

GENERAL SYNOD

NOVEMBER 2020

QUESTIONS

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

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SECRETARY GENERAL

NATIONAL SOCIETY COUNCIL

Ms Sophie Mitchell (CEYC) to ask the Chair of the National Society Council:

Q1 Since the decision was made by the Education Office and the National Society Council to disband the Church of England Youth Council in November 2019, how does General Synod intend to gain the input and representation of those under the age of 18, which the CEYC reps had previously represented?

The Bishop of Durham to reply as chair of the National Society Council:

A The decision about CEYC was made following discussion with its chair and core group, recognising its engagement with young people in recent years has been very limited. The National Society has now developed opportunities for the Church to hear the voice of children and young people in its thinking and decision making and is delighted that the new National Younger Leadership Groups (launched this month) have engaged 200 young people in the church's vision and strategy work. This programme for primary, secondary and FE students will continue with other themes and we will seek to find ways to ensure they feed into Synod and other leadership and governance structures. Representation by under 18s at Synod is less straightforward for safeguarding reasons (CEYC reps were over 18) and so we are developing a 4th stream for those aged 18-21 in Spring 2021 and will draw Synod representatives from this group.

Mr Richard Denno (Liverpool) to ask the Chair of the National Society Council:

Q2 Will the National Society ask each Church of England School Governing Body with support from their Diocese to warmly commend in the school community the Church's teaching that sexual intercourse properly belongs within marriage exclusively, and marriage is of a man and a woman?

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

A All Church of England schools have a denominational inspection which considers how the school's Christian vision enables the whole school community to flourish. Our inspection schedule includes the requirement to ensure the school "offers age appropriate and coherent relationships and sex education that reflects the school's Christian vision" and the Church's teaching on marriage and place of sexual intercourse within it is already a fundamental part of that.

Mrs Kathy Playle (Gloucester) to ask the Chair of the National Society Council:

Q3 Given that each school has autonomy over its syllabus including RSE in schools, will the Church of England Education Office ensure that any resources it will commend for RSE include those which promote a traditional Christian understanding of marriage as well as other views of family?

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

A Yes, of course.

MINISTRY COUNCIL

Canon Jenny Humphreys (Bath & Wells) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:

Q4 What are the figures for the cohorts of ordinands who began training in September 2019, and September 2020, by gender and in 5-year age bands, when separated into the three different modes of ordination training: full time residential, mixed mode and part time?

The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich to reply as Chair of the Ministry Council:

A The data requested have been supplied in a table provided separately.

Mrs Caroline Herbert (Norwich) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:

Q5 Following the adoption by Synod in February 2020 of the Covenant for Clergy Care and Wellbeing, what financial resources are being made available to dioceses to enable them to undertake the Big Conversation, and to put any learning points into practice? Specifically, is there funding for wide-scale distribution (down to a parish level) of the report from the Living Ministry research programme *How Clergy Thrive*, which the Archbishops commend on its cover as “a valuable resource especially as part of the Big Conversation”?

The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich to reply as Chair of the Ministry Council:

A The recommendations accompanying the Covenant for Clergy Care and Wellbeing are being overseen by a newly formed Facilitation Group. No specific financial resources are provided to dioceses for this work; however, the issue of clergy wellbeing continues to be supported by staff in both the Ministry and Clergy HR teams, including the ongoing Living Ministry research. A range of materials to support the Big Conversation is available online at no cost, including *How Clergy Thrive* and its accompanying resources. 6,000 free printed copies of *How Clergy Thrive*, funded by Clergy Support Trust, have been made available to curates, training incumbents and those in roles directly influencing clergy wellbeing.

Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:

Q6 Will the Chair of the Ministry Council confirm that the diagnosis and healing pathways proposed by the recently published FAOC Report '*Kingdom Calling*' (GS Misc 1254) will be fully incorporated into both the Ministry Council's vision for theological education, and the policies, procedures and budgets for Discernment, Initial and Continuing training of Ministers that underscore this vision, so that the '*Vision for Lay Ministries*' (GS Misc 1265), which the Ministry Council has strongly endorsed, can be fully realised and implemented?

The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich to reply as Chair of the Ministry Council:

A We warmly welcome the publication of *Kingdom Calling* and its challenge to us to ensure that ministries, lay and ordained, are set in right relationship with one another. The Ministry Council is fully committed to supporting the implementation of *A Vision for Lay Ministries*, across the breadth of our work, including within the vision for theological education.

Mr Andrew Presland (Peterborough) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:

Q7 What steps does the Council intend to take, to count, celebrate and support those Anglican lay people who between them have more than 1,300 role titles within 40 distinct groupings, as identified nationally by the Lay Ministry Data Project, according to the recently-published *Kingdom Calling* by the Faith and Order Commission?

The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich to reply as Chair of the Ministry Council:

A The Lay Ministry Data Project highlights both the scale and diversity of lay ministry roles within the Church of England. It would not be possible for us to sustain our mission and ministry without the dedication of so many lay people.

A Vision for Lay Ministries (GS Misc 1265) points forward to a Church where all lay ministries are recognised, valued and celebrated and the Lay Ministries Advisory Group are developing an implementation plan to enable us to work towards achieving this vision both nationally and more locally.

MISSION AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL

The Revd Canon Giles Goddard (Southwark) to ask the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

Q8 What is the Church of England doing to promote a green recovery in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic?

Mr Mark Sheard to reply as Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

A The Environment Working Group made a full submission to the Parliamentary inquiry into a green post-Covid recovery in August.

The EWG has joined the Climate Coalition, which is calling for a green recovery that leaves no one behind, unleashes a green energy revolution and protects and expands our green and wild spaces.

The Church of England is supporting Climate Sunday, asking churches to hold a climate focused service, commit to long-term action to cut emissions and to speak up by signing the Climate Coalition declaration.

Repair works funded by the Culture Recovery Fund will help our buildings remain sustainable, and include roof repairs, installation of new energy efficient heating and lighting systems, and climate change mitigation measures such as improved guttering.

Therapeutic gardening and access to green spaces in churchyards may also promote individual recovery.

Our net zero target (see the definition in GS Misc 1262) gives integrity to our intervention.

Mr Carl Fender (Lincoln) to ask the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

Q9 What progress has been made by the Church of England in its engagement with the Government since the debate on legal aid reform in February this year?

Mr Mark Sheard to reply as Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

A In October 2020 MPAC submitted a response to an inquiry into the future of legal aid by the parliamentary Justice Committee. This response focused on how The Legal Aid Sentencing & Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 has impacted access to justice. It raised concerns over the treatment of society's most vulnerable and the importance of access to justice in underpinning the rule of law. It drew closely on the February 2020 synod debate.

The MPA Home Affairs Adviser has focused on building up briefing materials and relationships within the legal world so that we can respond quickly to future parliamentary debates and to the Ministry of Justice in the future as and when opportunities arise.

Ms Josile Munro (London) to ask the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

Q10 What has been the progress on *Valuing People with Down's Syndrome* in 2020?

Mr Mark Sheard to reply as Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

A The working group tasked with designing a toolkit for use in parishes and schools completed its work in January 2020 and launched the toolkit at a fringe event during the February General Synod. The toolkit is now on the Church of England website. Further plans were made to produce a digital booklet and an 'easy-read' version of the toolkit with promotion of all three versions of the toolkit to be piloted in parishes and schools in the Autumn. The coronavirus pandemic has meant that these plans have been put on hold with the intention of picking them up again in 2021.

CLERGY DISCIPLINE COMMISSION

Miss Michelle Tackie (Chelmsford) to ask the Chair of the Clergy Discipline Commission:

Q11 How many clergy suspensions have there been in the last 5 years (or latest data available)?

The Bishop of Leeds to reply on behalf of the Chair of the Clergy Discipline Commission:

A The latest available data is up to the 31 December 2019. In the preceding 5 years there have been 97 suspensions.

Miss Michelle Tackie (Chelmsford) to ask the Chair of the Clergy Discipline Commission:

Q12 How many of the cases where the suspension is now finished were the allegations upheld or dismissed?

The Bishop of Leeds to reply on behalf of the Chair of the Clergy Discipline Commission:

A The Clergy Discipline Commission does not collect this data nor is it readily obtainable without disproportionate cost.

The Commission makes an Annual Report to the General Synod, the statistics for which are provided via an annual questionnaire sent to diocesan registrars. The questionnaire does not seek the information sought by the question.

LEGAL ADVISORY COMMISSION

Mrs Mary Durlacher (Chelmsford) to ask the Chair of the Legal Advisory Commission:

Q13 Has the Legal Advisory Commission considered the Opinion prepared by Stephen Hofmeyr QC and others with regard to the use of individual cups for the distribution of the wine in Holy Communion, and does it intend to revise its advice in the light of that Opinion?

The Dean of the Arches to reply on behalf of the Chair of the Legal Advisory Commission:

A The Legal Advisory Commission has considered the opinion from Mr Hofmeyr and others. The Commission has provided the House of Bishops with further legal advice on the use of individual cups. The conclusions reached in the Commission's two previous opinions on this question (January 1991, revised September 2003; September 2011) remain unchanged. The Commission took account of the Hofmeyr opinion when considering its further advice, but has not sought to respond to it directly.

LITURGICAL COMMISSION

Mr Jack Shelley (Exeter) to ask the Chair of the Liturgical Commission:

Q14 GS Misc 1265 envisages "Lay ministries are growing and proliferating within the Church of England as more people respond to God's call in their lives and share their God-given gifts in a wide range of ministries." One such role is the leading of services in the absence of a Priest. 'Communion by Extension' is one of the authorized services, in *Common Worship*, to be led by the un-ordained laity. Its use is valued in many Parishes in the absence of priestly ministry. The Bishop told us in answering Question 126 in the Spring "Making a Spiritual Communion is particularly fitting for those who cannot receive the sacrament at the great feasts of the Church, and it fulfils the duty of receiving Holy Communion". Many Anglicans do not find a 'Spiritual Communion' as uplifting as a service of 'Communion by Extension'.

Would the Liturgical Commission encourage wider use of this service by Readers and Church Wardens, and consider if the service could be enhanced by revising the liturgy and explaining the theology as was promised to Synod more than ten years ago?

The Bishop of Exeter to reply as Chair of the Liturgical Commission:

A The Liturgical Commission undertakes its work at the invitation of the House of Bishops, from which any request to revise liturgical material would need to come.

As the Guidelines to Communion by Extension indicate, use of this service 'must always be regarded as exceptional and provisional', taking place in specific pastoral circumstances. It may be led only by those who have been authorized by the diocesan bishop and have been appropriately trained. Its use is determined locally by the diocesan bishop, not by the Liturgical Commission.

The Commission is happy to draw this matter, including a request for further theological study, to the attention of the House in the course of planning the work of the next quinquennium.

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS

The Revd Canon Andrew Dotchin (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q15 In the light of Appendix 2 of GS Misc 1262, which indicates what is known of the carbon footprint of parishes and dioceses, what work are the Church Commissioners doing in order to measure the carbon footprint of the housing and ministry of Bishops?

Dr Eve Poole to reply as Third Church Estates Commissioner:

A The Church Commissioners' Bishops & Cathedrals Committee initiated a pilot project into See House Sustainability at the end of 2019. This project will assess the current position and then possible solutions to reduce the carbon footprint, aiming for net zero by 2030. So far, eight houses have been assessed and the Committee will consider in 2021 a report on potential solutions, the cost of this intervention, and their replicability in other properties.

The Committee also recently reviewed its approach to providing cars for Bishops to encourage a greater use of electric and hybrid vehicles and considered a new policy for installing charging points at See Houses.

Mr Andrew Gray (Norwich) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q16 With reference to GS 2188: In 2012-13, the Churches Conservation Trust employed 52 full time equivalent staff at a cost of £2.1M to look after the 342 buildings. In 2020 the headcount at the Churches Conservation Trust had risen to 71 staff at a cost of £3.3M to care for

356 buildings. Given that this represents an increase of just 14 buildings, have the Church Commissioners questioned the CCT on why their staffing overheads have risen so dramatically and, if so, can the answers be shared with Synod?

Dr Eve Poole to reply as Third Church Estates Commissioner:

A The CCT has a statutory role as part of the Church/State ecclesiastical exemption system. It is jointly funded by the Commissioners and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, so oversight is shared.

In September the Mission, Pastoral and Church Property Committee discussed the 2019-20 annual report with the Chief Executive as part of our regular review of its work. The CCT made a conscious decision in its strategy to invest in staff capacity to increase impact and sustainability. It has appointed additional staff to work with communities to build partnerships to look after CCT churches, and to grow commercial revenue so it can diversify income. Commercial income has risen 43% since 2016 and grant funding for posts now covers 17% of costs (from 3%). More staff has meant more income and therefore more spend on churches and a greater impact. Spend on churches increased from £3.4m (2013) to £5.2m (2020).

Mr Andrew Gray (Norwich) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q17 With reference to GS 2188: Given that the Friends of Friendless Churches undertakes identical activity to the CCT, managing 56 buildings with a staff cost of £49K, and The Norfolk Churches Trust manages 13 buildings with a staff expenditure of £52K, have the Church Commissioners questioned the Churches Conservation Trust as to the reason for this difference and, if so, can the answers be shared with Synod?

Dr Eve Poole to reply as Third Church Estates Commissioner:

A These two trusts are important partners whose efforts complement the work of the Commissioners and CCT. We have recently supported two transfers to the FoFC to avoid demolition where vesting in the CCT was not appropriate. The work is similar, but the CCT has a statutory function as the last resort vesting vehicle for churches which the Commissioners agree are no longer needed for regular worship, and for which no suitable alternative use can be found.

The CCT currently looks after 356 churches and welcomes 1.7m visitors a year, so the scale of its activity and staffing needs are correspondingly greater. It is able to do larger transformational projects and contribute to community regeneration – for example a £4.3m Heritage Fund project in Sunderland to develop Holy Trinity as

an arts venue (<https://www.visitchurches.org.uk/what-we-do/blog/canny-space.html>).

Any significant rise in church closures post-Covid will present a challenge to all working in this area.

The Revd Canon Catherine Grylls (Birmingham) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q18 Two years on from the Synod motion calling on the NIBs to start to disinvest from companies that are not taking seriously their responsibilities to assist with the transition to a low carbon economy and proactively to seek and scale up investment in renewable energy and low carbon technology, what actions have been taken by the NIBs, and in particular the Church Commissioners, in this regard and what actions will follow in the coming year?

Loretta Minghella to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:

A The NIBs have used Transition Pathway Initiative data to develop climate change standards that carbon intensive companies must meet to remain investible. The NIBs are working together to reflect on progress and co-ordinate decisions and announcements relating to divestment. We currently expect 6 companies held by the Commissioners will be among those restricted this year having failed to implement sufficient measures to assist the transition to a low carbon economy. More details will be published in December.

Recent significant engagement saw 12 large emitters improve performance, encouraging us in our engagement-led approach. Further standards have been set for 2021, 2022 and 2023, methodically increasing the level of ambition required, in line with the latest science. These will push companies in sectors from energy and mining to aviation and steel to align with the goals of the Paris Agreement.

In 2020 the Commissioners have invested c.£60 million into low carbon technology. This includes biofuels and recycling facilities, wind farms on our land, and £30m into an Electric Vehicle charging fund.

PENSIONS BOARD

The Revd Richard Mitchell (Gloucester) to ask the Chair of the Pensions Board:

Q19 Why is it that the Pensions Board would appear to be making increases in CHARM mortgages which now outstrip the increase in clergy pensions? In view of current interest rates at banks and building societies, how can this be justified?

Mr Clive Mather to reply as Chair of the Church of England Pensions Board:

A Thank you for both of these questions. The increases in CHARM mortgage rates have not outstripped the increase in clergy pensions – they are equal, and both based on the September increase in the retail prices index (RPI).

The CHARM mortgage scheme, which closed in 2008, gave retired clergy the opportunity to own all or part of their retirement home. During the period when most loans were taken out, it was not easy for people in their 60s and 70s to obtain mortgages from banks and building societies whose interest rates were peaking at 14%. Mortgage loans therefore with an initial rate of 3% or 4% of loan, pegged to inflation-only thereafter, represented good value to the clergy.

ETHICAL INVESTMENT ADVISORY GROUP

Canon Peter Adams (St Albans) to ask the Chair of the Ethical Investment Advisory Group:

Q20 The search for vaccines and treatments for COVID19 have brought significant focus on the activity and policies of the pharmaceutical industry. At the same time much opposition to so-called “big pharma” has arisen among conspiracy theorists. What ethical and responsible investment policies guide Church of England national investment bodies in pharmaceuticals, especially in regard to research and the availability of drugs in the developing world?

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

A The EIAG recognises the significant role all businesses can play in enabling human flourishing and improving the society we live in. We recognise that investments in Pharmaceuticals have the potential to bring enormous benefits to humanity throughout the world, from protecting the sick and vulnerable to enabling societies to be ‘unlocked’ from the economic shutdown and social isolation associated with COVID19. The EIAG has not offered specific advice to the national investing bodies (NIBs) with regard to Pharmaceuticals, but in line with the ‘Statement of Ethical Investment Policy’, the NIBs expect all investee companies to manifest responsible employment practices and they engage where necessary to improve upon ethical standards. Additionally, the ‘Business and Engagement Policy’ advises NIBs to serve as ‘salt and light’ to encourage investee companies to have business objectives that serve the common good in which we include research and the availability of drugs to the developing world.

ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL

The Revd Canon Kathryn Fitzsimons (Leeds) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q21 What action has been taken and what progress has been made following the Synod's approval of the Leeds Diocesan Motion in February 2020 entitled 'Through His Poverty'?

Mr Mark Sheard to reply on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

A The Mission and Public Affairs Council continues to address issues of poverty and disadvantage in our communities through campaigning, lobbying and resourcing local action. Recent work has focussed especially on the impact of the two-child limit in welfare policy. Most importantly, the Estates Evangelism Task Group is exploring how the Church communicates the gospel in especially hard-pressed communities.

As made clear to Synod in February, the specific research question in the motion is difficult to translate into a viable project and such a study would require additional resources which have not been forthcoming.

The concerns of the motion remain in our forward plan. Our main focus is on the Estates Evangelism programme and its multi-stranded strategy for strengthening the church's capacity in those areas. The challenge of designing a study that would turn the precise terms of the Synod motion into an achievable and worthwhile project remains.

Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q22 Following the Private Member's Motion on Mission and Administration which was passed in 2018, what progress has the Archbishops' Council made to develop centralised services for matters which are purely administrative in nature, in order to lift the burden of cost and time from diocesan offices across the country?

The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich to reply on behalf of the Archbishops' Council:

A The People and Data Programme is bringing together people data, systems and processes from across the Church of England. The framework of the system is built and being tested; capability includes a national register of authorised clergy.

The National Church Institutions continue to expand provision of digital services including enhanced support for online giving and A Church Near You. A cost-effective diocesan website offer has been adopted by 18 dioceses; a free local church website offer is available and 40%

of churches are using this facility. This is saving significant costs for churches in hosting or security, and removes any need for dioceses to develop similar services.

The Transforming Effectiveness workstream, as part of the Emerging Church of England work, seeks to ensure the operating model of the national church is aligned to be more cost effective and respond to what best supports the mission of the local church.

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

Q23 Over the last few months and years there have been several reports of safeguarding complaints made against certain archbishops, bishops and cathedral deans, resulting in the National Safeguarding Team establishing core groups to investigate those allegations and, in some cases, the making of formal complaints under the Clergy Discipline Measure 2003 (CDM). Please provide the Synod with a table listing, in respect of each such complaint during this quinquennium, the name of the respondent archbishop, bishop or dean, the date the complaint was made, the nature of the complaint, whether it was considered by a core group and/or dealt with under the CDM, its outcome (if the investigation has been concluded) or (if not concluded) the current stage of the investigation and when it is anticipated it will be concluded.

Dr Jamie Harrison to reply on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

A The data requested cannot be provided as all complaints considered by core groups, and those brought under the CDM, are confidential. Where proceedings have been determined by a Bishop's Disciplinary Tribunal (for priests and deacons, including deans) or a Vicar-General's Court (for bishops and archbishops), those decisions are publicly available on the Church of England website. Where a penalty by consent has been agreed, details are provided on the relevant diocesan website. In cases where a complaint is not proceeded with, the matter remains confidential.

Mr Mike Stallybrass (York) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q24 During the debate in York on July 13th 2018, regarding the Draft Church Representation and Ministers Measure and Draft Amending Canon No. 39, I asked: "that even at this late stage the Revision Committee should consider as to whether it is possible to put something into the Church Representation Rules to allow, in special circumstances, if the chairman feels that it is appropriate and maybe

two-thirds of the members there feel that it is appropriate, a secret ballot can take place”.

No such provision was included. In the new Church Representation Rules, Rule M28 (2) states: If one-fifth of the members of the PCC present and voting on a resolution so require, the minutes must record the name of each member voting for the resolution and the name of each member voting against.

In the absence of a mechanism such as the one I proposed, Rule M28(2) has the potential to be used to intimidate PCC members who wish to discuss matters, such as serious safeguarding concerns affecting parish officers, for which confidentiality is highly advisable. What is the most appropriate way to ensure that PCC members are protected from such intimidation?

Dr Jamie Harrison to reply on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

A It is always the responsibility of the Chair to ensure that the PCC openly debates matters of legitimate interest in a respectful way. With sensitive matters, the chair will need to consider handling in advance with the secretary and standing committee e.g. who should speak to an item; what papers are required; whether to have a vote at the meeting or plan to conclude without voting but follow-up with a proposal by correspondence under Rule M29. The Chair may also need to have preparatory one-to-one discussions with any PCC members who have a particular interest, so that the ground rules for the meeting itself are clear, and the Chair can address any personal or pastoral concerns.

If an item of PCC business relates to a safeguarding concern, it would be appropriate for the Chair to include the Parish Safeguarding Officer in that preparatory work.

Mr Nigel Bacon (Lincoln) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q25 What measures are being either taken or considered to support those parishes where the requirement to maintain listed church buildings is increasingly unaffordable, placing undue stress on the church officers, drawing time and effort away from mission within the local community and impairing parish share payment?

The Revd Canon Simon Butler to reply on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

A Advocacy work by the NCIs ensured churches were eligible to apply to multiple strands of the Government Culture Recovery Fund. Over £30m of funding, including £11m for repairs to listed church buildings, has so far been secured, with further awards are expected. Officers work closely with government, heritage partners and philanthropic

fundings to secure funding as and when it is available. Conversation has been had with government about upcoming fiscal events. We have advocated strongly for continuation of the Listed Places of Worship grant scheme, worth up to £42m a year, in the November Spending Review. Officers represent the needs of parishes to the National Lottery Heritage Fund who are re-opening their grant schemes in the coming weeks. We recognise that there is an urgent need for grant funding to support parishes in caring for their buildings and in making the most of them as tools of mission and outreach.

The Revd Peter Breckwoldt (Salisbury) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q26 An organisation such as a diocese is **insolvent** when it can't pay its debts. This could mean either: it can't pay bills when they become due, or it has more liabilities than assets on its balance sheet. How many Dioceses have needed overdrafts or loans to ensure that they did not have qualified audit opinion of their 2019 annual accounts? Is there a central church rag rating to those dioceses that might be identify as being at risk to continue as a going concern?

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

A We are not aware of any Diocesan Board of Finance's 2019 accounts having a qualified audit opinion. Several did have an emphasis of matter (something the auditor considers has been appropriately disclosed but is of such importance that it is fundamental to users' understanding of the financial statements) relating to the uncertain impact of Covid-19. Auditors' going concern assessments will have taken into account the liquidity support measures the National Church announced in March.

Through its Strategic Investment Board and the Strategy and Development Unit, the Council has worked closely with dioceses to understand estimates of income lost due to restrictions as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. This has helped it award sustainability fund grants to dioceses to support their on-going mission, mindful of their asset base. Of the £35m made available by the Council and Church Commissioners, to date £14.5m has been awarded in grants to 22 dioceses.

HOUSE OF BISHOPS

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

Q27 Many of us have been disappointed by the lack of leadership: prophetic, spiritual or missional; shown by our bishops during the current COVID-19 crisis. Why has there been no call to the nation to prayer and repentance? And, at this time of deep questioning, why has there been no talk of Christ as the only hope for the nation?

The Archbishop of York to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A Although I'm sure there are things we could and should have done better, I do not believe the bishops of the Church of England have failed to give leadership this year. Many of us have spoken up for the needs of the poor and those who have been most disadvantaged during this crisis. We have challenged government where we have felt that to be necessary, not least recently over the restrictions placed on the Church. We are now in the midst of a call to prayer, and in our open letter to the nation (4/11/20), the Archbishop of Canterbury and I encouraged Christians and non-Christians to join us in this initiative. Given the challenging and difficult times many are facing across our country we also talked about the opportunity for everyone to look to Jesus Christ as the one who can comfort us in our fear and guide our life.

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

Q28 Given the present crisis arising from the freefall in church attendance there is, quite rightly, a current emphasis on mission and evangelism to produce numerical growth and reverse the decline. As our leaders in mission how many of the House of Bishops:

- a. Have personal experience of leading a parish or benefice into significant numerical growth,
- b. Have led their Diocese into significant numerical growth during their tenure?

The Archbishop of York to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A Although Part A is impossible to answer without expending a huge and disproportionate amount of time and resources, many bishops were considered suitable for Episcopal ministry precisely because they had led growing churches. I know that when I retire, one of the pieces of

ministry that will give me the greatest joy was as incumbent of Saint Wilfrid's, Chichester and the growth that happened in that parish and the people, particularly young people, who became Christians.

As regards Part B, each diocesan Bishop must take ultimate responsibility for the life of the diocese they serve, and therefore very few, if any of us, can feel anything but sadness, that decline has continued on our watch. The bigger picture is that numerical decline has continued for many years across many Christian denominations and throughout Europe. There does need to be scrutiny and accountability. There also needs to be realism about the context we find ourselves in and how we respond to it. Nonetheless I trust we all share the hope of reversing the decline and bringing more people to faith.

Mr Stephen Hofmeyr (Guildford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q29 Could you please identify (i) the eleven members of the "Vision and Strategy" Group who met three times in June 2020, (ii) the 120 participants who met for the "Future Search" conference in September 2020, (iii) the more than 150 delegates whom the Group consulted in September 2020 and (iv) the 300 young people with whom the Group has consulted or will consult in November 2020?

The Archbishop of York to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The initial group consisted of myself, the Bishops of Penrith and Hertford, Dr Sanjee Perera, the Revd Sharon Prentis, the Revd Ben Doolan, the Revd Dave Male, Mr Mark Sheard, Mr Chris Curtis and Ms Annika Matthews, plus the Bishop of Oxford as Theological Consultant. The Future Search Conference had a cross section of the Church including many parish clergy, cathedral staff, leaders of Anglican mission organisations, theological educators, ordinands, lay leaders in both church and secular work, Synod members, members of religious communities, youth workers, NCI staff and diocesan secretaries. The group of 150 in September consisted of the College of Bishops and Diocesan Secretaries. At the recent consultation with young people there were 172 young people consisting of 85 young people at primary schools from 20 dioceses, 75 from secondary schools from 20 dioceses, and 12 from FE colleges.

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

Q30 In the light of the welcome vision, articulated by the Archbishop of York, to see the Church of England become a Jesus-focussed community of missionary disciples, has the House of Bishops considered the nature of Christian discipleship and its relationship to the church's teaching, doctrine and ethics?

The Archbishop of York to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A Yes. Much of the varied work of the House of Bishops has a strong discipleship element to it. The Bishop of Oxford's paper on Developing Discipleship which originally came before the House in 2014 is one such example. This paper was later discussed at both General Synod and Archbishops' Council. The Bishop of Oxford has also acted as Theological Consultant to the Vision and Strategy work. More recently there has been a number of discussions around discipleship prompted by both the Setting God's People Free work, the development of the Evangelism and Discipleship team and the Vision and Strategy work. And in the dioceses even more work has taken place. If the strategic priorities which arise from this vision are owned and supported by Synod, further work will be needed, particularly around the five marks of mission as marks of discipleship, learning from our sisters and brothers in the Anglican Communion.

Ms Josile Munro (London) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q31 What are the key considerations and actions Dioceses, NCI 's and TEIs need to make in order to reach net zero climate emissions in 2030?

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

A **Firstly, work out your start point**, through measuring/estimating your carbon footprint. See the definition in GS Misc 1262. The Leeds report is a useful example (<https://bit.ly/LeedsCO2>). Our webinars will help guide you (<https://bit.ly/NZwebinars>). Dioceses should encourage churches to complete the Energy Footprint Tool (EFT).

Secondly, identify the major sources of emissions; typically energy use from larger buildings, which are used regularly throughout the day.

Third, create an action plan for tackling these major sources of emissions. If possible, commission energy audits. The "Practical Path to Net Zero for church buildings" is full of suggestions: GS Misc 1262.

Fourth, focus on cutting heat loss from buildings, "decarbonising" heat, and purchasing 100% renewable electricity.

Fifthly, engage broadly, explaining why change is needed and how to act. Seek champions. Eco Church, Climate Sunday, and Eco Schools give frameworks for action.

Sixthly, only after real reductions have been made, **offset the residue**.

The Revd Canon Catherine Grylls (Birmingham) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q32 Five years on from the signing of the Paris Agreement, what is the Church of England doing to prepare for COP 26, which would have been meeting now in Glasgow but has been delayed to 2021?

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

A The Church of England meets regularly with the COP unit of the Cabinet Office alongside other civil society organisations. It is part of the COP Faiths Task Group, developing an advocacy strategy to come from a faith perspective, aiming to bring a justice perspective to the COP, to use COP26 as a catalyst to transform society in the UK, and to ensure a welcome to the parties in Glasgow in November 2021.

It supports Climate Sunday, which asks every church to hold a climate focused service, make a pledge to cut emissions, and use its voice to call for ambitious commitments at COP26. Aggregating action by churches gives weight when churches speak out.

The Church Commissioners have expertise in sustainable finance, a significant feature of COP26 negotiations.

Preparations are being made for a new Lambeth Declaration, along the lines of the one made ahead of COP21 in Paris.

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

Q33 What outcomes have been reported from the virtual ‘tea party’ hosted by the Bishop of Salisbury, with Nigel Topping, the UK Climate Champion, and Christiana Figueres, a key member of the UN team for the Paris Agreement, in preparation for COP26?

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

A The annual Bishops’ Environmental Breakfast, to which all bishops are invited, could not be held this year and was replaced with a virtual tea party. This enabled Christiana Figueres to take part from her home in Costa Rica, and Nigel Topping to join from the Vatican.

The event, which I hosted, was extremely well attended by bishops and both archbishops. It is part of the EWG programme to encourage

all within the Church to be actively involved in COP26, in particular through engagement with Climate Sunday.

The event raised the level of awareness of these climate talks, the urgency of the climate and ecological crises, and the powerful link to issues of justice, especially in the global south. It demonstrated to those present the understanding within government of the action being taken by the Church on climate change, in particular because of the work of the NIBs.

Mrs Enid Barron (London) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q34 What has been the take up on the Energy Footprint Tool (EFT), what is being learned, and what plans are there to develop this work going forward?

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

A Since its launch in May 2020, over 5,800 churches have engaged with the Energy Footprint Tool (EFT) and over 4,700 churches have submitted the required information to calculate their church's energy footprint. We are pleased with this uptake, given the EFT went live during the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The information collected is currently being quality assured and analysed, and a Report is planned for early December 2020. This will include a detailed analysis of the learning from the first year's data, and the results in each diocese. GS Misc 1262 includes a summary of what we know so far about our carbon footprint.

The work will be developed further in 2021. Recruitment is currently underway, and our aim is that staff resource will be in place from January 2021 to begin to develop tools to measure the Energy Footprint of other buildings, e.g. cathedrals, vicarages, offices and schools.

Fr Thomas Seville (Religious Communities) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q35 In light of GS Misc 1262, whereby the Environmental Working Group will consider post 2030 "All the emissions (including upstream process & transport) from the procurement of any items we buy (e.g. pews for churches, paper & printing for offices, new cars for bishops, catering for events)" will the Church of England commit to a policy of instructing Dioceses not to dispose of church pews, given the environmental impact of losing the embodied energy committed to their creation which will be lost by their removal, transportation, re-sale and/or disposal?

Fr Thomas Seville (Religious Communities) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q36 In light of GS Misc 1262, given that Medieval and Victorian pews were carved from locally sourced, sustainable forests, and recognising that the World Wildlife Foundation stated in its report of 2017 that “Overall, very few companies offered annual performance tables to demonstrate how they hold themselves accountable for year-on-year progress on increasing the percentage of certified sustainable timber in their supply chains” (https://www.wwf.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/Jul17/WWF_Timber_Scorecard_2017_0.pdf) will the Church of England consider a moratorium on the disposal or sale of pews which pre-date 1945 on the basis that modern furnishings cannot be guaranteed to derive from certified, sustainable sources?

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

A With permission, Chair, I shall take questions 35 and 36 together: It is true that retaining pews can be beneficial environmentally, since the ‘embodied carbon’ in their manufacture was invested long ago and they are generally made of local wood. Some are also suitable for the installation of energy-efficient pew heating.

Individual PCCs must balance this against how their building is used. Some wish to create more flexible spaces, suitable for a variety of activities. The disposal of pews requires a faculty. The PCC will be asked about the environmental impact of its proposals as part of its supporting documentation.

Care for the environment, as the fifth mark of mission, can be taken into account in the faculty process that must take account of the mission of the church. Achieving net-zero by 2030 will be done by winning hearts and minds. Adding to the burden of faculty rules could be counterproductive in encouraging good environmental practice which is the main goal.

The Revd Canon Timothy Goode (Southwark) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q37 Could the House of Bishops share how they are going to reflect on the lived experiences of so many, including myself, in this pandemic who have been denied physical intimacy, either through having to shield from their sexual partner due to serious underlying health issues or through finding themselves geographically separated from their sexual partner due to lockdown? Will you be exploring the mental health implications of such lived experience and the effect such actions have on the health of their primary relationships as part of your ongoing research?

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

A The House will, in due course, be making its own study of the material in Living in Love and Faith – which includes reference to research on mental health and the physical expression of sexual intimacy. The House, of course, hopes that the wider church will engage with these materials too. The question also highlights the way that the current pandemic has made some of the issues studied in LLF even more acute.

For those interested in considering questions of mental health and sexual intimacy, this is touched upon in the LLF Book, and includes references to some useful academic papers on this subject. These papers dig deeply into a complex area of study and are not easy to summarise in a few words, but they repay study and will help place the question in the context of a much wider field of data and research.

Mr Richard Denno (Liverpool) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q38 What is the position of the House of Bishops concerning a decision by UK government to increase screening before birth for genetic conditions such as Down's Syndrome and the evidence of increased abortions as a result of the screening?

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

A Members of the House joined other members of Synod in a unanimous vote at the February 2018 General Synod *Valuing People with Down's Syndrome* which included calls for the government to ensure that women are given comprehensive and unbiased information so that they can give free and informed consent to non-invasive pre-natal testing (NIPT). Accepting NIPT or pre-natal diagnostic tests does not imply support for abortion on the basis of genetic conditions or disability.

Mr Andrew Presland (Peterborough) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q39 Have any members of the House engaged in the media or on social media to advocate the Church of England's longstanding line on abortion, in the light of the Government's authorisation of medical abortions at home during the coronavirus crisis.

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

A I am not aware of members' engagement with this issue on mainstream or social media specifically in the light of medical abortions at home during the coronavirus pandemic, but the House has consistently underlined the Church of England's position that

combines principled opposition to abortion with a recognition that there can be strictly limited conditions under which it may be morally preferable to any available alternative.

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

Q40 Has the House made representations to the Government about the Government's extension, without recourse to Parliament, to allow, 'DIY' medical abortions at home by pills by post?

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

A The House of Bishops has not made any representations to the Government on this issue.

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

Q41 While Government will say they have given unprecedented support to many in the Crisis, there remains millions who have had no support. Disabled people on legacy benefits never got the extra £20pw, or are struggling to find permitted work and predicted to be the most impacted group by Covid19. Mortgage payments are a loan and limited to interest. Directors who are the backbone of our economy didn't get financial support, and found themselves among the excluded. Has the House of Bishops made representation on the above issues, and does the Chair intend to issue a statement in support of these three groups - to call for help for all?

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

A With MPA support, several Bishops publicly backed the Joseph Rowntree Foundation's *Keep The Lifeline* campaign to make the £20pw uplift to Universal Credit permanent and extend it to legacy benefits. I myself raised this issue most recently in the House of Lords on the 12th November, specifically referring to the impact on disabled people. The Church of England also published a joint report with the Child Poverty Action Group in August 2020, 'Poverty in the Pandemic', on the financial impact of Covid-19 on low income families, who we identified as one of the groups most impacted by the pandemic. Separately, the Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission on Housing, Church and Community is looking at the impact of the crisis on people in housing need, with a particular focus on private tenants who have received even less financial support than mortgagees. Their final report will be published in February 2021.

The Revd Peter Breckwoldt (Salisbury) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q42 In the light of substantial decline in numbers as recently reported in *Statistics for Mission* published in October 2020. What plans are there to address the decline in Church numbers in particular the decline in children and young people attending places of worship? What lessons can be learnt about decline and are there principles to be discovered from more vibrant local churches?

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

A *Growing Faith* and the accompanying *Faith at Home* campaign is prioritising the connection between church, school and parents to promote discipleship amongst children and young people. Following GS2161, additional research is looking at common factors in churches of any size that have shown sustained growth over the last 5 years and the youth and children's ministry in churches which have seen growth of 10 or more under 16's as reported in their Average Sunday Attendance. This will enable the identification of common practices that are evidenced both in the existing research and in the sample churches, helping to identify key factors that have contributed to growth. Our intention will then be to explore how this can be developed in other churches across the Church of England. Young people will be a clear priority in the developing Vision and Strategy and Emerging Church work.

Mr Carl Hughes (Southwark) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q43 Does the House of Bishops have any plans to provide training for clergy on the difference between Licensed and Authorised ministries to help ensure Readers, especially in the rural setting, are used effectively?

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

A The Formation Criteria for ordained ministry in the Church of England includes the requirement that they are 'able to release and enable others to fulfil their calling to ministry and mission'. As Licensed and Authorised roles vary from diocese to diocese, national guidance is not straightforward. The three categories into which lay ministries broadly fall are outlined on the Church of England's website: <https://www.churchofengland.org/life-events/vocations/exploring-lay-ministry>

A Vision for Lay Ministries (GS Misc 1265) expresses the hope for a church where all called into ministries are equipped and supported to exercise their gifts and ministries appropriately. The increasing variety of lay ministries being licensed, commissioned or authorised

demonstrate the variety of gifts with which God equips and blesses us. Practice varies from diocese to diocese, and it would be the responsibility of each diocese to ensure the distinction between licensed and other forms of authorisation is understood. However, these distinctions should not be understood as a hierarchy with some roles seen as inherently more or less valuable.

The Revd Canon Timothy Goode (Southwark) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q44 Given that this year marks the 25th anniversary of the Disability Discrimination Act and that disability is now finally named within the Church of England's budget at a time when Covid 19 is disproportionately affecting disabled people; would the House of Bishops please reassure Synod that the goal of full access for the disabled will remain a key priority and that they remain committed to seeking to achieve the full participation of disabled people within the worship of the church and fully opening up lay and ordained ministries to disabled people, for the benefit of the whole church; especially in light of present and future financial pressures?

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

A I pray for a Church fully committed to the participation of disabled people in every area of our common life, not only ministering to disabled people but affirming their gifts and receiving the ministry they offer -- including encouraging disabled people to follow their calling into lay and ordained ministry. This requires commitment at every level of the Church's life.

The disproportionate impact of Covid-19 on disabled people must make us especially aware of their needs and, in partnership together, ensure disabled people's voices do not go unheard. This is a Gospel priority. It therefore remains a vital commitment for myself, the Archbishops' Council and, I hope, this Synod.

We certainly face financial challenges as a result of this pandemic, and it would be foolish to promise at this stage that any specific budget will be unaffected. But maximising the participation of disabled people will remain a core strategic objective.

Mrs Sarah Finch (London) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q45 Has the House of Bishops responded, on behalf of the Church of England, to the recent resignation of Bishop Bill Love from the Diocese of Albany (New York, USA), who adhered to the agreed teaching of the Anglican Communion as set out, for example, in Lambeth Conference 1998 resolution 1.10? If no response has so far been made, will one be made, and with what content?

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

A Division in the Body of Christ is always a cause of lament. The House of Bishops would not wish to make statements on individual cases such as this, not least as it is a matter under the jurisdiction of another autonomous Province of the Anglican Communion. I have arranged to have a private conversation with the Presiding Bishop of The Episcopal Church and others on this matter so as to better understand the situation in hand.

Mr Chris Gill (Lichfield) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q46 Within either Renewal and Reform or the Emerging Church Work, what consideration has been given to the potential re-organisation of Dioceses, so that they might better serve us administratively through improved economics of scale, efficiency of management and effectiveness of mission and ministry?

The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A Each of three strands of the Emerging Church work – Vision and Strategy, Governance and Transforming Effectiveness – are gathering insights and perspectives on the strategic direction, culture, governance and operational configuration for the church as we seek better to serve God’s mission in England.

While none of these groups is charged with addressing the structure of dioceses, various responses, particularly the Transforming Effectiveness workstream, explore what functions are best held at what level, and that will likely lead to a consideration of the nature and role of dioceses and what functions could happen better in larger or smaller configurations. The insights gathered will also be passed on to the Dioceses Commission for their consideration.

The Revd Dr Andrew Atherstone (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q47 To assist parishes which have decided to introduce individual cups at holy communion, to fulfil the command of Jesus to eat and drink in remembrance of him, when will the House of Bishops publish practical guidelines on how best to do so?

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

A The House recognises that there are conflicting opinions about individual cups. Further discussion of the theological issues is scheduled for a future meeting of the House in January.

However, we look forward to releasing guidance shortly on administering communion in both kinds which members of the House of Bishops will be able to issue to their dioceses.

The Revd Dr Andrew Atherstone (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q48 In the light of Canon B 14A [dispensing with celebration of Holy Communion in any parish church], are parishes which have suspended holy communion permitted to do so until such time as the whole congregation can receive again in both kinds?

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

A As Canon B 14A indicates, the celebration of Holy Communion may be dispensed with on a regular basis ‘on the request of the minister who has the cure of souls and the parochial church council of each parish in the benefice acting jointly’, by the diocesan bishop, who ‘must be satisfied that there is good reason for doing so’.

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

Q49 Has the House of Bishops considered the Opinion prepared by Stephen Hofmeyr QC and others concerning the lawfulness of using individual cups in the administration of Holy Communion, and what was the outcome of that consideration?

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

A All members of the House have received copies of the opinion of Mr Hofmeyr and others. The House has received advice from the Legal Advisory Commission of the General Synod. The House continues to consider how best to address the difficulties that Covid restrictions present for the administration of Holy Communion.

Mr David Lamming (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q50 At the informal meeting of the Synod on 11 July 2020, in answer to a question from Mary Durlacher (Q.68) whether the House of Bishops would “reconsider the prohibition of use of small individual cups as a valid ‘common sense’ *pro tem* way of sharing the Communion wine while current constraints remain,” the Bishop of London referred to advice from the Legal Advisory Commission that it was “contrary to law for individual cups to be used for each communicant” and stated, in the light of that advice, “The House cannot authorise or encourage a practice which would be contrary to law.” Subsequently, in a Legal Opinion dated 12 August 2020 and commissioned by Mrs Durlacher, six barristers (three of whom are members of the Synod), including

three QCs, challenged that advice, and concluded that the use of individual cups was lawful: see the report in the *Church Times*, 28 August 2020, page 4.

In paper GS Misc 1259 (Summary of decisions by the House of Bishops and by its delegated committees, March-November 2020) it is recorded at paragraph 44 that at the meeting of the House on 4 September 2020, “The House considered a paper on Holy Communion and the Distribution of the Elements and noted that a study day on this matter would take place on 26 October for all Bishops to attend.”

In the light of the above, please inform the Synod whether the said Opinion was considered by the bishops when they met on 26 October and whether, as a result of the study day, the House of Bishops will now authorise the use of individual cups for the distribution of consecrated Communion wine during the current pandemic?

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

A It was the stated intention of the College of Bishops’ Study Day on Holy Communion to deal with the theological issues arising from the question of the use of individual cups, as well as from the online broadcasting of services of Holy Communion. Discussion at the Study Day acknowledged the fact that there were differing opinions as to the legality of individual cups. Further work in this area is scheduled for a meeting of the House of Bishops in January 2021.

Mrs Caroline Herbert (Norwich) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q51 Does the House of Bishops agree that the sacrament of the Eucharist within the Methodist Church of Great Britain – which habitually uses individual cups for the distribution of wine – is “duly administered and celebrated” (Anglican-Methodist Covenant, 2003, Affirmation 2)?

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

A On 1 November 2003, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, the Secretary General of the General Synod and of the Archbishops’ Council, and the President, Vice-President, and Secretary of the Methodist Conference signed *An Anglican-Methodist Covenant* in the presence of Her Majesty the Queen. It was an ecclesial act in which both Churches, among other things, accepted that in the other “the sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist are duly administered and celebrated.” That they are “duly administered” does not mean that the

rites of the two Churches are interchangeable. Hence each Church retains the duty and freedom to maintain its own discipline and practice according to its best theological understanding, tradition, and discipline.

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

Q52 In the light of Article 30 of the Church of England's 39 Articles of Religion ("The cup of the Lord is not to be denied to the lay-people: for both parts of the Lord's Sacrament, by Christ's ordinance and commandment, ought to be ministered to all Christian men alike"), what are the benefits of taking both bread and wine in the Lord's Supper?

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

A Communion in one, or both, kinds has been controversial from at least the 3rd Century and practices still differ between Churches.

Article 30 captures the Reformation insistence that communion in both kinds has scriptural warrant and is to be the normal practice of the Church at the command of Christ whose body was broken and blood shed for all. Yet, there is no implication that Christ is not truly given through both bread and wine equally, and that by each we feed on Christ by faith with thanksgiving.

The Reformers challenged the distinction between priest and people implied when the priest alone received the wine. Reception in both kinds is thus the visual symbol of the priesthood of all believers. However, Christ is still equally given through both elements, and the Church remains a priesthood of all believers even when, for reasons of necessity, we receive in one kind only.

The Revd Simon Talbott (Ely) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q53 The recent IICSA report made clear recommendations about Diocesan officers and the NST, all of which are most welcome. However, what efforts are being made to ensure that these bodies are adequately trained in the technical issues concerning computers and the internet and also civil law? How would such training be monitored, and will it be adequately funded?

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

A Work on the development of information sharing protocols will be taken forward in accordance with the IICSA recommendations. As part of this work, any training related needs in respect of data sharing and protection will be identified. Under the present arrangements,

responsibility for monitoring training and adequate funding sits with the diocese for diocesan officers and with the Archbishops' Council for the National Safeguarding Team.

The Ven Julie Conalty (Rochester) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q54 In July 2019 the NST published the Safeguarding Training and Development Practice Guidance (2019) and included in the document was a list of specialist courses that were to be delivered. One of the courses was entitled Emotional/ psychological abuse – to include spiritual abuse and healthy Christian cultures. In August 2020 as a consequence of a general inquiry, the NST advised that this course was no longer going to be developed. What is the reason why the development of a course on so important a topic was cancelled, and what consultation with safeguarding teams was undertaken prior to the decision being made?

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

A The National Safeguarding Steering Group set out a new direction of travel for safeguarding learning at its February 2020 meeting. This included an approach to learning that is “transformative”; in other words, it aims to affect people’s actual behaviours by engaging them at the level of beliefs and values.

From this, new learning pathways have been developed and consulted upon. Whilst there is now no specific Pathway planned on spiritual abuse, the new Leadership Pathway focusses on healthy Church cultures and those in leadership positions to promote healthy culture and address unhealthy culture. All clergy will be participants of this Pathway. The Senior Leadership Pathway, focussing on senior clergy, will have a similar focus on healthy Christian culture.

A new Safeguarding Learning and Development Framework has been developed and will be consulted on in early 2021.

The Revd Simon Talbott (Ely) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q55 In the 2018 diocesan self-assessment key safeguarding data (<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/Safeguarding%20Data%20Report%202018.pdf>), eight categories of abuse were used. For adults, ‘Other/ Uncategorised’ is by far the most used category: 571 incidents compared to 310 for ‘Sexual abuse’ and 219 for ‘Domestic abuse’. Why are there so many concerns where a firm category is not used?

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

A The high usage of the Other / Uncategorized for concerns raised about adults reflects several factors. The Other category will include incidents that are not easily classified including the following: examples where there is more than one primary concern which carry equal weight; some incidents which do not meet a threshold to be described as abuse at all, but may be characterised as complaints; and some adults notified to diocesan safeguarding teams from statutory services such as probation. These will set out where a future risk is being identified based on for example a previous conviction, but where there has not been a recent incident to categorise.

The Revd Canon Rosie Harper (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q56 Is it correct that PCR2 relates only to files held at a Diocesan level or have files forwarded and held elsewhere, such as Lambeth Palace, also been independently audited?

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

A The PCR2 review does include files held at Lambeth and Bishopthorpe Palace and these audits are being conducted by independent reviewers.

Canon Peter Bruinvels (Guildford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q57 How are members of a Core Group appointed and for how long is their appointment?

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

A Members of the core group are appointed in line with section 3.1 of the Practice Guidance. The Guidance gives examples of who may be a member. Members of the core group are appointed on a case by case basis in accordance with the Guidance, and members may be reviewed and changed during the life of the core group. The Chair of the core group is responsible for establishing membership of the group, ensuring all appropriate parties are present.

Canon Peter Bruinvels (Guildford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q58 What training is given to Core Group members, and how often does it take place?

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

A Core groups are arranged according to the circumstances of each case. There is no specific training to be a core group member, however all church officers will have had safeguarding training, and this will include the core group function. Church officers are required to do Safeguarding Training every three years.

Mr Martin Sewell (Rochester) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q59 Given the recurring complaints by victims/survivors about the timing, sincerity, delivery and content of apologies, and the likelihood of there being many more apologies needed forthcoming in the future (given outstanding reports) is there any work under way to develop comprehensive guidelines to ensure that the right people address the right issues in a meaningful and timely fashion?

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

A The recent IICSA report highlighted that responding better to victims and survivors is of paramount importance for the Church, and this includes giving apologies which are timely, thoughtful and meaningful. The NST is revising its suite of safeguarding policies, including the policy on responding well to victims and survivors, who have been involved in its development. This policy will address the issue of apologies, within the context of an overall improved response.

Mrs Sarah Finch (London) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q60 What lessons can the Church of England learn, both locally and nationally, from the Peter Farquhar case, and the Independent Review of it?

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

A The lessons arising from the Peter Farquhar case are clearly set out in the independent review and include: greater scrutiny of candidates in discernment; information sharing clarity at diocesan and parish level; using safeguarding training to enable understanding of risk issues for older people, especially regarding sexuality; ensuring the safer recruitment and practice of volunteers; and working to create a more open culture where challenging issues can be discussed, encouraging people to share any safeguarding concerns. The National Safeguarding Team will incorporate the training recommendations, is already working on information sharing which was a recommendation from IICSA, and has updated the safer recruitment guidance which is currently out for consultation.

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

Q61 What safeguarding changes are the House of Bishops making to act on the findings highlighted in Adi Cooper's report into the death of Peter Farquhar, which found that: "policies of the Church of England regarding homosexual practice and approach to sexuality and relationships put Peter Farquhar at risk and vulnerable to exploitation" and "A culture which supported openness and transparency would have better safeguarded Peter Farquhar. While people continue to feel forced to hide or lie about their sexuality, they can become vulnerable to exploitation, as was Peter Farquhar."?

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

A The National Safeguarding Team will incorporate the learning from this review into safeguarding training and guidance. Further recommendations include work on information sharing, which is being done in response to IICSA recommendations, and ensuring the safer recruitment and practice of volunteers. The Safeguarding Team has updated the Safer Recruitment policy which is in consultation currently. The Living in Love and Faith work will seek to consult and engage safeguarding perspectives in its ongoing work. It will also play a significant part in establishing openness and transparency as churches engage in learning together about identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage using the LLF resources.

The Revd Canon Rosie Harper (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q62 In her recent 'lessons learnt' report on the murder of Peter Farquhar, Dr Adi Cooper OBE wrote: 'The policies of the Church of England regarding homosexual practice and the approach to sexuality and relationships continues to put people at risk because it forces people to hide, lie and become vulnerable to exploitation, as was PF.' What steps will the LLF implementation group take to ensure that Dr Cooper's concerns about both praxis and theology are comprehensively addressed?

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

A The purpose of the LLF resources is to enable the whole church to learn together about identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage. This involves learning about theology and how it is worked out in the Church's common life. Importantly, the resources emphasise unequivocally that every person is equally loved by God and made in the image of God. This foundational truth must govern, therefore, the welcome, love and care with which every person must be met. The resources also invite people to engage in some depth with matters of

identity and sexuality together – openly, honestly, and with grace and compassion regardless of the different perspectives and lived experiences among us. This requires an unprecedented openness at all levels of the Church about these matters which will help to break the perceived need to hide, lie and so become vulnerable to exploitation.

Dr Andrew Bell (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q63 The independent report by Dr Adi Cooper, commissioned by Oxford diocese: “Lessons learnt from events in the parishes of Stowe and Maids Moreton” includes a number of recommendations which specify a need to promote awareness and change nationally within the Church of England. For example Recommendation 2 (of 13): “Within the Diocese, work on LGBTI+ inclusivity should focus on raising awareness of the safeguarding risks for some older people and the Diocese should promote this nationally within the Church of England.”

How will the House of Bishops promote implementation of these recommendations nationally, and how will it ensure that actions taken to promote safeguarding, inclusivity and an open culture are consistent with the Church of England’s current doctrine on sex and marriage?

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

A One of the ways in which Bishops will promote implementation of these recommendations is by encouraging the whole church to engage with the LLF resources. This will contribute significantly to addressing questions of inclusivity and a culture of openness while continuing to maintain the Church’s current teaching on sex and marriage. That is because the resources are unequivocal about valuing every person as made in the image of God and equally loved by God, and therefore about the kind of welcome and love with which every person must be met. This inclusivity is not conditional upon conformity with the Church’s teaching on sex and marriage. The resources also invite people with different perspectives and lived experiences to engage in some depth with matters of identity and sexuality together – openly, honestly, and with grace and compassion. This requires an unprecedented openness at all levels of the Church about these matters.

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

Q64 Will the House of Bishops request that the Government respects the independence of the Church in determining its practice for gathered worship during the coronavirus crisis?

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

A As Chair of the House of Bishops' Recovery Group I am a member of the Government's Places of Worship Taskforce and will continue to represent the views of the House in that forum on all issues relevant to the coronavirus pandemic. Bishops joined other faith leaders in sending a letter to the Prime Minister on 3rd November which expressed our disagreement with the Government's decision to suspend public worship this month. We shall continue to stress the importance of public worship and will argue strongly that COVID-secure Places of Worship should host services of public worship once the current restrictions come to an end.

The Revd Canon Andrew Dotchin (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q65 The Executive Summary of the IICSA final report, reads: "Deference to the authority of the Church and to individual priests, taboos surrounding discussion of sexuality and an environment where alleged perpetrators were treated more supportively than victims presented barriers to disclosure that many victims could not overcome." How will the *Living in Love and Faith* process address these taboos and what action will be taken so that the Church becomes a place of safety for people of all sexual orientations and identities?

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

A Both the content of the resources and the Church-wide engagement with them, will help address the taboos surrounding discussions about sexuality and thereby contribute to the Church becoming a safer place for people of all sexual orientations and identities. The Pastoral Principles, which are embedded within the resources, are designed to help ensure that this engagement is as open, gracious, compassionate and safe as possible. This requires an unprecedented openness at all levels of the Church about these matters which will help to break the oppressive silence that has characterised the Church's engagement in the past. Furthermore, the LLF Next Steps Group will work collaboratively with the National Safeguarding Team to ensure these lessons are incorporated into both LLF and safeguarding development work.

Mr Chris Gill (Lichfield) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q66 Thank you to all those who have given up so much time and energy to work so hard on Living in Love and Faith, which is finally with us, and please forgive me if this question has already been answered within all that has been produced. How will the next steps group be approaching

the task of ensuring that engagement with the resources is framed in as pastorally sensitive and safe way for single people, particularly for the younger people in our Church?

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

A Thank you for your kind comments and important question. There are several ways that we hope to do this well. First, the LLF course invites people to reflect on the Pastoral Principles as part of their learning, and to make some commitments to engaging graciously and sensitively with one another. Second, we will be working closely with LLF Advocates in each diocese to support them with facilitation training that is tailored to the different contexts in which people will be engaging with the resources. Third, we will be working with a very diverse 'reference group' of 'grassroots' people in churches across the country who will help us provide the right kind of support and resources to ensure engagement is as pastorally sensitive and safe as possible. This 'reference group' will include young people and single people. Finally, we will work collaboratively with the National Safeguarding Team in developing this work.

Mrs Tina Nay (Chichester) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q67 How will the House of Bishops' Next Steps Group ensure it incorporates LGBT members in a way which gives them better representation than on the original LLF co-ordinating group?

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

A Thank you for this important question. The LLF Next Steps Group is made up of bishops. That means that its representation is limited. That is why the group has decided to establish a Reference Group made up of 'grass roots' people who are actively involved in the life of the church and who can contribute from diverse perspectives relating to sexuality, ethnicity, age, church context and tradition. This group will act as a sounding board for the group's work in enabling church communities to participate in LLF in appropriately sensitive ways.

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

Q68 According to *The Times* on 10 November 2020 (Kaya Burgess, Religious Affairs Correspondent), the Church of England could reverse its opposition to "same-sex marriage" by 2022. Is this the case?

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

A Thank you for the opportunity to clarify the situation. The *Living in Love and Faith* resources will be used by the whole Church to learn together about human identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage.

This includes gaining a deeper understanding of different perspectives and lived experiences as well as the complexities of these matters. It includes listening to God together. Only when this process has really taken root will we begin the process of discerning a way forward for the Church – ‘so that right judgments and godly decisions can be made about our common life.’ (p. 422 of the LLF Book). We do not yet know what these decisions will be.

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

Q69 Given your acknowledgement and apology in the *Living in Love and Faith* report for the “huge damage and hurt” that has been caused to LGBT+ people by the Church, what actions are you taking and in what time frame to put in place adequate safeguards to ensure this does not continue?

The Bishop of Coventry to reply as Chair of the Living in Love and Faith Coordinating Group

A An important part of the work of the Living in Love and Faith and Pastoral Advisory Groups has been to become better informed about the damage and hurt that has been caused to LGBTI+ people and to find effective ways of educating the people of God in avoiding such attitudes and behaviours. We have incorporated the Pastoral Principles into the LLF course materials as well as highlighting them in the LLF book. Additional advice is available to LLF Course Group Leaders to create a free and safe space for learning by encouraging behaviours that display a commitment to mutual respect and inclusion. The LLF engagement process provides the opportunity for people to relate well to each other and to grow in mutual understanding not only of who we are but also of how and why each of us think, reason and act.

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

Q70 In his response to the May 2019 IICSA report on Chichester and Peter Ball, the Bishop of Bath and Wells, the then Lead Bishop for Safeguarding, responded ‘It is absolutely right that the Church at all levels should learn lessons from the issues raised in this report’ ([Publication of IICSA 9-5-19](#)). The newly published *Living in Love and Faith*, rightly says ‘we should not ignore or downplay another horrific reality [child abuse]’ (p. 86) but also states that ‘it is important that the specific theological reflection on IICSA be carried out separately from the LLF project’ (p. 87). May Synod know the rationale for the exclusion in LLF of the vital and essential learning provided by the IICSA hearings and reports over the past few years, despite the need of the Church to ‘learn at all levels lessons [from IICSA]’?

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

A The rationale for the exclusion of the learning provided by the IICSA hearings and reports is provided in the pages of the LLF book that are referred to in the question: these reflections need to be carried out together with victims of sexual abuse (not talking about victims, but with victims) and only after the full published findings of IICSA had been assessed. The purpose of the LLF resources is to explore a Christian understanding of what it means to be human as part of an educational endeavour, the effect of which will be to encourage and create a culture of openness about matters relating to identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage in the whole church at all levels. This in itself is a vital element in responding to the IICSA report.

Mrs Mary Durlacher (Chelmsford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q71 As the body responsible for safeguarding doctrine in the Church of England, will the House of Bishops reaffirm the primacy of Scripture over practice in the formation of doctrine?

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

A As the First Book of Homilies (1547) puts it, ‘there can be nothing either more necessary or profitable than the knowledge of Holy Scripture; ... And there is no truth nor doctrine necessary for our justification and everlasting salvation, but that is, or may be, drawn out of that fountain and well of truth.’

The classic Anglican expression of the use of Holy Scripture, found in Richard Hooker and elsewhere, is that we read scripture as our primary source in the light of the Church ‘s tradition of Biblical understanding, deploying our God-given faculty of reason – reason itself being shaped by the living tradition of the Church as it seeks to be formed by God ‘s Spirit.

By speaking of the “primacy of scripture” Anglicans, relate scripture and the practice of the Church in the closest of ways: “*Lex orandi: lex credendi*” – what we say in our liturgies is what we believe.

Mr Stephen Hogg (Leeds) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q72 Organisations that have managed their response to COVID-19 well follow best practice by maintaining a Risk Register and a Business Continuity Plan to mitigate the impact of disruption. Does the House of Bishops maintain a Risk Register and a “Business Continuity Plan” to enable it to respond to major negative events? If not, why not? If it does, what did these documents say at the beginning of the year?

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

A The House of Bishops does not have a risk register or a business continuity plan of its own. The House of Bishops is a House of Synod and not a corporate body and therefore there is no requirement for it to maintain a risk register. The National Church Institutions keep risk registers and have a business continuity plan and were able to respond effectively to the crisis.

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

Q73 The Vision & Strategy Group, led by the Archbishop of York, is considering what the future of the church will look like and what ministry resources we will need as a whole church. But while that work is still underway, parishes up and down the country are closing their doors for the last time, clergy numbers are being cut and clergy posts are being made half-time or house-for-duty. What steps are the House of Bishops taking, in consultation with other National Church Institutions, to ensure that such church closures and clergy cuts do not happen before the Vision & Strategy Group can make its final report, and to ensure that the Church takes a joined-up, whole Church approach, rather than individual dioceses acting alone?

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

A Decisions regarding church closures and clergy numbers are matters for individual dioceses, reflecting their strategy and context. The House of Bishops have committed to sharing their plans with each other in order to ensure that the Church takes a joined-up, whole church approach.

In May the Council and Commissioners announced financial support for dioceses: up to £35m in sustainability funding. The majority of the sustainability funding will be made available in grants to the dioceses in most need, having regard to the resources available to them. This funding provides vital short-term financial assistance for dioceses whilst they develop or begin to implement diocesan transformation programmes and the Vision and Strategy Group completes its work.

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

Q74 Will the Chair of the Co-ordinating Group confirm that the diagnosis and paths of healing set out in the recently published FAOC Report *Kingdom Calling* (GS Misc 1254) will be fully incorporated into the strategies, policies and budgets for 'Emerging Church' so that the implementation of this Vision and Strategy will replace the long-

pervading culture of clericalism, (which was also identified by IICSA as needing to be addressed), with a culture which enables and equips the whole people of God to be fruitfully engaged in the whole of God's mission to the whole of our country?

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

A The Faith and Order Commission's report *Kingdom Calling* helpfully raises some significant and pervading challenges faced that restrict our theological imagination. In 2021, the direction it sets will be built upon in new resources for vocations work that reflect the calling of all God's people.

The Vision and Strategy will further develop the work in helping to create a culture which enables and equips the whole people of God by recognising the importance of every person in the Church being a missionary disciple. FAOC will continue to provide theological resources for this Vision and Strategy work within the wider Emerging Church process.

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

Q75 What is the timeline and process (including whether they will come to and through this Synod) for the implementation of the recommendations made to the House of Bishops by the IDG and earlier Independent Reviewer Reports?

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

A The Implementation and Dialogue Group will be publishing their report early in 2021 and would like to present their report at the February 2021 group of sessions, subject to the agreement of the Business Committee. This follows detailed discussion by the House of Bishops, with a further engagement with the House in December.

The report contains a number of recommendations for implementation by different bodies, including dioceses, NCIs and the House of Bishops. The House of Bishops Delegation Committee will be invited to monitor implementation of the recommendations set out in the Group's report, and will report back to the House of Bishops on progress.

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

Q76 The IDG undertook visits to about five dioceses to inquire about the experience of Mutual Flourishing and some dioceses are known to have ongoing Mutual Flourishing groups. How many, and which

dioceses, have official and active groups monitoring the understanding, working and use of the Five Guiding Principles and of the Church of England's commitment to Mutual Flourishing?

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

A In addition to the in-depth visits to the five dioceses, the IDG wrote to all dioceses at the start of the Group's work to ask about what had been done to educate and inform the clergy and laity. The Group received responses to this request from 36 dioceses and of these, seven specifically referred to a formal group monitoring the understanding, working and use of the Five Guiding Principles. These included Carlisle, Chichester, Derby, Leicester, Lichfield, Manchester and Sheffield.

However, the Group did not specifically ask dioceses about this directly as part of their initial research. This means that there may be diocesan groups established, about which the Group was not informed.

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

Q77 In response to a question at General Synod in July 2020, the Bishop of Rochester stated that bishops are clear about the importance of "Resolution" parishes providing unambiguous and easily accessible information about their theological position to anyone attending the church or searching for a church on websites, including on *A Church Near You*. What actions have bishops and dioceses taken to ensure this information is provided?

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

A While this is not an issue the House of Bishops has addressed specifically, transparency and clarity are always to be encouraged. It is, however, for parishes to determine how best to communicate Christian beliefs, across the range of traditions that make up the diversity of our Church. How an individual parish decides to describe itself on its website, *A Church Near You*, noticeboards etc is a matter for them and is not something which can be mandated by others.

Mr John Appleby (Newcastle) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q78 What number of parishes in each Diocese have passed a Resolution requesting extended episcopal ministry, and how would a churchgoer identify these within their own diocese?"

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

A These figures are available nationally in the annual Ministry Statistics – see p.32 of https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/Ministry%20Statistics%202019%20report%20FINAL_0.pdf

In 2019 there were 590 such parishes (4.7% of the total).

The national Ministry Statistics do give a breakdown by the bishops providing this ministry. Further details of most of the parishes and which diocese they are in can be found on the websites of the Bishops of Beverley, Ebbsfleet, Maidstone and Richborough.

SECRETARY GENERAL

Mr Martin Sewell (Rochester) to ask the Secretary General:

Q79 At the last General Synod we learned that there was no appeal system by which those aggrieved by core group practice could be reviewed and where appropriate rectified. Have any interim arrangements been adopted on a voluntary basis to address this, pending significant structural reform?

Mr William Nye to reply as Secretary General:

A Anyone dissatisfied by the work of a national core group, or by another aspect of the services provided by the Archbishops' Council, may make a complaint through the National Church Institutions' external complaints policy.

Work to update the core group policy and guidance will include consideration of whether an appeal system, or a dedicated complaint system, should be included.

Mr Philip French (Rochester) to ask the Secretary General:

Q80 Given the continuing coronavirus pandemic, when and how is it envisaged that Annual Meetings of Parishioners (for the election of churchwardens) and Annual Parochial Church Meetings will be held in 2021?

Mr William Nye to reply as Secretary General:

A The annual meetings are required to be held by 31st May each year. It cannot be known at this point what the situation will be next Eastertide. Should it be necessary to do so, the bishop of the diocese may exercise powers under the Churchwardens Measure 2001 and the Church Representation Rules to extend or alter the time for holding the annual meetings, and/or to modify the procedure for

meetings and elections so that they can be conducted remotely. Bishops exercised those powers this year and will therefore already be aware of their existence and scope, should they need to consider making special provision for 2021.

Mr Philip French (Rochester) to ask the Secretary General:

Q81 Given the continuing coronavirus pandemic, when and how is it envisaged that the next General Synod will be elected, and its inaugural session held?

Mr William Nye to reply as Secretary General:

A Currently, the Convocations of Canterbury and York will automatically stand dissolved on 31 July 2021 if they are not dissolved sooner pursuant to Her Majesty's directions. The current assumption is that directions will be given for dissolving the Convocations on 13th July 2021 and that elections will be undertaken between July and October 2021 using the online election process. Planning is being done to enable this to happen. It is still expected that the inaugural group of sessions of the new Synod will take place in November 2021.

We will closely monitor the situation in light of the pandemic, and engage with dioceses and members as necessary.