part of the report. I know that there are real concerns about the report from Birmingham and Surrey SACREs. This work would therefore also be on behalf of other religious communities.

Whether or not members agree with the first of my alternatives I urge them to vote for the amendment, to ask for a rigorous appraisal of the report so that it may be clear to the Department for Education and to Mr Gove – who has claimed in his foreword that the review has the endorsement of a very wide range of professional organizations and bodies representing faiths and other world views – that the responsibility of General Synod to engage with proposals to Government for the teaching of RE cannot be overridden, taken for granted or ignored. I urge Synod to support the amendment.

The Bishop of Oxford: I know that it is intended as a friendly amendment but I feel inclined to resist it on these grounds. The RE review was for community schools, not our own schools, where we draw up our own syllabus and give different advice. This was the REC's work for community schools, where, of course, a confessional approach is not appropriate, not possible. It is just different.

The problem for me also is that we are already doing it. The National Society does have an RE strategy group and it has already considered the RE Council's review. It will be formulating a response – and I am very happy for that to go on the Church of England website. When appropriate, we will also be providing guidance to schools on how to use this material. I think that we are already meeting the substance of what Chris's amendment is about.

I am more concerned, as members will know, to emphasize the potential huge value of the Christianity Project, in which I have great confidence. David Ford, a theologian from Cambridge, is deeply involved in that. We have some very good work happening on it; we have had some very good responses to it. I want to get that into every Church school, and then see it overflow to our community schools. Sheer quality will bring that forward.

I do not think that we need to take this amendment because we are already doing the work. I want to emphasize the Christianity Project and, of course, that the REC work is really for community schools and not for ours. I resist the amendment.

The Chair: The floor is now open to debate this amendment.

Mrs Sarah Finch (London): I am making this speech in support of Chris Sugden's amendment partly because I think Synod ought to be making a response of its own to this whole matter and because, unless I have misunderstood it, the Council that has produced this report is insisting that what they recommend should apply to all schools. It may be that is not the case, but that is what I have understood.

I want to focus attention on the 1944 Education Act as an important and constructive settlement between the state and the Church of England and other Christian Churches on the provision of schooling. The 1944 Act secures the contribution of religious faith to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils and of society. However, in relation to the teaching of RE, many features of this settlement are now being threatened by this review of religious education in England from the Religious Education Council.

I want to highlight the threat to a particular feature, which is that county and community schools must deliver RE according to an agreed syllabus. The benefit of this in practice is that having a syllabus determined locally by a SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education) is that this consensus leads to moderation and social cohesion.

In a school like the one where I am a governor in the City of London, a little primary school where children come from a great variety of faith backgrounds and there are 35 mother tongues, this matter of social cohesion is vitally important. The threat from this review is that an attempt is being made to impose the statement that the Christian faith and other world views, such as atheism, Marxism, humanism et cetera, are on a par, that they have equal status, as Chris Sugden has just explained. This contradicts the principle that RE should be Christian, as agreed locally, and therefore this ought to be resisted if the 1994 Act is not to be totally undermined.

It has already been resisted in Birmingham. Legal advice was re-issued in 2009, stipulating that Marxism and secular humanism may only be taught in RE as a critique of religion and 'not in their own right'. Leaders of the Sikh community in Birmingham, as was mentioned earlier, have gladly agreed to this advice. Why? Because the integrity of their religion and other religions is also being upheld. The 1944 Act is valuable for people of all faiths, not just Christians.

The REC's review does indeed need to be examined very closely and appraised rigorously, with the appraisal being published. I urge Synod to support this amendment.

Canon Timothy Hind (Bath and Wells): I want to resist this amendment for purely practical reasons. I cannot believe that our Board of Education is not already doing this sort of work. Bishop John has already said that it is part of their remit to look at this report.

I recognize the threat from it but I also recognize that to do a rigorous review and publish that review will deflect us from the already busy work that is being done in the Board of Education. I think we have scant resources at the moment to engage in something else.

The final reason why I want to resist this is because there is no time limit to Mr Sugden's amendment, and it would therefore be possible for us to agree to it and then push it into the long grass for a long time. I do not really think that is a good way to go about things either. I would resist it on purely practical grounds.

Revd John Cook (Oxford): I want to follow up in support of Chris Sugden. I am very grateful for what the Bishop of Oxford has said: that he wants to make sure that we look at everything. However, there are some important issues. The Religious Education Council's report of October – only very recent – reminds us that it is possible to ignore the bodies with statutory responsibility for RE. It also incorporates very doubtful interpretations of the

statutes governing the requirements for delivering and monitoring RE, such as has been mentioned about secular humanism and atheism being part of the curriculum.

The process of review has also been done through selective quotations in that document, with ministers directly countering the political policy of decentralizing. It seeks to find a core curriculum, with benchmarking and so on. That is bad news for Church schools. We have been told how important RE is and we need to look at it very carefully. The RE review is also unclear about the purposes of RE. I take the point that these are not faith schools, but it is still unclear about what the purpose is and presumes towards individualism and neutrality as regards basic values of religious life and religious institutions.

Finally, let me come to something that has not been mentioned. The review of October 2013 is correct in saying that the structural changes in education brought about by the 2010 Academies Act – and the academies are good where they are springing up, are they not? – and by other decisions of the Secretary of State for Education will potentially have a detrimental impact on the quality of provision in religious education. Since RE was the responsibility of the local authorities, the 2010 Academies Act is subverting the roles and supporting the structures of SACREs and ASCs. It is denying – and this is important – faith communities a role in defining the RE syllabus. It effectively restricts the powers of the Church of England as the Established Church to share in the determination of what is taught in state-funded schools without a religious foundation. RE is not just another subject, and that is why it has previously been treated differently in law.

It is vital, I believe, to support Chris Sugden so that we can examine all the executive and legal changes and ensure that RE is not inadvertently disadvantaged.

Dr Rachel Jepson (Birmingham): As a member of Birmingham SACRE, I feel the call to speak. Our syllabus is called *Faith Makes a Difference*. If members would like to find out more, there is a website – faithmakesadifference.co.uk. The people who organized and planned the syllabus set out to take a very different approach. It is a very different approach from the one the Religious Education Council review recently published. That is the point.

One of the key things is that we use 24 dispositions – for example being merciful and forgiving, sharing and being generous, being thankful and expressing joy, appreciating beauty and so on – to encourage children, right from when they start school and on into the secondary years, to explore what it means to belong to a faith community. Belonging to a faith tradition is one of the key elements, as well as what we can learn from these different faith communities.

Obviously I would like to encourage everybody across the country to use it or at least to consider doing so. Across Birmingham, community schools have a legal requirement to follow it, but a number of the academies that have come into being in the last couple of years are also using the syllabus. Our diocesan board of education is also very supportive of it and encourages Church of England schools to follow this particular agreed syllabus.

The other point I would make is in response to Sarah Finch's comments about the 1944 Education Act. Although subsequent Education Acts have superseded some of what was in that Act, elements such as the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are still underpinning the whole of how we view our education system in England and Wales, and the

importance of that in children's learning throughout the whole of their time of formal education.

I too would urge Synod to resist this amendment.

Mrs Penelope Allen (Lichfield): Speaking as someone who has been in state education for all my working life and teaching RE for the last 20 years, I would like to support this amendment. It is very important that the Church of England takes an interest in what is happening in the nation's schools generally.

Some parish priests do not have Church schools; they only have community schools. They need to be familiar with what is happening in the RE Council. They need to understand the pressures on teachers. They also need to understand the long-term implications of what happens in education policy. If they do not have that understanding, then in the long term we will be lacking teachers who can come in and deliver Christianity.

In my last ten years of teaching I had three students in the classroom with me, training to teach the faith, RE, and not one of them was a member of a practising, worshipping community. This body has to take an interest in what is happening in state schools if we are to mission effectively.

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

‘That the question be now put.’

This motion was put and carried.

The amendment was put and lost, 109 voting in favour and 190 against, with 10 recorded abstentions.

The Chair: I now call on the Bishop of St Albans to move his amendment.

The Bishop of St Albans (Rt Revd Dr Alan Smith): I beg to move as an amendment:

‘After paragraph (c) *insert* as a new paragraph –

“(–) encourage parishes to identify and implement good practice to strengthen links between Church schools and parishes;”.’

It is encouraging that we are increasing the number of Church schools and the number of pupils who study in them. This motion does not give us a great deal of help in relation to how we can use more effectively the opportunities that Church schools provide for the mission of the Church, and in particular how we can make that gospel connection. What contribution can our Church schools make to spiritual and numerical growth?

I note that the motion calls on dioceses and the Ministry Council to take certain action and invites the Archbishops' Council to do something. However it appears to omit parishes from doing anything, and it seems to me that parishes are one of the key places in which a difference is likely to be made. We know that we cannot undertake overt evangelism in our schools where there is a captive audience, but there are many exciting ideas around that have

been developed at grass roots and really can make this gospel connection much more effectively.

Let me throw out several suggestions. They are not my ideas but rather points that I have observed as I have visited Church schools.

First, as far as I can see, virtually every parish in our diocese and in many others is being encouraged to have a lay ministry team. Why do we not have a schools team in every parish, or perhaps in the case of just one Church school in a very rural deanery a team drawn from the entire deanery, helping with collective worship and reading and offering resources to our local schools so that the pupils can meet members of the worshipping community, and if they happen to turn up at church meet them there as well?

Second, I wonder why we do not conduct an audit of our Church schools so that we have a common stock of songs, hymns and prayers. This came home to me recently when I discovered that one local church is using the traditional form of the Lord's Prayer and the Church school next door is using the modern version – not even beginning to join up. Talking to the head and the vicar, it became obvious to me that they agreed that they ought to identify some core hymns, songs and prayers that they both could use regularly, so that when there were overlaps people would have a common language. It is a very simple idea. In another place I discovered that they now hold confirmation classes in the school at lunchtime and indeed even bring the church into the school for the confirmation service. It may be that some parishes already do this, but it seemed to me an excellent idea.

I have now adopted another very simple idea that was suggested to me by someone else. When I go into schools regularly, in addition to wandering round the classrooms talking to the children, which of course is a very good thing to do, I always suggest that we spend 20 minutes with the head, the chair of governors and the vicar and ask the simple question: how can we work better together? It is fascinating to realize how often either the head or the incumbent has ideas but they have never quite got round to discussing them and thinking about what they might be able to do better, and I am constantly astonished that before a few minutes are up they are engaged together in a conversation that they have never had previously.

I offer those thoughts not because I have lots of bright ideas but simply to illustrate that all over the place people have brilliant practices that we ought to identify and roll out as the very best way of strengthening the links that we have.

My simple amendment asks our parishes to identify and share a wide range of local, practical, achievable ideas to strengthen the links between churches and Church schools; and of course this could be with any school. It will probably need a little encouragement from DBEs to set it up, and we might ask rural deans to encourage that sort of debate, but let us see whether we can bring it down to the practical level of joining up this very high level sort of strategy with what is happening locally as we seek to strengthen what we are about.

The Bishop of Oxford: I would be very happy to accept this amendment. It is a helpful addition. We have been looking at certain aspects of two reports – *The Church School of the Future* and *A DBE of the Future*. We have pulled out some points from those to offer to Synod, because we cannot take the whole lot, but this is a very helpful, practical, down to

earth sharing of good practice. Bishop Alan has already thrown out half a dozen good ideas and I look forward to our responding.

I would point out that on page 5 of GS 1920 we have made quite a bit of clergy training, and the box on that page refers to training schools where there is high quality parish school engagement, good RE, worship and strong foundation governors as places for short and long placements or a range of single sessions for clergy and Readers and so on. We are therefore beginning to flesh out some other ideas, and indeed the group that is looking at clergy training is already doing an audit of good things that can contribute to schools and parishes working well together, but I am very happy to accept this amendment as bringing a greater focus to that work.

Dr Philip Giddings (Oxford): I wish that I had seen this amendment early enough to enable me to table an amendment to it because, although I fully support what Bishop Alan said in moving his amendment, I believe that it contains an unhelpful word, namely ‘Church’.

The strength of the main motion is that it recognizes that we need to engage with both Church and community schools, and that is of vital importance in the secondary sector, where we have relatively few Church schools, in relation to which the point made by the Bishop of Blackburn about support of teachers is so important, and where it is also so important to support Christian pupils; they are at the really sharp end of this.

I wish that the word ‘Church’ was not used in this amendment, because the main motion applies just as much to community schools as to Church schools. In our parishes, deaneries and communities at local level we need to work with those schools, their staff and their governance so that they can fulfil their mission and we can fulfil ours more effectively. If we pass this amendment, I hope we will let the reader understand that it has a much wider application than only to Church schools, important though they are.

Revd Stephen Pratt (Lichfield): I want to reiterate what has just been said by Dr Giddings. In my parish we have six schools – one secondary, one special, one nursery and three primaries. None of them is a Church school but we are in all of them, except one, in a major way.

We are talking here about the changing future. One of those primary schools was on the forced academy list; I serve on the governing body of that school. We fought it and have become a co-operative trust, and the thought now is that not the diocese but the church becomes part of that trust, so the link is becoming very formal; it is almost like a Church school.

I believe that matters will become blurred with the passage of time. A Church primary school in a neighbouring parish is also about to become a forced academy. The diocese is losing a little of its control over that school for the time being. I do not know what will happen later but that is what is happening at the moment. In other words, things are becoming blurred and we need to secure links with all schools, not just Church schools.

Therefore, while I support this amendment, I would like it to be understood that we should be going into all our schools, not only Church schools.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

Canon Peter Bruinvels (Guildford): – and immediate past chair of the Guildford board of education.

This is such a good motion for bringing the Church to our schools, holding family Communion, using the school as an alternative church hall, celebrating governorships, appointing pastoral assistants to the schools, promoting church services in our schools and promoting schools in our churches. Some churches do not advertise even though are situated almost next door to each other.

Also, what about the important role of governors? The Bishop of Blackburn stressed and praised the role of our Christian teachers, but our governors are unsung heroes as well. We ought to have them reporting to the PCC, celebrating the role of the Church and of Church schools; and an annual report would not come amiss at the APCM.

I agree with Philip Giddings that we should not forget the non-Church schools. The diocese of Guildford has 10 affiliated non-Church schools. As the previous speaker said, we should be focusing just as much on establishing links with them.

We also need our Sunday clubs to develop, and Church schools bring in many people to Sunday clubs. Another opportunity is to recruit candidates for our choirs. Here we are all working on one side, whether with a Church school or not. We are in a community strengthening those links and we do not celebrate that enough. In addition, we have academies – I am a trustee of the diocese of Guildford’s Education Trust – and again we should be working hard at strengthening those links.

I say ‘well done’ to the mover of this amendment, which is so important for us in our use of each other to the benefit of Our Lord.

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

‘That the question be now put.’

This motion was put and carried.

A member: On a point of order, Chair. Would you order a separation of the vote on this amendment so that the Synod can vote separately on the word ‘Church’?

The Chair: That does not have my permission.

The amendment was put and carried.

Mrs Mary Durlacher (Chelmsford): I would like to comment on the Christianity Project, the rationale for which is set out in paragraph 18, and the remarks made by the Archbishop of York yesterday about the inadequacy of the term ‘life enhancing’ for describing the effect of coming to know Jesus Christ. Could we raise the bar so that point (i) reads: ‘The Church ... is called to work towards every child having a life transforming encounter with the Christian faith and the person of Jesus Christ’? After yesterday ‘life enhancing’ has a faintly Laodicean feeling to it.

It is good to see that there is engagement with training the clergy more thoroughly, but I would like everyone to recognize how much time is involved in full clergy participation in schools, especially Church schools. We have two Church schools in our parish and we find that it is very time-consuming for clergy, who already have a lot to do, to take their places on the school governing body, complete their training, attend meetings of governors – we are currently going through the process of replacing a new head teacher – take assemblies and organize special services in church. I was therefore heartened by the suggestion of the Bishop of St Albans that we need school teams to help and by the reference to the involvement ‘inside out’, to use another term mentioned today, of the church community.

Foundation governors too – not much mention has been made of foundation governance – need training. As a foundation governor I find it very difficult to cope with the other governors who do not understand why I keep going on about raising the standards of church ethos, education and commitment. They definitely think that I am over the top, so perhaps we could raise the level of training and support for church foundation governors.

I would also like to echo Philip Giddings’s point that Christian children in schools, whether primary or secondary, are at the sharp end. We have heard about gay bullying and the need to resist it, but perhaps we should also consider how supported our Christian children need to be. I do some Sunday School teaching and every child has said that he or she has been on the receiving end of bullying for being Christian. It needs to be flagged up.

The Bishop of Warrington (Rt Revd Richard Blackburn): I am very pleased to support all parts of the motion, especially the underlying assumption that our engagement with schools is of crucial importance. Implementation of the main recommendations is important if the Church is to operate effectively in our national schools system. Therefore it is right that we affirm the crucial importance of engaging with schools and that both our lay and ordained ministers are trained to make the most of the opportunities.

I echo the caution expressed by the previous speaker about increasing the burden on our clergy. As parishes become larger many clergypersons have to service an increasing number of schools. My wife is the team rector of a parish that has two Church schools and four other schools with which she is actively involved. From time to time I have to remind her that there is more to ministry than just those.

Our engagement needs to go further, with a wider involvement in our church communities. I therefore welcome the recommendations in paragraphs 54–56 for developing Churchschool partnerships. In Liverpool we have formalized this through a church and school partnership award, which now more than half of our schools and their churches have been awarded over the past five years. This is a two-way street, because schools are also being challenged and encouraged to become much more involved in the lives of their churches.

We are now being challenged to play a role in our schools that arguably we have not played before, and certainly not for over a century. We cannot escape the consequences of this for our schools or the expectations that now fall on us as a result. The greatly reduced capacity of many local authorities means that our increased involvement, either through direct action or as a broker, is now expected. Paragraph 39 of the report *A Diocesan Board of Education for the Future* sums this up well: ‘Doing nothing is not an option since it will be understood as being unwilling to take responsibility for the schools which we say that we provide.’

I am pleased to see in the report an entire section about the role and resourcing of our education teams. Central to this, and highlighted, is that dioceses need credible professionals to foster this new relationship with our schools, and it seems obvious that the challenge of recruiting such people in the future, probably from well-paid leadership positions in our schools, is likely to have cost implications and will challenge existing diocesan pay structures. This will be difficult, but if we are serious about our future role in education, as is the message in both reports, we have no option but to rise to this challenge.

Revd Dr Joanna Spreadbury (St Albans): I would like to offer a couple of examples of good practice, both of which happen to come from the diocese of St Albans and in both of which I have been involved.

The first is as a parish priest working with a local school, where we have come to realize that it would benefit both school and parish if it were to become a Church school. The diocesan board of education has been invaluable in providing advice and support. If you make enquiries, it is relatively straightforward for a community school to become a Church school. If the school governors are in favour, the transition process is surprisingly easy. The good practice addressed here was endorsed by the bishop's council, which has agreed that our diocesan director of education can have more staff support to help him with similar conversations between other parishes and their community schools. I recognize the workload on clergy and parishes, but this is a very exciting and energy-releasing venture.

The second example of good practice that I would like to suggest is one in which I have been involved as chair of Praxis and a member of the diocesan worship and liturgy group. At the invitation of the diocesan board of education we were involved in setting up a joint training day for parish clergy and ministers together with school teachers, heads and RE co-ordinators. She has been mentioned once, but I would like to tell Synod that on that day Mary Hawes, here in the balcony, was one of the key speakers primarily on worship. We looked at worship in schools and school visits to churches. We also explored the possibility of celebrating the Eucharist in schools, using the new Additional Eucharistic Prayers and introducing the worship workshop online resource, but the benefit above all was the extraordinary range and depth of conversations that took place: schoolteachers getting excited about liturgy, parish ministers grappling with RE provision and the place of Christianity in the curriculum.

I therefore welcome the focus in paragraph (c) of the motion on looking at school-related training for lay and ordained ministers and look forward to the Christianity Project materials in due course. I hope and pray that children will have a chance to be formed and fed by school worship and RE teaching alike; that each year they will discover more and more about Christianity and even about Christ.

It was mentioned this morning that we are in the octave of C.S. Lewis. As someone who came to faith at Magdalen College, as C.S. Lewis did, I hope members will excuse me if I conclude with two quotations. At the end of *The Last Battle* Aslan said: 'Every year you grow, you will find me bigger.' I trust that the children in our schools will grow each year, that we as a Church will grow, and that the children will learn to make connections with what they are taught and their own experience and faith practices. As Lucy reflects to Prince Tirian, 'In our world too, a stable once had something inside it that was bigger than our whole world.'

Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark): I too want to speak about paragraph (c) of the motion in the interests of adding to the joining up of our Agenda across the three days of this group of sessions.

Paragraph (c) requests the Ministry Council to consider and report to the Synod in 2014 how training for lay and ordained ministers can include more school-related experience. One of the things that we omitted from yesterday's debate on intentional evangelism was the fact that there will be training implications for ensuring that the priority of evangelism is rolled out through our lay and ordained ministers to all people in the Church. Secondly, there was a call for the use of schools in catechesis for younger people.

Therefore, my question is this. In its consideration of these matters, could the Ministry Council also think about how it trains lay and ordained people for intentional evangelism in the school setting, and in particular how it might fulfil the aspiration in *Going for Growth* that every child should have the opportunity of a life-enhancing, indeed a life-transforming, encounter with Jesus Christ?

The Chair called Revd Canon Richard Mitchell for a maiden speech.

Revd Canon Richard Mitchell (Gloucester): As I am sure members know, in the past few years the speed of change and the amount of work that the staff in our boards of education have had to face has been huge, and I would like to commend and thank them right across the Church of England for being able to keep pace with those massive changes in the world of education; or, to put it another way, while those of us in the Church of England ultimately are working towards the second coming of Our Lord, those in the world of education have already grappled with their own second coming in the form of the Secretary of State for Education – judgement and transformation being his themes too!

I want to go back to the very helpful checklist for diocesan boards and the key aim of their being properly resourced. This afternoon we have talked about a good number of matters, but it seems to me that many of them will rely on the work of the staff in our DBEs. In their distinctiveness and inclusivity they have a level of responsibility for ensuring church effectiveness; they relate to governing bodies, as for example in rural areas more small schools, many of which are Church schools, look towards federation; they have some responsibility for clergy training because they will have to forge links between clergy and schools and build up those relationships; they have produced and continue to produce, as we know from the diocese of Gloucester, some wonderful resources for values and ethos in Church schools; and no doubt they will need to pick up the big aim of improving our teaching of Christianity.

In the diocese of Gloucester we have had to delve into our historic funds to put in place staff to organize and lead our academy trust. We have been very fortunate to have that. We do not know for how many years we will be able to do it, but we hope that it will be self-financing. However I am aware that not all dioceses in the Church of England will be able to do it. Combined with that there is, of course, a massive reputational risk for the staff of our boards of education, and indeed for all of us in the Church of England, as the academies programme is expanded and the standards continue hugely to be scrutinized and published.

At the very poorly attended fringe meeting held at York in July, Rabbi Jonathan Romain, who heads up Accord on the issue of admissions to Church schools, about which Archbishop Justin spoke last week, said, 'I thought Church schools were the jewel in the crown of the Church of England.' Is that perception or fact?

I think that a real priority for us is to maintain, enhance and support our DBE staff. The big questions are there. Are we prepared to find the necessary resources for them, and is it a priority for us as dioceses when there are many other pressures on our finances? However in the interests of addressing and I hope achieving the same I welcome this motion very warmly and urge Synod to support it.

Revd Canon Dr Michael Parsons (Gloucester): Some of those million hours that clergy spend with schools occupy part of my time as well, and I would like to add to the observation that it involves not only Church schools. In fact I spend most of my time with a local authority school and it is remarkably productive, because in my experience actually it behaves more like a Church school than two of the Church schools with which I have had contact previously.

However for a few moments I want to address paragraph (c) of the motion and the reference to the Ministry Council. Before I took up my post in my present parish I was the principal of one of the regional training courses and before that a director of ordinands and a director of curate training. Frequently when the Church is faced with a need there is a temptation to say, 'It needs to be taught in the theological colleges and courses', but that is a little like pushing more stuff on to the back of a lorry until something else falls off at the other end unnoticed.

There needs to be a greater emphasis on clergy and lay ministers continually being resourced in their involvement with schools. You need to contextualize what you are doing, and in many cases being removed for training takes you out of that context. It needs to be within part of the IME 4–7 provision – it used to be known as potty training, and to some probably still is better known as that – and the continual ministerial development of the clergy, and it should be more than just the occasional course offered sporadically but rather a regular and important part of clergy and lay ministerial training.

Our opportunities are immense in both Church and State schools and we will fail the children of this nation with the gospel if we do not seize them.

Mrs Andrea Williams (Chichester): Like the previous speaker, I believe that with this motion the opportunities are now immense. It was interesting to hear the Bishop of Oxford talking about his granddaughter Cora going off and his feeling vulnerable about what she was to be taught. What are our children are being taught in an age in which the curriculum is highly secular? What is our distinctive as the Church of England in relation to our ability to exercise policy in education for our children, and what do we define as the common good? Jesus of course is the fount of the common good. He is Lord of all, of you and me, the sustainer of all creation central to the common good, the fountain of all truth, the great distinctive and the great message for the curriculum of our Church of England schools.

Yesterday we talked about intentional evangelism. Well, here is the place to start. Connor's life was transformed by an encounter with Jesus Christ. I pray that those teachers who have just been appointed in Blackburn, about whom we have heard today, will have the ability and capacity to be distinctive about Jesus and will not be told to be quiet about him in order

properly to deliver the curriculum according to the state. Our job for the common good is not to reflect the standards of a state secular curriculum that has abandoned God but to set and make the curriculum; and when we have schools that are in our charge it is exciting and challenging to give our children something worth living and dying for – Jesus – and to give them answers to the meaning of life.

Importantly, it will involve how we teach on the distinctive issues where truth is under attack in our now pagan, secular nation. Jesus said that he was the way, the truth and the life and that no man comes to the Father but by him. How will we teach that in our schools? Creation and science (Genesis 1) or marriage between a man and a woman (Matthew 19)? I have four children aged between 11 and 18 in school, two of whom are in a Christian school, and I know how they are being taught on these subjects. They are not being taught that God is the Creator of the universe; they are not being taught that Jesus is the only way; they are not being taught that marriage is between a man and a woman. Therefore, as we set the curriculum for the Church of England, it is our job as its ruling body to teach our children how to be bold and speak of our faith in the public space, in a culture that has forgotten Jesus.

In parenthesis, I am particularly concerned about the Bishop of Oxford's admission yesterday that Stonewall, a homosexual campaign group, has been invited into Church of England schools to act as a consultant on homophobic bullying, a term that needs to be defined, particularly in view of the Archbishop of Canterbury's public concessions on the matter. How are we going to ensure that Christian marriage is faithfully taught and that all that flows from Jesus is faithfully taught in our schools? – (*The Chair rang the bell.*)

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

‘That the question be now put.’

This motion was put and carried.

The Bishop of Oxford, in reply: I thank all members who have contributed to such a stimulating debate for the many good ideas expressed.

Mark Steadman affirmed the centrality of this work, which to me showed how important it is for senior staff to take a lead on this, affirming their role and saying, ‘This is important – go for it’; the results are shown, and that is great.

Susan Witts talked about the huge changes that have taken place and the great work that has been done on multi-academy trust and effectiveness, which I know has taken place in her diocese. It is an example of how the board is rising to the challenge, in which the senior staff and all of us have to play our parts. We also have to face the challenge of training and supporting families. It is an entire wrap-around thing, not just about what happens in schools.

To Roger Walton, thank you very much. He was absolutely right to raise the ecumenical dimension. Indeed, paragraph 55 of the report *The Diocesan Board of Education for the Future* refers to the fact that the Church of England is committed to working ecumenically and that schools are encouraged to build a broad range of relationships with other Christian denominations, some of which are structured formally, et cetera. We are also making some progress on drawing up a memorandum of understanding between dioceses and the Methodist Academies and Schools Trust.

Thank you very much to the Bishop of Blackburn for emphasizing the role of Christian teachers and all teachers, supporting them in their work. This of course takes us right back to the Dearing report and the important emphasis on teaching as a vocation. I hope that for members of Synod the message will always ring out that this is one of the key vocations for any Christian.

I am grateful to Rachel Beck for her comments on the framework of the report *A DBE for the Future*, which obviously has been really helpful not just in the context of the diocesan synod but all the way through. I am glad that the work has been so useful and I hope that others will be encouraged to use it. Apart from its usefulness as a report, it has so much to offer at all kinds of level.

A point was raised – I am sorry, I did not catch the name of the speaker – about the training of governors. Online training resources for governors are being prepared, but, as another bishop said to me this morning, ‘The real dilemma is getting governors of the calibre that we need for the task that we now face.’ It is not simply a case that we need the last person standing; we really do need the best we can get.

I thank Bishop Richard for telling us about the obviously very good experience in the diocese of Liverpool. To me it spoke of the importance of adequate funding from a diocese. He said that we cannot raise capacity without funding. As I emphasised earlier, in straitened times it is a real challenge to find such funding, but this is where our work lies with a million schoolchildren and all the other schools as well; it is such a core task. As I have often said – probably from here, but I cannot remember – a clergyperson cannot say, ‘I don’t do funerals’ or ‘I don’t do schools.’ It is absolutely crucial that we do schools.

Thank you to Jo Spreadbury for the excellent idea about community schools converting to Church schools, which is happening in a number of places, and I am really pleased that she has found it a good process. Thank you for also drawing attention to praxis training. Quality worship is one of the entitlements that children should have in a Church school.

Adrian Greenwood referred to intentional evangelism in schools. Of course, as we know, it cannot be hard evangelism, but if we take seriously the phrase about every child having a life-changing encounter with Jesus Christ, I hope and trust that such an encounter will be transformational. Actually I do not think it is possible to meet Jesus without it being transformational, but at least we can make sure that the encounter takes place.

I agree absolutely with Richard Mitchell’s point about the jewel in the crown, and I am very glad that my friend the rabbi saw it in that way. It is our jewel, but we have to support DBE staff. They are under pressure like never before. We have some gems out there but also some who find the stress levels very high. I urge members to support their DBE staff.

Thank you to Mike Parsons for drawing our attention to the need for greater emphasis on continuing training and resourcing of clergy and others who are involved in schools at all levels.

To Andrea Williams, yes, Jesus is the common good – absolutely; I like the phrase. Often

I say that what makes us distinctive is that we can talk about the life, death and new life of Jesus Christ being the core value of what makes Church schools different. Let us speak about the core value of life, death and new life of Jesus with confidence and joy.

I want to thank the many members who have stayed so long for this debate, which has been really helpful and shows the commitment that we have to education; we all care very greatly about it. It is about raising capacity and raising our profile. I want us to be more distinctive, inclusive and effective – the three words that I used earlier – for that is the task we face at the moment. We have a million children, clergy giving a million hours, and many laypeople giving so much more; and, as members know, Connor and Cora depend on our enthusiasm and commitment.

I urge the Synod to vote for the motion.

The motion was put and carried in the following amended form:

‘That this Synod, affirming the crucial importance of the Church of England’s engagement with schools for its contribution to the common good and to its spiritual and numerical growth:

- (a) urge dioceses, in the light of *A DBE for the Future*, to complete the self-evaluation framework within twelve months and thereby review their support for schools;
- (b) invite dioceses to draw up plans for promoting the widest possible use of the new Christianity Project materials in both Church and other schools;
- (c) request the Ministry Council to consider and report to the Synod in 2014 how training for lay and ordained ministers can include more school-related experience;
- (d) encourage parishes to identify and implement good practice to strengthen links between Church schools and parishes; and
- (e) invite the Archbishops’ Council to report to the Synod by February 2015 the outcome of its discussions with the National Society on the national governance proposals made by the Chadwick Report.’

The Chair: That completes this item of business.

THE CHAIR *Professor Canon Michael Clarke (Worcester)* took the Chair at 4.45 p.m.

Legislative Business

Draft Church of England (Ecclesiastical Property) Measure (GS 1921) Draft Measure for First Consideration

The Archdeacon of Tonbridge (Ven. Clive Mansell): I beg to move:

‘That the Measure entitled “Church of England (Ecclesiastical Property) Measure” be considered for revision in committee.’

This short, technical draft Measure is the result of a Private Member's Motion brought by Revd Christopher Hobbs to the Synod for debate in July 2012 to permit certain PCCs to acquire and hold land and other property without any requirement for the interest to be vested in the diocesan authority; and I want to start by thanking Revd Hobbs for his helpful initiative on this.

The proposals before Synod today are not exactly what Mr Hobbs tabled originally. The Archbishops' Council concluded that his proposed distinction between registered and unregistered charities would not be workable. It also had other concerns both about the capacity of small PCCs to manage legal issues and more generally the risk that vesting land in PCCs could in practice make it easier for assets to be lost to the Church of England. Nevertheless this draft Measure would not have been prepared but for the 2012 motion.

The draft Measure acknowledges that the present restrictions on PCCs are unnecessarily onerous and provides a welcome addition to the agenda of simplification and removal of administrative burdens imposed by legislation on church bodies. It makes a number of small changes to the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956 and to the Incumbents and Churchwardens (Trusts) Measure 1964, reducing the role of the diocesan authority in relation to property transactions carried out by PCCs and by charitable trusts with incumbents and churchwardens as trustees. The Council's reasoning was further explained in GS Misc 1060, which was circulated to Synod members in July this year.

Clause 1 of the draft Measure amends section 6 of the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure in three ways. First, it removes entirely the requirement for a PCC to obtain consent from the diocesan authority before bringing legal proceedings for example to evict squatters or non-paying tenants from parish property. If this Measure passes into law it will be a matter for a PCC to decide in every case whether it is in its interests to bring court proceedings.

Second, it extends the length of lease that can be granted without reference to the diocesan authority. Under section 6 as it stands at present a short lease is defined as for one year or less. The new draft Measure provides that a short lease is a lease for seven years or less, aligning this requirement with the controls on dispositions of land under the Charities Act 2011, which apply only to leases of more than seven years.

Third, it provides that the consent of the diocesan authority is required only for transactions with a value in excess of a figure to be specified in an order made by the Archbishops' Council. The precise level of the figure to be specified has not yet been decided by the Council and members of Synod are invited to comment on the level that they consider would be appropriate. The Council is aware that there is an important balance to be struck between setting the levels so low that the effect is not really deregulatory and so high that there is no additional protection for the interests of a parish in a significant transaction. All land and property other than land held on trust where the capital cannot be spent by the trustees will continue to be held in the name of the diocesan authority and not in the name of the PCC. However if the PCC wants to carry out a transaction to which the diocese's consent is not required, the diocese will be under an obligation to execute any necessary documents on behalf of the PCC. The PCC will of course need to ensure that it acts wisely and with advice on relevant aspects of the law, including ecclesiastical law and charity law.

Clause 2 of the Measure makes equivalent amendments to the Incumbents and Churchwardens (Trusts) Measure 1964. That Measure deals with charitable trusts of land or

personal property held on permanent trusts that have the incumbent or churchwarden of a parish as the trustees. It makes provision for the legal title to be vested in the diocesan authority in the same circumstances as the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure. The changes keep the 1964 Measure aligned with the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure, so they make the same changes as described above, that is to say they remove the requirement for the diocesan authority's consent to legal proceedings, amend the definition of a short lease from one year to a lease of seven years or less, and provide that the diocesan authority's consent is not required to a transaction for a value less than a sum to be specified in an order to be made by the Council. They also make a small correction to the terminology used in the Measure. At present the expression 'custodian trustee' is used rather inaccurately to describe the diocesan authority's functions, and this opportunity has been taken to tidy up the terminology.

Clause 3 makes provision relating to the procedure for making an order under the amended text of either Measure.

The draft Measure seeks to strike a sensible balance between achieving a degree of deregulation and giving parishes greater flexibility while continuing to protect them from accidental or indeed deliberate misappropriation of significant charitable assets. Some members of the Synod might like to go further, and perhaps others – the substantial minority that voted against the 2012 motion – will wonder whether even this degree of deregulation is wise. To both I want to say that these proposals result from the careful analysis and consultation that has occurred since that debate 18 months ago. If the Synod passes the motion on the Order Paper it will have an opportunity in Revision Committee and then at revision stage to test the arguments further.

These are quite technical issues, but lying behind them are some important principles: that PCCs have responsibilities to the diocese and the whole Church of England and not just to the local congregation; that dioceses need to act in the best interests of parishes; and that together we operate processes that ensure proper accountability and responsibility without being so cumbersome that they drain energy away from the task of mission.

I commend the draft Measure to Synod for consideration.

The Chair: I remind members that under SO 51(b) speeches must be directed to the general purport of the motion and not to matters of detail, which properly will go straight to the Revision Committee.

Revd Christopher Hobbs (London): When my Private Member's Motion passed in July 2012, a phalanx of archdeacons opposed it and alluded to horror stories of foolish PCCs. Without repeating speeches from them, we allow PCCs to decide on all sorts of issues to do with money, just not property; and, to be honest, I think that we could allow PCCs hold their own property since property is well regulated by the Charities Act 2011 and the much feared alienation of charity property is illegal. However I am content with small steps.

I appreciate, for instance, that it might be possible to let out a curate's house with a little less red tape, but if we could wind back the clock I would have thought that the powers of the PCC to hold property ought to have been looked at by the Simplification Group. The report of the Simplification Group (GS Misc 1048) states that the general principle it adopted is that PCCs should have the same general responsibility to regulate their own affairs as other

charitable bodies and that the national framework of rules should not be more prescriptive than necessary.

It could be said that since the Charities Act 2011 we have been subject to double regulation and that the Church's rules are more prescriptive than those required by the Charity Commission. I do not know how many members have read the advice of the Legal Advisory Commission of the General Synod but it reveals a complexity and lack of precision in what applies now. Voting for this draft Measure will allow a Revision Committee to work out with the lawyers what in some respects has been unclear for a long time and will help us to conduct PCC business efficiently without removing safety nets – for instance perhaps specifically requiring consultation with our venerable archdeacons.

Mr Robert Holgate (Birmingham): I wonder whether members of Synod are as disturbed by the contents of GS 1921 as I am. I find myself seeking the answers to two questions, and of course I will share them with Synod. First, do the proposals in GS 1921 adequately reflect what the Synod intended when it considered the relevant Private Member's Motion on the subject in 2012? Second, what vision is held in the national Church – us – for PCCs and local churches? Is it one of empowerment or duplicated regulation arguably beyond reasonable accountability? Currently we seem to trust local churches with witness and evangelism. What were we discussing enthusiastically yesterday afternoon? These are really important matters, yet we do not trust PCCs with significant property matters. Which vision is it to be?

Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark): I hope that this first consideration motion will be approved so that the draft Measure can then be committed to the Revision Committee to deal with the detail.

I want to make four points. First, it would be helpful if we could be clearer as to whether the concerns of the Archbishops' Council in relation to not implementing the 2012 motion in full have to do with principle. Is there something about the dynamic relationship between PCC and diocese that suggests the land should be vested in the diocese, or is it really a matter of pragmatism and that we do not want a misguided PCC to make a balls up of it – pardon my French – which would cause damage to the reputation of the Church and untold misery in terms of chasing land that has been alienated? Therefore clarity on principle versus pragmatism would be useful.

Second, the Archdeacon of Tonbridge asked us to suggest where the level of delegated authority might be set. I do not have a figure in mind but I would suggest that we do not confine ourselves simply to a financial value. I think that part of the level of delegated authority needs to be expressed in terms of process. Has the PCC gone through the proper process, taken independent legal advice from suitably qualified lawyers and valuers who understand ecclesiastical and charity law and consulted with our dear archdeacons and others, rather than concentrated on a simple figure?

Third, I understand that in these times of tight resources this is about a balance between avoiding duplication and therefore extra cost, but I want to read an extract from an email that I received from a diocesan finance officer who has to administer the current process. He says that he was very excited when the 2012 motion was passed '...but now I am quite frustrated with the most recent papers that have been provided. ... The interim papers in June 2013 seem to go some way towards acknowledging that the legislation did need amendment. Additionally the background comment in October 2013 made the same point. Reading the

draft Measure it is really difficult to see any material change. The real change that I wanted this proposed alteration to drive is the liberation of the diocese' – that is 'me' in his terms – 'having to manage an overview as custodian trustee (of) the permanent endowment investments for PCCs that were perfectly competent and able to deal with their own affairs. This would have potentially helped me to liberate my existing role to concentrate on helping the smaller PCCs truly manage their permanent endowments to their best advantage.' That again hints at the balance of risk, but I hope it will be listened to by those who will go into the detail.

My final point is that legal advice is already available from the Legal Advisory Commission from 2009. I think that it needs updating, and certainly it will need to be updated and made much clearer if this Measure is passed. In particular I would prefer to see it changed so that it deals not only with the matter of how consent is granted but also with questions such as: what are the duties of PCCs that hold property in these circumstances, what are the duties of dioceses as holding or custodian trustees, and in what circumstances can they withhold consent?

I hope that Synod will vote for the draft Measure.

The Archdeacon of Lincoln (Ven. Tim Barker): Yes I was one of a phalanx of archdeacons from a couple of years ago. I was nervous about some aspects of the Private Member's Motion that we considered in 2012, but I am delighted to welcome the proposed legislation. It takes seriously both the need to reduce the burden of inappropriate controls on PCCs and at the same time the need to help PCCs safeguard the assets of the Church.

If there is any doubt about the importance of safeguarding assets, here is an anecdote from rural Lincolnshire: Earlier this month I visited a tiny parish deep in the heart of the diocese. Closure of that parish and its church had seemed a real possibility but a group of young women wanted a place where they and their children could come to worship. However the church had no electricity; it relied on a cable being brought across the yard from the adjacent farm. Could there be an electrical supply? The parish had no money, or so it thought. An investigation by the diocese's excellent trusts officer revealed the existence of an accrued balance of income of some £12,000 from a trust established some 50 years previously. The move from the village and subsequent death of a former treasurer meant that the fund had been completely forgotten within that community. Without proper safeguards, how easily could it perhaps have been lost from the use of that parish, in a small way evangelism enabled?

I support the draft Measure and hope that Synod will send it on for revision so that in our Church we can have that appropriate balance between flexibility and the protection of the valuable assets of our parishes.

Mrs Julie Dziegiel (Oxford): As I have mentioned several times before, I am the treasurer of my parish. I have also told Synod previously that in that role somehow I have done quite a huge number of property transactions for the parish – from licences to occupied property, from short tenancies to a farm business tenancy, to a particularly troublesome Scouts' hut lease.

In all of this I have found my diocesan authority supportive, helpful and efficient; and, to be honest, I would not have wanted to do the work without it. I am therefore delighted that it

will remain as the diocesan authority, but if there is to be a degree of flexibility or relaxation in the number of transactions that need to be referred to that authority for permission, I would urge dioceses to ensure that they have information available for parishes – preferably easily accessible on their websites – to help people like me who undertake such transactions.

I would not have liked to start my career – and I think that it is a career – in church property transactions without that support, and I would like the information to be available to parishes even though they will no longer be involved. I understand that some matters will most simply be handled by PCCs and that it is right to take away one layer of red tape transactions, and I am prepared to be courageous and go it alone, but I urge that a safety net be provided.

Mr John Ward (London): I am nervous about the spirit of a sentiment that necessarily diocesan authorities are a burden. I want to draw Synod's attention to a debate that took place in our group this morning, and indeed to the fourth guiding principle that will underpin our lives together if we move forward in relation to women bishops. The House of Bishops says that the Church of England remains committed to enabling those with concerns on the grounds of theological conviction about the decision that has been taken to flourish within the its life and structures. The key point I want to make is that although sometimes it may be seen as a bit of extra bureaucracy, the need for the consent of diocesan authorities to significant sums of money in fact is part of the checks and balances necessary to ensure that decisions are taken about significant sums of money in a collective way.

In my own parish, the Victorians had a vision to build a church hall. For reasons that I will not go into, recently we have had to sell it. Now, of course, the PCC has to decide what to do with the proceeds, and in the PCC I sense an inherent tension in trying to decide what is in the best interests of the parish: what vision did the Victorians have for the church hall, and what vision should we now have for this cash? I believe that being required to draw on diocesan authorities and those from a wider perspective within the Church definitely will help the PCC to make its decision.

Therefore, I do not think we should see this change, which broadly speaking seems like a sensible, middle of the road proposal, as a step that does not go far enough. In fact I think that we should rejoice in and celebrate the fact that frankly the Church of England is an unusual charity because within it, power is held at different levels and therefore checks and balances are required in our charity that perhaps would not be required in others.

I welcome the proposal as it stands and believe that it rather carefully holds together that inherent tension between the levels of power and short- and long-term interests. I would therefore urge Synod to vote to send the draft Measure to a Revision Committee but to think very carefully before any amendments are made.

That said, I have one final thought to fly. If there is an issue about trying to decide how much money should be set by order, perhaps we might consider whether in some circumstances it should be set by reference to a proportion of the assets on a PCC's balance sheet. For example for some churches £100,000 may be a small fortune but actually not a great amount for others, and I suggest that there may be some scope for looking at that particular matter. However I stress that I think the right balance has to be struck between central ideas and the structure of the Church as a whole and then what we do individually in our parishes.

Mr Clive Scowen (London): I am not quite sure what churches my friend John Ward knows where £100,000 would not be a significant sum of money, but there we are.

It is fairly evident that what we have before us is not what the Synod asked for. The Synod asked for bread and has been given, if not a stone rather a thin crust. The very modest changes in this draft Measure are welcome – they are better than nothing – but in a spirit of simplification we could do so much better. As others have pointed out, all PCCs are already well regulated by the Charity Commission. Much smaller charities than many PCCs are able to hold their own land subject only to regulation by the Charity Commission; and already canny PCCs get round the requirement to vest land in the DBF by establishing separate trusts that are not subject to the 1956 Measure. Would it not be better to have a system in which the incentive to do that was removed and actually rather greater influence could be brought to bear from the wider Church than is currently possible where a separate trust is established?

The main argument against what I call de-nannyfication appears to be that parishes would lose the involvement and sage advice of their archdeacons who are said to have saved many a parish from folly. I do not doubt that that is so, and the role of archdeacons is enormously valuable, but alternative statutory safeguarding mechanisms could be put in place that would end the requirement for land to be vested in the DBF. PCCs could be made subject to a duty to consult the archdeacon and to have regard to his or her advice. Once the PCC had decided what it thought of that advice, archdeacons could be given a power to require that the DBF's consent be obtained in exceptional cases. That would be a much lighter touch approach, more consistent with the spirit of simplification, in the great majority of cases enabling PCCs to deal with their own property without the need to involve the DBF and the diocesan solicitors, subject only to consulting the archdeacon and on rare occasions being required to go to the diocese if the archdeacon remained deeply unhappy with what the PCC proposed to do.

I shall vote for this draft Measure to go forward for revision, but I hope that the Revision Committee will be bold and robust in making changes to bring it more into line with what the Synod originally asked for and in the spirit of the simplification process that we have welcomed in other areas already in this group of sessions.

Mr Peter Smith (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich): I welcome the draft Measure and will vote in favour of it going forward for revision. However I would like to draw members' attention to clause 2(4)(g) relating to the amendment of the Incumbents and Churchwardens (Trusts) Measure 1964, which reads, 'in respect of which any consideration is paid is less than an amount specified from time to time by an order made by the Archbishops' Council'.

Usually the value of a piece of land that has restrictive covenants attached to it is substantially less than if it had no covenants attached to it. I will give Synod an example. An earlier speaker mentioned the question of a lease to the Scouts. Supposing the local Scouts came to a PCC and said, 'We would like a little piece of your land. We want about 100 square metres and we are prepared to pay £2,000' and the PCC considered the matter and disposed of the land to the Scouts for £2,000, which we will assume is under the limit that the Archbishops' Council may proscribe, and everyone went on their way rejoicing until, say, five or six years down the line the Scouts were approached by a developer who wanted to buy the Scouts' hut in order to construct a road to allow for a major housing development. If, when it had been disposed of, the land had had attached to it a covenant to the effect that it could be used only for charitable purposes by the Scouts, when the Scouts came to sell it to

the property developer the parish would be able to claim a major capital receipt for releasing that covenant.

I give Synod that example to illustrate that we need to be very careful to ensure that PCCs do not just say, 'Please can we have permission to sell a small piece of land for X thousand pounds?' without actually thinking it through and obtaining professional advice from valuers and experts in church law, thus losing out on windfall moneys to which they could have been entitled if they had been properly advised at the time of disposition.

Mrs Debbie Sutton (Portsmouth): I feel on somewhat shaky ground in relation to legislation, but I want to say that sometimes it is not always just about money and property; people are involved as well, and I therefore want to talk about the pastoral aspects of some of this work.

As I listened to the speech introducing this debate, a little alarm bell sounded in my head when I heard about tenants who do not pay their rent. Some years ago when I was a churchwarden, we let our curate's house to a church family that did not pay their rent. It was a grizzly experience and frankly the pastoral relationships were a bit of a disaster. I am not convinced that every PCC would have the necessary expertise to deal with that sort of issue, so I am asking for some reassurance that indeed PCCs will have the support and help that they need to navigate their way through that kind of problem and possibly, not because they want to duck out of their responsibilities, whether there may be occasions on which it would be expedient for another body to take on and deal with that kind of matter rather than the PCC being left with a church family leaving, broken relationships and a really nasty taste remaining for some time afterwards.

The Archdeacon of Tonbridge, in reply: I thank everyone who contributed to the debate. If the Synod carries this motion their comments will feed into the Revision Committee process, and indeed I hope that those who spoke and others will write in to make their contributions to that process.

In the background, of course, we have a number of things to balance, and the word 'balance' has come up quite a few times. The original motion was quite hotly debated and, as I said in my opening speech, despite it having been passed by a majority, a number of members voted against it, so there was a balance of opinion then. We are also trying to balance the circumstances of different sized and differently equipped PCCs so that those who perhaps have fairly small memberships and not necessarily great expertise can be balanced against other parishes in which there is an abundance of expertise. We are trying to cover different situations with one particular Measure.

Thank you to Christopher Hobbs, who moved the original Private Member's Motion, for saying that he is content with small steps, for his support for this motion and his recognition that it covers many circumstances. In the Revision Committee we will be able to see how matters develop further maybe along his original lines or otherwise.

Robert Holgate raised a couple of questions perhaps in the other direction. He asked, 'Does this adequately reflect what the Synod intended?' Other speakers, including Clive Scowen towards the end, also picked up on that theme. He also asked, 'Is the vision empowerment or duplicated regulation?' Again we are trying to balance the needs as between differing circumstances and the varying competencies available in different places.

I thank Adrian Greenwood for his support. Primarily it is a draft Measure aimed at pragmatism rather than the alternative that he put to us of principle, though some principles are involved. He raised the question whether the way to test an appropriate level is not so much by financial figures as process, whether the PCC has done certain things, and clearly process is important here. It is right to have safeguards in place. If the draft Measure proceeds to final approval, I am sure that strong, good guidance will be given to PCCs as a result of this development in the law, and that is quite important. Such guidance could include a number of different themes that various speakers have raised this evening. We are trying to address the balance of risk about which Adrian Greenwood talked. Good guidance will definitely come.

Thank you to Archdeacon Tim of Lincoln for his support. Like him, I too felt nervous about the original motion, but I believe that the new draft Measure manages to achieve the right balance.

It was quite useful to hear one or two of the stories related by people based on their personal experience, which illustrated some of the issues that can arise – for example the unlikely case of the treasurer who moved away and then died, resulting happily in something that had long been forgotten being discovered later with help from the diocese.

Thank you too to Julie Dziegiel for urging that dioceses should make information available. We will do that.

Thank you to John Ward for his support and for the sense of placing an individual local piece of property within the context of the wider membership of the local church, and therefore the wider Church itself, so that we support each other. Indeed many parishes are grateful for the advice, support and counsel that dioceses can offer in that respect. Yes sometimes it is the sage advice of the archdeacons – aren't we wonderful? – but actually archdeacons are not the only ones who can offer advice and wisdom. Very often others within a diocesan team have very strong expertise, and parishes can benefit enormously from what they contribute to the final outcome of some particular decision at parish level – and not necessarily only a property type decision either.

John Ward touched on the level at which sums of money should be set. He suggested that we consider whether it might be set by reference to the proportional value of the assets. We have heard that and will reflect on it in Revision Committee, and if members have any suggestions in that respect I urge them to submit them to us in writing.

Thank you to Clive Scowen. Not quite what Synod asked for? Yes we are trying to get the balance right, Clive. Thank you for wanting to see it go through to revision stage when we can consider some of these issues further. It is worth making the point that the ultimate ownership of the property is not changing; it is still PCC property but it is being safeguarded, if possible, so that it is properly handled for the benefit of the PCC and its ministry both now and potentially in times to come.

To Peter Smith, thank you for your example of land possibly being sold to Scouts with a developer coming in later. That again is a situation where wise advice from those with more expertise and experience can help in the making of good decisions. Even if in due course parishes go for something below whatever the set limit might be, they can still approach their dioceses to see what advice they can offer. I suspect that in that particular example charity

law would have kicked in and affected how the original decision would have been made anyway.

I am grateful to Debbie Sutton for picking up on the pastoral side of things. Anything that we deal with is not confined simply to numbers and figures or documents and deeds; there are people involved at all stages. I can also understand that sometimes a party that is a little remote from the immediate situation – in this case it might be the diocese – can help those most immediately involved to find their way through difficult and tense personal circumstances in the locality.

I thank all members of Synod for their contributions and invite them to support my motion.

The motion was put and carried.

The Chair: The carrying of the motion means that the draft Measure is now automatically committed to a Revision Committee. As stated on page 10 of the Agenda, any member who wishes to submit proposals for its amendment should send them in writing to the Clerk to the Synod – I am tempted to say in lieu of a Christmas card since they are due here no later than 5.30 p.m. on Monday 23 December. That concludes this item of business.

THE CHAIR *Mr Aiden Hargreaves-Smith (London)* took the Chair at 5.30 p.m.

Draft Vacancy in See Committees (Amendment) Regulation 2013 (GS 1922)

Draft Instrument for Approval

The Archbishop of York (Dr John Sentamu): I beg to move:

‘That the Vacancy in See Committees (Amendment) Regulation 2013 be approved.’

I do not propose to speak for very long, as I believe that the papers set before Synod are self-explanatory.

In July 2012 the General Synod resolved, on a motion moved on behalf of Bradford diocesan synod, that the Vacancy in See Committees Regulations be amended so as to secure that Vacancy in See Committees have at least 21 members. The purpose of the amending regulation before the Synod today is to give effect to that mandate.

The aim of the amendment regulation is to remove a potential problem identified by Bradford diocese whereby a small number of *ex officio* members on the committee could mean that a Vacancy in See Committee is too small to ensure the election of six members to the Crown Nominations Commission.

As set out in paragraphs 8 and 9 of GS 1922X, it is proposed that this be achieved by amending paragraph 1(b) of the Vacancy in See Committees Regulations so that the number of clergy and laypersons to be elected to the committee must be such that, in addition to meeting the other requirements laid down about membership, there are at least 21 members.

The change will take effect from 31 January 2014 to allow time for guidance to be provided to dioceses, but will not apply to any Vacancy in See Committee where a vacancy has been announced prior to that date.

The motion was put and carried.

The Chair: The regulation is accordingly approved and I therefore call on the Archbishop of Canterbury to move the next item from the Chair.

THE CHAIR *The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby)* took the Chair at 5.32 p.m.

The Chair: We come now to Item 511, the proclamation of the Vacancy in See Committees Regulations 1993, as further amended, as an Act of Synod. I accordingly move, with the concurrence of the Archbishop of York and of the Business Committee:

‘That the Vacancy in See Committees Regulation 1993, as amended by the Vacancy in See Committees (Amendment) Regulation 2003, the Vacancy in See Committees (Amendment) Regulation 2007 and the Vacancy in See Committees (Amendment) Regulation 2008, and as to be amended by the Vacancy in See Committees (Amendment) Regulation 2013 upon the coming into force of that Regulation, be solemnly affirmed and proclaimed an Act of Synod.’

The motion was put and carried.

The Chair: The motion having been carried, I shall now ratify and confirm the Act of Synod for the Province of Canterbury and shall invite the Archbishop of York to do the same for the Province of York.

I now call upon the Registrar to read to the Synod the customary form of proclamation.

The Registrar read the Act of Proclamation.

The Chair: The Act of Synod will now be transmitted to the diocesan synods.

THE CHAIR *Mr Geoffrey Tattersall (Manchester)* took the Chair at 5.40 p.m.

Diocesan Synod Motion

Review of the Workings of the General Synod (GS 1914A and GS 1914B)

Mr Anirban Roy (London): I beg to move:

‘That this Synod request the Archbishops’ Council and the Business Committee to set in motion a review of the workings of the Synod and to propose alternatives to the parliamentary model currently used, the review to include consideration of:

- (a) the frequency and length of groups of sessions;
- (b) the ways in which debate takes place and decisions are made; and
- (c) whether, in the light of recent changes in the democratic structures of local government and other public bodies, the current synodical framework and representative structures are still fit for purpose.’

In July there was only one debate that really mattered, the safeguarding debate on Sunday afternoon. This is from the survivor's statement that opened the debate: 'It is an indication of where the Church of England is in hearing the voices of those who have been caused irreparable harm within the Church that survivors are not allowed to speak for themselves. ... We have been told it has to do with "other" debates taking place over the coming days and the danger of setting a precedent.'

What have we become? What have we become when we muzzle the voices of the survivors of abuse because some of us might use it as a precedent? If Synod remembers nothing else of what is said today, it should remember that. That is why we need to start a process to reform General Synod – us, here, today.

If it is still not thought that reform is necessary, here is a postscript to that story. At the end of that debate in July, 360 people voted on the motion. The next day we debated Women in the Episcopate; 425 people voted. The difference is 65. Sixty-five members of General Synod had something more important to do on a Sunday afternoon in the middle of Synod than to engage with abuse in the Church. One in seven of those in this room think that safeguarding is less important than Women in the Episcopate.

What does Christ think? Christ was in that chamber on that Sunday afternoon. Was he sitting here with us or was he with the survivors we kept out? Let us look at this motion in those terms. Would Jesus be a member of General Synod? Would he see himself reflected in us and the way we behave? Would he recognize his teachings in our Standing Orders or legislation? Put another way, would he see us loving our neighbours as ourselves? In some ways, I think that he would. I can see Christ when we stand up for the vulnerable, for those with no voice of their own. I can see Christ when we speak with passion about the mission of our Church. I can see Christ when we hear of those working on the fringes of society. But I cannot always see Christ.

The fact that we sometimes do things well does not mean that we always do things well. We get caught up in processes and procedures rather than in God's will. We question each other's right to be Christians. We use Scripture as a weapon. So let us commit to finding a way to change how our debates take place; a way to lose our parliamentary model; to change the way in which we make decisions.

Paul says to the Corinthians that 'Since there is jealousy and quarrelling among you, are you not worldly? For when one says "I follow Paul" and another "I follow Apollos" are you not mere human beings?' Our labels of 'liberal', 'conservative', 'Catholic', 'evangelical' – whatever – are modern ways of saying that we follow Apollos or Paul. Our structures force us to be worldly. We form factions. This divisiveness is not what God intends for us. Paul tells the Corinthians, 'We are co-workers in God's service.' To go toe to toe does not further the Kingdom of God.

The report from the Business Committee notes some of the helpful incremental changes that it is considering. Let us acknowledge that the green shoots emerging from the way that we are using small groups are a sign that we can get it right; but incremental is not enough. This motion creates the possibility for us to think radically.

Let me turn to another aspect of Synod. If we look around this room, I do not think any of us would claim that we fully mirror the people of England. Let me take the most obvious

example. Of our two elected Houses, 15 out of 376 members are under the age of 40. To put it crudely, where are the people like me? Where are those members with primary school age children when we debate education? Where are those members living with student debt, youth unemployment and benefit cuts when we debate welfare? Frankly, where are those of us who in 50 years' time will still be living with the decisions that this Synod makes? More importantly, why are those people not here? What is it about our structure and process that is stopping them from taking part?

To be clear, this is not about age; it is about reflecting the communities we represent; about trying to find ways to make it possible for them to participate in Synod. It is asking what it is about our structures and procedures that may be putting off who would otherwise stand. This is not about quotas or reserved places. Let us fix the real problems, not put a sticking plaster over them.

How does this motion address any of that? In July, Archbishop Justin said that we are in a time of revolution; we are at a time when we have to look afresh at all of our structures; we are at a time for reimagining the ministry of General Synod – and it *is* the ministry.

If the Synod carries this motion, we start a detailed discussion on what it is that we are here for. Yes we will ask how often we should meet. Yes we will ask how to make it easy for people to participate. Yes we will ask how we should relate to ourselves, how we relate to each other and to the dioceses. But we can use this process to ask more than that.

I thank the Clerk to the Synod for her helpful background note. In its last sentence she identified the heart of the task. In 1993, two decades after General Synod was created, the Bridge Commission started a review of synodical government. Now we are two decades further on and this motion asks that question again. However, as the Clerk points out, this motion cannot just be about looking at ourselves as a Synod. She suggests that we have to ask questions about the organization and governance of the Church of England more generally. I hope that today's debate will tease out whether we want to do that.

Let me suggest briefly why that may be necessary. The motion calls for a review of the frequency and length of our meetings, which could mean – not necessarily but it could – a reduction of the time that we spend at Synod. If so, there has to be a consequence. To reduce meaningfully the amount of time we meet, we need to change what we do. We need to decentralize, to delegate, to trust our parishes, our priests, our dioceses and our bishops, because therein lies our true talent. Are we prepared as a Synod to let the Church of England do the work of God with less control from us? If we trust God and God's people, we can truly reform ourselves. If we want to keep power to ourselves, then we cannot. It calls for a revolution.

I know that this motion is light on specifics. It is not because I do not have a very clear idea of what I would love the Synod to be but, frankly, who cares what I think? It is about what *we* think. This debate is to ask the question about whether we as a Synod are prepared to have that conversation.

The light is still green and I want to hear what members of Synod have to say. I look forward to hearing the debate.

The Chair: The motion is open for debate.

Miss Emma Forward (Exeter): I am not speaking strongly in favour or against this motion; I just want to hear how the debate goes. However, I will raise some factors that we ought to consider if we seek to enable more young people to serve on the General Synod. These are simply points from personal experience. I speak from the perspective of a lay member, although I accept that there may also be some factors here that overlap with factors affecting young clergy.

First, the vast majority of young people on General Synod will be in full-time work or education, or hope to be. On the subject of employment, young people may not have the same degree of flexibility as older members when it comes to leave from work in order to attend Synod. Young people who are new to their careers are more at the mercy of their employer, keen to impress and prove their consistency, and perhaps less inclined to ask for leave to attend Synod's meetings. Furthermore, this is particularly true of young people who, like me, are on General Synod and feel that the bare minimum of Synod's expectations is the maximum they are able to ask of their employer. This excludes young people from serving on committees, boards and working parties, on top of their ordinary Synod commitments. It also becomes particularly difficult if emergency meetings are called at short notice, as we may not be able to beg another day off work.

Next, young laity may have more need or inclination to relocate dioceses within their Synod term. This may be because they wish to experience living in more than one place before they settle down or in order to seek the best employment opportunities.

Young people may not have the means to travel easily to attend diocesan and deanery synod meetings that are expected of us. In a diocese like mine, Exeter, it is virtually impossible to get to deanery synod meetings across the county without a car. This may not be possible or practical for young people who have not yet learned to drive or who cannot afford to run a car.

Finally, those in their twenties and thirties may have a young family. Do we want people to continue their term if they have children or is it simply too much to ask someone to manage?

In 2014, I turn 30 and it will be my ninth year on General Synod. I can honestly say that standing for General Synod was a decision that I do not regret and I would recommend the experience to young people who might want to stand themselves. I have felt consistently welcomed and valued as a young member and as the youngest female for eight of those years. It continues to be an experience that brings incredible opportunities and is both fascinating and a privilege to be part of. I hope that future discussions will keep young people's needs in mind, as we seek to take the Church of England further into the 21st century.

The Bishop of Salisbury (Rt Revd Nicholas Holtam): It is always pleasing to see the way in which a motion works its way up through the synodical process: from the PCC at St Martin-in-the-Fields to Westminster St Margaret's deanery to London diocese, and the Bishop of Salisbury supports it too.

My interest in the way in which people are elected to Synod was focused because, coming out of the major building works at St Martin's, we were wanting to re-engage with the wider Church, having had a very intense experience through that rebuilding programme. I am

pleased that two members of St Martin's were elected to General Synod – Anirban Roy to the House of Laity and Clare Herbert to the House of Clergy.

Elections in London are hot. The diocese of London is the Church of England's star performer. It pains me to say this now! The competition was 27 clergy standing and 52 laity for 10 seats in each House. The electorate of the laity is confined to deanery synod representatives, so in London – a diocese with over 70,000 on the electoral rolls – half of the deanery synod representatives voted; 566 people got to vote for their 10 representatives. It is a complex system of voting, as the Synod will know. Very few understand it but it is alleged to be very fair. London's leading candidates romped home in the House of Laity with 60 votes – 5.3 per cent of the electorate, 10.6 per cent of those who voted. The House of Clergy was marginally more impressive – 56 per cent of clergy voted from an electorate of 823. The two leading clerical candidates were elected with 66 votes and 44 votes, the first being 14 per cent of the electorate and 9.5 per cent of those who voted; this in a diocese with over 70,000 on the electoral rolls.

In these elections London is outstanding, at least in terms of the numbers of candidates. In Liverpool there were six candidates for five places in each of the Houses of Clergy and Laity. In Hereford, there were four candidates for three places among the clergy and five candidates for three places in the laity. Overall, in the six dioceses with the lowest numbers, 31 clergy stood for 22 places.

The evidence suggests that being on General Synod is of not much interest. When I joined, I was shocked that I enjoyed it so much. I also remember walking around the campus in York one evening, in conversation with a friend, and walking from one party meeting to another party meeting, with people doing their business outside the Synod in a way that was talking in silos and actually encouraging us to think in terms of 'parties'. I am even more annoyed to discover that we pay for the rooms in which they meet. It is part of the synodical process.

Synod is immensely important but we meet as laity, clergy and bishops; 467 of those who ought to be among our best people meeting for between 9 and 13 days a year most years. It is not just the time in Synod but the preparatory meetings, all the follow-up work. It skews the way in which we understand and do our business as Church.

Parishes, deaneries and dioceses got the message some time ago that we need to be a mission-shaped Church. The way we do our business has skewed this, and the Synod needs to catch up with the rest of the Church in the way we do our business.

When the Synod was set up, Michael Ramsey talked about how good it was, but that the side effect, which was unintended, was the amount of bureaucracy, the number of meetings, the way in which it trapped our attention from the ministry and mission of the Church. That seems to me to be a pattern that I recognize and I encourage us to review our business with all seriousness and urgency.

Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford): I should begin by saying that I am not in principle against a review of the governance of General Synod from time to time, but I am worried about the lack of a clear rationale behind these particular proposals.

The fact is that there exists within the Church of England, and reflected in this Synod, sharp divisions of opinion on a variety of subjects. It is perhaps wishful thinking to suppose that

any change in the procedure will make those divisions go away. There is a possibility that we might come up with a procedure to sanitize and mask those divisions, but that would not be an honest thing to do.

One of the features of the current process is that the establishment – for want of a better word – does not always get its own way. A couple of examples spring to mind. In the last quinquennium, the Synod effectively defeated proposals to transfer the ownership of churches, churchyards and parsonage houses to diocesan boards of finance. If it had not been for the will of the majority of this Synod, it would not have come out that way.

Another example is perhaps the last thing that some people in the Synod might expect me to mention, namely the defeat of the Anglican Covenant by means of an Article 8 reference to diocesan synods. It will not surprise many members of Synod to know that I was not thrilled with the outcome of that process, but I do not question the legitimacy of that process. It resulted in an outcome that not everybody would have wanted but it was legitimate – unlike the usual kind of diocesan synod process, where there are usually a lot of presentations, followed by some discussion, which is quite often fairly bland, and various people make comments, observations and ask a few questions, which may or may not be heeded, but by and large it has no real teeth. When I was younger I recall that I had a badge which said, ‘If I want your opinion I’ll give it to you.’ Sometimes diocesan synods can feel a bit like that, I am afraid – and I am not getting at you, as I look at my diocesan bishop!

I am worried, however, that that is what the General Synod may end up like if we go down this line, and I do not think that I would want to spend my time here if it was like that. We may end up with an appearance of more unity and collegiality than actually does exist. Our present procedures allow dissent to be expressed in a substantive way, which may actually have an effect on the outcome of the process. I think we need to retain that.

Church governance is a complex and serious business. I do not think that we should see it as a problem that the General Synod is made up mainly of people who tend to have reasonable levels of intellectual equipment and education, who are reasonably articulate and confident in getting their point across and, of course, not excessively constrained by modesty.

It is also important that those of us who are here are able to find the time to devote to the process. For many years on this Synod I had to take some of my sparse annual leave to be here. I was not at all happy about that, but the fact is that if you want to be involved in something you have to be there.

I think that there has been a lot of goodwill throughout this Synod towards the special process we followed this time on women bishops, which has obviously departed from the normal synodical procedure. However, this is an exceptional process for dealing with an unusual situation. There may very well be a case for using such a process again in special circumstances, but that does not necessitate a full-scale review.

A distinctive and precious feature of Anglicanism at every level is that governance is a matter for bishops, clergy and laity taking counsel together. I have a concern that the effect of this motion, in the context of the thinking behind it, could be centralizing, diminishing the role in governance of the clergy and the laity. I very much hope that the Synod will display the wisdom of the existing processes in defeating it.

Mr Tim Hind (Bath and Wells): I think I am in favour of this motion but – and there is a big ‘but’ – what we need to do is to think through what we are trying to do. For example, Prudence Dailey has just mentioned the special process we have been going through on the episcopate. Actually, we have not had a special process; what we have done is to discover processes that we already had and we have deployed them properly. Therefore, we already have within our power ways in which we can change the way that we do Synod. I think it is important to remember that, so let us not go overboard.

Secondly, I want to highlight the fact that we have the work of the Elections Review Group tomorrow afternoon, talking about the electorate for the House of Laity. That will be a big issue and it goes in tandem with what Anirban Roy has been talking about this afternoon.

If we want to know how to do Synod, we need to know what the Synod is and what it might become, and not waste too much time fixing a problem that we have now – if we have a problem – only to find that we have changed the problem underneath in a few months or years’ time.

Looking at the Agenda, just above Anirban Roy’s Diocesan Synod Motion we find the Wakefield motion, which asks about how we organize our Church as a whole. Clearly, when it comes to it, if our Church organization changes we will need to change the governance and parliamentary processes that we use to deal with legislation for that Church.

By all means let us start to carry out a review of the workings of Synod, but let us make sure that we take a little time so that the other two motions we have before us can catch up. We can then do one single, good piece of work to do a good bit of reform overall.

The Chair called Revd Steven Saxby for a maiden speech.

Revd Steven Saxby (Chelmsford): This is only my second time at Synod, following an election in a vacant see to what will soon become the diocese of East London and TOWIE! Lots of people have asked me what it is like and my response has been, ‘It’s pretty awful.’ What worries me most is that I may get used to it and come to think that it is not that bad after all; but for the time being I can afford to be provocative.

It is not that as a new member I am intimidated by the procedures and so forth; much of that is familiar to me from my days of being active in a student union. It is not that I do not like parliamentary procedure; in fact I love it. I just do not think the Church of England should conduct its business like a student union or try to ape Parliament.

What would I like to see? I would like the Church of England nationally to do business like a Church. I suggest that there are three marks of being a Church that we might seek to embody in any reworking of the current model.

First, let us be relational. We have already seen the fruits of this through the group work that has started at General Synod – thanks be to God. What we are discovering is that the quality of our common life is enhanced by our attention to each other’s stories and perspectives.

I spend half of my week working from an office in Central Hall, across the road, which is used for national gatherings all of the time. What I observe is that they almost always gather around round tables – even the rather unnerving nuclear group who met there last week. Why

don't we be relational all the time? Why don't we sit round tables in this room? Let us aspire to be a Church where our love for each other flows over to those who encounter our work at national level. Let us do that after the pattern of the Holy Trinity, who is loving relationship flowing over into the world.

Secondly, let us be theological. I suggest that we develop processes which help us to learn from our experiences, bring this into conversation with Scripture and Tradition, actually open our Bibles and talk about Jesus with one another, and then pray together for the Holy Spirit to guide us as we distil our common learning and use that as the basis for action. I helped reshape my own deanery synod in this fashion using the model of the pastoral cycle, and I reckon we can do it at national level too. We are a gathering of the Church, so let us gather in such a way that we use the resources of the Church to enhance our action in the dioceses and communities we represent.

Finally, let us be inspirational. I suggest that we ditch the General Synod altogether. Why not have a Conference of Bishops, like the Conference of Catholic Bishops – but with women – surrounded by a small council of advisers who sort out, in private, the necessary but dull and detailed matters of internal Church life. Let us then have a broad-based Church Assembly, modelled on the assemblies of Citizens UK and of the People's Assemblies, whereby we bring together the diverse membership of the Church of England to tackle matters of importance to our communities and where we invite those in power to come and do public business with us. Let us engage on credit unions, for example, not by a tokenistic 90-minute slot amidst all the dreary business of the current model, but by bringing representatives of our membership from our poorest communities together, bringing families and their young children, bringing migrants, bringing older, vulnerable people, and bringing others; and then bringing the chief executives of Wonga and others here to be brought to account by them.

The assemblies of Citizens UK, where 500 to 2,000 people gather together, many of them from Churches, show that this sort of thing can be done. I see no reason why we should not be doing it as the Church of England, acting in the public square and using a relational and theological model of working together to provide inspirational leadership within civil society.

Let us not just rework but let us ditch General Synod. Let us make a great leap forward. Let us prepare to put ourselves out of the business of boring ourselves and the nation to death, so that we can start to do the real business of working for the common good, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Mr Sam Margrave (Coventry): I come from Coventry. In the election when I was elected to the House of Laity there were 11 candidates. It was a diverse range of candidates, some of whom were younger than me – in this eternal fountain of youth that I seem to have joined, where I will be forever 'young'!

As the target audience for this motion, I read the report with some interest and I would like to respond to the following points first: importantly, cost. When I suggested at the last session of Synod that we pray for those suffering because of the bedroom tax, I was told by Andrew Britton that prayer would cost £10,000. I therefore wonder how much this will now cost. I also acknowledge that time is indeed precious. Marriage and children are a vocation. However, there is already provision in this place to support those who are missing time from work and their employers, in order for members to be able to be here.

Imagine if we met once a year. All we would talk about is legislation and about who can decide where plants go in churchyards. I therefore do not believe that a review will bring younger people here. I am worried that the report did the Synod and the Church down, because I believe that there are a lot of positive relationships here and it is up to every one of us to get more young people – by passing on the baton, by encouraging people and educating them, by supporting them.

As a former student union officer, having been on the National Union of Students and the British Youth Council, also involved with regional assemblies – and the list goes on – I have attended more meetings and have been involved in more constitutional reviews than members can imagine. I have grown up with points of order and red lights warning people to be quiet – not that anybody ever listened! From my own experience, the Synod is not really that complicated. It is easy to get involved and each and every one of us has an opportunity to speak. We can put forward our own motions. It is actually relatively simple and ordered.

When I read the report, I was very sad that it appeared to suggest that we are rude or poor examples of Christians. That hurt a great deal, because since November I have seen all of us work together in love, sharing our Church in the joy of Christ outpouring in our lives.

Think about it. We have had role play to explore the issues around women in the episcopate; we have changed the way we work, to meet and talk to each other. I think that there is something very different between the Synod and Parliament. We already have the flexible framework to do whatever we like. Despite the Church seeming disconnected from my community and generation, therefore, we actually have a really good story to tell. We should be proud and thank God for His blessing.

Archbishop Rowan Williams once said, ‘Mission is finding out what God is doing and joining in.’ That is true and it is our true role, not necessarily to be representatives but servants.

I am proud of our Church, proud of the good story we have to tell and I want us to celebrate it. I believe that all the things we want to aim for by means of this motion can already be achieved. I value the members here, many of whom have much wisdom and age and many of whom have pointed me in a direction, because it is so easy to get lost. We have some wonderful people here.

Something must be right about our current system because we have two of the most inspirational Archbishops of my generation and a Church that is trying to work together, despite our differences. I suggest that we should use what we already have; let us work together and create a Synod for the next generation using the one we already have, by going out there and passing on the baton to those in our dioceses and parishes.

Revd Canon Matthew Baynes (Worcester): In proposing the amendment, which I do on behalf of the Worcester diocesan synod, we are seeking not so much to change what we understand to be the emphasis of the London motion but to give it a greater clarity and to add the dimension of accountability that General Synod has to the other parts of our synodical structures at diocesan and deanery level. I recognize, though, that we may be coming at this from a somewhat different starting point.

Like many diocesan synods around the country, ours in Worcester was left feeling both angry and bemused by the events in November 2012. How was it, I was asked on so many occasions, when diocesan synods had voted in such overwhelming numbers, did we end up where we did? One could just say that that is the nature of democracy but, back in the dioceses, it certainly felt that it was a strange kind of democracy where relatively small numbers were able to block a change that was overwhelmingly yearned for. It also seemed to diminish the nature of synodical governance as a whole if the debate and decisions of deanery and diocesan synods counted for nought.

In Worcester we had taken the debate very seriously and, in our preparation, members had received both written and visual material for the debate. People were invited to approach the debate in prayer and in a spirit of openness, determined to listen to the arguments on both sides. Members of diocesan synod voted, believing that under the synodical system their decision-making was taken seriously and would make a difference to the final outcome.

Following what happened last November, many were left feeling diminished and that their time had been wasted. As a parish priest who often has to lean on people quite hard to be interested in both deanery and diocesan synods, I felt that many of the misgivings expressed by people – that it was pointless and a waste of their time – was simply reinforced.

In seeking this amendment, members of the Worcester diocesan synod wish to ask the following questions of those who would be involved with a review of the workings of General Synod. What is the purpose of the Synod and where does it fit into the life of the Church? How can it be more accountable to the wishes and needs of the wider Church? To pick up from Archbishop Justin's presidential address at the summer Synod in York, we ask in what way the current structures of General Synod would enable us to rise to the challenge of achieving the quinquennial goals and become a body that will serve the whole Church, in this time that the Archbishop rightly identifies as being a time of revolution? How do we attract a younger membership?

I rather loathe the term 'fit for purpose', which has become something of a cliché; however, we do need a Synod that serves the needs of a Church where many of the presumptions of the past no longer apply, and the context in which it is called to serve is changing at an almost bewildering speed. We also need to ask how we address such situations when it seems that General Synod is so out of step with the wishes of the vast majority of diocesan synods.

I therefore ask the Synod, when given the opportunity, to support the Worcester diocesan amendment that stands in my name.

Revd Prebendary David Houlding (London): I was concerned that I did not see many others from the diocese of London standing, so I felt duty-bound to intervene; not least because, as Chair of the House of Clergy in London, with the then vicar of St Martin-in-the-Fields I helped to devise the wording of this motion.

My mentor many years ago, who subsequently became the Bishop of Edmonton and encouraged me to stand for Synod, gave me a very useful little tip: 'If you live by the Synod, you will die by the Synod.' I treasure that comment; I keep it up my sleeve, and I feel that I am rapidly approaching death! However, I do remember that sensation of first being elected many, many years ago; so there is something about the length of time that any of us should serve on this Synod. I think that needs to be addressed, whether we are clergy or laity.

How things have changed. I am still here. I still witter on about the same old things. I also always have the phrase up my sleeve, ‘Never miss an opportunity’; and I try always to make sure that I speak on a variety of subjects, rather than being linked in with one particular subject – of which I am very tired.

It is very easy to equate the General Synod of the Church of England with the Church of England. We are *not* the Church of England, and I think the Bishop of Salisbury has brought out that point very clearly. There is an issue about representation that needs to be addressed, but this motion was also born out of the whole model of the way we do our work being the parliamentary model, which I want to suggest is no longer fit for purpose.

We simply stick to our guns all the time. Of course there are differences and there is diversity. It is important that that is expressed in the life of the Synod, but simply locking ourselves into corners and fighting it out will not do. Surely, although this motion is not about any one particular issue, we have learnt that recently very painfully in the way we have proceeded over our debates on women in the episcopate. At last we have made real progress, because we are doing it differently and we are listening.

You can tweak things all you like; you can change the way the Synod works; you do not necessarily end up with what you want either. Although of course I am very supportive of what this motion is about, it also comes with a caution. We will not necessarily end up where we want to be. However, surely what we do and the way we do it is not the right model for where we are as a Church? The majority rules, OK? I do not think so. Synod is about walking in the way, the way of Christ, and I have a feeling that we still have a very great deal to learn.

Revd Canon Susan Booy (Oxford): I am beginning to feel rather old and crumbly, so I have to keep remembering that for ten years I was the youngest lay Reader in the Oxford diocese. However, I thought it might be helpful to make one or two comments from the perspective of the Business Committee.

I want to begin with the sense of a movement of the Spirit, which I notice in both Mr Roy and Jacqui Phillips’ paper. There is the movement of the Spirit that kept this coming to us from the London diocese, despite all kinds of obstacles and, in Jacqui’s paper, the sense that the Spirit works through our processes and through our continuing commitment to keep looking at what we do and how we do it.

Interestingly, in the group in which I was working this morning, the question that was on a number of people’s lips was ‘How are we going to live and work together in the future?’ That was not necessarily about a reform of Synod; it was about a reform of the way we relate to one another. I think that both may well be the same thing.

I have a question in my mind, which is this. Are we broken or do we need the attention of an engineer with a large can of oil? Do we need the Spirit’s help in paying attention to our machinery? In the speech I made in the debate on the Agenda, I mentioned that the Business Committee has met with Archbishop Justin, and I followed that up this morning with a meeting with some folk from the Panel of Chairs.

We should give proper attention to a point that has already been made in this debate, about rediscovering a proper use of the tools we already have. Tim has spoken to that already.

We have heard a balance of opinion in this debate so far, from people who are passionate about, if not keeping things the way they are, giving our processes a good bat, and others who are pretty determined on revolution. We have heard some sensible things said, which I would reiterate, about there being streams of things coming to us at the moment that require good and sensible attention from the Business Committee and from the Archbishops' Council. From the whole Synod? Probably not in this large gathering and in this kind of a way.

I want to draw out a number of the threads I have heard, which I will be taking back to the Business Committee, because we are already engaged on a process; we have already set aside some extra time to talk about the way Synod works together. These are the threads I will be carrying back: finding ways to hear voices from outside ourselves and to engage with those groups of people; exploring new ways of working together, building on some of our recent experiences; putting God's mission first but paying attention to the experience of others inside and outside the chamber; reducing our dependence on and allowing of the silos that beset us in this chamber; asking that question, 'How can we live together in the future?' Finally, continuing to acknowledge and recognize that we are a National Church and that we need a place where we will relate to the nation and to Government.

I do not stand here, urging the Synod to vote one way or another; I am simply telling you what is in our mind, the way we are working – and what we will be doing anyway.

The Chair: Canon Baynes, can I ask you to move Item 23 formally?

Revd Canon Matthew Baynes (Worcester): I beg to move as an amendment:

‘After “currently used” *insert* “that would identify and introduce accountabilities to ensure that a properly balanced and appropriate understanding and representation of the needs and opinions of the whole Church is reflected in Synod’s deliberations and decisions”.’

Mr Anirban Roy: Is everyone having fun? I am having a great time tonight!

In general, amendments have made this motion better. This is probably a good opportunity to thank my London colleagues, those who supported this and those who did not, for getting this into shape for the Synod. In that context, I thank Matthew for his amendment and I am very sympathetic to the sentiment behind Worcester's amendment.

Of course, we need to reflect and understand the needs and opinions of the whole Church. I have a minor reservation in that this may focus on one particular aspect of the changes we want to make and so run the risk of inadvertently skewing where this ends up, but that is not a big enough concern for me to want to oppose it.

However, I do hope that we get the opportunity to debate this. Whatever happens to this motion, I want the Synod to own and engage with this issue. If we do not debate it, then we may either nod it through or ignore it without having had the conversation. Let us debate and vote on it, to make sure that it is something that we really do, or do not, want to do.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

Revd Canon Suzanne Sheriff (York): I want to pick up on the ‘representative of the whole Church’ comment, because I would have to say that it does not feel very representative. We have heard a lot from young people but I would like to talk on behalf of the Northern Province.

I am very interested that this has been brought by the London diocese because generally, as a non-London person, I would have described General Synod as being a London-style of doing things. I confess my fault in that and I apologize. However, I would like to hear things like more regional dialects amongst members, representatives of people who come from the heart of things.

With the elections for the Business Committee, it was interesting to be told yesterday that by choosing somebody from the Northern Province we had doubled the number of northerners on the Business Committee, making it two rather than the previous one. Also in relation to Questions, at the last couple of sessions only slightly more than 10 per cent of the Questions have come from the Northern Province. I wonder whether somehow something changes the farther away we get from London geographically. Is it because of the extra problems with the meeting we have in the summer being in York or the fact that if you are on committees and boards there is still an awful lot of travelling to do down to London? I am not sure, but I think that underneath all of this there is something that says we are not representative at the moment, either geographically or even in terms of members of our churches.

Speaking personally, I have to wait until I feel sick to the pit of my stomach and cannot shut up any longer before I am able to stand up here and say anything. It does seem as if a majority of the speeches are made by a minority of the members of Synod and that we see the same faces over and over again. I admit that they are very eloquent, and I do not claim to be a brilliant wordsmith; but I think that there is room for common sense and for sensible talking.

We are not representative at the moment. I do not have any answers but what I like about this is the shake-up and the questions that are being asked as to whether we could be more representative of the Church as a whole.

Revd Dr Philip Plyming (Guildford): I declare an interest as one of only three members of the House of Clergy under the age of 40 – at least, until January.

I share the concern behind this motion and behind the amendment. I stand to speak because I am slightly nervous about some of the amendment’s language, in particular the phrase ‘identify and introduce accountabilities’. There is just something in me that is a little nervous about the idea of changing the rules of elections because we do not like the results.

I think that we should be proud of the STV system we have, which ensures that we have a greater diversity in this body than other forms of legislative and council bodies in our country. I am very nervous about introducing new rules simply because the decision in November, or whatever future decision, did not happen in the way we think it should have done. I want to give a note of caution about changing rules on that basis.

For me, that has tapped into a wider concern about the motion. To echo Sue Booy’s comment, I do not believe that this is broken; I believe that it is in need of reform. I do not think that reform will best be achieved by a costly, lengthy, and I have to say potentially very confusing, motion that is set before us – or, rather, the debate that will continue.

Three questions remain very live for me. First, is what we are asking the Committee to do realistic? Second, is it the right way to go about change? I think that evolution rather than revolution is the way forward. Finally, is this really a priority? Yesterday we debated intentional evangelism. I hope that we want to put all our energy behind that.

I know that it is possible for this Synod to do more than one thing at once. However, I suggest that the urgency should be focused around evolution, not setting up a new Bridge-style report. I do not know where that would go or what value it would deliver.

Mr Gerald O'Brien (Rochester): I feel a little concerned about the motion and this amendment. We may look around this Synod and may not like what we see. We propose that the remedy for this is that we should look at the workings of the Synod, tweak how often we meet, where we meet, when we meet, how we meet and how we discuss things. The amendment is saying that we want 'a properly balanced and appropriate understanding and representation of the needs and opinions of the whole Church' and that this should be 'reflected in Synod's deliberations and decisions'. That is exactly what we do not want.

The problem is that we live in cloud cuckoo land. We have an imaginary idea of what the Church ought to be like and, when we look around Synod, it is not what we would like to see. People can say, 'This Synod is unrepresentative' and that is a great rallying cry, but the problem is that this Synod is *too* representative of the Church of England.

Let me explain what I mean and give just one example. Paragraph 9 of GS 1914A: 'The frequency and length of meetings has an impact on who can afford the time to stand for General Synod. As at November 2010, 62 per cent of the House of Laity were aged 60 or over (compared to around 22 per cent of the population).' Shock, horror – how terrible! But why is that? If members of Synod were paying attention to the debate yesterday on intentional evangelism, they may have seen a little graph that Gavin Oldham kindly circulated. The reason that 62 per cent of the General Synod are aged over 60 is because about 62 per cent of the Church of England is aged over 60. If you want to know where the under-40s are, most of them are not Christians or have no denominational allegiance; half of those who have any allegiance are with the free Churches – the Newfrontiers, the New Wine, the new expressions; a chunk of them are Roman Catholics; and a small minority are Anglicans. That is the reason why we do not have young people here: we do not have them in our churches.

If we want to do something about it, for goodness' sake let us not tinker with the way we run this Synod, the sorts of debates we have, whether our procedures are too parliamentary or not parliamentary enough, and whether we meet during the week or at weekends. Let us get to grips with what the intentional evangelism debate yesterday was all about and say that we have to get out there, make disciples, persuade people to give their allegiance to the Lord Jesus Christ, and get them in our churches as a powerful praying and worshipping community – and then they will be here.

Dr Philip Rice (London): I had better declare that I love statistics and I am a professional statistician. I have taken a considerable interest in the numbers around representation and I think that the issue for the Synod to consider is what is the counterfactual? What in the rest of civil society might the Synod be compared to if we want to make judgements about performance? Here, I would like to bring certain statistics to Synod.

I am a member of the FDA, the First Division Association, the Civil Service trade union of mandarins. What sort of turnout representation would we expect to see in our FDA elections? We would be doing well if we had a 25 per cent turnout. When I was working on these numbers in 2011, I was asked by the FDA what a good comparator would be for the FDA in terms of performance. I said that the Electoral Reform Society would be quite a good comparator in terms of turnout. It also had a very sophisticated computer system and voting by email. What sort of turnout would we expect the Electoral Reform Society to have in its own elections? Do I hear 50 per cent? Higher? Lower? It is about 28 per cent.

I am very grateful to the deanery of Tower Hamlets, which sent me as a co-optee on the Tower Hamlets council's budget overview and scrutiny committee. What sort of turnout would we expect for elections in Tower Hamlets? It is lower still. My favourite is the elections to the other PCC, namely the Police and Crime Commissioner. Do we have any idea what the average turnout to elect a PCC was? The lowest turnout was about 9 per cent.

Counterfactual is important. Civil society does find it difficult to elect members to bodies similar to us. We are not in a society where this comes easily. Maybe they are all at home, playing on the internet.

My time is up. I think I have made the point.

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

‘That the question be now put.’

This motion was put and carried.

The amendment was put and lost.

Revd Prebendary Stephen Lynas (Bath and Wells): I would like to try to correct the oft-quoted statement that we have heard three or four times in this debate that we have a parliamentary model. If I had got my act together, I would have proposed an amendment to remove that phrase. I was sorry that both the man from the diocese of TOWIE and the man from the diocese of Salisbury told us that we have a parliamentary model, because I do not think that we have.

The origins of this confusion are interesting to some of us, and I will try my luck with the Synod. First of all, Parliament and this place have history. They have close links, never more so than in World War II when a bombed-out Parliament met in this building. There is a plaque to that effect in the Hoare Memorial Hall. That does not make us like a Parliament.

Secondly, the BBC is to blame for this confusion – and I speak as an ex-employee of that body. Some of us will remember Gerald Priestland, that doyen of religious correspondents of a generation ago. There was a time when, every night when the Synod was in session, Radio 4 would broadcast – can you believe it! – *Today in Synod*, with extracts from speeches. It was billed in the *Radio Times* as ‘Gerald Priestland reporting from the Parliament of the Church of England’. He was a great religious journalist, but it was not that. We are not a Parliament.

If Synod members do not believe me, they should go over the road and have a look at the real thing. Over there, they sit opposite each other and glare at each other. Over here, we sit in circles and we smile at each other. Over there, they have parties of the political sort. I was sorry that the Bishop of Salisbury talked about the ‘parties’ at York, because the parties I went to at York were in the Vanbrugh bar and were jolly good! (*Laughter*) What we have here are groups, not parties. I belong to EGGs, the Evangelical Group of the General Synod, and I belong to the Open Synod Group. Over there, if you tried to belong to two parties at once you would not get very far! Over there, the leaders only come into the Chamber for the set pieces. Our leaders, bless them, stay in here all day. Over there, the leaders tell the troops what to do and how to vote. Our leaders might wish to do so... (*Laughter*). If you think about it, you can make a lot of comparisons and we come out a whole lot better than the place over there. In particular, when we vote we now say ‘decide’ rather than ‘divide’.

This is not a parliamentary model. There are a lot of things we could fix and fiddle with, but let us not pretend that we think we are a Parliament – because we ain’t!

Revd Canon Simon Killwick (Manchester): One of the fallacies of the so-called ‘parliamentary model’ is that there has to be a review before there can be any action. This year we have already seen how there can be quite radical action about the way we do Synod, without first having to have a review. We have had both facilitated conversations and a mixed Steering Committee without any kind of review.

The irony of this motion is that it is calling for a parliamentary-style review, leading into some kind of action. What worries me about it is that the last review, the Bridge Commission, took from 1993 until 1997. Do we really want to wait four years for any kind of action when we can have action without a review, as we have seen this year? As has been said, the Business Committee is thinking about other ideas. Let them get on with it. Do not set up a complex, parliamentary-style review, which will mean that nothing will happen for some years to come.

While being sympathetic to much of what is in the motion, to vote for a review is the wrong way to achieve action.

Professor Tony Berry (Chester): On a point of order, Chair. I propose that the Synod moves to Next Business, under whatever Standing Order that is, and I would like to be given time to give my reasons, if that is possible.

The Chair: Since you are moving a procedural motion that Synod moves to Next Business, if the motion is carried then the London Diocesan 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 and with the general consent of the Synod. I will give you two minutes to speak to the motion and I will ask the mover of the main motion to respond. I will then decide in my discretion whether or not we will have further speeches.

Professor Tony Berry (Chester): I beg to move:

‘That the Synod do pass to the Next Business.’

The reason for proposing this procedural motion is to honour two things. One is the view of members of Synod that this may drag us down a pathway of indeterminate work, because the

brief presented in this motion as it stands is insufficiently specific; it is open to too wide an interpretation.

I want to follow the advice of Tim Hind, Sue Booy, and the still-alive Fr Houlding, to say that what we are likely to do is to vote against this motion because of those reasons. However, I want to honour the work of diocesan synods in bringing their concerns to General Synod. The concerns have been very widely heard and they are substantially shared, but this motion as it stands is inappropriate for the purpose. I am sorry to use that word against the mover, but the Synod has ‘purposes’ and not ‘purpose’.

Democracy is being debated. Police Commissioners got 10 per cent. Individualism is rampant in our society and collaboration and democratic participation is falling everywhere. Individualism, autonomy, is a culture not unknown in the Church of England, I understand, but that is no reason to pursue this particular agenda.

I think that this would act as a displacement activity, unfocused, and would therefore eat up unhelpfully enormous amounts of resources. However, to honour the work of a diocesan synod is to acknowledge that we understand their concerns and that work will proceed; that nothing that has been said from the proposers of this motion will go unheard, unconsidered or not thought about.

The Chair: I call on Mr Roy, as the mover of the main motion, to speak. After I have heard him, under SO 32 I will then decide in my discretion whether to hear any more speeches.

Mr Anirban Roy: I thank Professor Berry because, from what I heard, the intention was to be kind – and I mean that sincerely. However, if we want to do this, let us do it; if we do not want to do it, let us have the courage to vote against it. Kicking it into the long grass does not really help anyone.

If this is not something on which we think it is worth spending our time, money or energy, then we should not do it; but to leave it hanging around, potentially to come back from London, Salisbury or wherever, is an unclear, unhelpful signal. I would rather that we moved forward and voted. I agree with Professor Berry that there is a strong chance this will fall; therefore, let it fall.

The Chair: The issue before the Synod is fairly straightforward and I do not propose to allow any further speeches. May I again make the position clear? If the procedural motion is carried, Mr Roy’s motion lapses and the matter cannot be brought again for debate in the lifetime of this Synod except with the permission of the Business Committee and the general consent of Synod. If the procedural motion is lost, debate on Mr Roy’s motion will resume.

The procedural motion was put and lost.

The Chair: We are running up to the buffers of time, so I need the Synod’s help. It would help if we could extend the sitting by ten minutes. (*Agreed*)

Revd Canon Pete Spiers (Liverpool): I am in some difficulty with this motion. Fifteen years ago, I would have been wholeheartedly in support of such a motion. I was one of the founding members of the Making Synod User Friendly Group, set up in the early part of the 2000 General Synod, because a number of us were very concerned at the way in which the

Synod conducted its business. One of the things that we were most concerned about was the way that voting took place. It led to a meeting with the Business Committee and we now have electronic voting. It took a long time to bring that in, but it has speeded up our processes and we now could not live without it.

Many of the concerns that we had were to do with clause (b) in today's motion. We were concerned about speech limits. Why did we need ten minutes to introduce a speech? Why did we need ten minutes at the end simply to give a long list of 'thank yous' to all those who had spoken? Why did we have speech limits of five minutes? Surely we could say it in three? There was the number of times people were called to speak in almost every debate and what was the rationale behind that? The way in which people put forward an amendment so that they could guarantee themselves a speech; the way that we alternated 'for' and 'against' even when the outcome was not a reflection of the 50:50.

Members also need to know that, once the Business Committee agreed that there should be a change, the Standing Orders Committee has to be involved. When the Standing Orders Committee gets involved, there is no knowing where it goes next! With regard to the matter of an amendment, we proposed that there should be ten people to support an amendment but it ended up with two.

Change is not quick in the Synod. The way to introduce change is to have debates like this. I am very grateful to the diocese of London and to Mr Roy for bringing this motion to us, because otherwise we would not have generated a lot of creative ideas about how we can use the Synod better. I am heartened that Sue Booy's has said the Business Committee is listening. We should write in to the Committee at the end of every session, give it our ideas and the Committee should act on that.

If we change our values, then the Synod will change. We have begun to do that with the use of small groups and I hope that we will continue with them. We do not need to review the workings of the Synod and propose alternatives. That presumes that there are alternatives. We could simply send an email to all the other Churches and say, 'How do you do it and what can we learn from you?'

I urge the Synod to vote against the motion.

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

'That the question be now put.'

This motion was put and carried.

Mr Anirban Roy, in reply: Mr Spiers will be delighted to know that I do not intend to thank anyone tonight! What I would like to do is pick up some of the themes that I think I have heard.

I have a big concern about some of the ways that we have spoken tonight, because to me they talk of complacency. There are a lot of people who are deeply comfortable with the way the Synod works, who love the Synod – and there is so much that is good about this place. However, because we like it and are comfortable in it, it does not mean that it is right; it does

not mean that we should not change; it does not mean that we should not pay deep and careful attention to the way in which we conduct our business.

I do hear what has been said that, yes, it can already be done; but it has not already been done. We have been having our new small groups, but what did it take to get there? What did it take to get a Steering Committee made up of people who disagreed as well as those who agreed? It took the crisis that we had last November, and I do not think that we should be lurching from crisis to crisis in order to find new, creative ways to make sure that we do our business right.

We can do better; we should do better. I hope that we carry this motion, so that we can move forward. As I said at the start, I have my own views on a lot of this and I know that mine is just one voice. However, one of the strengths of this proposal in its present form is that it does not commit us to any specific proposals.

I have heard people say that there is a lot that is good in the way that we do Synod, and we should keep all that is good. Prudence Dailey spoke about the ability to express substantive dissent, and I think that is absolutely one of the strengths. Any review should not be looking to destroy all that is good but it should be looking to make it better.

Where does that leave us? This motion is about testing the mind of Synod. If we are not engaged with the process, we could vote for it and we would not get anywhere. If members of Synod do not want to do it, then let us not do it. If, having reached this point at the end of this debate, members think that there is no benefit in even considering any changes, then they should vote against it. However, I think there are changes that could be made. Voting for this motion puts a structure in place to help us report on the changes that are made. It gives momentum and rigour to the process.

Maybe this is the best that the Synod can be. Yet, as I said in the paper, despite the odds, the Spirit has brought this motion to us here today. Last July, the Archbishop called us to revolution. Let us see what we want to do.

A member: On a point of order, Chair. Will you consider a division of the whole Synod on this item?

The Chair: Do I see 25 members standing in their place? No, I do not. We proceed to vote on the motion.

The motion was put and lost.

The session was adjourned at 7.05 p.m.

Third Day

Wednesday 20 November 2013

THE CHAIR *Professor Michael Clarke (Worcester)* took the Chair at 10.30 a.m.

Report of the Steering Committee for the Draft Legislation on Women in the Episcopate (GS 1924)

The Chair: I hardly need remind you of the business we have come to, but we are conducting this morning's business against the background of the bishop's introduction on Monday and our own discussions yesterday morning, let alone the discussions over the last few months and years.

On previous occasions I have observed that, at its best, the Synod can put on a really good debate and conversation. I am pretty confident this morning will be one of those occasions, but I hope that our debate is indeed imbued with a spirit of generosity and graciousness.

Not surprisingly, I am faced by a very large number of requests to speak – well over 50. If you do the arithmetic, by the time we get to lunchtime there will be some disappointed people who simply have not had the opportunity to say what they were going to say. I apologize to them in advance. However, given that almost all those expressions of a wish to speak are to speak for the motion, it will not be a debate by serried ranks of those for and those against. My objective this morning will be to ensure that as many people who want to speak have the opportunity to do so. There will therefore be a speech limit of three minutes from the beginning of the debate. In saying that, I also hope that we will not have a morning of repetition. There has been a lot of opportunity to say a lot of things – (*Applause*) – I was not asking for applause! I urge you not to repeat many times points which have already been made, particularly in the chamber this morning.

If by any chance your minds should wander during the morning, which I am sure they will not, just think of the Archbishop in that lifeboat – and you will pretty quickly want to get back here!

I will now call upon the Bishop of Rochester to propose the motion which stands in his name.

The Bishop of Rochester (Rt Revd James Langstaff): I beg to move:

‘That this Synod, welcoming the package of proposals in GS 1924 and the statement of principles endorsed by the House of Bishops at paragraph 12 of GS 1886, invite the House of Bishops to bring to the Synod for consultation in February a draft declaration and proposals for a mandatory disputes resolution procedure which build on the agreement reached by the Steering Committee as a result of its facilitated discussions.’

I gather that there is a certain amount of interest around the place in what we are doing this morning and the House is fairly full as a result. I am conscious too that, as the Chair has already pointed out, this is my second bite of the cherry and, because of the process we have followed of having the groups yesterday, in my introductory speech, somewhat unusually, I

am given the opportunity to respond to some of the things that may come up in the debate, as they have already been mentioned in the feedback from the groups.

Members of Synod will be aware of the saying that one should be wary when all speak well of one. The members of the Steering Committee and I are therefore somewhat wary because the responses to our proposals, not least from the groups yesterday, seem to be generally rather encouraging. That is underlined by what the Chair has said about how people wish to speak. As others have observed, we do seem to have travelled a considerable distance since last November. Again, I express my thanks to the members of the Steering Committee for their part in this, and this time also for their involvement with yesterday's group discussions.

It is also right to acknowledge that the work of that Steering Committee has, as it were, been on the shoulders of others who went before us, those other processes that came to an end, but in particular the working group which picked up the process from last November and got us through to July, setting us on this new process. In that regard, I would give a particular thanks to the Bishop at Lambeth, who chaired that group and who has helped to get us to this particular point.

The motion before us today is primarily about the process that I hope will flow from today. In a sense, it is seeking Synod's mandate for that continuing process, a process that is intended to be purposeful while also continuing to be consultative and not over-hasty. No amendments to the motion have been submitted but this is nonetheless an opportunity for the Steering Committee and the House of Bishops to listen to the suggestions, comments, questions and concerns that may be expressed in this debate, along with those already gathered from the group discussions yesterday.

That prompts me to let members know that, if Synod does vote later to take the revision stage in full Synod, the Appointments Committee has invited all members of the enlarged Steering Committee, should they individually so wish, to remain on the Committee for the next phase of this process. My hope is – and I am conscious that I have absolutely no authority for saying this – that the House of Bishops would also invite that Committee to continue to have the wider brief that it has had, enabling it to keep an overview of the whole process and the whole package as it goes forward.

The motion before us today focuses primarily on GS 1924, the report of the Steering Committee. I shall not take you through the content of it; I am assuming that it has been read, and it provided the foundation for the discussions yesterday.

The motion singles out what we are now calling the guiding principles, which are reproduced at paragraph 5 of the draft House of Bishops' Declaration, pages 16 and 17 of GS 1924. I know that some of the groups yesterday spent some time looking at these. Inevitably, people will have quibbles about various words, phrases and nuances within this statement of guiding principles – the five bullet points – but I would ask Synod to remember that these are intended as guiding principles. They are neither Holy Writ nor a creedal statement, so I hope they can be received in that spirit.

In particular, I think that the key part of those principles is the deliberate but hopefully creative tension between the first and the fourth bullet points. These look to the day when the Church of England as an ecclesial entity will have made a clear decision to open all orders of ministry to women and men without distinction, whereby all those so ordained are

acknowledged as ‘the true and lawful holders of the office which they occupy’. That clear decision having been made, however, they also look to us being the kind of Church within which those who out of theological conviction take a different view on that matter may continue to flourish, playing a full part within the life and structures of our Church – and that without any specified limit of time. In short, these principles are about us being the kind of Church that we profess to be, clarity of decision and stability, and durability of arrangements.

It is, as members will know by now, the proposed Declaration by the House of Bishops and the dispute resolution procedure required by canon that are designed to create the culture, the space and the procedures which, in relation to the presbyteral and episcopal ordination of both women and men and their ministries, will shape how we live together as Christians within our Church of England. Those documents are the focus of the second half of the motion before us this morning, framed as a request to the House to bring to Synod drafts for consultation in February. Indeed, Synod already has the first drafts, even before the House has discussed them.

Emerging from the discussion in the groups and more generally, it is clear that there are parts of these documents where we need to look again at the text, and there are other issues that may merit additional material. We know, for example, that paragraph 19 of the proposed House of Bishops’ Declaration needs clearer wording in the final sentence, and my learned friends are already working on that. We also understand that some will wish to suggest – I think that they will suggest it within this debate – an addition, which provides for notice to the wider congregation when a PCC is to consider a resolution relating to priestly or episcopal ministry; and that may well be a helpful suggestion.

We know too that paragraph 22 of the proposed Declaration specifically refers to further guidance from the House concerning the consultation between a bishop and a PCC that has passed such a resolution. The position in multi-parish benefices may also merit such further guidance, and other matters which could be dealt with in this way may well emerge as part of this debate and indeed subsequently. A frequently-asked-questions sheet may also be a useful part of the package.

I am very clear that it will be important to have such additional materials drafted, so that Synod sees them alongside the draft Declaration in February. We also know that Synod will need to see material relating to the transition from the present arrangements to the new ones. Indeed, it may be necessary for us in February to take first steps to pave the way for rescinding the Act of Synod as part of that transition process.

Various questions have been raised in the groups about the dispute resolution process. Some have asked whether a single reviewer is the right model and what the qualities sought in such a person might be. Solomon comes to mind! The logic of a single reviewer is that a single reviewer would more easily ensure consistency, at least while the process was being established, though the draft regulations do provide for the appointment of additional reviewers if needed. A piece of work that is now needed is to draw up a fuller role description and person specification to assist the Archbishops in due course with the identification of that Solomon figure.

Incidentally, I think that we should now move away from the ‘ombudsman’ language because, although that is the primary model on which we have drawn, our proposed use is the language of ‘independent reviewer’ and that is what we have gone with at the moment.

A number of other issues have been raised in the group discussions, which may go further than the proposed texts of these two documents. For some we know that the question of oaths is still an issue and we may need to see if there is anything further that we could usefully say, not only to assist those who take the oaths but also, as has been pointed out by some, those who hear them do so. Is there, for example, a simple explanatory paragraph that could be offered to dioceses for printing in the front covers of orders of service at institutions and licensings, which could explain the thinking?

The supply question has also been raised, in relation both to bishops of traditional Catholic persuasion and, rather more pointedly, conservative evangelicals who hold to a male headship viewpoint. The issue has been identified in the documents. Neither the Synod nor the Steering Committee, nor indeed the House of Bishops, can readily deliver that, but the point is heard, seriously taken, and I am sure that conversations will continue as to whether there is a way forward in that regard.

In proposing this motion, I would urge Synod to vote as positively as it is able for this process to continue and, incidentally, I would welcome a division of the whole Synod. If we do so, work will begin on drafting the additional guidance materials; the House will have its discussion in December; it may then remit to the Steering Committee or to others elements of redrafting. In February, Synod will be consulted on the texts alongside, if Synod so votes, the revision stages for the Measure and the Amending Canon. At that point it could also be possible for the Article 8 reference to the dioceses to be made. However, we would need to be as sure as we could be that we had agreed texts for the Declaration and dispute resolution in place before we proceed with that Article 8 reference.

There have been positive comments about both the spirit and the shape of this process, with hopes expressed that we might learn from this to our future benefit. A vote for this motion is a vote for this process to continue in a way that is purposeful, considered, consultative, transparent, hopefully reasonably swift but not over-hasty, and prayerful. I urge the Synod to continue in this spirit of working that we have begun to discover by voting for this motion.

The Chair: The bishop has made it pretty clear what the task of the morning is, for which I am grateful. Let me remind you that there is a three-minute speech limit and I want to hear as many people as possible, but not repetitively.

Interestingly, there are a number of people who wish to make a maiden speech in the course of this debate and I intend to take one of those straightaway, Richard Mantle, followed by Fr Killwick.

So that we do not lose the point, the bishop suggested in his speech that there should be a division of the whole Synod at the end of this debate. That would have my full support, so I exercise my discretion in its favour. We shall vote as a Synod.

Mr Richard Mantle (Ripon and Leeds): Thank you, Chair, for calling me so soon.

History makes us naturally cautious about optimists who wave documents that offer ‘peace in our time’. These are often proposed out of a profound need and longing for peace and stability but, if they are to deliver what is required, there must be a sincere desire and commitment to reach a commonly agreed goal.

Whilst these proposals and this package are worthy of very serious consideration, and I intend to support it today, it is clear to some that they do not offer the kind of security yearned for by traditional Catholic Anglicans. However, they come warmly commended by our Archbishops, who are publicly committed to upholding the rich breadth and diversity of our Church.

This package is inevitably something of a compromise, for we are now invited to eschew our purist visions for the Church in a spirit of reciprocity and mutuality and to embrace a new, worthy and life-giving compromise. These proposals are an invitation bravely issued. To accept the invitation will demand a fair degree of bravery, for we are invited into a new position of vulnerability that demands considerable trust in those whom some of us have not always been accustomed to trusting. Trust, however, needs to be built, like a bridge and from both sides. If the proposed way forward is to have a chance, we must start building trust – and now.

The draft Declaration says some helpful things about what we ought to be able to expect of each other within the Church. There is a clear statement of commitment to enabling traditionalists to flourish within the life and structures of the Church of England. The House of Bishops is one of those structures. It is clear that women who are bishops must hold their office under the same jurisdiction as their male colleagues. If the traditionalists are also to flourish, it will be necessary for them to have a share in the episcopal jurisdiction held by the House of Bishops.

The Declaration imposes appropriate responsibilities upon diocesans who do not ordain women as priests but it also requires other diocesans to ensure that leadership roles in their dioceses are occupied by people from across the range of traditions. These undertakings represent very significant assurances, which should make a considerable difference in our Church. However, we need to see firm evidence of the rebuilding of trust and this new commitment through forthcoming episcopal and senior appointments, and certainly before the new legislation completes its passage through Synod.

Whilst the Synod may dare to trust the House of Bishops' Declaration, and indeed our Archbishops, the most senior appointments are not solely in their gift. The Crown Nominations Commission plays an important part in facilitating the vision suggested by the draft Declaration. By the end of this year, the Bishop of Chichester will be the only serving traditionalist diocesan bishop under the age of 65. No diocesan bishop who ordains women has ever been replaced by one who does not.

There is a need for change and, if there is to be trust in the proposed settlement to work, we look to those who have it in their power to give us something in which to place our hope and trust.

Revd Canon Simon Killwick (Manchester): I want to mention some aspects in which I believe the package we have in front of us today is much better than the one we had in front of us 12 months ago. It has clearly been very fruitful to have had a larger than usual Steering Committee and to try to reach agreement before going into the formal legislative process. It is also extremely helpful that we have the whole package on the table at the same time.

One of the big improvements in the package we have in front of us now as compared to last year is that there is no reliance on a code of practice. That code of practice would have been very tortuous to have worked out through the Synod, had the Measure been passed this time last year. There would have been ongoing debate and controversy over it. Then, after that, each diocese would have had to have written its own diocesan scheme; so the process would have carried on and on and on. We now have the potential for a process that can happen relatively quickly and in an infinitely better atmosphere than that we had in the years leading up to the previous Measure.

I believe too that the idea of an independent reviewer for resolution of disputes is infinitely better than the prospect of going to judicial review and the secular courts over the previous code of practice; indeed, it is preferable in any case to Christians going to law against each other. It is far better that we have an internal process like this for resolving disputes. The independent reviewer process is also much more easily accessible than any kind of judicial process would have been.

All these things represent very significant improvements on the package that we had before us last year. Another improvement is the fact that there are five clearly laid out principles, so we can see the principles on which it is based. Last year, there did not seem to be any principles on which the package was based.

Clearly a great deal of trust is still required on all sides. That is probably a good thing, and I do thank God that there is such a positive atmosphere of trust in the Synod today. I am sure that we will all need to work at building trust before this Measure comes to final approval, and afterwards as well. Certainly traditional Catholics will have to trust that people will take the recommendations of the independent reviewer seriously. For us, trust would be greatly helped if arrangements were published for the consecration of future traditional Catholic bishops.

Revd Prebendary Roderick Thomas (Exeter): I want to start if I may by thanking other members of the Steering Committee, and indeed members of this Synod who have taken part in the group discussions, for the generosity of spirit that they have shown in this whole process and in particular in preparing this package of proposals.

I am very conscious indeed that last November, when people like me voted against the draft Measure, it was a cause of shock, of bewilderment, of anger and of grief. Therefore, to be able to sit down and talk with people who have experienced those emotions and to talk constructively about ways in which we might find agreement has been a very uplifting process, and I thank members of the Steering Committee and members of this Synod.

Having said that, I would not want the Synod to gain the impression that everything has been sorted out, because there are some major issues that we have not really been able to deal with in the Steering Committee and which are a cause of concern for those like me who take a conservative evangelical view on male headship.

The whole issue of jurisdiction is one that we have not really been able to tackle. The reason that is a problem is because, if a supplied bishop operates in a delegated capacity, the acceptance of that bishop for some in our grouping will be tantamount to accepting the headship of the person who gives them that authority. That does remain a problem, therefore, and it may be that there is more that the House of Bishops could do in its Declaration to help

ease that concern. Archbishop Rowan helpfully distinguished between ‘delegated’ and ‘derived’ authority, and it may be that drawing a distinction between what is delegated on a temporal basis and what is not delegated on a spiritual basis might help with this general problem.

Nevertheless, despite that, I shall be voting for this motion. That is not to say that at the end of the day, if these major concerns remain, I will be able to vote for the package at final approval. Even though I may not be able to do that, however, I am quite clear that I need to vote in favour of this particular motion, despite the fact that there are aspects of the motion itself with which I would take issue.

In the spirit of agreement that we have reached, in the spirit of wanting to achieve agreement, I will vote for it. Even if at the end of the day I am unable to join the majority of Synod, whom I confidently expect to approve this by the required majorities, I shall rejoice in the measure of agreement that we have been able to reach.

Mrs Christina Rees (St Albans): If anyone had told me that, one year on from last November, we would be where we are, I would have said ‘That’s impossible’ but, by the grace of God, it has been possible and here we are.

I believe that what we are considering now is better than what we had last year, and I also believe that we are better as a Synod. For that I would like to pay tribute to the Steering Committee, to all the staff and officers, to Canon David Porter, and to Archbishop Justin for having the vision to ask David Porter to become involved in our synodical process.

Having commended and said how much more positive I feel about this package, there are things that of course I would not have included but, as Rod Thomas has said, I am prepared to accept this. I believe that it is now time for our Church to move forward and trust one another and the process.

A few small points. To the five principles and to the additional ones of simplicity, mutuality and reciprocity I would like to add two further principles. First, transparency, which will require absolutely clear communications and honesty in all that we do – within the House of Bishops, in all our arrangements, all our synods and at a parish level. I would also like to add ‘relationality’ because, ultimately, our faith was not founded on rules or rituals but on a living relationship with Jesus Christ. It is how we treat one another, how we live with one another, how we relate to each other, all people and the rest of creation that reveals our prime relationship with Jesus Christ.

I would end by saying that, whatever theological or ecclesiological nuances we may think there are in considering this package, what the world that is watching and waiting will see, understand and take away from what we decide and do today and in the continuing process is not just what the Church of England decides about having women as bishops: it will be what the Church of England decides about women.

Revd Prebendary David Houlding (London): Chair, if you live by the Synod you die by the Synod. Last night I was approaching death but this morning, faced with this whole package of proposals, I feel that I am approaching resurrection. 20 November 2013 is a very different day from 20 November 2012.

What we have in front of us works. It works for all of us, no matter where we are coming from on this matter. Of course this is not a maiden speech but it could well be a valedictory one, in the hope that it may not be necessary to speak again on this matter – as an indication of the degree of confidence that I have in these proposals.

Here we have a Measure, plain and simple – in effect, a one-clause Measure – that will enable women to be consecrated without qualification or limitation to be admitted to the office of bishop. This must be good news. However, there is equal good news in the declaration that will accompany it from the House of Bishops, which provides an ecclesial life and sacramental assurance that we have been arguing for over these past years. Our time has not been wasted. The moment I have been waiting for has arrived.

In this package, three things are provided for. We have bishops of a traditional hue; we have access to their sacramental and pastoral ministry; and there is, I believe, a very high degree of security built into the system.

Let me repeat those three things that I have always tried to emphasize, which I believe these proposals deliver. The nature of provision is that it is for everyone, not just for any one group who in conscience has difficulties in this area. We are all provided for – and what a pleasure it is for me to follow Christina Rees in speaking this morning – for theological integrity on both sides is honoured and secured. Provision must be for the whole of the Church of England.

Secondly, the ecumenical avenues of conversation and relationship are left open with the wider part of Catholic Christendom, with whom we share our understanding of Holy Order. That there will remain something within our polity and ordering of the Church of England that the greater part of the universal Church can recognize as consistent with their practice and discipline must also be an essential part of this provision, and here it is. Thirdly, the sacramental life of the Church is assured.

As the amendment I put to Synod all those years ago in 2006 affirmed, we are all loyal Anglicans and an honoured place is assured for all in these proposals. The battle surely is over. Let us now get on with the mission. For the wondrous things He has done now thank we all our God.

Mrs Anne Martin (Guildford): In July I had the first feeling of hope that we might be learning to live together. Today, I am even more hopeful and have the expectation that what we have before us will be accepted.

This is becoming urgent. If we cannot agree among ourselves, how can we expect to be taken seriously as Christians outside of the Church? We need to be seen to be living together as Christians, not apparently continually wrangling, wrapped up in our own internal affairs. Outside is the real world: Syria, the Philippines, poverty, despair and unhappiness in our own country.

What we have in front of us is simple but with real potential for a fair solution for us all. No, not everybody has what they want; but life is like that. We have to live with it, and I think that we have a very good solution to live with.

I am very glad that there are no amendments and I hope that what we have before us goes to the House of Bishops for clarification about the concerns there are and not for alteration. We have a consensus, but if we start to find that what we have agreed upon is considerably argued about and changed, I think that consensus is fragile. I therefore hope that there will be real clarification for those with concerns.

I would urge the Synod to vote wholeheartedly for what we have in front of us, because I think that it is the best solution we could have found.

The Bishop of Southwark (Rt Revd Christopher Chessun): If Christina Rees and David Houlding are happy, then I am happy. (*Applause*) But I cannot stop there. In joining my voice to those who warmly welcome the report of the Steering Committee, I wish to congratulate all those who have worked so hard and so swiftly on these proposals to enable, God willing, women to be consecrated as bishops.

I have been greatly heartened, not only by the proposals that have emerged from this process but also by the way of working together, in which we have all been encouraged to listen carefully, prayerfully and respectfully to each other. From where we are today compared to where we were a year ago is, as someone described it to me the other day, nothing short of miraculous.

I sense what I hope is a greater degree of trust and a desire to be open and transparent. The proposals that have come before us are relational, as Christina was saying, and are based on a desire to walk together around the five principles that the House of Bishops has articulated and committed itself to.

This relational way of moving forward has to be founded on trust. A leading layperson recently described the diocese of Southwark to me as ‘happily fractious’. Of course, when people are deriving a degree of pleasure from robust interactions one can at least draw a measure of comfort. However, I also know only too well of a more corrosive culture of suspicion and mistrust that has surrounded those of us entrusted with episcopal leadership. If we are to move forward, bishops, along with everyone else, will have to show themselves to be worthy of the trust that is placed in them. I know that bishops have a greater weight to bear in this but it is something that belongs to us all. Trust is required of each one of us; nothing less will do.

I for one recognize that if this is the direction we as a Synod choose to travel together, then bishops will have to demonstrate that they are totally committed to this way of doing business. Moreover, with my fellow bishops, I sense that there is a deep commitment and determination to make these proposals work. This is important. Personally, I have always sought the flourishing of those who hold different convictions to my own in this area, across the wide spectrum of legitimate conviction and belief; but I firmly believe that, in the commitment to the five principles, the House of Bishops has already articulated its position in a clear and compelling way.

In the working out of those principles I welcome the desire for Synod and the wider Church to see the whole package of proposals. This too is an important departure from the past and I believe that the House of Bishops understands that. I hope that this commitment will extend to the guidance notes for conversations between parishes and bishops, mentioned in

paragraph 22 of the draft Declaration, and I am glad that there is an intention for these to be shared by February if at all possible.

I welcome these proposals.

The Chair called Revd Amanda Fairclough for a maiden speech.

Revd Amanda Fairclough (Liverpool): This is my first General Synod, so thank you, Chair, for calling me so soon.

Last November I watched the live feed as the vote failed. I was not terribly surprised; I was not even the least bit angry; nor was I left feeling particularly hurt, undervalued or unappreciated; but I did feel a curious sense of galvanization in the fact that the vote was so close and yet failed. I come, as near as my theological understanding will allow, to discerning a sign from God that Synod is on the right track in pursuing the consecration of women. However, the legislation proposed was not on the right track. In parts unclear, it relied on too many compromises and complications.

My initial feeling was that we were given an opportunity to go away, rethink, and come up with something that was not just better but wholly right. I have no doubt that one day a woman will be called by God to be Archbishop of Canterbury. For her sake, for the whole Church's sake, and most importantly for God's sake, we must and we have to put our shoulders to the mediative and legislative wheel to achieve the best possible proposals.

I accept that there is a tension between acting quickly and acting justly. I would favour the latter but, as a new member of Synod, perhaps I enjoy a little more appetite and suffer a little less cynicism for the continued struggle.

Had I been a member of Synod last November, I doubt that I would have had the courage to vote against the flawed Measure. I am now in the most fortunate position of being able to stand my ground without betraying a previously held position until a simple, single-clause Measure is laid before us. That is almost what I promised my clergy colleagues in Liverpool I would do. Almost, because I was not willing to find myself a hostage to fortune if there was a deal that could be done. I am persuaded by the Bishop of Rochester's wise counsel that this is a deal that can be done. However, it does require compromise, and very nearly more compromise than I can live with.

Coming from the Catholic wing of the Church, I empathize with my traditionalist friends who feel that they need bishops to provide sacramental ministry, so I can accept the first part of paragraph 30 of the House of Bishops' draft Declaration, preserving the three suffragan titles. It is a practical accommodation. However, the remainder of that paragraph sits much less comfortably with me. Ring-fencing a place in the College of Bishops for a conservative evangelical who argues for male headship goes against the logical grain of the Measure as a whole. As I understand it, we must surely be trying to ensure that those whom God calls and gifts are properly enabled by the Church to fulfil their vocation.

All that said, however, my conscience would allow me to sleep at night if I vote for the package as currently proposed. We have been warned that if we start to tinker at the edges of the proposals we could easily cause this delicate compromise to fail. I urge Synod members

to leave it be. I remain sufficiently galvanized that I may well be brave enough to vote against any Measure that requires more compromise than is currently offered.

Revd Canon David Banting (Chelmsford): Chelmsford is a diocese in which our 14 reps – bishop, clergy and lay – almost exactly replicated last November’s voting. We are a microcosm of the General Synod and Chelmsford has what I consider to be our own exciting proposal for a way forward that we are trying to put into the process.

I stand before Synod as a conservative who will today vote No because I vote in the light of the final approval vote, where I stand with fresh confidence that there is a new atmosphere and a new trust, where my integrity is allowed to be spoken and is allowed to flourish. I therefore speak to Synod with that confidence.

I dreamed a dream. For me, it went all the way back to 2000 and the Rochester Report. I welcomed the possibility to talk theology, the new opportunity to rectify imbalances and to express in a new way the brilliant partnership between men and women in ministry, reflecting the partnership of a man and a woman in marriage. I was looking forward to a new sort of bishop, moving away from issues of jurisdiction, geography, oaths; not just jobs for the boys or even jobs for the boys and girls; new ways of ‘bishopsing’, not questions of power and hierarchy; new ways of decision-making, working with consensus and collaboration; more about the classic Ordinal call to teach and to care, to guard the faith and to proclaim it; more about duties than rights, service than justice, partnership than position.

I dreamed a dream that has not quite been fulfilled. This may indeed be the best yet. I thank God for a new and positive atmosphere but I must be honest that I stand where I still stand, with a conservative integrity and believing that this essential development is – I use the word carefully and, I hope, charitably – inappropriate for the Church finally to pursue.

The report and the bishops then talk about ‘a rich diversity’ and ‘flourishing’ but there are other questions around the oaths, the supply of bishops and the succession. We may have removed one glass ceiling but replaced it with another. There will never be a conservative evangelical diocesan bishop, despite two being in the pool who have been described as having the calibre to be diocesan bishops.

We are in process, yes, and I believe that it will go forward today; but on final approval I will have to vote No. However, I am a churchman; I am a pragmatist; and I will seek to live within the Church, whatever decision is made and with whatever way the Spirit’s renewal is flowing. I commend the Chelmsford proposal to create new suffragan sees for a diocese or a cluster of dioceses as a dramatic but significant way forward.

Revd Prebendary Maureen Hobbs (Lichfield): I offer what I hope may be a helpful intervention for my conservative evangelical colleagues. Let your ‘yes’ be ‘yes’ and your ‘no’ be ‘no’.

Many years ago and in another existence, I worked at GCHQ. Quite what I did there I still cannot tell you – or, at least, if I did I would have to kill you and then probably kill myself. The point is that, on joining that esteemed body and on leaving, I had to sign the Official Secrets Act. The signing of that Act, however, made no real difference to the authority, and indeed the law, that affects me. For the truth is that as a subject of the United Kingdom I am, like probably all if not most of you, subject to the Official Secrets Act and may be prosecuted

under its terms if I do something to contravene it – so I hope they are not waiting for me outside!

In much the same way, anyone who is ordained is under orders and subject to the authority of a bishop. Making the oath, as signing the Act, really serves only to remind the individual and those who witness it of their responsibilities. It should not be impossible to devise a public ritual that achieves this for ourselves and our congregations, if the swearing of an oath remains a sticking point for some of my colleagues.

We are all under orders. Let us be released for mission.

Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn): You will know, Chair, that I am a member of the Steering Committee and you will also know that I abstained from its recommendations. I did so because I felt it was the will of the Synod in July that the Steering Committee should have looked at things in a broader way. However, we were told that we must follow the motion as carried by Synod – Option 1-plus.

I still think that it would have been better to have dealt with jurisdiction. I still think that it would have been better to have had more legislation; but I accept that is not where we are now and therefore, given the constraints under which we were working, I think that this is the best that can be done. It is a good and workable solution.

Chair, I hope you know me well enough that if I had not thought that, I would have had the courage to vote No, but I did not do so because I think this is a workable way forward. I shall therefore vote for this motion this morning and I shall vote in the next debate to have the legislation considered for revision in full Synod. I urge the Synod to do the same.

Mrs Anne Foreman (Exeter): First of all, I add my thanks and appreciation to the Steering Committee.

I would like to refer to two paragraphs in GS 1924: first, paragraph 14 on page 18 of the draft House of Bishops' Declaration, about mutuality; the second, paragraph 14 on page 4, about the overall approach. Both this and the group of sessions held last July have been characterized by doing things differently, which in a way is catching, and, although for a very long time I have been a supporter of enabling women to become bishops, the nature of my support has become different too. The July Synod really challenged me to think about what it means for me personally to be committed to enabling those of differing convictions to flourish, and my thinking, which involved some real heart-searching, led me to conclude that I had been doing more talking about mutual flourishing than engaging with it in any practical way. I therefore decided – and I know that this will seem very small beer to many in this chamber who do amazing things – to participate in worship with those of differing convictions. I represent parishes, and you have to do what you can where you are.

What did I find? When I went to the Forward in Faith parish I received a very warm welcome. I found an outward-looking, lively congregation, plenty of lay involvement, quality preaching and real practical expressions of love and service to neighbour, combined with priests who clearly are held in great affection and respect. I then went to the more conservative evangelical and a Bishop's Mission Order. What did I find there? Synod will have guessed it – a warm welcome, an outward-looking congregation with plenty of lay involvement, quality preaching, practical expressions of love and service to neighbour and

ministers clearly held in great affection and respect. Of course, I experienced these services differently because I had gone just to be a part of them rather than to discuss particular issues; but I am not suggesting that one should supplant the other. The experience brought home to me quite forcibly that really we are all part of the Church of England and can, as is said in paragraph 9, 'rejoice in each other's partnership in the gospel'. I do not have to think like other people, nor do they have to think like me, but we are all in it together.

That brings me to paragraph 14 on page 4 and the acknowledgement that there are elements of the vision that will cause discomfort to those on various sides of the argument. That is true, and I do not want to make light of it, because for me and many others it is more than discomfort, but I trust the Steering Committee to attend to the concerns that have been expressed – I do not want to identify them now – in a way that does not upset the careful balance that it has achieved with this draft Measure. I therefore pray that we can be robust enough to withstand any inevitable discomfort as the price to pay for supporting this draft legislation prepared by the Steering Committee as a way forward, for we cannot go back; the only way is forward.

Revd Charles Read (Norwich): I too warmly welcome, support and commend the package of proposals in front of us and congratulate and thank the Steering Committee, which has managed to achieve a great deal, in both senses of that phrase, in quite a short time.

However, there is always a 'but', and the 'but' is that I am slightly nervous about one or two matters. In expressing my nervousness I want to make it clear that it is in the context of a huge amount of personal support and gratitude for what is in front of us, lest some people may think that it is rather churlish. One sense of nervousness that I have is about the suggestion that we might ring-fence that place in the College of Bishops for someone described, I think erroneously, as a conservative evangelical. I should say that I am an evangelical. I was converted in that wing of the Church and have been nurtured in it. I was taught in an evangelical theological college and even had a summer holiday job, a long time ago, working for an evangelical mission agency; so this is not about having a go at evangelicals.

Usually we do not appoint bishops solely on the basis of one facet of what they believe. The intention of the proposal is good and laudable and points us to the fact that perhaps some voices are not heard in the College of Bishops. However, I am not convinced that this is quite the way of going about rectifying that, so perhaps the Steering Committee or the House of Bishops would like to nuance this a little. I do not believe that the way in which it is expressed in the proposal is quite right. It raises the right question and identifies the right issue but perhaps answers it in the wrong way. For example we do not appoint bishops simply because they are theologians and scholars, though some members of the House of Bishops are good theologians and scholars, but I suspect that that is not the only reason or even, sadly, the prime reason why some of them are there. Likewise, we do not appoint bishops simply because of their ecumenical experience, but it is good that we have in the House of Bishops people who have that as part of their backgrounds. I therefore suggest that ring-fencing a place in the College of Bishops is probably not a wise way to go about it. We probably need another way, another form of words, to express this.

The other point I want to make about this proposal is that it places quite a burden on any conservative evangelical bishops chosen because they happen to take a certain view on alleged male headship. The fact is that bishops are human beings and change their minds.

Any members who have been involved with the Myers-Briggs Personality Type Indicator will be familiar with this. I have a friend who is a Myers-Briggs trainer and takes it seriously, but he once showed me some spoof Myers-Briggs personality type prayers. For those who know it, my Myers-Briggs personality type is the INTJ. The INTJ Prayer is 'Lord, help me to be open to the ideas of others, wrong though they may be'! People change their minds – even bishops.

Mrs Susie Leafe (Truro): How I wish that I too could stand here and say that all is well, but I cannot. To vote in favour of this motion, I am asked to welcome both the package of proposals in GS 1924 and the principles endorsed by the House of Bishops. I am afraid that in good conscience I can do neither.

We claim that this package is designed to enable all to flourish, yet I and my Church can flourish only once we have denied our theological convictions and accepted a woman as our chief pastor. Members of Synod may say that we are offered an opportunity to request pastoral and sacramental ministry from another bishop, but the responsibility for this lies in the hands of a woman. We talk of reaching out to the younger generation. It puzzles me, therefore, why we are risking alienating churches that are sending large numbers of young men for ordination, whose congregations generally are growing and youthful. I have been asked to remember that my 'yes' is a 'yes' and my 'no' is a 'no'. So it would be unwise for me to stand here and say that all is well.

The problem lies not in the details of the documents before Synod but in the decision made some time ago in a different climate, a different place, and before a lot of talking had taken place – a decision of the House of Bishops to accept the premise that any new approach should not seek to reopen questions over jurisdiction and the position of diocesan bishops in law as the Ordinary and chief pastor of everyone in the diocese. This assumption was not made by the steering group or Synod, and it is this assumption that is at the heart of my difficulties. Because these issues were outside the scope of the Steering Committee's agenda, as yet there has been no means of finding a way forward on this issue.

Therefore, today I stand here to ask the House of Bishops to consider carefully whether it is right to stand by that decision – a decision that was made in a very different emotional climate and before we had the wonderful opportunity to engage in facilitated talks and steering groups, which gave us a chance to understand more deeply one another's theological convictions, and I am grateful for the spirit in which those conversations have taken place. I therefore hope and pray that the House of Bishops will consider these issues carefully and keep us moving forward together.

Revd Thomas Seville (Religious Communities): I welcome the report very warmly and will vote for the motion. I think that since last July a wonderful atmosphere has grown up out of the new way of doing things. That is to be welcomed, and I believe that in that respect I speak representatively for most people here.

There is always a problem, however, when a difficult issue finds resolution in a group that has been working at it for a very long time. Anyone who is engaged in ecumenical work will realize the sense of ebullience and the rush that occurs when an agreement is reached. Sometimes that has been a fruit of the Spirit, but there are occasions on which one can have a wrong perspective. I do not think that we have a wrong perspective, but we are at risk of seriously underestimating the task ahead of us, and I mean beyond final approval. It is a

challenge and, like most members, I hope that it challenges our opportunities. We have to find a means of working together in ways that some of us have not done hitherto; and I speak from the perspective of both my part and other parts of the Church of England. It requires a measure of turning again – good old *metanoia*, good old conversion – and I would define it specifically as making another's difference an essential part of our life. I realize that that is a little abstract, but at times I am known for talking abstractly.

If I were to give it a concrete example, I would go to the Scriptures and that wonderful Christ-filled series of books, the Books of the Kings, and to 2 Samuel 21. I can see many smiles around this chamber because everyone knows what is in 2 Samuel 21, but I will remind the handful of members who do not. David is confronted by the Gibeonites, a group, not Jewish, much abused by Saul. They come to him, quite nervously because they know what Saul can do or has done, and David – and in this case I think a better example than Solomon – asks them the question ‘What must I do for you that you should bless the inheritance of Israel?’ In other words, ‘What must I do for you that you should find in me a blessing from God?’ I will not relate the rest of the story, which perhaps is more typical of the Old Testament than the New! However, I wish to suggest that we need to carry with us something like that, both to our parishes and for the long haul, for the Church with women bishops and for the Church with people like me and Rod Thomas. ‘What must I do for you that you should bless the inheritance of Israel?’

The Archdeacon of Hackney (Ven. Rachel Treweek): I want strongly to support what we have before us. I believe that it is good for the Church and more importantly for the way we sing the music of the Kingdom of God and live out relationships in places of difference. Everyone has given up something and is able to maintain his or her integrity. Therefore, like many others, I have no desire to distort the harmony by turning up the volume in one section of the choir rather than another. Yet I would like us to continue to explore how we might ensure that mutual trust can go on being a repeated refrain in all that is offered.

It is with that in mind that my wonderings and questions are around the outworking of paragraphs 19-22 of the draft House of Bishops' Declaration. They focus on the PCC's responsibility regarding the passing or rescinding of a resolution and the consultation between bishops and parishes. Paragraph 22 helpfully states that the House will provide guidance for bishops and parishes to help to facilitate those conversations. It is important that the excellent concepts of simplicity, reciprocity and mutuality are kept prominent in those guidelines.

In our present situation with Resolutions A, B and C, it is not uncommon for me to encounter members of PCCs or people in the worshipping community who are confused about what the resolutions mean or what rescinding them might mean. I therefore believe that it would be helpful to consider two matters, and the Bishop of Rochester has touched on them. First, it is important that a worshipping community knows that the PCC is considering the passing or rescinding of a resolution and that the Church members are able to express their views, even though, of course, the final decision is down to the PCC; and it therefore would be helpful if the bishop could expect there to have been some form of notification in a church.

Second, it would be good if PCCs could be helped in their deliberations by having access to some simple, non-partisan material and perhaps some helpful questions to explore. These could be made available on the Church of England website to enable PCCs and churches to

consider the issues and engage in open, honest discussion, just as we have done, and that should be equally true whether it is about passing or rescinding a resolution.

Those are just a couple of my out-loud wonderings, which I hope might be helpful as the work on the guidelines progresses. Above all, though, I want to strongly support the package of proposals with a resounding ‘yes’.

Ven. Christine Hardman (Southwark): Some years ago I was engaged in a very robust exchange of views by email with the late Dean of Southwark, Very Revd Colin Slee. We were in full swing. Then, to my horror, I discovered that I had been basing my argument on inaccurate information. There was no way out of it. ‘Dear Colin’, I wrote, ‘I am very sorry. I have been basing my argument on inaccurate information. I am wrong. I am going to have to eat humble pie.’ Quick as a flash, his response pinged back on to my computer screen, ‘You are going to get very fat!’ My friends, today I am going to get even fatter.

When during the previous group of sessions the Bishop of Willesden introduced his idea of having a wider steering group – the ‘I agree with Pete’ suggestion – I thought that it was completely off the wall, very irritating and absolutely doomed to failure. Bishop Pete, I am sorry, I was wrong! Clearly what emerged was a very different and challenging way of working for those of us who, like David Houlding, have lived and may die by the Synod.

What I want to say now is that, as Synod will have gathered from the speeches by Susie, Rod and Paul among others, that process was not a cosy one. We could all have gone in there and actually withheld ourselves, simply going through the motions. Very tempting though it was, we did not. As far as I could see, every single member of that Steering Committee trusted themselves to one another and entered into the process with goodwill and courage; and, my goodness, at times it was unbearably uncomfortable, very difficult, not at all cosy; we did not feel as though we were in some way experiencing the Kingdom of God; it felt very scary, and indeed we needed those facilitators to help us have the courage to stick with it.

If we now move forward with this proposal in the way that this ragtag and bobtail group of us that produced it has suggested – and I pray that we will – that kind of sincere, courageous and dangerous engagement will be needed as we live out our lives together in the Church. At times we will have to feel very uncomfortable, will need to resist conflict-avoidance behaviour, which actually is deeply insulting to those with whom we disagree, and call on professionals to help us grapple with the difficulties that we face. But, my goodness, isn’t God good? Here we are in this place today, which we could not have imagined one year ago. Many of us have learnt a lot and have had to make public penance and confession, but let us move forward continuing to care especially for those whom we know will find it incredibly difficult.

Dr Jamie Harrison (Durham): As a member of the Steering Committee, I agree with Chris!

I am a GP who has been involved in complaints and once was personally named in a major complaint. I think that we need to be very grateful to both Philip Giddings and Stephen Slack for the way in which they have worked out a very effective grievance (now termed ‘disputes’) resolution procedure.

During my career in medicine I have worked quite a lot with families who have been in a situation of having to complain about the care they have received. Families, carers and

patients want us to say three things. They want us to say, 'We professionals acknowledge that we made a mistake and got it wrong; that we need to find out what went wrong and why; and need to make a decision to make sure that it never happens again to anyone else.' That is the nature of responding to complaints through grievance procedures without going on to refer to regulation and the General Medical Council.

We have before us a process that I think mirrors some of the benefits about which we have already heard. It seeks to protect PCCs ahead of the game and warns people off from bad behaviour. However, if things go wrong, we have in place arrangements for individuals to make statements to the independent reviewer, as well as for PCCs to trigger such interventions, and mechanisms to ensure that concerns about failures of due process can be investigated and dealt with.

We have already heard very helpfully from Simon Killwick about the many benefits of the scheme, including the fact that deputy reviewers can be appointed as well as expert advisers who can explain to the reviewer the technical matters of theology and practice of a particular PCC and its congregation. In addition, there are clear timelines that will prevent prevarication and avoidance in what is a compulsory process and clarity over the need to publish, unless there is very good reason not to, with recommendations; and, if all does not go well, the timeline could lead to matters that come within the remit of the Clergy Discipline Measure.

I have heard some members mention the lack of teeth in this process. I am a GP, not a dentist; all I know about dentists is that they can be very expensive and have a long process of extraction! The risk involved in any legal process relates to cost as well as time. The particular court case in which I was involved concerned a patient who was harmed, I think by me, probably in 2002, and we settled out of court in 2010. I was named in the national papers on that basis and it was not a happy place to be, and I think the same would apply to anyone who felt that eventually they might be named in this process. It is very powerful both as a deterrent and as a way of saying, 'We will never go this way again.'

The independent reviewer would also have an opportunity to make statements or comments in the annual report, which would carry weight and significance, on what he or she had heard. Should individuals and others write in, the independent reviewer would have the power to investigate complaints in great depth and publish his or her findings.

As David Houlding has helpfully reminded us, this is a very joined-up process; the various parts of it work together to give a coherent whole. If we pick at one bit, we miss the point. So trust me, I am a doctor, and I know that it will work; and if you do not trust me, trust Philip Giddings.

Dr Elaine Storkey (Ely): I want to talk about the relationship between law and grace and between structures and relationships, because that is more or less what we have been about during the whole of this process.

Good laws are essential. They enable the free flow of grace and recognize that although the Church is the Body of Jesus Christ, it is also a community of saints and sinners; and, tragically and sadly, sin, self-interest and abuse of power will continue in our Church despite our hopes and assurances. During my 27 years as a member of the General Synod I have discovered that we as the Church of England have not reached the state of sinless perfection! Law, then, is crucial for grace, that which enables the free flow and joy of grace

to be there among us. However, law is built on theology, and theologies differ. I have heard the differences that exist in those theologies within the Church of England today, and that is what we have always to contend with.

This month I was one of the Synod's delegates at the WCC in Busan and was on the leadership team of an ecumenical conversation on moral discernment. In fact the moral discernment was about conflict avoidance. If members want to see theological disagreement and attempts at constructing laws or even statements on it, I would urge them to attend a conversation on moral discernment in the WCC. It came to a head on gender. The theology of difference between men and women was present very dominantly within the Orthodox contingency – the Russians, Syrians, Greeks and so on – but actually we also had a group of people from an American Church, which shall not be named, in which there is a very strong theology of sameness between men and women. 'There is no need for laws', I was told, 'no need for anything, sunshine, because we are all transgendered.' I found it very difficult to get my mind round that over four days of conversation, but we resolved it. I will not tell Synod how, because that would be a waste of the time that I have available.

The point I am trying to make is that we are much further on than that. We know that when Paul says, 'In Christ there is no male and female' it does not mean that we are transgendered. Actually it means that all the old things that held us apart and broke down relationships between male and female, the barriers that were erected, are now irrelevant, because in Christ we can recognize, affirm and love one another and bathe in one another's gifts and the spiritual discernment that comes from being in fellowship with each other. It is a wonderful picture of unity in the Body of Christ, and I believe that that is a picture of what we are approaching and becoming in the Church of England today. What unites us is far greater than what separates us. We are in a position to make good laws, but good laws also depend on grace. The converse also applies: we cannot make good laws unless we have the grace to recognize that all need to be full participants in this process.

This morning I have heard an enormous amount of grace from Catholic brothers and sisters who a few years ago would have been weeping and pleading, 'Please do not go this way, which is wrong for the Church and for us', and today they say, 'Let us make this work.' I want to honour that with every fibre of my being. I want to work as hard as possible for a Church that is inclusive for all of us, whatever our theologies, provided they are biblical, triune, Trinitarian and creedal. We can walk together. We need not part company over tiny interpretations of single words. Let us just embrace one another and walk forward in confidence.

Mr Peter Haddock (Southwark): With the widespread welcome for these proposals and perhaps a degree of relaxation that may now be seeping into this process, I hope that we do not revert to old habits, policies and strategies when it comes to dealing with the proposals as we go forward. It was good to hear that an invitation has already been issued to the existing membership of the Steering Committee, and I therefore hope that we do not lose sight of the value of the facilitated process in which we engaged yesterday and that it might be continued in both this and other areas, because we may yet need it as we go forward.

I also want to pick up on what the Bishop of Rochester said earlier in the week about the importance of taking this package as a whole and the danger, which has been hinted at already, of pulling at one thread only to see the fabric lurch in somewhere else. I was particularly enthusiastic about the reference in the Steering Committee's report to the five

principles. I hope that in our examination of this package we will relate its individual parts, and indeed the activities of bishops and parishes as well as those of the independent reviewer, back to those principles. This greatly excited me.

I also want to mention my concern about the reference that has been made several times, both in separate discussions and here on the floor of Synod, to canonical oaths by clergy. I would like to point out that not only do clergy make oaths but also that Readers make declarations, in the same form, and I hope that that is not forgotten. Although Readers make declarations, not oaths, the same issue applies to both clergy and Readers.

Finally, I would like to pick up on the point made by Rachel Treweek – I think the bishop had also heard of it – about the relationship between PCCs and congregations in considering whether to adopt or rescind a course of action.

Mr Tim Hind (Bath and Wells): Many members will remember the TV Licensing Authority's advert suggesting that it is always better for you to go to see them than for them to come to see you. During the past few years of my working life, before I was gloriously retired from being paid to do anything, I was a quality auditor, which meant that I spent a lot of time talking to project managers in IT, finding out what they wanted to do, suggesting ways in which they might do it better and later asking them why on earth they had not done it!

In relation to what we have in front of us on the table today there has been much talk about conflict resolution and the need for an ombudsman. I am grateful to Dr Giddings for informing me of a particular Swedish word which translates as 'conflict resolution agent' or something like that, so I welcome the use of the term 'independent reviewer'. Thinking back to that TV Licensing Authority advert, wouldn't it be a good idea if members of the House of Bishops decided to visit the independent reviewer before he had to visit them? Wouldn't it be a good idea if, as part of their processes and the outworkings of this, they were to invite the independent reviewer from time to time to come in and review their practices as they happen, rather than waiting for them to go wrong?

The Chair called Revd Dr Hannah Cleugh for a maiden speech.

Revd Dr Hannah Cleugh (Durham and Newcastle Universities): As so many others have done, I want to begin by welcoming this package and thanking the Steering Committee for its incredible work in producing so quickly such a fresh, imaginative, promising and yet traditionally Anglican set of proposals.

The fact that this is a set of proposals, a package, seems to me to be its greatest strength. We are not asked to think about it piecemeal, to work it out one bit at a time, but to gather round a table. Somewhere else in our common life there is a table round which we gather, at which theologically we might well disagree and think that different things are happening but which keeps on offering us ever new glimpses of the transforming love of God in Jesus Christ, lived out by the power of the Spirit in one another together for the world.

In this package, as in the five elements of the vision underlying it, we are all asked to hold things in some degree of tension and to commit to aspects that do not sit easily with us. The holding together in tension of a cluster of texts is in the best Anglican tradition, as we see our identity emerging from the inside out of our formularies to which all have to give their assent – our authorized liturgies, the Thirty-nine Articles and various accompanying texts, which

hold and have held more or less official and legal status over the past 500 years.

A theological conviction is not what someone happens to think or arrives out of nowhere; it is a position at which we arrive together, emerging from our reading of Scripture, our engagement with tradition and our reasoned reflection in the light of experience. It emerges from the inside, out of our common prayer and our life together.

This is not about determining some undisputed criterion of orthodoxy or making windows into one another's souls – even, dare I say, into episcopal souls. I urge the Synod to give its warm and wholehearted assent to this process and these proposals, not because we like every aspect of them or because no one in this chamber has any misgivings, and certainly not because they are the magic compromise, but rather because they offer an authentically Anglican way for all of us, providing space for all of us to continue to move forward together and to witness to the love of God to a watching, yearning and needing world.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): On a point of order, Chair. Can I tempt you with a motion for closure after the next two speakers?

The Chair: No, I fear that you could not yet. A great number of people are waiting to speak and consequently I propose to extend the length of the debate.

The Archdeacon of Cleveland (Ven. Paul Ferguson (York)): Chair, thank you for calling me even though I was no longer standing because the points that I had intended to make had been expressed very eloquently by Archdeacon Rachel Treweek.

The Chair: Please do not undermine my authority!

The Archdeacon of Cleveland: The brilliant work of the Steering Committee based on the foundation of simplicity, mutuality and reciprocity affirms what we are about as the people of Christ, seeing Christ in one another and proclaiming Christ in the world. It is a foundation not only for the task of the moment but permanently, especially where conscience leads us to see things differently. The work continues and in a sense begins from here, and I hope that we will be sensitive to those burdens that still need to be borne and do them for one another.

The Archbishop of York (Dr John Sentamu): I would like us to consider four areas. The first is about the supply of conservative evangelicals and traditional Catholics. Archbishop Justin and I are committed to ensuring that this happens and actually endures. These are not empty words.

We need Synod's help in two directions. The first is to ensure that vocations in both traditions continue to grow. It is very easy to know what traditional Catholics look for; they look for sacramental assurance and the orders as received by the Church of England. By the way, the Bishop of Chichester is not the only traditional Catholic diocesan bishop. I had thought that the Bishop of London was one of them, but he may disagree with me. Second, as far as conservative evangelicals are concerned, actually this is not easy to quantify as there are diocesans who at the moment see themselves as conservative evangelicals in regard to Scripture and salvation, except on this issue, and then some decide to say that they are not, despite their understanding of salvation and Scripture and their belief that it is only by grace and faith that they become Christians. With those who do not see them that way we need to have further conversations.

Rod Thomas illustrated exactly what I mean. I appreciate his irenic speech and I can assure him that he and I should have lunch together and then pray and seek the mind of Christ on this matter, because only in that way will we be able to understand one another as far as conservative evangelicals are concerned.

With regard to consecrations, the mandate from Her Majesty the Queen to consecrate a bishop is given to the Archbishop and Metropolitan of the province, and it is a command. They are ordered to carry out Benedictions and blessings. Again, our canons require only three bishops to carry out a consecration. Archbishop Justin and I will consult together and show our hand before the Measure is promulgated. A declaration to be quiet is unthinkable; when women are about to be consecrated, it is necessary to talk about it, so we will try to declare our hand. By the way, for the information of Synod, as Clerk of the Closet, the Bishop of Guildford has taken the Bishops of Blackburn and Manchester for their homage to Her Majesty the Queen.

Why a single reviewer? As the Bishop of Rochester said in his opening speech, at the heart of it is consistency. A good example of this is the Clergy Discipline Measure, in respect of which Lord Justice Mummery is the President of Tribunals, and perhaps this model should be looked at. Lord Justice Mummery ensures that there is consistency of approach and decision-making. That is why a single reviewer is needed. Incidentally, Lord Justice Mummery, who has just retired from the post of Lord Justice of Appeal, has done a fantastic job for the Church and been paid nothing, and I think that we probably need a person of that character in terms of reviewing.

On the question of the Revision Committee, I do not intend to repeat all that the Prolocutor of Canterbury said. Many of us of course agreed with Pete when, being well acquainted with our Standing Orders, he was inspired to suggest that actually we should have a broader Revision Committee and that this Synod as a whole should revise the Measure. That is no different from the procedure in the House of Lords, where, after Second Reading, the entire House goes into Committee and looks at every clause line by line, and of course at Report stage and Third Reading of the Bill there is no need for a division. I therefore hope that we will also agree with Pete that the entire revision should be conducted in this and not another place, because we want to hear about principles and ideas.

Finally, the Archbishop of Canterbury and I again want to express our deep thanks to the Steering Committee, the facilitators, the Chief Legal Officer, the Secretary General and all members of Synod for their self-denying ordinance in not tabling amendments on this occasion; their generous magnanimity is palpable.

I know that some matters have not yet been resolved. However, may I bid us all not to open champagne bottles, or whatever drink we regard as celebratory, because we need to continue to walk together until the end. As Sir Francis Drake said, 'There must be a beginning of any great matter, but the continuing unto the end until it be thoroughly finished yields the true glory.' Beloved in Christ, we need to stick together and stay in the same place until we reach the end. Let us all walk together in a pilgrimage of love and trust, and may the Lord help us not to lose anyone given to us.

When she was 12 years of age, in the year in which we embarked on legislation to ordain women to the priesthood, our daughter Grace spoke these words, 'The Church of England through its General Synod has the brakes of a juggernaut and the power of a lawnmower.'

Today may we, filled with the Holy Spirit, have the power of a juggernaut and appropriate brakes supplied by the same Holy Spirit.

Mrs Mary Johnston (London): Like many others, I want to express my thanks and admiration to the Bishop of Rochester and the Steering Committee for their hard work and courageous, imaginative energy that have led to these proposals. I shall support the package.

I wonder, though, whether perhaps that same imaginative energy could be directed very precisely at the wording of clause 2. My recent five-year service on the Crown Nominations Commission has made me acutely aware and extremely appreciative of the public role of especially a diocesan Church of England bishop. Therefore, the bald assertion in clause 2 that the office of diocesan or suffragan bishop is not a public office strikes me as seriously regrettable.

I have read in the Explanatory Memorandum that that statement applies only to the Equality Act 2010, and paragraph 23 of GS 1924 informs us that it ‘has no implications for the public role of bishops more generally’. However, surely once we as a Church have declared and set in law that in one sphere our bishops are not in public office, in the future many voices will be eager to point out a specific renunciation of that role and apply it elsewhere?

If as a Church we are serious about looking outwards into the public square rather than inwards, this declaration of retreat from a precious, inherited position seems to me to jeopardize an Anglican bishop’s privileged responsibility to engage with others in positions of influence for the public good and most especially to be the voice of the voiceless. I understand the rationale behind clause 2. I take it that the precise wording is the product of serious legal advice, but perhaps the necessary objective can just be achieved in a potentially less detrimental way by a combination of lateral thinking and earnest prayer. I urge the House of Bishops to try again to avoid that particular declaration.

Mrs Debrah McIsaac (Salisbury): – but before that, Saskatchewan. As my many Canadian nieces and nephews would say, ‘This report from the Revision Committee is *boss*.’ They mean excellent and outstanding – especially the idea of the ombudsman or independent reviewer. It is a ‘makes everything else work’ idea.

It was my great privilege to be the researcher on the appointment of the first provincial ombudsman of the province of Saskatchewan. For those who do not know, Saskatchewan is the Canadian province immediately next to Alberta. Members can ask the Archbishop of York where Alberta is located. Edmonton is the city he mentioned. People in Saskatchewan are rather proud of having had one of the first ombudsmen in the modern world, but Saskatchewan is a place where, because of its social and economic history, there are mechanisms to resolve a complaint by someone small against someone big and powerful, to try and find a resolution at the earliest stage.

I will not go into any more detail as to why I think the ombudsman or independent reviewer is a boss idea, as Synod has heard lots about that this morning, but I would say that it is not a good idea for bishops to go to the reviewer and say, ‘Would this be okay?’ Above all, this independent reviewer must be impartial and independent and a reviewer, not an adviser who goes back later and says, ‘Why didn’t you do it my way?’

We have a job to do of explaining the role of the independent reviewer or the ombudsman to people so that they understand. It started this morning. It is not an independent arbitrator; that is one who reaches a decision and enforcement follows. Enforcement does not follow from the recommendations made by an independent reviewer or ombudsman. I think it is telling that the ombudsman will be able to undertake an active investigation and is not dependent on the quality, or not, of the legal and other representation which either party has.

This set of proposals is a safeguard and a backstop. It is protection both for the office holder, to use the language of the papers, and of the PCC.

I would like to conclude by saying that if the Archbishops want any suggestions for names for the independent reviewer, I have one or two ideas.

The Chair called the Archdeacon of Portsmouth for a maiden speech.

The Archdeacon of Portsmouth (Ven. Gavin Collins): As someone who was not a member of Synod at the time of last November's vote, I can offer something of an outsider's perspective on where that vote left us. To our mission it was disastrous, as we decimated our credibility in the eyes of our society. It left many women in the Church, lay and ordained, feeling deeply hurt, rejected and devalued. However, make no mistake, no matter how much this is an issue of principle, theology and conviction for all of us, for our sisters in Christ it is also personal, it is painful and it cuts very deeply.

The wider Church at large, the Church across the nation felt that we – and I do say 'we' because, as a member of Synod now, I associate myself with where we are at – had let it down. How do we move forward from here? We have agreed as a Synod that the consecration of women bishops should happen. Now we need to move forward and do it, but ensuring that in doing so we provide properly for the oversight and support of those churches, laity and clergy, who would not welcome the ministry of a woman bishop, and so enabling their continued flourishing.

The key question is what that proper provision should look like. The answer is our diocesan bishops. That is the Anglican way. That has always been the Anglican way. The bishop is the focus of unity for all churches and clergy in his – and eventually her – diocese. That is what a bishop is called and charged to be. Once we have women bishops, they will need to be bishops of the whole of their dioceses. Churches should not be able to pick and choose episcopal gender, just as we should not be able to pick where on the spectrum of churchmanship our chosen diocesan bishop lies.

As an evangelical I have served in three dioceses under five diocesans. They have included liberals, Anglo-Catholics and evangelicals, and each of them has been committed to me as a minister and to the support and flourishing of my parishes. Resolution C apart – and I will not go there – we do not get to pick and choose our bishops. We should not be able to pick and choose our bishops whether we disapprove of their gender or their theology or anything else.

Together we are the Body of Christ, but we need to be committed to work and to fellowship and to loving one another together. It is when we do that despite our differences that our witness is the most powerful, our fellowship is the most genuine and Our Lord is the most glorified.

When we have women bishops it will be their responsibility to work, pastor and support all parishes, including traditionalist, Anglo-Catholic and conservative evangelical parishes, in a way that enables their flourishing, growth and well-being. It will be the responsibility of all parishes, clergy and laity alike, to respect and work under that bishop, male or female, liberal, Anglo-Catholic or evangelical, to work under them, and the suffragan assistant and honorary assistant colleagues that they have, in a way that models unity, fellowship, mutual respect and our common witness.

Dr Anna Thomas-Betts (Oxford): A quick word in praise of ‘ombudspeople’. With debates on women in the episcopate in the Synod there is an overwhelming sense of *déjà vu*, but this latest proposal has a very new element, that of an independent reviewer, which brings with it more than a ray of hope for the whole package.

I would like to say a word in support of this proposal from my experience of two different sets of circumstance. First, as an independent adjudicator for universities I was involved, even before Dr Giddings, in resolving student complaints when this system was first introduced. Until then, our students made their final appeal to the Visitor, Her Majesty the Queen, which meant that in practice the Privy Council dealt with it – when it pleased it – and there were long delays. The new system was, and I think still is, working well. Adjudicators’ recommendations are taken very seriously.

The other ombudsman I have had dealings with is the Prisons and Probations Ombudsman (PPO). Most of my time these days is spent on the National Council of Independent Monitoring Boards. IMBs monitor all prisons and immigration removal centres in the country. People in custody who have complaints not satisfactorily resolved locally can take them up with the PPO, which can recommend compensation and, indeed, changes in procedures. Again, the system does work. Of course, prisoners and immigration detainees are some of the most vulnerable people in the land. The PPO system does offer some real if limited protection to them. The PPO publishes its findings and its recommendations are taken very seriously by the authorities. Indeed, Annex B could have been a description almost exactly of how the PPO works.

In our group discussion the question came up of who should be able to access the independent reviewer. PCCs would seem to be a good unit to do this. It would probably avoid vexatious complaints. In any case, we have a general complaints mechanism in the CDC. Nevertheless, it would be an unwise reviewer who ignored complaints that came their way, from whichever source, and did not look for trends and patterns in their work.

My reservation would have been about having just one independent reviewer but, as the Archbishop of York pointed out, the CDC has worked very well with Lord Justice Mummery, and this would be a parallel mechanism.

Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford): I of course support this motion wholeheartedly. I agree with much of what has been said before but I would like to pick up on Mary Johnston’s reference to this curious legal phrase, ‘the office of diocesan or suffragan bishop is not a public office’. I agree with what she said but I would like to take it further. That would seem to exempt the bishops from all aspects of the Equality Act.

I see that we need exemption from some aspects of gender in the Equality Act, but I do not want bishops to be exempt from racism. I am not at all anxious that they might be prone to

any sort of racism, but it seems to me wrong in principle that we should open ourselves up to being allowed to do things that are against the Equality Act in all sorts of ways. I think it would be wonderful if the lawyers could look again at this. Indeed, I support the idea that the Steering Committee very much continues, so that the lawyers and the Steering Committee look again at this and come up with what I can only presume will be some better wording, improved wording, before we meet again in February.

Revd Canon Rosie Harper (Oxford): I would like to take a moment to look at this from the outside in. I would like to name the sheer weirdness of a community still arguing about discrimination in the 21st century. People out there do not care enough to be angry, but they do dismiss us as weird. If we are serious about our mission – and I know this is a very basic point – we really do have to stop being weird.

Gavin Oldham has drawn our attention to the catastrophic fall-off of Church involvement by the under-30s. All the research into the attitudes of young people to the Church tells us that they think Jesus is wonderful but the Church is always telling people off and is rife with discrimination of all sorts. If our message is not relevant, then it is nothing.

Pope Francis gets it. He stopped judging people and started loving them, not just loving the appropriate people but loving the lot; and – guess what? – Catholic Church attendance is up 20 per cent, even in the cynical West. Please, let us stop being a Church that defines itself by who it excludes and start being good news for everyone. It is an alignment thing. Practise what you preach. Stop being weird and vote Yes.

Revd Professor Richard Burridge (University of London): Like so many people today, I want to welcome not just this report but the whole process. On Monday we spent a long time discussing an excellent report on intentional evangelism, but anybody who has done any communication theory or literary theory would say that it does not matter how good your message is if nobody is listening. The unintentional un-evangelization of England has been going on all my life. Since the 1970s, when we decided that there was no reason why we should not be ordaining women but we just would not do it yet, I have watched generation after generation walk away. My children are not listening. My children's generation is not listening. The students among whom I work are not listening. No amount of getting out your message better will help, if people are not listening. They look around and see that the Church is discriminatory. They see how these Christians love one another – last November's wrangling. The question before us is how Christians travel together when they disagree.

I have just come back from Rome. That does not mean that I was thinking about converting. I attended an international conference, staying in the same house with Pope Francis. He is a person who is learning to listen. He asked me to ask us all to pray for him. We were studying the gospels and how we read the Bible and I would like to mention two brief points which came out of that.

I have spent my life studying the fact that there are four gospels. There is not just one *Jesus: the Authorized Biography*, one size suits all; there is plurality within the canon, diversity within limits. When I was a young ordinand at St John's Nottingham and a curate I spent hours and hours and hours counting every single verb in the Greek texts and many other texts of the time to demonstrate that the gospels are about the words and the deeds of Jesus.

We hear a lot about biblical teaching being the reason we can stay together. I have spent 15 years analysing all the reports, including in Afrikaans, of the Dutch Reformed synod's theological justification for apartheid. The common idea is that they were missing Scripture. They were not. They were a prayerful, spirit-guided Church. They thought that they had it right by looking at teaching, but they were not looking at the rest of the narrative; for the narrative is the rigorous teaching of Jesus, accompanied by an inclusive and mixed community. Imagine, Synod, what it was like for Simon the Zealot to have to keep company with Matthew the tax collector.

We have heard about the conservative evangelical view on 1 Corinthians. In the commentary of Tony Thiselton, former chair of the evangelical group, he lists over 80 substantial books on the various and different meanings of *kephalē*.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu reminded us last night at King's College London that it was only when they started listening to each other and listening to each other's views through the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that they were able to move forward. It is time for us to stop giving the bad news of our wrangling and move on to the consecration of women, and then we can evangelize England with the really good news.

Revd Eva McIntyre (Worcester): On a point of order, Chair. In the light of the excellent debate and the fact that it would be wonderful to give the BBC a good-news story about Synod at one o'clock, would you consider a move to closure? (*Applause*)

The Chair: I would like to hear at least two or three people, but I am sympathetic—

Revd Eva McIntyre (Worcester): It will not make the one o'clock news, Chair.

The Chair: We will continue for a moment.

Mrs Mary Nagel (Chichester): It feels quite strange to find myself standing here, making this speech. It certainly would not have happened a year ago. I believe the Steering Committee's report has brought us a long way since November of last year. We have learnt to listen to each other, to walk in each other's shoes. For me the legislation is not ideal but it provides hope for working together.

If I may, I offer an example. Nearly two years ago, my elder daughter told us that she believed she had a vocation to ordained ministry. Indeed, she is now studying at theological college. That evening I had to attend a meeting. 'What is it?' she asked me. I replied, 'A Forward in Faith meeting.' We both laughed.

This has been a heart-searching time for me, for my family, for my daughter's godparents. However, we have learnt to live with this difference in love and respect without compromising our own integrities. I think we possibly have a way forward. Let us take this opportunity to grasp and work with the process in front of us for the sake of the Kingdom.

Revd Canon Dr Rosemarie Mallett (Southwark): I had no real intention of speaking in this debate, as I believe that as a member of the Steering Committee I have had ample opportunity to make input to the documents before us. However – that dreaded word – I just wish to say that I pray we can move forward expeditiously on this matter, because I know that we have so much more to do as the part of the Body of Christ that is represented by the Church of

England, not simply on how we order ourselves but on how we do the work of God in the world and, more particularly, in our parishes.

For obvious reasons, I could not speak in the debate on Church schools yesterday. I might have made this point then, but it is relevant here too. I am the chair of governors of one Church school and vice-chair of another. One of the very important roles I play, apart from spiritual leader, is as a role model to the children and young people, not simply because I am a woman, although that is important – especially as one of the schools is a girls' secondary – but more particularly because I am from a black and minority ethnic background. If we look round this chamber we can see how important that is, due to the paucity of representation from that group. While many in Brixton from BME backgrounds desire their children to attend our schools, the majority are not interested in attending our churches as members.

There are mission action imperatives that are outstanding. In our parishes and in our Church schools we have so much to do as role models for equity and justice, for care, and for demonstrating the full representation of the complexity of the Body of Christ, as we engage and encounter our children and our young people and bring them into an encounter with Our Lord, our faith and our Church of England.

Passing this package of proposals and allowing the House of Bishops and the Steering Committee to get on and move us further along this road will, I pray, enable us all to go forth and proclaim the gospel, to be witnesses to the faith and to be truly intentional in our evangelism.

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

‘That the question be now put.’

This motion was put and carried.

The Chair: I now call upon the Bishop of Rochester to respond to the debate.

The Bishop of Rochester, in reply: I would like to thank members so much for their contributions to this debate. Some 33 people have spoken, including three maiden speeches. Members will be delighted to hear that I do not intend to respond to each one; I do, however, want to thank one or two people particularly.

To have Rod Thomas, Christina Rees and Simon Killwick all saying pretty well the same thing is quite an achievement really. I would like to thank them and all the others for the generosity of the contributions that have been made, and also for the generosity of the comments made about the Steering Committee and its work.

Reference has been made to the Steering Committee, to the staff who supported us and also to the three facilitators who worked with us. David Porter and Bill Marsh are not able to be with us today, but Sandra Cobbin is sitting up in the gallery. I would like to thank her and, through her, her colleagues for what they have done. (*Applause*)

The Archbishop of York warned us not to open the champagne too soon. Mine is still on the rack. It is yet to be put into the fridge but nonetheless is gently on the journey. There is a

danger of complacency and we need to be alert to that, because there is hard work yet to be done.

Thomas Seville helpfully took us to the Scriptures. I was rather glad to have a theological adviser sitting beside me who could give me a little bit of background to the passage to which he was referring. Yes, David did say, 'What should I do for you that you may bless the heritage of the Lord?' It sounds good and his intention was right, but he went about it, I am told, by killing the descendants of Saul – which was not the best thing to do. Interestingly, it was a woman who got him out of the mess – (*laughter and applause*) – Rizpah, who sat and mourned for six months. Eventually he saw the error of his ways and, by burying the bodies of her relatives and those of Saul and Jonathan, he brought about reconciliation between his own house and that of Saul and the Gibeonites.

Thank you very much, Paula. (*Laughter*) It illustrates that some hard work was done to get his intentions to come about. There is still some hard work for us to do to get our intentions to come about, but it does indeed seem that we may have found a new model of working together, of being the Church together. There is some change going on perhaps in us as a Synod and also, witness what Anne Foreman said, in us as individuals as well.

There has been quite a lot of the language of trust, relationality, transparency and so forth, and some comments about the place that bishops play within that. David Banting raised the question of how we do 'bishopsing' – if that is a word in the dictionary. It was rather beyond the Steering Committee's remit to dare to say too much about that, but there is a sense in which the whole model of how we do things is on the move, and on the move, I hope, in some good and positive directions.

Amanda Fairclough in her maiden speech and then Charles Read raised the issue of conservative evangelical, headship bishops and used the language of 'ring-fence'. The word 'ring-fence' is not in the draft text of the House of Bishops' Declaration. What we have put in there is a simple response to the reality: that out of 110 or so bishops there is not one who takes that position. If we are trying to go forward on a basis of trust and mutual generosity, that raises questions. It is therefore an issue that needs to be attended to, not necessarily here, but by those who have the opportunity so to do.

Reference was made to the role of the Crown Nominations Commission. That is not in our gift, but I am sure that the point is heard.

Some comments were made about consecration services and how they will happen in the future, and reference was made to this whole issue of the language of delegation and derivation and whether that can help us in some way as we try and fine-tune this documentation. I will return to the question of clause 2 of the draft Measure when we have the specific debate on the draft Measure, rather than now. There was a request to the House of Bishops to clarify but not substantively to alter. I am sure that point has been heard, as well as the point about transparency of process and texts as we go forward.

Some helpful suggestions were made in relation to the tone of the additional work to be done. Rachel Treweek made reference to that in relation to the engagement of congregations and notice to congregations.

I would like to honour those who have not been able to support this package and those who, even though they will support today, in terms of a process vote, may not be able to vote Yes at final approval stage. That is an honourable position. It is important that we are aware of that and that we continue to try and create and frame this Church in a way in which we can continue to be able to live together, despite the realities that would be made manifest by those unable to support this at final approval stage. It is important that people feel perfectly able to vote in a way that their conscience and their integrity requires them to.

Hannah Cleugh, in her maiden speech, referred to our gatherings round a table and how we are developing patterns here which are authentic to our Anglican tradition and way. There is a verse of Scripture that tells us we should outdo one another in showing honour. It is in Romans, in the context of our love and mutual concern one for another. That, I hope, is the spirit in which we will go forward.

Here is a package that is based on principle, with structures that seek to make a secure and verifiable arrangement for ordering our future life as a Christian community in these matters. I urge Synod to vote in favour of the motion which is in my name and, in doing so, enable the process to go forward.

The Chair: I now exercise my discretion and order a division of the whole Synod.

Canon Dr Peter Capon (Manchester): On a point of order, Chair. I had understood that it was out of order for photographs to be taken while the vote was in progress, yet photographs are being taken from the gallery.

The Chair: I am advised that it is not out of order.

The motion was put and carried, 378 voting in favour and 8 against, with 25 recorded abstentions.

The Chair: I would like to thank members of Synod for that debate, notwithstanding the baying at the end. As we started, I spoke of a debate imbued with grace and generosity. That is exactly what this morning has been and members are to be thanked. Your reward is in the here and now, because I am granting an extended lunch break by a few minutes.

Before members get too excited, there is one more thing from me. As we queued outside to come in this morning, somebody said to me, ‘Do you feel like a bride?’ Before I had had a chance to think about that, my advisers on left and right said, ‘We’ll be the bridesmaids.’ *(Laughter)* I am now going away to think. Enjoy your lunch. That concludes our business this morning.

(Adjournment)

THE CHAIR *Canon Ann Turner (Europe)* took the Chair at 2.30 p.m.

Legislative Business

Draft Bishops and Priests (Consecration and Ordination of Women) Measure (GS 1925)

Draft Amending Canon No. 33 (GS 1926)

Draft Measure and draft Amending Canon for First Consideration

Article 7 and Article 8 business

The Chair: The decisions that Synod will be making on Items 503 onwards are about whether to refer the draft legislation on for revision and, if so, what form the process of revision will take.

Let me explain in a little more detail what that means. When draft legislation is considered at first consideration stage, the usual form of motion is one under which the Synod is invited to agree that the draft legislation be considered for revision in committee. If a motion in that form is carried, the draft legislation is considered by a Revision Committee before returning to the Synod with a report from the Revision Committee for revision in full Synod.

However SO 57 allows for an alternative procedure under which, if the Business Committee agrees, the motion at first consideration stage can propose that the draft legislation is considered for revision in full Synod, so that, at a time appointed by the Business Committee, it returns to the Synod for revision without first being considered by a Revision Committee.

For the reasons explained in paragraphs 8587 of its report, the Steering Committee has proposed that this procedure be adopted in relation to the draft Measure and draft Amending Canon. The Business Committee has given its consent to that and therefore has included motions to that effect in the Agenda as Items 503 and 505, so that the Synod can decide whether it wishes the draft legislation to go forward for revision on that basis.

Thus, the Bishop of Rochester will begin by moving Item 503. If that is carried, the draft Measure will be committed for revision in full Synod. In that event, Item 504 will not be moved and I shall therefore call on the bishop to move Item 505, which, if carried, will similarly commit the draft Amending Canon for revision in full Synod. However, if Item 503 is lost, I shall call on the Bishop of Rochester to move Item 504, which, if passed, will commit the draft Measure to a Revision Committee. If that is carried, I understand that the Bishop of Rochester will not move Item 505 but will instead move Item 506, under which the draft Amending Canon similarly will be committed to a Revision Committee.

The other introductory point about these debates is that they are concerned with the draft legislation as such. We have already had extensive debate on the wider package, which includes the proposed House of Bishops' Declaration and the disputes resolution procedure. I shall therefore be firm with any member who seeks to use the opportunity of these debates to return to those wider issues.

Furthermore, under SO 51(b) speeches at first consideration stage must be directed to the general purport of the draft legislation in question. Members are entitled to flag the points that they may wish to pursue in the subsequent process of revision, whatever form it takes,

but this is not the moment for detailed debates on particular provisions; we shall come to those in the revision process, when amendments can be put before us and we are required to go through the legislation clause by clause.

Against that background, I suggest that if members wish to speak about the overall framework and approach of the draft legislation, whether the draft Measure or the draft Amending Canon, they should do so in the first debate on the draft Measure. Points about the general purport of the draft Measure should also be raised in that debate. Speeches in the second debate would then be confined to any issues not yet covered on the draft Amending Canon.

I hope that makes the position clear! (*Laughter*)

The Bishop of Rochester (Rt Revd James Langstaff): I beg to move:

‘That the Measure entitled “Bishops and Priests (Consecration and Ordination of Women) Measure” be considered for revision in full Synod.’

Members of Synod, this could be the first time when the Chair’s introductory remarks are longer than the speech introducing the item. The Chair’s guidance has probably given members a hint as to how to make sure that they hear as little as possible from me over the next few minutes. However, although the press gallery is not as full as it was before lunch, this is important business with which we must deal in a proper way.

As has already been indicated, it is the view of the Steering Committee, with the support of the Business Committee, that on this occasion the revision stage should be taken in full Synod. That is partly because the draft Measure is brief, and therefore any matters for possible amendment will be germane to what is in the Measure and are as well taken on the floor of Synod rather than elsewhere. In addition, there is a degree of connectedness between in the whole package. If we are to bring the House of Bishops’ Declaration and the disputes resolution procedure back to the Synod in February for further consultation between the Synod and the House, it somehow makes sense to keep the whole thing together in one place. Our strong encouragement to Synod, therefore, is to vote in favour of Item 503 and agree to the revision stage in full Synod.

The Measure contains four clauses, the first two of which are the most significant. Clause 1 is fairly self-explanatory; it does what it says it does.

Clause 2 was alluded to by at least two speakers in the earlier debate. It is probably at the revision stage in February, if that is when we take it, that some of that debate needs to happen, because those might or might not be suggestions for revision that emerge. However, let me make a few points about this. It is unfortunate that we find ourselves in this language of public office and the phrase ‘public office’ being used in different ways, but we have no option in relation to that, because that is where it is in the legislation. Whether we like it or not, by what we have decided before lunch we are making provision for parishes to request the ministry of priests and bishops where gender is part of the dynamic and the request.

Potentially that brings us, or could do in some people’s thoughts, within the remit of the Equality Act, for obvious reasons. The general view is that bishops do not fall within the definition of ‘public office’ in the Equality Act, and I ask members to note that that definition

applies only to the Equality Act. There is no wider definition; it is a narrow definition for the purposes of that Act. However, for the avoidance of doubt, the lawyers, both in this place and in Government, have advised that it would be sensible to put this clause into Schedule 6 of that Act in order simply to underline the point that bishops do not fall within the remit of that Act as far as these matters are concerned.

I think that is all I need say about it at this stage. If it comes up further at the revision stage, obviously we can consider it more fully. This is probably one of those points about which I wish one could enable the lawyers actually to speak to the Synod rather than put words in other people's mouths, but that is where we are and why it is here. It is not here without our thinking that it probably needs to be here, in order to provide some surety and security about the fact that we would not fall foul of the Equality Act as a result of what we have done this morning.

With that brief comment I urge the Synod to vote for the motion.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

Mrs April Alexander (Southwark): I had not intended to speak this morning but was tempted to because I want to develop one or two of the comments made by Mary Johnston and Hugh Lee in relation to clause 2, but the issues that I have with it are really rather different.

I would like to ask a couple of questions about clause 2. The certainty provided by this clause is essential if the package is to go through. It will ensure that there is no risk, however remote, of legal action against the Church on grounds of discrimination in relation to gender. Much though this goes against the grain, I and those to whom I am close in this Synod accept that if we are to have women bishops we must live with this, as women priests and laity have done for the past two decades.

The rub may come when we look at the other protections listed alongside the one in question in the Equality Act, and I wonder whether we might also be giving up those in relation to episcopal appointments and doing so by default. They include those protections for divorced persons, with the first spouse living for example, and those in civil partnerships, about whom the bishops issued a statement approximately one year ago.

Because of my work on the CNC I know that CNC processes honour that statement, which in turn reflects the risk, however remote, of legal action. As always, such a risk influences behaviour on the part of institutions and, assuming we agree that discrimination is wrong, it influences them for the good. In our current proposals for women bishops, the disputes resolution process gives heart to many for precisely the same reason.

My first question, therefore, is might we lose the two legal protections that I have mentioned? I hope not, because today we are dealing with the proposals for women bishops and it would not be very clever to make a major decision on these other matters without any discussion, possibly without even realizing it and, as I say, by default.

If the answer to my first question is 'yes', my second question is could another way be found to secure the clarity that the lawyers need in relation to discrimination on grounds of gender without risking the loss of protections in relation to those other discriminations that appear to be swept up in it?

There is discussion to be had about the House of Bishops' statement of December 2012, but today is not the day and now is not the time for major decisions on those matters.

Mr Clive Scowen (London): I have a concern that I think would justify the insertion at revision of an additional clause in this Measure, which I believe could be done without disturbing the delicate balance of the package.

The Steering Committee's report informs us that anxious consideration was given to the position of patrons and lay representatives of parishes acting in accordance with a PCC resolution requesting the provision of a male priest. The report refers to the fact that it is probably covered by the exception in paragraph 2 of Schedule 9 to the Equality Act and that Equality Act challenges are unlikely. However, in the current state of the law it is impossible to be certain about that, and that very uncertainty could have a chilling effect of the sort to which April Alexander has just referred on the willingness of patrons and parish representatives to act in accordance with a PCC's request.

I therefore believe that an extra clause is needed in the draft Measure, to deem a PCC resolution seeking provision to be an expression of the strongly held religious convictions of a significant number of a religion's followers, for the purposes of that language in paragraph 2 of Schedule 9 to the Equality Act; so that it is clear, not uncertain, that a parish representative or patron acting in accordance with the request of the PCC would not be contravening the Act. I believe that can be done without actually amending the Equality Act itself. It would be a provision in this Measure deeming certain acts to fall within the definition of words that are already in the Equality Act.

Alongside that, I also believe that in order to provide comfort to those in that position the Archbishops' Council or the Church Commissioners probably need to agree to indemnify patrons and parish representatives against any award of costs or damages that might be made, should an Equality Act challenge be brought. However, what I really want to do is flag up the need, which I may move at revision stage, for that additional clause.

Dr Lindsay Newcombe (London): What I want to say relates to the manner of our proceeding with revision in full Synod or committee. I was one of those involved in the conversations in February and April this year, which began in a very difficult way. We had a very frank discussion about our reactions after November. It was very confronting and emotionally draining, as was my group's discussion in York in July this year, but it was much easier yesterday. In my group yesterday I said something that I would feel very uncomfortable saying on the floor of Synod, with cameras on me and a full press gallery – not because I am ashamed of what I said but because of the nature of the conversation, which needed quietness, intimacy and eye contact; and that is the nature of the work we are doing at the moment.

I find myself thinking of the word 'flourishing'. Recently I was reminded that flowers die and, although 'flourishing' seems a good word, it does not necessarily mean longevity. The package is far from what I consider ideal, because at the moment it is difficult to see what certainty there is beyond our generation. How can we ensure that future generations will continue to have the vision of a broad and diverse Church of England? That is absolutely key to the possibility of flourishing, fruiting and development across the spectrum of the Church of England.

One way is to continue the conversation, to repent that we are in a position of disunity. We know that growing towards Jesus is the only way to grow together in a way that really matters, and we do that only by respecting Jesus in each other. Revision in full Synod will give us an opportunity to continue the conversations, but we can do it only by leaving space for the Holy Spirit. We need to ensure that God is in everything that we do. If He is not, anything that we do is sure to fail. We are part of the Body of Christ on earth, here, globally and throughout time, so we need to work together in prayer. It is our job to live and work together intimately and with eye contact.

The Bishop of Guildford (Rt Revd Christopher Hill): I have two points, the first of which is a technical one relating to clause 2, to which reference has already been made. It is important to have clarification about whether the office of a diocesan or suffragan bishop is a public office. At one stage many years ago I ended up in the courts in the Strand because of doubt as to whether or not a bishop's office was a public office; it was an appointments question. I came away from the court happily, but I would not have been there in the first place if it had not been such a disputable matter. I therefore believe that we need some clarification on clause 2.

My second point is much more general. It behoves a person making his last speech to the General Synod to be brief. Therefore, I say 'Get on with it, and goodbye!'

Mrs Sarah Finch (London): Like many other speakers, I too want to congratulate the Steering Committee on its strenuous work and to express gratitude for the change in atmosphere, for the listening and for the careful crafting of this package. I particularly want to thank the Bishop of Rochester for saying in his summing up this morning that opponents of the ordination of women have an honourable position. Thank you very much, bishop.

How am I to respond? With my heart, I want this carefully crafted project to succeed, but my head tells me to think soberly, to remember the constraints within which the Steering Committee had to operate, to remember that the issue of jurisdiction had been removed from the table by the House of Bishops, to recognize that the arrangements envisaged for those loyal Anglicans opposed to women bishops for theological reasons are not guaranteed by statute; and there are other concerns that I do not have time to mention.

I then realized that I cannot vote for this draft Measure. I would have to deny my understanding of Scripture. 'Well', someone might say, 'you have your understanding of Scripture and I am entitled to have mine.' In response to that I want to focus on a particular part of the New Testament, but I want first to explain something of my background. After doing a modern languages degree, I joined a publishing house and began to edit non-fiction books. Often the author of a non-fiction book will be an expert –

The Chair: Mrs Finch, I am sorry to interrupt you, but could you please restrict your comments to the draft Measure in front of the Synod?

Mrs Sarah Finch (London): I was hoping to explain why I am voting against it.

The Chair: Then we look forward to hearing that, relevant to the motion in front of us, please.

Mrs Sarah Finch (London): May I continue?

The Chair: You may for the moment, yes.

Mrs Sarah Finch (London): Thank you. I was referring to an author of a non-fiction book. Occasionally he is so immersed in his subject that he will write something that I simply do not understand, and then, as diplomatically as possible, I have to find another form of words, a translation that his general readership will understand but will be faithful to his original intention. I am not at liberty to alter his intention in the smallest way; his authorial intention must be respected.

I remember all this in the context of the Letter of St Paul to the Galatians, 3:28, which provides biblical warrant for women to be admitted to the presbyterate and the episcopate. St Paul writes, ‘There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.’ But what is St Paul writing about here? Is he giving instructions for the ordering of the Church? Is it his intention to authorize equality in ministry between men and women? No. He is writing about salvation. The context is about salvation, not about ministry – (*The Chair rang the bell.*)

The Bishop of Rochester, in reply: I am grateful to all who have contributed to the debate and I will respond to a couple of points that were raised.

Clive Scowen referred to the position of patrons and parish representatives and whether some further protection is needed there. We really wanted to keep clause 2 and any intrusion into the wording of the Equality Act to an absolute minimum – hence the intention, which is represented in the other documents that we considered before lunch, actually to get the bishops to take the strain as it were in relation to protecting the position of parish representatives. That is the pastoral mechanism as it were by which we would want to suggest that that matter could be dealt with.

April Alexander asked whether we would lose any of the other protections in clause 2. The lawyers tell me absolutely fervently – are lawyers fervent? I don’t know – that we do not; this is very restricted. As it happens, in relation to parochial appointments the guidance is that we act anyway as though the Equality Act did apply, even where legally it might not. We act within that spirit anyway, wherever we can, and therefore this is a very specific clause.

There is the wider issue whether somewhere down the line this might raise questions about the position of bishops within the nation as holders of a public office in a more general sense. It is worth noting that actually members of the House of Lords already have the same exemption under this clause, and on the whole we would see members of the House of Lords as playing a public role within the life of the nation. Therefore, I do not think there is any fear that we will find ourselves restricted on that in the future.

I am grateful to Lindsay Newcombe for her support of the idea that we should continue in conversation in full Synod over this. In the light of something that was said this morning, there will be questions for the Business Committee and the Steering Committee with regard to how we continue to build in the more informal conversations, as well as our more formal business as we move forward.

I am grateful to the Bishop of Guildford for suggesting that we get on with things, which I now propose to do by seeking Synod's agreement to this motion.

The motion was put and carried.

The Chair: The draft Measure will accordingly proceed to revision stage, without a prior Revision Committee stage, at such subsequent group of sessions as the Business Committee shall determine.

The Bishop of Rochester (Rt Revd James Langstaff): I beg to move:

‘That the Amending Canon entitled “Amending Canon No. 33” be considered for revision in full Synod.’

Synod having voted the way it has on Item 503, I rather hope that members will see it as consistent to vote in the same way on this motion, but I would not want to presume absolutely everything.

It is worth noting a couple of points about the significance of the Amending Canon. First, as it suggests, the Amending Canon includes various amendments to other canons, one of the most significant of which is contained in paragraph 3, where Canons 4A and 4B are revoked, and thereby we remove from the canons any language that distinguishes in relation to gender in the matter of orders within the Church; and it seems to me that that is a very positive move to make.

Second, I draw Synod's attention to paragraph 6, on which hangs the disputes resolution procedure – hence the importance of paragraph 6 within the whole package. This section gives canonical force to the regulations that will bring that procedure into being.

This is an important document for those reasons, and I encourage, urge, cajole the Synod to vote for the motion.

Revd Canon Simon Killwick (Manchester): First, it is very welcome that this Amending Canon contains requirements for the House of Bishops to make regulations for the disputes resolution procedure and for a two-thirds majority in relation to any future changes that might be proposed to those regulations. That particular element of the entire package really helps to build trust and give assurance for the future durability of the arrangements proposed.

Second, at the moment I think that the Amending Canon reads slightly oddly, because it refers *en passant* to the House of Bishops' Declaration but nowhere is there any explicit or direct reference to that Declaration, and I would like to ask the Steering Committee to look at that between now and February in order to establish whether the Amending Canon might be made a little more complete from that direction.

The Archbishop of York (Dr John Sentamu): I am very grateful that this Amending Canon removes any gender language. Part of the battle that Rowan Williams and I tried to have with the Synod was that, for those for whom headship mattered, it was not simply a matter of gender and that, for those for whom maleness mattered in terms of sacramental assurance and the nature of the Church, maleness was not really at the heart of it, but the matter was never resolved.

We all wanted legislation that actually did not contain any reference to gender. When we baptize a girl or a boy, a man or a woman, we never genderize anything of it in our liturgy; they are baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Members of the Synod who have been here long enough will remember that Bridget Langstaff, the wife of the Bishop of Rochester, moved in this Synod that we must use gender-neutral language. That motion received huge approval, and yet we still do not have such gender-neutral language within our liturgies and canons. Therefore, I for one rejoice that the use of gender-neutral language in this Amending Canon will help us in the way that we refer to what those in opposition actually were looking for. I give thanks for and rejoice in the use of this gender-neutral language and hope that we will not tinker further with the legislation.

To Fr Killwick, in terms of the generality of the canon that is being amended, all I would say is that it is flagged up, so wait for the regulations.

Revd Canon David Banting (Chelmsford): Since the Book of Common Prayer is alluded to in this particular part of the amendment, I hope that this is the right occasion on which to ask a question. During the revision of the Ordinal, comment was made about the Book of Common Prayer and how to understand it. In that revision process we were often reminded that the Book of Common Prayer is one of the formularies of the Church of England, one of the ways in which we express our doctrine, and therefore has a unique status over and above for example the ASB Ordinal or the *Common Worship* Ordinal, important though those services of course remain; but there is something foundational about the Book of Common Prayer.

My question is what, therefore, is the status of the Book of Common Prayer as one of our formularies and, in order that we can pitch into its interpretation and understanding, how does that relate to the fact that it is a formulary? How important is it that the Book of Common Prayer is part of our formularies?

The Dean of Jersey (Very Revd Robert Key): I rise simply to say that I shall abstain on this motion, not because I do not thoroughly approve of it but because I look forward to using it as a basis for amending the canons of the Church of England in Jersey and guiding it through the States of Jersey, the island's Parliament, for ratification.

I do not want the lack of my arm in the air to be interpreted by any of my friends as a lack of enthusiasm for this or as the island simply being difficult, but rather rejoicing in the fact that we in turn will look forward to seeing today's events and what lies ahead taking place in the life of the Church of England in its southern outpost.

Revd Professor Richard Burridge (University of London): I am grateful to David Banting for reminding us that the Book of Common Prayer is one of our formularies. This morning I mentioned the difference between an author's intention and how a text is received. I would be very worried if we thought that we were importing any meaning we liked into the Book of Common Prayer.

The whole point about language at that time in Jacobean English is that the masculine pronoun included the feminine pronoun. That is extremely clear in the translation of the King James Bible, for instance, where 'but if the salt have lost his savour' actually meant 'its' at

that time. It is also the case that in both the Book of Common Prayer and the King James Bible feminine pronouns regularly are translated by the masculine. Therefore, we would not in any shape or form be changing the understanding of the Book of Common Prayer or importing things into it, but merely recovering the inclusiveness of 16th and 17th century English, which did not adequately reflect the inclusiveness of the Greek and the Hebrew, which we now hear exclusively because of the way in which the meaning of those pronouns has changed. I hope that that will reassure Revd Banting and other members of the Synod.

The Bishop of Rochester, in reply: I am again grateful to all those who have contributed to the debate.

I shall defer to Professor Burrige in relation to his response to David Banting and thank him for that contribution.

I am grateful to the Archbishop of York for reminding me that I have a wife, whom I meet occasionally, and that for 14 years I was a Synod widower!

We wish our brothers and sisters in Jersey well.

I am grateful for the comments about the embedding of matters with the two-thirds majority clause and the security that is intended to offer.

The wider question concerning the embedding of the Declaration is a valid one. As members will know, there is a sense that it too is covered by a kind of self-imposed, two-thirds majority clause. Whether that can be reflected in the Amending Canon is something for the lawyers to advise us on as we take forward this process.

Those are the main points to which I want to reply. Clearly, where appropriate, some of them can be picked up in the revision process. I therefore commend the motion to Synod.

The motion was put and carried.

The Chair: Accordingly, the draft Amending Canon will proceed to the revision stage, without a prior Revision Committee stage, at such subsequent group of sessions as the Business Committee shall determine.

That concludes this item of business.

THE CHAIR *The Bishop of Willesden (Rt Revd Pete Broadbent)* took the Chair at 3.13 p.m.

The Work of the Elections Review Group: Electorate for the House of Laity and Online Elections

Second Report by the Business Committee (GS 1906) (Resumed debate)

The Chair: Members of Synod, we come now to Item 12, which was fated to receive slightly disjointed coverage at the end of the July group of sessions, so we are back where we were on the Tuesday morning last July.

Order Paper IV contains a fairly complicated series of amendments because it includes additional amendments received during this group of sessions and therefore takes us forward from the amendments that we began to debate in July.

Julian Henderson moved this item when he was the Chair of the Business Committee and an archdeacon. He is not able to be with us this afternoon. Therefore, with Synod's permission, Sue Booy's will take over from him and, at my invitation, summarize the position that we had reached in July. Because she was not the original mover, at the end of the debate I shall ask the Synod to give her a second chance to speak and sum up in place of Julian Henderson, and I hope that members will give their general consent to that.

It should also be noted that Philip French had spoken to but not moved his amendments. Members may therefore need their minds refreshing on that, and I may also ask Synod to allow him the indulgence of three minutes to bring us back to speed when he moves those amendments to which he had already spoken in the previous debate.

Members will see that the motion consists of paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) and that the amendments relate mainly to paragraphs (a) or (b). I therefore intend, first, to invite debate on the various concerns about paragraph (a), followed, secondly, by debate on paragraph (b) and, thirdly, on paragraph (c). It means that members who have asked to speak will need to be somewhat discerning in relation to the points at which they want to intervene.

Revd Canon Sue Booy's (Oxford): I am grateful to the Chair for allowing me to remind Synod of the motion moved by Ven. Julian Henderson, as he then was, the previous Chair of the Business Committee.

I will try not to detain members for too long in reminding them of the two issues that form the basis of the motion. I shall address them in reverse order from that outlined by Bishop Pete, starting with what on the face of it is the simpler basis, which, generally speaking, seemed to me to elicit the greatest enthusiasm among Synod members in July, namely the continued and increasing use of electronic processes for nomination and voting in General Synod elections.

We very firmly propose two different timescales for this. First, we aim to bring in nominations in time for the 2015 elections and, second, to bring in voting by the 2020 elections. We do not believe that it is practicable, reasonable or probably safe to rush that, although I know that others think differently.

The question of who should form the electorate for the House of Laity has been with us for quite a good deal of this Synod, as those of us who have been members of Synod for a while will remember. A number of speeches in yesterday's debate touched on this, as do the amendments.

I would like to remind Synod of yesterday's debate and of the remarks that I then made. We all acknowledge that we have embarked on a process of change in the way that we do our business in Synod; that we are thinking about the way we change things, the way that we change our working together; and that it may or may not be the right time to change the electorate for the House of Laity. As I walk around this place I am conscious that there seem to be strong views from different people in different directions, and I believe that is why so many amendments have been tabled.

GS 1906 outlines a range of possibilities, and the Business Committee came to the conclusion that an electoral college would provide the best opportunity for change. However, we were not absolutely unanimous in this view. Some favoured what generally has been called universal suffrage, and we will touch on that later.

Because of that, I am grateful for the series of helpful amendments, which will allow us to test the mind of Synod about the different ways forward. I propose, as asked, to respond to the amendments and to try to outline exactly what they will enable us to do in terms of providing for the electorate for the House of Laity.

I look forward to hearing the debate because, as I said yesterday, I am committed to listening to members' ideas, progressing the change in the way that we work and do our business together through the work of the Business Committee, of which the Elections Review Group was a part, and responding to the ideas that are shared with us this afternoon. I hope Synod will understand that we are receiving them in the spirit of renewing and re-inspiring our work together and the processes that we use.

The Chair: The item is now open for debate, but I first need to draw members' attention to the financial comment in the fifth notice paper, which details the possible implications involved in carrying the motion.

Revd Canon Jane Charman (Salisbury): As I said on Monday during the debate on the report of the Business Committee, I have been unsure how to frame this amendment because of the presence elsewhere on the Agenda of two related items – the Diocesan Synod Motions from London and Wakefield. It was clear from the debate on the London motion that we are concerned about many of the issues that it raised, but we did not see our way to a wide-angle review of the entire workings of the Synod. My amendment offers a different and more specific way of coming at some of those issues.

When we debated this motion in July three points became clear: first, that there is a great deal of energy around the question of the electorate for the House of Laity; second, that some people felt they had not been able to make a full contribution to the review group's thinking before it reported back to the Synod; and, third, that there is no consensus within the review group about the rival merits of an electoral college or universal suffrage. Since we have a system of governance based on representation, we need to ensure that representation is as good as we can make it, but we are not yet clear, it seems, about the best way to do that.

Many of us will be familiar with the research being done by Linda Woodhead, some of which has appeared in the *Church Times*. It shows that 87 per cent of those who identify as Anglicans are not churchgoers. They are believers who practise some aspects of their faith, but they do not appear on electoral rolls. Among them are those whom we identify as missing, such as young people and ethnic minorities, but they are not really missing; they are Christians who behave in what to us are non-traditional ways. So here is the sound bite: even if we go for universal suffrage, the most radical of the options in front of us on the table today, we still would represent only 13 per cent of English Anglicans. If we are serious about wanting a representative Synod, this is not the solution.

I do not have answers but, to whet members' appetite, here is just one idea. Ironically, since we so recently flirted with the idea of getting rid of it, it may be the universities constituency

that holds the key to a different approach. What if we were to reform and modernize that constituency, then look at ways of using it as a model for engaging with laity in other walks of national life – schools, hospitals, government, the law, retail, media?

We are a National Church that has lost its nation. We urgently need to re-establish that connection, not so that we can become more like the world but so that we can reach the world with the gospel. We know that it will not happen without some new and radical thinking. Linda Woodhead has said that, if invited, she would be very happy to contribute to that work. To me that sounds like a good offer.

This does not need to be a long drawn-out exercise. Let us keep it quick and dirty – July 2015 or earlier, if that can be achieved. Neither does it mean going back to square one. We need to build on the valuable work already done by the previous review group, but we need to do more than task the Business Committee with continuing to discuss the existing options.

Since in any case lay changes can be made until 2020, there seems no reason why we should not, and every reason why we should, find ourselves a little more space in which to consider these complex, significant issues before setting out on a course of action that will so decisively shape our future identity. If members agree, I urge them to vote for my amendment.

The Chair: Before inviting Mr Freeman to speak to his amendment, I need to ask Synod for its consent to allow Mr French to speak for a further three minutes. He has already spoken once in July, but I need Synod's general agreement to his speaking twice in this debate. (Agreed)

Mr John Freeman (Chester): I have tabled my amendment because I fear that we are in danger of introducing a solution that may suit some dioceses because of their difficulties with the present system of electing laity to the Synod, whereas others of us up north find the breadth of arrangements satisfactory, understand them and regularly remind deanery synod lay members that one of their main responsibilities is, every five years, to elect members of laity to the General Synod. They will all be reminded at the coming 2014 deanery synod elections ahead of the 2015 elections to this body.

During the debate I have heard comments on what we do about getting through to our congregations. Every time I return from a group of sessions I am in the habit of twisting my vicar's arm and speaking to the congregations at the 8.30, 10.30 and 6.30 services in my church, telling them what we have been up to. I am always quite happy to answer any questions, and occasionally it results in a round of applause! So the wonderful work that is done by the Synod is spread to a wider part of the Church, and I commend it to all members. Congregations like to hear what we have been up to and we should let them know. However, that is simply an aside.

I have no problem with dioceses that wish to explore alternative methods. Let them experiment and share their experiments with us all. They may well find a new, improved electoral college, but I urge that they do not impose their experiments on us all.

I took the advantage of the adjournment of this motion to poll all the deaneries in the diocese of Chester to ascertain what they thought of the various options. For Synod's information, there was unanimous support for the existing arrangements; no one wanted to change

anything. Seldom do we have a chance during the middle of a debate to talk to our friends back at base, but I took that advantage and I also commend that to other members of Synod.

My amendment aims to please all – those happy with the present arrangements and those who wish to explore alternatives. I therefore urge the Synod to support it.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

Mr Philip French (Rochester): Members may recall from July that I support these proposals but I question whether they are sufficiently radical, urgent or transparent. Item 27 puts the radical proposal for universal suffrage, which would be, as the report notes at paragraph 16, simple to explain, democratic and inclusive. It would also encourage diversity and enhance our public profile. Any form of indirect election loses the immediacy and accountability of universal suffrage.

I have two further amendments. Item 30 addresses the pitiful lack of urgency in proposing to do nothing significant until 2020. What is wrong with 2015? It is not next month; it is not even next year. To put off change for seven years would be all too easy but, characteristically, all too timid. It is, of course, tighter now than it was in July, but I think it is still possible.

Turning to Item 32, I really want to put some focus on this. It argues for transparency by having election addresses published online in a standard format, encouraging candidates to think through issues and present themselves effectively, and allowing voters to come to a well-informed judgement. This would improve upon both those that are deliberately misleading and a perhaps larger number that are hopelessly vague. This innovation is crucial to voter engagement. It is doubly important, given the widespread failure of hustings for lay elections.

I urge Synod to support these amendments. If members are not persuaded by the case for universal suffrage, then I would urge them to consider Canon Jane Charman's amendment.

The Chair: Finally, I call Mr O'Brien to speak to but not move his amendment, and then I shall open the debate.

Mr Gerald O'Brien (Rochester): I stand before Synod in the unlikely guise of asking for support for our hard-pressed staff in General Synod and our hardworking staff in our diocesan offices. I urge Synod not to impose additional, unnecessary burdens upon them. I think that would be the best contribution we could make today.

Paragraph (a) refers to an electoral college that would elect members of the House of Laity to the diocesan synods and the General Synod. We already have an electoral college. It is called the deanery synod. It is proposed that we should set up an alternative one: synodical electors. What is the difference? Both would presumably be elected at the annual parochial church council meeting. They would be elected by the same meeting groupies who turn out to attend meetings. I submit that they would probably elect fairly similar people. The only difference would be the numbers they might elect.

Supposing we create a class of synodical electors, what would it look like? Some of those elected might well be deanery synod members, because they would be elected the same way.

Depending on the size of the parish, some might be PCC members, who are not members of a deanery synod. In a really big parish, some might not be members of the PCC at all. This group would be formed that would have nothing to do for three years at a stretch. It would never meet. The members probably would not know who each other was. One day, an envelope would drop through the post or they would receive an email saying, 'Here is a list of 20 people' – people they have never heard of – 'would you like to range them in order of preference?' What sort of response, what sort of turnout, might we get? The Police and Crime Commissioner elections come to mind.

Of course, if you are a member of a club that never meets and nobody knows who you are, who will notice if you move away? Who will notice if you die? If you fail to turn up to a deanery synod, someone will notice. If you do not turn up for a PCC, someone might possibly notice. How many of these invitations to vote will be sent off to goodness knows where? How will we know who has filled them in? It seems to me that the turnout would be far lower than the 50 to 60 per cent of deanery synod members we get in elections at the moment. It could be a lot worse, and it would be a bit difficult to keep tabs on who these people are.

There is also the problem of inequality. You would find at a deanery synod that half the people had a vote in General Synod elections and some of them did not. You would find on a PCC that some, for no particular reason – not that they are a member of deanery synod or anything – had a vote and some did not. In a huge parish there might be 10 or 20 people who were not on the PCC who nevertheless had an election about which they knew remarkably little but nevertheless had the opportunity to vote.

If we had such a class of people as synodical electors, maybe they could use what I call the deanery synod experience. Now that is not to say it is any great shakes, but at least they would meet Anglicans from other parishes and become aware of some of their issues. Synodical electors could keep their heads down in their own parish and have not the faintest idea of what goes on in the Church of England beyond its parish boundaries. If they were to go to a deanery synod, however, they might learn something about diocesan and national Church issues and they might become a bit more of an informed electorate than they would otherwise be. In fact it could be argued that, if we did have synodical electors, it might be a good idea to co-opt them on to the deanery synod. (*Laughter*)

There is nothing that this reform might achieve that could not be achieved by a reform of deanery synod structures and the rules relating to them. There needs to be proportionality in the number of members of deanery synod. I see that I have a red light.

Let us reform deanery synods; do not let us enfeeble them. Let us save the Church from the additional bureaucracy that various people would suggest.

The Chair: I now open the debate in relation to (a) and the franchise and related matters.

Mrs Christine Corteen (Salisbury): I speak in support of Item 25, the amendment brought by Jane Charman. I was disappointed, having read the work of the Elections Review Group, that it came up with what I thought was an arbitrary decision to choose an electoral college. To echo some of what Gerry has just said, we will have a number of people swilling about for five years, seemingly not connected to any part of the structures of the Church, apart from the APCM. To say that we will get more commitment from them because their time will not have

to be taken up does not sound like the basis for having people who would be the least bit interested in electing General Synod members.

The report states that universal suffrage would give us the most democratic and diverse electorate that would be the most inclusive. That echoes a lot of what we were saying yesterday, so I do not understand why it has been dismissed.

It is said that there are people on the electoral roll who do not go to church. Surely it is our business to find out why they are on the electoral roll. Go out and visit them. Do a bit of intentional evangelism. That might help them to understand that there are other things they can be thinking about and contributing to the life of the Church. How can we engage with them? How can we encourage them to be part of the life of the Church? They must have some commitment in wanting to be on the electoral roll in the first place. I do not understand why that has been dismissed.

Would it not be great to have a group of people representing their parish, meeting up with other groups of people in their vicinity representing their parish, sharing best practice, inviting the odd bishop or archdeacon or two, or any other more interesting speaker to come along and talk about things, engaging together, hearing about what is going on at diocesan synod, talking about intentional evangelism together – and not just in their own context but being aware of all the different nuances of how evangelism is working in other contexts? To me, that seems to be a good model. Oh, sorry! I think that is what we call our deanery synods!

However, although I have some sympathy with what Gerry is proposing – to delete paragraph (a) – I would support Item 25, whereby it goes back to be looked at again. There are things that still need to be considered, I believe. We do not want to lose sight of this. It is very important.

There are other things in the report that have been dismissed. Electoral colleges, consisting of elected lay members of PCCs and elected lay members of diocesan synods, have just been dismissed. I do not think enough attention has been given to all the options, and I think there are others that could be looked at in more detail, to be debated further. I would urge Synod to support the amendment at Item 25.

Revd Prebendary Stephen Lynas (Bath and Wells): Chair, I want to apologize for intruding on the business of the House of Laity as a member of the House of Clergy, but I am here as a messenger, a messenger from the rural deanery of Frome and the Bath and Wells diocesan synod. The message is a technical issue that I hope will encourage members to drill down a little below the business of deanery synods – in our part of the world, we refer to it as ‘fracking’ – and ask how people get on to a deanery synod in the first place, or to any other electoral college one may end up choosing. Some may think I am referring to gerrymandering, but I want to assure them that we are after positive gerrymandering, not bad gerrymandering.

The existing electoral arrangements for all our synods were framed some 45 years ago. In those days most benefices were smaller and many consisted of one parish with its one parish church. The rules do make provision for some exceptions, but they are exceptions and reality has changed. The rural deanery of Frome in our diocese spotted this and in their case got our diocesan synod to do something about it.

Imagine for a moment an idyllic, wonderful, rural, multi-parish benefice with six parishes on the western fringes of the Quantock Hills in Somerset. The combined electoral roll of those six parishes is 180 people. Under the present rules, those 180 people will have eight deanery synod reps, or whichever electoral college you like to come up with. Now climb over the Quantock Hills to the eastern side, where there are six equally idyllic parishes of a similar size. That is a very go-ahead group of parishes, for it has just formed not just a united benefice but a single parish with one PCC. However, for all their trouble and their go-aheadness, they find that they are now entitled to only three deanery synod members, because it is one parish and not six. If that happens in Bath and Wells, it will be happening in Hereford and, I dare to say, in Chester and even possibly in Salisbury – which we love so well in our diocese.

I hope that Synod members will see the problem. In the context of this debate, it is about whether the lay electorate, as we have it or as we may even modify it, is fair. Is there an electoral disbenefit to parishes that, in my view, have done the right thing and united to form a single parish rather than be a multi-parish benefice? The Church Representation Rules 25(2) allows you to vary the membership of your deanery synod in certain ways and sets out the way in which that can be done. That is what we have done in Bath and Wells to try to help out Frome, which has a very large single-parish benefice that is woefully under-represented on the deanery synod.

The Church Representation Rules 26 enables you to have some more radical alterations to the set-up but, if you are to do that, there has to be a two-thirds approval in the diocesan synod and the scheme has also to be laid before the General Synod.

The plea of the rural deanery of Frome, which I pass on today, is that, before there is too much fiddling about, we should look at who gets on to a deanery synod and whether that represents the true strength of Anglican churches, not just parishes, within that rural deanery. If we do not fix that, we will have a bit of gerrymandering that might not be so positive.

Canon Dr Peter Capon (Manchester): I am lay chair of the deanery synod and the Manchester diocesan synod. We have revised the membership scheme for our deanery synods during this last year, so we are well aware of the sorts of issues and tensions that we face here. The question is what is reasonable membership of a deanery synod? What is a reasonable representation of the electoral rolls for voting purposes? The tension and difficulty that exists is that to most people these are quite different.

Regional representation on the deanery synod is perhaps two to four members per church per worshipping congregation – and we heard a moment ago of some of the difficulties of getting reasonable membership across teams and so on – whereas fair elections require some sort of proportionality to the electoral roll. If members want to ditch proportionality to the electoral roll, they do not need to change anything. However, the Church Representation Rules do say that the deanery synod membership should be related to the electoral roll. In Manchester, those currently vary between the smallest, which happens to be 14, and the largest, which is 605. Even if the smallest was about 20 or 30, excluding the exception, that is a factor of more than 20. You cannot build a factor of 20 into deanery synod membership unless you swamp the deanery synod membership with people from large churches. More than perhaps four or five members risks dominating or swamping a deanery synod and, of course, the PCCs are overloaded with *ex officio* members.

Our old scheme allowed up to 12 representatives on deanery synods. One or two parishes did have 12 representatives; that is, 12 people from that parish on their deanery synod, quite apart from any clergy, and 12 *ex officio* members on their PCC. That seems quite unreasonable – so unreasonable that some churches that were entitled to larger numbers chose not to elect them and therefore disenfranchised themselves in the electoral process. Our new scheme is a compromise. We still have a maximum of eight representatives from any one parish on the deanery synod.

This tension cannot be resolved just by continuing to use deanery synods as the electorate. If we make PCCs into the electorate, which has been suggested, it is even worse, because there is relatively little variation in the size of PCCs between small parishes and very large parishes. Although there may be guidelines, there is no regulation of the number of members on the PCC. It can be determined by the annual meeting.

For these sorts of reasons, I support the electoral college proposal, where deanery synod members in large parishes may be elected but where additional voters can be added, so that we get an electorate that is proportionate to the electoral roll. I think that is a way of achieving what we desire without overburdening the diocesan administration. Quite apart from the administrative burden, the problem with universal suffrage, everyone on the electoral roll – which looks superficially attractive – is that I cannot imagine a significant turnout. It would be far less than for the Police and Crime Commissioners, as far as I can see. Even under the present system, in the recent by-election there was a 29 per cent turnout and a 45 per cent turnout in the general elections.

For all these reasons, I urge the Synod to resist these various amendments and to support paragraph (a) as in the original motion.

The Chair called Mrs Sheridan Sturgess for a maiden speech.

Mrs Sheridan Sturgess (Truro): I speak as a diocesan lay chair and as a previous diocesan secretary. Item 27 proposes that the electorate should be the members of our electoral rolls and may seem to be preferable from a democracy perspective, as it is defined by the Elections Review Group as universal suffrage, but I would question what the universal suffrage of the Church of England is. I would probably agree that the option of electoral rolls is the best we have for this, as it is the only record we have of the membership of our parishes, but is it truly representative? I know that my parish's electoral roll has people on it who have little or no connection with the parish church as weekly worshippers, as do those of many other parishes, but there are also some regular worshippers who choose not to go on to the electoral roll for whatever reason. The myth still exists in places in the diocese of Truro that the size of your electoral roll will increase your parish share.

My main concern is the practicality of using the parish electoral rolls as the electorate. The report says, 'However, establishing and maintaining a register of qualified electors would be a very substantial task for the dioceses and for every parish. It would need an adequate investment of resources – not just in the implementation period – to ensure the integrity of the system and minimize the risk of error.' As a previous diocesan secretary and presiding officer for diocesan synod and General Synod elections, I say that this would be totally impractical. I found it quite difficult to obtain correct, up-to-date lists of deanery synod members from our 12 deanery synod secretaries, largely because they found it difficult to obtain the details from

their parish secretaries. To get this information directly from several hundred parish secretaries would be almost impossible. I trust that each parish does maintain its electoral roll properly, but as to receiving that information in a timely fashion, I am sorry, it just will not happen. I feel strongly that we should not be heading down the road of using the electoral rolls and I will be voting against Item 27.

That still leaves the question as to whether we should be establishing an electoral college, as the Business Committee is recommending, or stay with our present system of the deanery synods. I would prefer to stay as we are. Establishing an electoral college gives us just another register to obtain and maintain. To quote the report again, ‘...it is undoubtedly curious that the membership of the synodical body that has the fewest formal responsibilities and operates more variably than any other in different parts of the country should have the responsibility for electing the General Synod.’ It is their responsibility however, and it should be taken seriously. I think we need to be doing more to educate our Church members about Church governance process and responsibilities.

Members may remember that, in the debate we had yesterday on the Review of the Workings of General Synod, statistics were provided for the numbers of people voting for the London General Synod reps – the small numbers for such a large constituency. In the diocese of Truro, not all parishes fill all their deanery synod places. Most deaneries have not even filled all their diocesan synod places. We have to encourage parishes to fill these places and to fill them responsibly. Establishing the electoral college will not help this problem. Deaneries must take their responsibilities seriously; it is the main function of deanery synods. If they are operating properly, these are the people who are properly informed about issues facing the Church of England, the dioceses and their localities. These are the people who know Church members across their deaneries and not just in their own parishes. I urge the Synod to vote against these amendments.

Mr Timothy Allen (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich): The very close vote last November in the House of Laity, which killed off the women bishops Measure so lamentably, shows how vital it is that the rules governing election to the Synod are calculated to produce a Synod membership that is accurately representative of Anglicans in England. This debate is timely.

Turning first to some of the amendments, it seems to me that John Freeman’s amendment, though it has superficial attractions, would lead to chaos and anarchy. We really do need national rules for election to a national body. Jane Charman’s amendment, it seems to me, is unnecessary, since the present report from the Business Committee clearly exposes for our choice the range of practical options for reform. A further review would not help and would waste time.

I shall come in a moment to Gerald O’Brien’s amendment and to Philip French’s first amendment, but for the time being let me take the options that are proposed in the report of the Business Committee.

First, from my experience in Suffolk deanery synods are admirable, hardworking bodies that play a key role in supporting the local church. I have a feeling that in dioceses like London they are probably rather different, but in my diocese they work really well. However, I have to accept the arguments in paragraph 9 of the Business Committee’s report that they are not inclusive enough of ‘active Church members who are the mainstay of local parish life’. For that reason I will reject Gerald O’Brien’s amendment when we reach it.

Second, I agree very strongly with the Business Committee in ruling out election by all electoral roll members, the so-called universal suffrage, and so I urge Synod to reject Philip French's superficially attractive amendment when we come to it. However, there are more compelling reasons for rejecting universal suffrage than the rather feeble ones that are given in the Business Committee's report at paragraphs 17 and 18.

My experience, which I think I share to some extent with you, Chair, as a counsellor in a north London borough, taught me a lot about the dark political arts of packing meetings, manipulating electoral rolls, gerrymandering and managing elections in other respects. (*Laughter*) I imagine things went on much the same in Islington as they did in Haringey. I do not want to see these practices applied to the election of General Synod members. It would be easy and costless for interest groups to persuade their supporters to join electoral rolls for the purpose of voting for their candidates in General Synod elections. The words 'Falkirk', 'Labour Party' and 'Unison' are enough to remind us that electoral manipulation is always a threat and is still alive and well.

Third, I agree that the best way forward is an electoral college, but I would suggest one constituted on a somewhat wider basis than the Business Committee proposes. The aim should be to bring into the electoral process what the report calls the 'active church members who are the mainstay of local parish life'. To this end, my suggestion is that a parish's membership of the electoral college should be made up of the following: two churchwardens; the treasurer; the PCC secretary; the deanery synod members; plus a number of additional electors, equal in number to the deanery synod members and elected by the church's annual meeting. These additional electors could include younger and ethnic minority people. Such an enlarged electoral college would more effectively involve active Church members than the present system and avoid the potential abuses of universal suffrage to which Philip French's amendment would subject us. I do hope, Chair, that the Business Committee will consider this as a useful development of their suggestion of a narrower electoral college.

Mrs Christina Rees (St Albans): I am a member of the Business Committee and I was on the Elections Review Group. Sue Booy is right. We were not unanimous at all about our recommendation for having an electoral college, a system that I think would produce an even less representative House of Laity, for all the reasons Gerry O'Brien gave. I am one of those who very strongly and for a long time has felt that universal suffrage is the step we have to take at some point. I think it is without a doubt the most democratic system and it would also produce the greatest breadth and variety of our church members, and so I am in favour of it for all those reasons.

I do agree that it has challenges. The speaker before last outlined some of those. I know that as a diocesan secretary she will have experienced that, and she is not the only one to have done so. I believe that we as a Church, in the light of what we talked about yesterday with the London Diocesan Synod Motion, are in a time of transformation. I would like to think that we could make these changes purposefully, mindfully and carefully, without any rush. I do not think the challenges are insurmountable at all. I know other organizations that have many, many more members and who have dealt with elections like this. They do it on a system which is efficient and cost-efficient, and it works. Setting that up would be a challenge and it would be a true change of culture.

If we vote for Jane Charman's amendment, then I hope that we would have a very swift review and not take the same length of time we have already taken. As Sue Booy's has said, we are already going to consult Linda Woodhead and others about the best way forward. If we do not choose to have a review, then I hope very much we will go for Philip French's amendment at Item 27, and take the time to get it right. There are people with a huge amount of expertise in this room right now who can help us to make sure we get it right, so that we have the widest variety of our Church members who are able to vote and who are enfranchised.

If we choose not to go that way, I think the second best would be to go for Gerry O'Brien's amendment, which is the status quo, and do what we have referred to already, namely reviving the deanery synods. However, I would prefer us to be a little more courageous, a little less risk averse in going for universal suffrage and looking at that. After all, even though it would take away the role of deanery synod members to vote for General Synod members, every deanery synod member is already a member of their electoral roll and so would be enfranchised if it went to universal suffrage. To me that is a win-win. We would not lose anything. We would lose the role of the deanery synods voting for General Synod, but we have already discussed many of the issues in relation to deanery synods not necessarily being the best body. The members would still be able to vote for the members of General Synod under a universal suffrage vote or, as Philip French's amendment calls it, church electoral rolls.

If we vote for Jane Charman's amendment, yes there would be a review, but I hope that it could be swift. I hope that we would not have to do again what we have already done in our Elections Review Group. If we do not vote for it, then I would ask that we go for Item 27.

Mr Jacob Vince (Chichester): I propose retaining the status quo. Like Gerry O'Brien, I believe the deanery electorate is in fact an electoral college.

Our deanery meets just twice a year over three years. Why should so-called 'busy' leaders not turn up to deanery synods and then vote for busy leaders who will turn up to General Synod, which is arguably a more onerous position? When I came on to the General Synod I was a churchwarden, a full-time employed chartered surveyor, and a deanery synod, diocesan synod and Bishop's Council member. It is not necessary to do all those things to get on the General Synod. In fact, General Synod is open to any Anglican communicant and to those who are desirous of being communicants and who shortly would be. There is a wider openness to stand in the General Synod election than for many of the national elections we hold, where you have to be members of parties, have to get on a list and, in large part, be voted on to safe seats by a very small constituency. Anyone can stand in our diocese. On the two occasions when I have stood, two people stood who had had no direct involvement in any synods and they were elected. That, to me, is a very fair system.

If electors are not prepared to get involved, why should they vote only every five years? I think there will be even less engagement. Who will General Synod members be accountable to with an electoral college? There is little enough opportunity to be connected as it is. Reporting to deanery and diocesan synods is one of them. What opportunity would there be for the electorate to get to know their prospective candidates? What contempt for deanery synod members that they are ignored. They have shown commitment and they should be honoured for that and receive the vote.

When I return from this General Synod I will be reporting back to my deanery synod about all that has taken place here. I am also allocated to another deanery synod in my diocese, and I will be waiting for them to contact me and will report back. I think this is how it should be. Deanery synods in our dioceses are entrusted with allocating the parish share for the dioceses. If they are good enough to make arrangements for the money, then I think they should be good enough to make arrangements to elect the General Synod. There is no way that I would wish to report back to my deanery synod and tell them that they no longer to have the responsibility and privilege of forming the electoral college for lay members of General Synod. By all means inform parishes, PCCs and congregants of the important role of deanery synods.

I would urge General Synod not to go down the route of change for change's sake and to shape the existing arrangement better rather than replace. Let us simply make what we have work better.

Mr Keith Malcouronne (Guildford): Just to compete with Jacob, I am treasurer of St John's parish and lay chair of Runnymede deanery. I serve on our Bishop's Council. I am vice-chair of our DBF and vice-chair of the Archbishops' Council's Audit Committee. I serve on the Dioceses Commission and I am also a full-time chartered accountant. Whilst there are some people who can give time to all these different bodies, we do need to widen the electorate for General Synod, for all the many reasons that speakers have given already.

I take the point that Jacob just made, for example, that the very people who are serving in so many different ways in our churches should continue to have a full part in that franchise. I would suggest that we supplement the existing deanery synod membership with additional members to be voters for the elections, along the lines that Tim was suggesting – people who are also serving on PCCs, as wardens and so forth – but, very importantly, in proportion to the electoral roll of the church as a whole. Tim's suggestion might have been taken to mean that if all those people were on *ex officio*, the system would be even less proportional than at the moment, because obviously every parish has two wardens, a treasurer, a secretary and so on.

I will therefore be voting against all of the first four amendments. Jane's amendment will just delay matters. We want to get on now and get this electoral college in place. John Freeman's amendment is well meant – to explore different ways of going forward – but it would generate a postcode lottery. With regard to Philip French's amendment, people join electoral rolls for all sorts of innocent reasons; they may want to get married in that parish and then end up staying on that roll for year after year or, as was hinted at by another speaker, as a form of entryism. We would end up with very different elections. With such a wide electorate of people who have very little knowledge about what General Synod does, we would end up with single-issue elections and campaigning on just the issue of the day. The membership of this body would swing wildly from one five-year period to the next.

Finally, I would sadly recommend voting against Gerald's amendment too because, as Stephen Lynas pointed out, we do need to have proportionality. The current system has the strangest quirks and so is just not fair. I am afraid that I am being negative today. I urge Synod to vote against them all.

The Chair: I will now ask each of those who has put down an amendment to move it formally and the mover of the main motion to comment.

Revd Canon Jane Charman (Salisbury): I beg to move as an amendment:

‘Leave out paragraph (a) and at the end insert –

“and request the Business Committee to establish a review specifically to consider the better representation of the laity in the General Synod to report to the Synod by July 2015.”.’

Revd Canon Susan Booy: I urge Synod to resist this amendment. I am not sure that it is a more specific opportunity, as Jane suggested. The work of the Elections Review Group reporting to the Business Committee was not for root-and-branch reform, but we have heard and can hear further some useful ideas. We will be willing to hear those but this will either be large-scale and expensive or small-scale and we have already done it. I therefore urge Synod to resist the amendment.

Revd Canon Dr Simon Cox (Blackburn): On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

This motion was put and carried.

The amendment was put and lost.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): I beg to move as an amendment:

‘Leave out paragraph (a) and insert –

“(–) allow Dioceses to retain the present arrangements for the election of lay members to the General Synod or to experiment with alternative electoral college arrangements for lay members approved by their Diocesan Synods and to report on the outcome.”.’

Revd Canon Susan Booy: I can see that it is tempting but it is not transparent and, as Mr Allen says, national rules for a national body.

Mr Peter Haddock (Southwark): On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

This motion was put and carried.

The amendment was put and lost.

Mr Philip French (Rochester): I beg to move as an amendment:

‘In paragraph (a) leave out “establish an electoral college for” and insert “enable all those on church electoral rolls to participate directly in”.’

Revd Canon Susan Booy: I wonder if it would be helpful at this point to say something about the electoral college. Otherwise, we will get beyond the point where we might do that.

I am sorry, Mrs Corteen, but we did discuss all the options quite carefully. Although I am bound to say that we were not unanimous, the majority view of the Business Committee was that the electoral college was a relatively simple form of creating a way out of the all the kinds of problem I have heard articulated time and time again on the floor of this Synod earlier this week, during this debate and on the fringes of this Synod. There just might be people who cannot give up their time for PCCs and deanery synods, the kinds of folk of whom Emma Forward was speaking in the debate yesterday, those who really love the Church and want to participate in it, who are thinking people.

I welcome Tim Allen's suggestion that we should think a little bit more on this, but I honestly believe that we do not have the resources at the moment to move to a good system for universal suffrage. I am indebted to my colleague on the platform Simon Butler, who reminded me that most organizations that use universal suffrage are subscription organizations with clear membership lists. Sadly, we are not a subscription-based organization, which means not only do we not have the lists but we do not have the subscriptions. *(Laughter)*

Revd Canon Dr Simon Cox (Blackburn): On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

This motion was put and carried.

The amendment was put and lost.

Mr Gerald O'Brien (Rochester): I beg to move as an amendment:

‘Leave out paragraph (a).’

Revd Canon Susan Booy: I know that some members are still wedded to the problems of their deanery synods as electorates. If members want to vote for this, please do, but I am not convinced that we can click our fingers and solve those problems. Before members vote, I would urge them to think about the magic wand that I cannot wave and to consider how the problems raised in this chamber, not only this afternoon but at other times as well, will be solved. I urge Synod to resist.

The Chair: Item 28 is almost open for debate. Let me make clear what would happen if the amendment were carried. There would be a return to the status quo, which is using deanery synods as the electorate.

Revd Canon Dr Simon Cox (Blackburn): On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

This motion was put and carried.

The amendment was put and carried.

The Chair: We have deleted (a) and we are back to the main motion.

The Archdeacon of Bolton (Ven. Dr John Applegate): I want to thank the Business Committee and the Elections Review Group for their reports. As a member of the House of Clergy, I hesitate to comment on how the House of Laity should be elected, and my comments therefore apply whether the electorate stays with deanery synods or you prefer an electoral college or something different.

I am perturbed by some of the implications of clause (b). My amendment is to delete it, and not because I am a Luddite. I am one of those people who download all of the papers and bring them on my laptop, rather than waiting for the printed ones to fall through the letterbox and kill the cat!

It is important that we widen the participation in Synod elections, but moving to online voting will not necessarily do that. One in six adults has never used the internet and one in six households do not have access. According to quarterly figures published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) – and, most recently, just last week – three groups of Church members would be disadvantaged by such a move. First, the over-65s. We have already heard that over 60 per cent of Church members are over 65, so that would be a huge number. Although a growing number of over-65s use the internet, last week's figures from the ONS noted that one-third has never used the internet. Among the over-75s, the figure is that two-thirds have never used the internet.

Second, the poor. Unsurprisingly, households on low income have less access to the internet than others. Last week's ONS figures clarify that internet usage is lowest in our poorest rural communities, particularly west Cumbria, and the most deprived urban areas outside of London are not far behind – Newcastle, Sheffield, Doncaster, Birmingham, Birkenhead, Hull, for example. A quick survey among Manchester Synod reps revealed PCCs in deprived areas with as few as two people with access to email and no churchwardens with access to email or the internet. This difficulty is compounded by the financial crisis in many local authorities, where the closure of libraries and community resource centres has meant the removal of free computer and internet services.

The third group that would be disadvantaged is those who assess themselves as having a disability recognized under the Disability Discrimination Act. In fact, the ONS has highlighted that over half of the people who have never used the internet are disabled.

A postal system may have its drawbacks but its clear advantage is that the oldest, poorest and most disabled of Church members have a letterbox or pigeonhole through which they can receive information by post and decide whether or not to exercise their vote. Using online voting only, which is what is recommended in the motion and the paper, means that a significant number of people will be excluded because they simply do not have the electronic letterbox they need to participate. If people are excluded because they cannot afford to have the necessary equipment to participate or they do not have the skills to do so, that seems to me to be fundamentally wrong.

As Archbishop Sentamu reminded us in his presidential address, there are some big issues of social justice for us to tackle, and I do not pretend that our voting system will address any of those. I ask this simple question. Does it reflect biblical standards of justice that we should

discriminate and disenfranchise the oldest, the poorest and the disabled among Church members by moving to online voting only? It seems bizarre to move to a system that will exclude the majority of Church members, that is, over one-third of the over-65s, and offensive to move to a system that excludes some of the poorest and many disabled people. Personally, I would be happy to move to online voting as an additional method of voting but I understand that a mixed system would be more difficult and expensive to administer.

I would urge Synod to vote for this amendment on the grounds that using only electronic media would automatically disenfranchise many of the oldest, poorest and disabled of Church members. At the very least, I would ask members to send a message to the Business Committee that a more inclusive way of conducting elections needs to be found.

Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford): The previous speaker has made most of my speech for me. I am a person who likes to do everything online. I get resentful when people give me or send me pieces of paper. I say, 'Could you please put that in an email?' Frankly, I am disorganized when it comes to paper. I lose it. If I have something electronically, I know where it is, because it is on my computer. For many of us, doing things electronically is easier. If we make it possible for people to vote electronically in General Synod elections, I think it will increase participation, particularly of younger – and when I say younger, I mean relatively younger – Church members. At the same time, there are still a significant percentage of people in our churches who are digitally excluded, as the previous speaker was explaining.

We have been looking at graphs of age demographics. Even though this would not be introduced until 2020 and obviously the proportion of people digitally excluded by reason of age will decline with every passing year, by 2020 there will still be significant numbers of people who potentially are electors who will not be able to vote electronically. Although it has been suggested that methods could be put in place for assisting them to vote electronically – there could be somebody with a computer to whom they could go who would help them to cast their vote – the trouble is that it is creating a barrier to participation. It is a general principle of democracy that if you want to increase voter involvement you should be trying to make it easier rather than more difficult for people to cast their votes. If we have an online voting system, make no mistake about it, it will put in place a barrier to voting for those who do not have access to the internet. That is obvious really, is it not?

Can we put in place a system that gives people the option, so that if individual electors want to vote electronically they can do so, but those for whom it is not the best way of receiving election materials and casting their vote can continue to do that by post?

The Chair: The debate is now on (b) and (c), which is all that is left of the substantive motion.

Mr Peter Collard (Derby): I would like to support Prudence's option. I do not see that it need necessarily cost a great deal, but we do have a cost problem at the moment: the cost of postage. If someone is poor, will they spend 50p to send in their vote when they do not know any of the people? I wonder whether the postage problem is not restricting the number of people who vote.

I would like to make a more general comment on computer systems, having spent 30 years in IT. Over the last few months I have spent my time unsubscribing, to try to reduce my junk mail. I think that I am winning. Before last November I got a lot of canned emails. They had

been auto-generated by someone just putting in their email. They all looked the same, I realized, after I had replied by hand to the first two or three. After that, I simply filtered them into the trash. Can we avoid any system that allows emails to be extracted off websites and suchlike, which allows people to generate trash?

Mrs April Alexander (Southwark): After hearing many speeches, I have come away with the view that we do not really know how to organize the elections fairly, parish by parish, whether we do it by the deanery synods or whether we do it by a special electoral college. I am pretty worried by that and I do hope that those issues will be looked into by the Business Committee at the next stage.

There are two other comments that I would like to make. Whoever the electors are, can there be rules to ensure that in every diocese there are proper hustings? Even if these are done electronically, by Webinar or Skype or conference call or whatever, it must be possible for every elector to put questions to each or any candidate in public and for everybody else to hear the answers. That did not happen in my diocese last time and led to some of the disappointments that we have experienced since.

The second thing I would like to say is that I am puzzled. I am always losing things. I am one of the over-65s and I probably do not have internet and I am always losing things, but this time it is really strange. I have lost a whole bunch of university representatives. Where are they? We had quite a strenuous discussion about that in July and they have just gone off the radar. I put in a submission, as was suggested. I submitted views to the effect that in my work on the Church Commissioners and on the CNC I have had cause to value the input of university representatives hugely. I understood that their method of election was somewhat flawed, and the suggestion was that they should just disappear. It appears that they have disappeared. I simply do not know what has happened to that part of the argument and I would like to.

The Chair: I will bring the debate back to the whole report towards the end, so we are trying to debate the issues arising from the amendments at this stage, without actually debating the amendments.

Mr Adrian Vincent (Guildford): I am speaking in relation to Mr Applegate's amendment. He says that the wording of paragraph (b) of the motion states that by 2020 the elections will be exclusively online. I cannot find the word 'exclusively' in paragraph (b) of the motion. He says that the report states that it will be exclusively online. Paragraph 66 of the report points out that 'It is possible to enable postal nominations and ballots for those who choose not to use an online system.'

There are many ways in which one can have online or postal as an option for those who do not have access to the internet. I therefore hope that we will resist the amendment but that, when the motion and paragraph (b) are carried, efforts are made to ensure that when we bring in an online facility we also enable people who do not have internet access to vote by post.

Revd Dr Hannah Cleugh (Universities of Durham and Newcastle): All the university representatives certainly have been here during the course of today, so we have not vanished! For Mrs Alexander's benefit, the system for electing university representatives is under revision and I understand that the Revision Committee is meeting at the beginning of next month.

Specifically, I would like to endorse what Prudence Dailey has said, that we should have a mixed economy of electronic and non-electronic elections, to enable the widest possible participation from people who not only may not have internet access but who are also culturally suspicious of doing things online. I think that it is fairer if we have both.

Dr Edmund Marshall (St Albans): I have just three quick points. Any exclusive reliance on electronic methods of voting causes a disenfranchisement of much of the electorate.

Secondly, any dominant reliance on electronic methods does open up quite a bit of – I will not say abuse of the electoral system, but it undermines secrecy. If people are relying on their friends to show them how to use the internet or if they are using equipment belonging to other people, it is very easy for secrecy to go by the board.

Thirdly – and this is equally important – we have to try to maintain a system whereby everybody has the right to vote fairly, freely, honestly and secretly. If we take away that right, we shall be undermining our whole system.

Mr Malcolm Halliday (Bradford): I speak as someone who until very recently has been a presiding officer for 25 years as a diocesan secretary.

I have concern regarding the amendment to have a paragraph after paragraph (c), in particular the word ‘transparent’. I presume that does not mean we will be printing it on see-through paper, but I think it contains an implication that people were perhaps being economical with the truth in the past.

I first encountered diocesan synod elections while I was an ordinary lay chair in Epsom deanery in Guildford diocese when, one afternoon, somebody knocked on my door, introduced himself as a candidate for the diocesan synod and said that he hoped he could spend 15 minutes with me, discussing issues that I thought the Church ought to be addressing. This was one Oliver Wright Holmes, who may be known to one or two members of Synod. He was going around the diocese, canvassing door to door. I think that we have to accept that was perfectly reasonable; not everybody would want to do it or would have the time. I think it is up to an elector to determine the form of their election address. The way they do it says something about them, and I think it is a matter for us.

I am not against the idea of their being centrally published on a website, though that does enable party groups to collect information across the whole country and perhaps occasionally misuse it during the election process. However, I think that the election addresses should be posted out – for the reasons given earlier by the archdeacon.

The Chair: I will ask John Applegate to move his amendment formally.

The Archdeacon of Bolton (Ven. Dr John Applegate): I beg to move as an amendment:

‘Leave out paragraph (b).’

Revd Canon Susan Booy: I will try to make a couple of comments, which may help various points that have been raised in the last few minutes. I think that this is based on a misunderstanding. There was never an intention to move to an entirely online system. That

was certainly made clear in the opening speech of the July debate; so I am really sorry if it has not been made clear to you now. There was never any intention of moving to an entirely electronic system. I wonder how many members of Synod have electronic devices within reach at the moment, and how many have been concerned by Mr Oldham's graph and concerns about that generation, if one depends on electronic equipment. We are totally in favour of a mixed economy.

As to the investigations we have carried out so far, the Electoral Reform Society is proposing a closed site with password access; so this is not just nipping onto the General Synod website and casting a vote – I promise.

I would therefore urge Synod to resist this amendment. It will close things down. Similarly, I will not then need to comment on Prudence Dailey's amendment, because I would be saying the same thing. I urge Synod to resist both amendments for the same reasons.

Revd Canon Dr Simon Cox (Blackburn): On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

'That the question be now put.'

This motion was put and carried.

The amendment was put and lost.

Mr Philip French (Rochester): I beg to move as an amendment:

'In paragraph (b) *leave out* "2020" and *insert* "2015".'

Revd Canon Sue Booy: I do understand and appreciate Mr French's enthusiasm for the process. However, although in practical terms, in terms of the computer industry, this may be possible, in our terms it is not. Synod has heard some of the concerns that have already been raised. I am advised that we would be having to bring this to Synod in February if we were to have things up and running for online voting in 2015. I think that members will all be as clear as I am that to be able to bring that to Synod in February and to vote on it sensibly is just not possible.

I am very sorry, Mr French, but I would urge Synod to resist this amendment.

Revd Canon Dr Simon Cox (Blackburn): On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

'That the question be now put.'

This motion was put and carried.

The amendment was put and lost.

Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford): I beg to move as an amendment:

'In paragraph (b) after "undertaken" *insert* "optionally".'

The Chair: There is no comment needed; you have already heard one.

Revd Canon Dr Simon Cox (Blackburn): On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

This motion was put and carried.

The amendment was put and lost.

Mr Philip French (Rochester): I beg to move as an amendment:

‘After paragraph (c) *insert* as a new paragraph –

“(–) make provision by 2015 for General Synod election addresses to be published online in a standard transparent format.”.’

Revd Canon Sue Booy: We appreciate the concerns that led Mr French to bring this amendment and it is something we considered at some length when we met as the Elections Review Group and then in the Business Committee.

The question is in the word ‘transparent’. It is not possible to enforce what we mean by transparency and we run the risk of an increasing number of appeals. It is something that we have considered time and time again and have had to reject time and time again.

We looked very carefully at the guidance given to the officers for elections, which says ‘Candidates should ensure that their addresses are accurate and should disclose the candidate’s membership of any body, if the fact of such membership might be considered relevant by electors to their decision as to whether to vote for the candidate.’

I know that this is the area around which there has been some distress, but it is not possible to enforce it in the way that Mr French invites us to. When we put addresses online, however, I am quite sure that there can be a standard form, which, together with that advice, policed by members as well as election officers in each diocese, will give us the makings of a more robust system.

For really good reasons I urge the Synod to resist this amendment, but we will certainly make sure that when we have an online system there will be a form that people can fill in, which will make it clearer.

Revd Canon Dr Simon Cox (Blackburn): On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

This motion was put and carried.

The amendment was put and lost.

The Chair: We therefore come back to debate the main item, as amended by Item 28. It means that we have Item 12, with (b) and (c) re-designated as (a) and (b).

Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford): I have to say that I feel this has been a very unsatisfactory debate. Not only has it been split over two groups of sessions, which is very difficult when there is quite a complex set of recommendations like this, but also there has been very little debate on the substantive recommendation from the Business Committee on electoral colleges. In fact, the matter of omitting paragraph (a) was moved and voted on without any debate at all on the amendment itself, which I think is extremely regrettable.

There is very sound thinking behind the Business Committee, which I will mention in a moment. Before doing so, I find something not quite right to begin with about our discussing this issue, namely elections to the House of Laity, across the whole of General Synod. The majority of people voting on this issue are not members of the House of Laity. If we want to talk about this issue, we ought to talk about it in a House of Laity meeting first, come to a view and then, if it needs to come to General Synod, it would be brought to General Synod afterwards.

I come from the diocese of Oxford and I am lay chair of the Wendover deanery, so I have a fair experience of how deanery synods work and the elections for them. Synod members know extremely well what the problems are. We have a very poor voting record in General Synod elections for the House of Laity. We have practically zero turnout for hustings. At one hustings in Newbury there were more candidates who turned up than electors. That is not an infrequent experience. We also have very little engagement of the young. I feel that the whole issue of engagement of the young is something we have to tackle across the Church of England and not just in voting and synod procedures. It starts on the ground and that is where we need to be, as we were saying on Monday.

We have a serious problem here and I think the Business Committee was trying to address it in dealing with the electoral college. If there are people whose sole duty is to vote, that provides a completely different basis for their action than ‘Who wants to be on deanery synod?’ What does it mean? It means turning up at three or four meetings a year in the evening and having the time to do that. Not everybody wants to do it. The issue of being an elector in elections for General Synod hardly gets a mention in terms of people standing for deanery synods.

I do think that there is a problem about this and I hope that, from that point of view, we will not lose it completely. I would therefore ask the Business Committee to think again about this process. I know that we have said we have to use the same system going forward, and obviously we will have to work with that; but we do need to keep this issue alive.

There is one small, final point I would like to make and it is one that has not come up at all. It is this. If there are elections for General Synod in the middle of August – surprise, surprise! – most people are away on their summer holidays. That may be another reason why the turnout is so low. Could I suggest that we think again about the timing of elections for General Synod and think about holding them at a time when people are around, when they are looking at their post and perhaps looking at the website as well, and they are able to deal with this? I do hope that will also be given some attention.

Dr Philip Giddings (Oxford): Following what Mr Oldham has said, I think it is appropriate that at some point in the process the whole Synod should discuss the elections to each of the Houses which comprise the Synod as a whole. It is for discussion within each House as to whether it should have a prior discussion of that matter.

However, I look forward to an assurance from the Chair of the Business Committee that the very relevant and important points that have been made about process, integrity, and the confidence we can have as a General Synod as a whole that we represent the Church in which we have a place in its governance, will be applied to the processes for electing the House of Clergy and suffragan bishops in the House of Bishops.

Revd Canon Pete Spiers (Liverpool): I think that this has been a very good debate. When I first came in I was thinking that I was going to vote for an electoral college, and I ended up voting for Gerry O'Brien's amendment.

I speak as an area dean in the Liverpool diocese. One of the reasons given earlier was that the General Synod was not representative of the views of the Church of England as a whole, probably based on last November's vote. It is the same Synod that this morning has voted through legislation for the consecration of women as bishops, so perhaps we are representative of the Church of England as a whole.

My answer to the comment about deanery synods is to make them better, make them more attractive, get people there. That is what we try to do. As a synod we have already flagged up that at our next deanery synod in February we need to have a discussion about the elections to the new deanery synod, because they will be the electorate for the General Synod.

When it comes to voting, nothing is stopping deanery synod reps consulting with people in their parish, or even amongst themselves, about the electoral addresses. I hear the comment about hustings from April Alexander. I would not like to go to London diocese's electoral hustings, because we would still be there now! But there must be a way of doing it by which people can speak for themselves. Online is an obvious answer. We could film them; the communications teams could get to work on that. There must be a way of making things better.

Finally, a suggestion for the Business Committee. Perhaps if it considered creating an app, as they do on *The X Factor*, there might be more involvement on the part of the younger generation.

Mrs Anne Martin (Guildford): Nine years ago I agreed – because nobody else would – to stand for deanery synod. I did not know until I got there that it was my responsibility to elect to General Synod – and look where it got me!

Seriously, however, I think that in a lot of PCCs people are unaware that it is the responsibility of deanery synod members to vote. If more people knew that, I think there would be far more people willing to stand for deanery synod, knowing that it was where they could have something to give to the Church of England and some responsibility.

Revd Canon Dr Simon Cox (Blackburn): On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

This motion was put and carried.

The Chair: I now need to crave Synod's indulgence once more because, as I indicated, Sue Booy's needs to speak twice. Because she did not move it, technically she is not meant to be able to respond to the debate, but I am sure that you would like to hear her. I therefore need Synod's general consent by a show of hands to say that it is happy for that to happen.
(Agreed)

Revd Canon Susan Booy's, in reply: I might have been quite pleased if you had refused to let me speak! However, I would obviously like to take the opportunity of thanking all those who have taken part in this debate. I was scribbling furiously but I did not write down every name and every point, because I was more concerned about trying to answer them. You will therefore forgive me if I do not mention everyone by name, because it has been such a good and well-represented debate, and I think that we would all get rather bored.

I share Mr Oldham's disappointment, not least because I have spent quite a lot of time thinking about this. We had worked hard on the disappointments that we had heard expressed about deanery synods. However, what I really hope is that members of Synod have listened to one another, because you are the people who were expressing unhappiness with deanery synods, the people who have decided – again – that deanery synods *are* the right place to do the business of electing the members of this General Synod House of Laity. I have to say that, if you are right, then you need to go home and do something about it.

This morning we heard a wonderful story from the Prolocutor of Canterbury about eating her words. It would be great if I were eating my words about elections to the House of Laity. I have heard some real enthusiasm, so at this point – area deans, lay chairs, lay members of deanery synods – I think it is up to you. It would be great if you could reinvigorate deanery synods. We have heard some good stories, not only here but also in the corridors about just that happening. I therefore wish you the very best of luck in doing it and look forward to seeing the fruits of your labours.

I thank Synod for a good and helpful debate. We will take on board all the points that we have written down and you will, I hope, find them coming up again. Enjoy your deanery synods, reinvigorate them. We look forward to meeting them.

The motion was put and carried in the following amended form:

‘That this Synod request legislative proposals to be brought forward to:

- (a) make provision by 2020 for elections to the General Synod to be undertaken online; and
- (b) make provision by 2015 for nominations for elections to the General Synod to be undertaken by email.’

THE CHAIR *Revd Canon Dr Rosemarie Mallett (Southwark)* took the Chair at 5 p.m.

The Chair: We now move to Item 13 on the Agenda. However, before we come to that business the Archbishop of York has asked my indulgence to speak to a matter for which champagne has definitely been shared already!

The Archbishop of York (Dr John Sentamu): Members of Synod, all I ask of you is to pray for the City of Hull! (*Applause*)

Farewells

The Secretary General (Mr William Fittall): Secretary General farewells are reserved for that small number of individuals who are, as the French would put it, *hors concours*. In other words, people who stand outside our normal categories, unique, unrivalled, without equal.

The last such farewell was in 2005 for Ingrid Slaughter, for whom the expression *hors concours* might have been specially created! Today, it is Sir Anthony Hilgrove Hammond KCB QC – ‘Wally’ to his friends – who has served the Synod with distinction as Standing Counsel for the past 13 years.

When I arrived at Church House 11 years ago, it was good to find one familiar face; for Wally, like me, had spent many years working in the Home Office. We had first met in about 1977, though Wally does not remember the occasion, because by then he was already a big fish and I still a young minnow. Incidentally, another fair-sized fish at the meeting was a certain Joe Pilling, from whom we shall all be hearing more – soon. (*Laughter*)

The meeting was about difficulties that had arisen with the Justices of the Peace Act 1361. As I recall, Wally advised that on the whole it might be wise to leave well alone. So we did – and he was right.

It should not be inferred from this that Wally’s working life has been spent by still waters. In 1974 he had spent all of one night in the official box in the House of Commons, supporting Roy Jenkins in getting through the first Prevention of Terrorism Bill after the Birmingham bomb. Throughout his time as Legal Adviser to the Home Office and Northern Ireland Office he gave advice through a steady stream of crises. As a Director General at the Department of Trade and Industry and then Treasury Solicitor, Queen’s Proctor and Head of the Government Legal Service he was at the centre of Government business. So it was a coup on the part of my predecessor to persuade Wally, on retiring from Whitehall, to come and serve the Synod in the part-time role of Standing Counsel.

He had scarcely arrived when Mr Blair asked him back, to investigate the Hinduja passport affair and the role played by Peter Mandelson. *Private Eye*, lapsing from its normally high standard, promptly labelled the investigator ‘Sir Wally Whitewash’. But anyone who troubled to read the report would see that it was another article that got it right. Under the somewhat unlikely headline, ‘Hammond breathes life into Mr Mandelson’, Matthew d’Ancona wrote that Wally had ‘refused to reproduce the script handed to him and produced something much more intriguing instead. He has resisted the crushing pressure upon him and told what he regards as the unadulterated truth, however inconvenient to the troubled political titans who appointed him.’

There you have what we are going to miss so greatly: someone of integrity and character who believes that it is best to do the right thing and take the consequences. Yes, let the Prime Minister, the Home Secretary, the Archbishops, the Steering and Revision Committees have what they want, if it is lawful and proper and just. But, if not, well it is time, quietly but firmly, to speak truth to power, however inconvenient that is.

Wally has drafted all of our Measures over the past 13 years, including four Miscellaneous Provisions Measures – which is more pleasure than anyone should be allowed! In addition, he has been an unfailing fount of wisdom and counsel to the Legal Adviser and to me on a whole range of complex and difficult issues extending far beyond his core responsibility for drafting our legislation.

As we were reminded yesterday, the Synod is a legislature and it is important that the legal advice we have is of an extremely high quality. In Wally's time we have had no difficulties with Counsel to the Ecclesiastical Committee and no judicial rulings thus far that have exposed difficulties with the drafting of our Measures. That is because, as well as a person of integrity, Wally is a consummate professional and a quiet and ingenious problem-solver.

Following Gordon Brown's decision in 2007 on Crown appointments, Wally was faced with the conundrum of how to amend section 1 of the Suffragan Bishops Act 1534, which consists of a single sentence, 23 lines long, in Tudor English. His solution was a very elegant 'as if'. Section 1 is now to have effect 'as if it required only one person to be presented to Her Majesty for appointment to a suffragan see and any reference in that section to two persons or to one of those persons shall be construed as a reference to the single person presented to Her Majesty'.

Similarly, when the rights of parish representatives were to be extended to Crown benefices there was a question of how it might be possible to leave well alone in relation to a parish where patronage is exercised personally by the Sovereign rather than on advice from Number 10.

Careful readers of section 1 of the Crown Benefices (Parish Representatives) Measure 2010 – though I am happy to say that there were not very many when it was going through the Synod – alongside the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986 will see that both refer to the patronage of Her Majesty 'in right of Her Crown or her Duchy of Lancaster'. However, you have to look very hard to spot that there are two words in the earlier Measure that Wally carefully left out in the new one – the words 'or otherwise'. And so Synod both introduced reform and, in relation to one very special parish, wisely and quietly left well alone.

We shall not be left comfortless. In Chris Packer we have managed to secure out of Whitehall a worthy successor, who once worked for Wally in the Treasury Solicitor's Office and who is also an experienced Parliamentary Counsel. But, like my colleagues in the Legal Office and so many others, I will miss the wise and civilized presence of someone who has been not just our learned counsel but a friend.

Wally, on behalf of the Synod and all the staff team I wish you and Avril all the best in your second retirement, and thank you for indeed being unique, unrivalled and without equal.
(Applause)

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby): It is almost impossible to follow anything William says – not least because, in the way that a particular politician had 'something of the night about him', William invariably has something of *Yes Minister* about him!

We turn now to a figure who lurks out of the shadows at unexpected moments; who, again like the Queen's Proctor, possesses a title of unusual obscurity and yet manages in all of it to

maintain a mixture of scholarship, of comfort, and indeed a capacity to allay panic at moments when others might simply leave one to reach for one's Ventolin inhaler. I am of course talking about the Bishop of Guildford, aka the Clerk to the Closet.

For those of us who found ourselves becoming bishops without a lot of time in Synod – or, in fact, in some cases *any* time on Synod – the first close meeting with the Clerk to the Closet was when one went to swear homage to Her Majesty, which in fact two people did today, the Bishop of Blackburn and the Bishop of Manchester. You turn up at the given hour, as I did, and discover that the Changing of the Guard is going on in front of Buckingham Palace.

It lasts 25 minutes and it is 20 minutes until the meeting with Her Majesty, and you have the feeling that the world is about to collapse around you. Because you are standing in the wrong place, the police officer then says, 'What are you doing here?' You say, 'I've come to see the Queen' and he gives you a funny look! Eventually, having negotiated all that – in my case by dint of having a daughter who was a police officer at the time – you go in, walk through the courtyard and, by this time, are in a state of near-panic.

Suddenly, out of the shadows emerges the Clerk to the Closet, smiling, polite, encouraging, telling you that you have put your clothes on the wrong way round, and generally giving the sense that all is going to be well. It brings the best of the best kind of chaplain together with the best kind of Dutch uncle, and it works. We all come out smiling. At interviews he just pops in, as you swear homage and are in conversation afterwards without the faintest idea what to do. He has an extraordinary gift of the perfect comment at the right time that just keeps it going.

At the same time, he is someone whose varied, scholarly and knowledgeable contributions to the Church have been given in such a delightfully quiet and modest way that it is easy to overlook the substantial impact that he has had, both here and overseas.

He has been a Bishop of Guildford who is greatly loved in his diocese (I know that we always say that but in this case it happens to be true) from people of all ranges within the Church, with his gift, at the usual round of confirmations, licensing, installations and special occasions, of being with people – in a sense that one envies when seeing him do it. He has brought to his role as a diocesan bishop a huge breadth of understanding and experience of the Church of England, and indeed of the Anglican Communion and the ecumenical scene, which comes from a very wide ecumenical and international perspective.

He started ordained life in the diocese of Lichfield as a curate at Tividale and Codsall. He then quite quickly went on to be Archbishop's Assistant Chaplain on Foreign Relations for five years, and then Archbishop's Secretary for Ecumenical Affairs for seven years. He was at Lambeth with three Archbishops – Michael Ramsey, Donald Coggan and Robert Runcie. In fact, I wonder if there is anyone left on the bench of bishops who worked at Lambeth with Michael Ramsey. I suspect, Chris, you may be the last one. That reaches back into another age indeed. During that time he became involved in ARCIC and from 1974 was its Secretary for six years.

For all this time, Christopher and Hilary were at Lambeth with their four children, who much enjoyed the use of the facilities, in particular the 'roundabout' at the front, developing it as a velodrome – which would have perfectly satisfied the requirements of the Olympic movement.

Christopher was one of the people behind the scenes negotiating the papal visit in 1982 and the Archbishop's visit to Rome in 1988. That was spiced up a bit when a particular Northern Irish clergyman at the time, who I believe was also involved in national politics, took himself to Rome to protest about the visit – which he did outside the English College in Rome, making himself heard without difficulty and without a megaphone!

In fact, there is not a major Church of England ecumenical agreement that Christopher has not had some connection with. That is a compliment, Christopher! Apart from ARCIC, he has hanging on his wall Meissen, Porvoo and Reuilly. He had a capacity to pour oil on ecumenically troubled waters.

Christopher spent a number of years as Canon Residentiary and Precentor of St Paul's and that stood him in good stead, where he added to his portfolio the ability to orchestrate liturgy on grand public occasions. There is also a profound scholarship, which I shall come back to in a moment.

He has a great interest in ecclesiastical law, which I suspect means that he would have particularly enjoyed the last farewell – probably being one of the few people, apart from the Bishop of London, who knew all the various Acts and Measures cited. That has led him to be a Chair of the Ecclesiastical Law Society.

There has then been the distinguished episcopal ministry, first as Bishop of Stafford from 1996 to 2004 and since then as Bishop of Guildford.

One of the areas in which I have had the great pleasure of working with Christopher is in his international work within the Anglican Communion. Guildford is key in our relationship with Nigeria. He was there last week for a farewell visit, and his capacity to build good links has been exceptional. Also his capacity to make those links work to the benefit of all the dioceses involved across a wide range of areas, from Maiduguri in the far north to the Niger Delta in the south. He has also built up links with two dioceses of the Porvoo Communion in Sweden and Denmark and with the Roman Catholic diocese of Évreux-Corbeil-Essonnes in France.

Losing Christopher from our presence and from the bench of bishops is to lose a very significant chunk of our corporate memory, and of the capacity to see the ups and downs we have in the perspective of many years of understanding what he does. When you put all this heavyweight experience, knowledge and erudition on paper, he could sound a terrifying figure to meet; but, as I began by saying, he has been quite the reverse.

There have been some inevitable benefits in kind. At one of the meetings of ARCIC in Venice they got a flavour of such things when a fire alarm went off in the middle of the night. There was the normal collection of slightly confused people, gathered in their boring dressing gowns. Christopher appeared in a kaftan, which those present concluded must have been a present from one of his visits to Africa. But then he always knows how to dress for every ecumenical occasion! If the machine works, we should be able to see an example.

(Photograph shown on screen) (Laughter)

As one can see, there is something of the exotic about Christopher – and no doubt that was one of the reasons for his appointment as Clerk of the Closet.

His senior staff will miss him enormously, not least from being diverted from business by the diverse Church history lessons that would suddenly interrupt the rather more mundane areas of the agenda.

Throughout these years he has, of course, been wonderfully supported by Hilary, who has offered hospitality on countless occasions. She has been instrumental in the establishment of the clergy spouses' network in Guildford, known as the Spice Link. She was also a mainstay in the bishops' wives' meetings for many years and represented their views on the Bishops and Cathedrals Committee. She maintained both contact and information for bishops' wives, and the really complicated business of keeping addresses up to date – a network of support that has been invaluable.

Wearing learning lightly is, of course, a cliché, but it is a gift that really is Christopher's. I am therefore very glad to be able to announce that, next month, in recognition of his long and distinguished ministry serving the ecumenical commitment of the Church of England both academically and through various ecumenical organizations, and pursuant to the Ecclesiastical Licences Act 1533 (I just thought I would get that in!) he will be awarded, not an honorary DD but a Lambeth DD, which is awarded to those who *could* have got there were it not for their commitment in other areas.

His wisdom will continue to be available in the Conference of European Churches and, for some time yet, as the Clerk to the Closet. Apart from these and other things that he will doubtless do, we wish him the happiest and longest of retirements. He goes with our deepest gratitude for his service to the Church, to the Anglican Communion and to the wider Christian community. (*Applause*)

The Archbishop of York (Dr John Sentamu): The Synod and the Church at large will greatly miss Bishop John Packer's unassuming practical good sense, his warmth and integrity, and his boldness in pursuit of justice. He is a bishop of unfailing good humour. Above all, he has an instinct for where real people fit in the big policy agendas.

His years in parish ministry in Sheffield and during the miners' strike shaped Bishop John's ministry and gave him a deep awareness of the struggles of life. For Bishop John, parochial ministry is at the heart of mission.

Bishop John has always disregarded status or privilege, whilst taking his episcopal calling very seriously indeed. He has been respected by the various traditions in his diocese and, although they did not always agree with what he said, they nevertheless recognized his integrity.

Bishop John's father was a headmaster, so it is easy to think of John Packer as the wise and patient episcopal headmaster of a provincial grammar school, complete with sports jacket, rather than a prelate of the Church.

His colleagues have said that Bishop John is a delight to work with, sharing his ministry with colleagues as equals. He has the capacity to discern, challenge, and yet comfort and encourage at the same time. This is a very great gift. He has a warm and pastoral heart that feels the pain and joy of others. He is never one to write another person off.

Bishop John is not an IT expert. What do you say when the postman drops letters through the door? For one Yorkshire bishop at least, that is 'Eee, mail!' As for mobile phones – two tin cans and a piece of string have been mentioned!

His grasp and knowledge of the diocese at all levels is striking. He is all for giving permission and ready to take risks. Bishop John would sometimes ask what ecclesiastical law related to any particular situation, so that he at least knew what he was breaking. This is not because John Packer disregarded ecclesiastical law and order but because, for him, the gospel always took precedence. In many ways, he was prepared to make things actually fit.

For Bishop John one of the highlights of the year has been the Boxing Day pilgrimage from Ripon to Fountains. In some years, around 1,500 to 2,000 people have taken part. In the year of the foot-and-mouth outbreak this was a particular challenge. That year he was very keen to visit farmers and to be pastorally supportive. Those who made their living out of livestock were really going through it. However, there was a problem. On his gardener's advice, the bishop had got some sheep to keep the grass down in the orchard. When foot-and-mouth broke out, these lambs would have to be slaughtered, but the vet said that they could be kept if they were pets. Asked to define a pet, the vet said 'Pets have names.' The lambs were swiftly named, and the bishop strictly kept out of the orchard. There is one episode of *Emmerdale* that features the bishop's cope and mitre – but, do not worry, the bishop wearing them was a stuntman!

He loved Ripon but the City of Leeds and its challenge beckoned, and it made absolute sense that John and Barbara moved home and office there in 2008. At times of crisis in Leeds, Bishop John has been a very significant presence: at the Hamara Centre, after the 7/7 bombers were identified as coming from Beeston; leading a walk through Armley after the death of Manuel Bravo; on the steps of Leeds Town Hall in a joint witness after the 9/11 atrocity.

Bishop John has a heart for ecumenism, and the leaders of other denominations and religions have appreciated and valued his ministry and partnership. He gave an inspirational lead to the diocese in pioneering the development of their partnership with the Leeds Methodist District.

John's humour is apt and his timing perfect. A police officer reported to a Safer Communities meeting on reducing burglaries. He proudly reported that there had been 1,000 fewer burglaries than in the previous year. The police were doing a fabulous job – so much time now saved for the judiciary. There was just a moment's pause before Bishop John added gently, 'I guess it's also good news for the 1,000 people who would otherwise have been burgled.'

Civil life sometimes brought him into conflict with local and national politicians. He was never deterred from saying what he believed. He always speaks with passion, skill and integrity. Bishop John would not shirk from supporting causes and individuals who had little voice in society.

One of the high points of his time in Westminster as a Lord Spiritual was during the 2010-12 parliamentary session, when he led the charge against the Government and the media over the welfare changes and the implementation of universal credit. His amendment to exempt children from the benefit cap was passed with a substantial majority, and then of course he was pilloried in the *Daily Mail* – I suspect the ultimate accolade! Despite later being

overturned in the Commons, Bishop John battled away in the best traditions of the Lords Spiritual. He never let go.

He launched a major inquiry into the immigration and asylum system with the Children's Society. He played a decisive role in the campaign to end child detention. He has always fought vigorously for a fairer asylum system.

In tricky situations, Bishop John would turn the other cheek when treated unjustly, maintain the right course in difficult circumstances, and always seek to do what was right in God's eyes. Not in his own or anyone else's, but what he believed was right in God's eyes.

He was once called to the Home Office with the Second Estates Commissioner to address the problem of sham marriages. He was introduced to the minister as the Church of England 'Bishop for Marriage'. I am not sure if Barbara knows this!

Bishop John has been an effective champion of urban ministry and mission, working with the Mission and Public Affairs Division to transform the Urban Bishops Panel into a more mixed group, with lay and clerical urban experts. As Chair of DRACS, the Deployment, Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee, Bishop John's rare gift has been to combine a naturally pastoral approach with a due sense of the importance of having coherent rules and policies in place to underpin fairness and pastoral concern.

He has helped this Synod to get through some very difficult and important work touching on clergy morale; for example, the reform of the clergy pension arrangements in 2007 and again in 2010. One benefit of retirement for him is that he will not have to bring to this Synod any more Fees Orders!

He has always attended the Inter-Diocesan Finance Forum in person and for many years chaired the Archbishops' Council Stewardship Committee, supporting dioceses in what has been a sustained and successful piece of work to increased planned tax-efficient giving.

These are the words from his colleagues. They say that he is collegial, humane, generous, hospitable, and a man of absolute integrity and sincerity. For me, when I have visited their home, both he and Barbara went out of their way to make sure that one was just like an old member of the family who has been away for a long time. The secretary to one of the committees on which he served said these wonderful words: 'Just an all-round, thoroughly nice, grounded, out-in-the-real-world bloke'.

John and Barbara are a wonderful couple and hugely supportive of each other and of their family. I pray that, as you prepare to move further north (I am glad that you are not going down south!) you will be blessed with a long, happy and fruitful retirement. Brother and my dear sister, may God bless you both most richly. (*Applause*)

The Archbishop of Canterbury prorogued the group of sessions at 5.30 p.m.

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