

GENERAL SYNOD

**Analysis of Post-Synod Survey
from the April 2021 group of sessions**

This paper includes a summary of feedback received following the April 2021 group of sessions through the post-Synod survey. The survey form was circulated to members on 24 April and closed on 5 May.

Some key takeaways include:

- The overall rating of the items and the various experiences of Synod improved (with the exception of worship due to the Community of St Anselm's wifi issues).
- Very few people complained about lacking breaks – an indication that the length of breaks may be correct.
- The change to simple vote on the second day was welcomed by Synod members.
- The rating of Question time improved from 2.67 in November 2020 to 3.05 in April 2021, though it is still low compared with the ratings of other items.
- The final question of the survey asking for members overall comments suggested a polarity of opinions regarding remote Synod. While some believed that remote Synod improved accessibility, others could not wait to get back to physical meetings.

Correspondence to the Synod Team and to the Chair of the Business Committee are included after the survey results. They include:

- A complaint from Jayne Ozanne about technical issues in raising a point of order and the lack of complaints procedure in General Synod
- A confidential complaint from a Synod member about an Archbishop's use of profanity
- Peter Bruinvel's wish to have an item on the Armed Forces tabled in the next group of sessions
- Michelle Obende (nee Tackie)'s conversation with the Clerk about any responses to the Panorama programme on racism in the Church.

Overview of participants (Q1-Q3)

House (response rate)

House of Bishops	18 (37%)
House of Clergy	77 (40%)
House of Laity	112 (57%)
Non-voting	8 (62%)

Age Group

18-25	2
26-35	4
36-50	29
51-65	103
66 or above	75

Province

Canterbury	148
York	65

Rating of agenda items

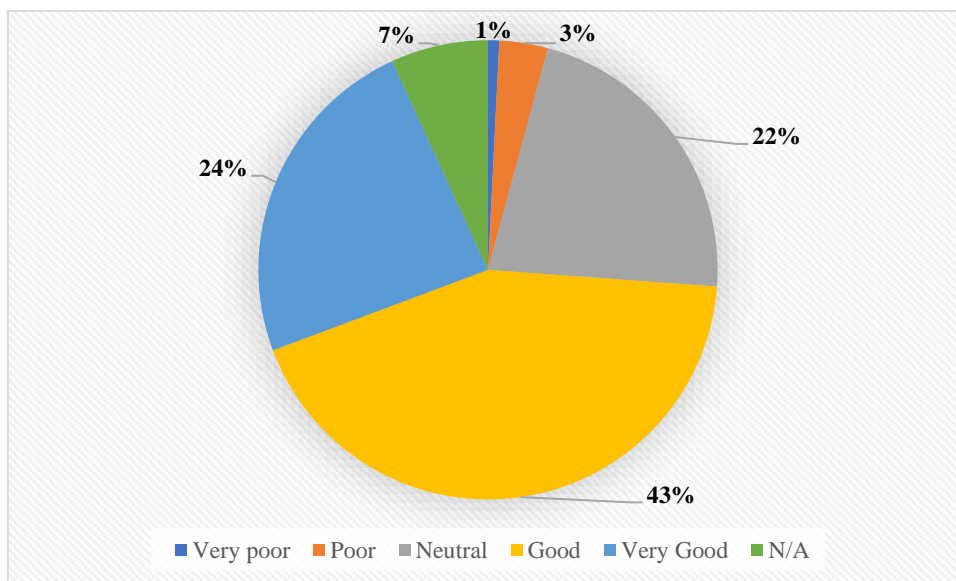
Q4. How would you rate the following items on the Agenda?

	Very Poor (1)	Poor (2)	Neutral (3)	Good (4)	Very Good (5)	N/A	Total	Weighted Average
28. His Royal Highness The Prince Philip	0(0%)	1(1%)	38(20%)	82 (43%)	55 (29%)	16(8%)	192	4.09
29. Presidential Address	2(1%)	3(2%)	21(11%)	78 (41%)	78 (41%)	10 (5%)	192	4.25
2. Report by the Business Committee	0(0%)	1(1%)	32(17%)	91 (48%)	53 (28%)	13 (7%)	190	4.11
505-515. Draft Safeguarding (Code of Practice) Measure Revision Stage	2(1%)	7(4%)	36(19%)	90 (47%)	46 (24%)	11 (6%)	192	3.94
3. International Religious Freedom	0(0%)	3(2%)	31(16%)	95 (49%)	53 (28%)	10 (5%)	192	4.09
502. Draft Legislative Reform (Church of England Pensions) Order 2021	1(1%)	5(3%)	56(29%)	90 (47%)	21 (11%)	17 (9%)	190	3.72
4. Questions	13 (7%)	43 (23%)	55(30%)	48 (26%)	15(8%)	11 (6%)	185	3.05
503. Clergy Discipline (Amendment) Rules 2021	1(1%)	4(2%)	35(19%)	97 (52%)	41 (22%)	9(5%)	187	3.97
5. Appointment of the Chair of the Church of England Pensions Board	0(0%)	4(2%)	70(36%)	64 (33%)	41 (21%)	14 (7%)	193	3.79
6. Appointment of the Chair of the Dioceses Commission	0(0%)	5(3%)	63(33%)	73 (38%)	40 (21%)	12 (6%)	193	3.82
501. Draft Safeguarding (Code of Practice) Final Approval	0(0%)	1(1%)	22(12%)	101 (53%)	59 (31%)	8(4%)	191	4.19

8. Responsible Representation : CNC	0(0%)	13(7%)	38(20%)	89 (48%)	34 (18%)	13 (7%)	187	3.83
9. General Synod Elections 2020: Allocation of Seats Amendment Resolution	3(2%)	6(3%)	61(32%)	73 (38%)	28 (15%)	20 (10%)	191	3.68
10. Safeguarding	0(0%)	0(0%)	28(15%)	93 (50%)	56 (30%)	10 (5%)	187	4.16
7 and 11. Farewells	2(1%)	7(4%)	32(17%)	63 (34%)	67 (36%)	16 (9%)	187	4.09
504. Clergy Discipline Measure 2003: Code of Practice	0(0%)	1(1%)	49(26%)	84 (44%)	38 (20%)	18 (9%)	190	3.92

Qualitative comments for each item can be provided to the Business Committee upon request.

Overall rating of the agenda: 4.00



Chairing and Speaking in Debates

Q5. Did you put in any Requests to Speak at this Group of sessions?

Yes	18%	35
No	82%	159

Q6. Were you called to speak?

Yes	26%	49
No	74%	140

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Q7. Do you have any comments on the chairing of the items on the Synod Agenda?

119 respondents commented on the chairing. They were overwhelmingly appreciative for the Chair's performance, though a small number of comments still found that the 'usual suspects' were called. Zoe Heming was singled out for praise by 10 members, which is unusual in post-Synod surveys.

One new Synod member suggested Chairs to introduce themselves by name on first appearance, as all other Synod members are supposed to do – this would improve the experience of newcomers and save them from flipping to the 'Chairs of Debates' notice paper.

Remote Voting**Q8. How would you rate the following?**

	Very Poor (1)	Poor (2)	Neutral (3)	Good (4)	Very Good (5)	N/A	Weighted Average
Written instructions on voting before Synod began	1(1%)	0	17(9%)	94(49%)	74(39%)	6(3%)	4.29
Demonstration sessions on voting before Synod began	1(1%)	0	18(9%)	28(25%)	37(19%)	86(45%)	4.15
Formal vote through the Crystal platform	2(1%)	12(6%)	31(16%)	79(41%)	62(32%)	5(3%)	4.01
Simple vote through Zoom poll	0	7(4%)	10(5%)	85(44%)	82(43%)	8(4%)	4.32
Green ticks through Zoom platform	2(1%)	4(2%)	27(14%)	77(41%)	57(30%)	21(11%)	4.1

Qualitative responses to the formal vote:

There were 58 comments related to this. Many members approved of the use of 'simple vote' for uncontentious motions on the second day, which saves time. There are a number of members who reported experiences of difficulties accessing the platform.

Qualitative responses to the simple vote via Zoom poll:

26 members responded to this question. Most Synod members find simple votes to be effective, but a number of people could not see the poll pop up on their screens.

Qualitative responses to the green ticks through Zoom platform:

22 members responded to this question. Some members finds this function helpful as seeing green ticks is similar to seeing people standing in the Chamber. Some members reported that they did not use the function, while others had trouble finding the green tick. [It should be noted that the Practical Guide included instructions on where to find the Greek tick.]

Q9. What changes or improvements would you find helpful on the Crystal platform in the future?

117 responses were received. Most members reported that they were able to vote, with some commenting that a one-minute voting period would be enough.

Q10. What changes or improvements would you find helpful for the Zoom polling function in the future?

73 responses were received. Virtually all of them found the functions to be completely adequate. A few members wished that the poll results were presented as number of votes instead of percentages.

IT, Communications and Synod App

Q11. How would you rate the following?

	Very Poor (1)	Poor (2)	Neutral (3)	Good (4)	Very Good (5)	N/A	Weighted Average
Synod App	3 (2%)	3 (2%)	13 (7%)	59 (33%)	65 (36%)	36 (20%)	4.26
Communications from the Synod Office to Synod Members	0	3 (2%)	11 (6%)	87 (49%)	75 (42%)	3 (2%)	4.33
Zoom teleconferencing platform	1 (1%)	5 (3%)	28 (15%)	98 (51%)	57 (30%)	2 (1%)	4.08

Q12. What changes or improvements would you find useful on the App in the future?

Members would like to see features and contents such as

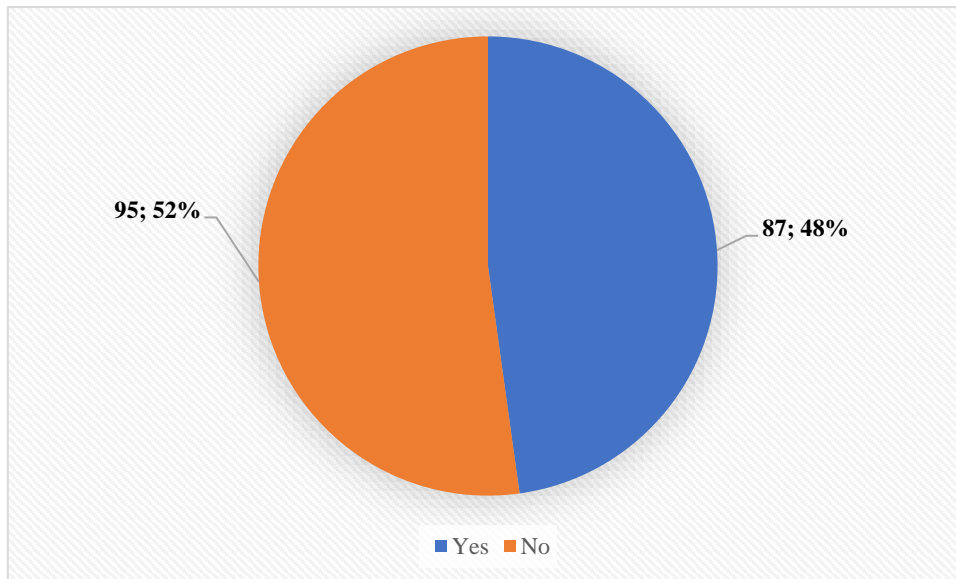
- List of members with Synod numbers and photographs
- Linking from timetable/agenda to the relevant GS and order papers
- Top tips for Eco-Synod to be at a more prominent place
- Agenda to be first item on the App
- Real-time update when agenda/timings change

Q13. What changes or improvements would you find useful on the Zoom teleconferencing platform in the future?

83 members responded to this question, most of which reported no issues with the platform. Some members would like to have the chat function open, while others took the opportunity of this question to express their wish to return to face-to-face meetings.

Q14. Did you use social media to comment on Synod or to contact Synod members?

Yes	48%	87
No (Please skip Q. 15 below)	52%	95



Q15. If so, please specify which platforms you used. (Please check multiple boxes where appropriate.)

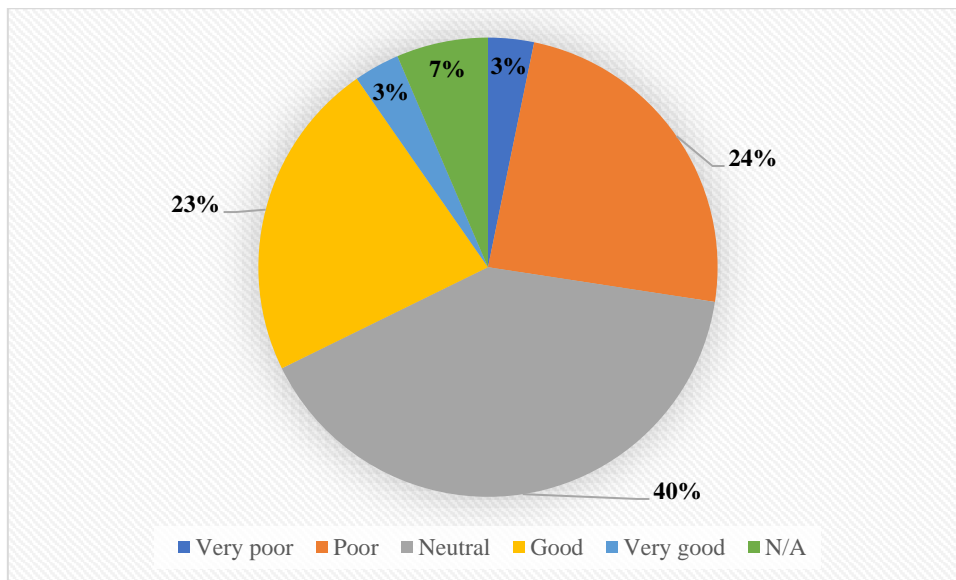
Facebook	22.45%	22
Twitter	50.00%	49
SnapChat	0	0
TikTok	0	0
Blogs	3.06%	3
WhatsApp groups	51.02%	50
Others (please specify)	14.29%	14

The answers under “Other” include emails, text, messenger and Instagram. The total for this question exceeds 100% because respondents are allowed to choose more than one option.

Worship

Q16. What was your experience with the following?

	Very Poor	Poor	Neutral	Good	Very Good	N/A
Worship via Zoom	6 (3%)	45 (24%)	75 (42%)	42 (22%)	8 (4%)	12 (6%)



Q16. Weighted average: 3.01

Q17. Would you offer any further comments on worship?

In offering comments on the worship, there were three main strands of negative feedback

- Poor sound quality on the worship led by the Community of St Anselm on Saturday morning. [*Comment: This was due to a technical fault with their equipment so there was, unfortunately, nothing that the staff team in Church House could do.*]
- The absence of text for Friday evening's worship. [*Comment: This was not the chaplain's fault, but due to a staff error in not signalling that it would be needed. Thanks are due to the Bishop of Fulham who was Chairing the final session and said a short Evening Prayer on Synod's behalf.*]
- Worship on Zoom being generally unsatisfactory/unedifying.

Other comments were

- Dull: can we move away from standard Morning/Evening prayer and be more imaginative?
- Please screenshare the words
- Needs a second voice unmuted to say the responses (this has been requested before)
- Pre-record The Community of St Anselm to avoid sound quality issues
- Missed opportunity to have worship led from somewhere else in the Anglican Communion via Zoom
- Needs to be more up-beat.
- Always the same style. Not reflective of the diversity of C of .E

Positive feedback included:

- Keeping it simple works better
- Good to have a different set of people leading
- The link with the BSL interpreters was much better this time
- Thanks to those leading (Charlotte Cook and the Community of St Anselm)
- Thanks for remembering Shirley-Ann Williams and others in the opening prayers

- Loved the Saturday morning from the Community of St Anselm - felt like we were drawn into their private community worship ... really authentic and heartfelt - probably a highlight of the session.

Suggestions for future Synod worship were:

- Would value having Prayer During the Day before lunch (both remotely and in person).
- Mass should be offered.
- Let us Christ-centred hymns with a good tune.
- There are many good pre-recorded worship lyric videos enabling people to sing in their homes. A few more from this century as well please.

Accessibility

Q18. How accessible did you find the following?

	Very poor	Poor	Neutral	Good	Very good	N/A	Weighted Average
Using Zoom	0	4(2%)	9(5%)	81(44%)	88(48%)	3(2%)	4.39
Worship materials	1(1%)	10(5%)	49(27%)	79(43%)	31(17%)	13(7%)	3.76
Presentations and videos	0	4(2%)	30(16%)	92(50%)	42(23%)	17(9%)	4.02
Written materials, such as GS papers	0	6(3%)	27(14%)	88(47%)	59(31%)	8(4%)	4.11
The Church of England website	1(1%)	12(6%)	40(21%)	77(41%)	34(18%)	23(12%)	3.8
The Synod App	2(1%)	5(3%)	15(8%)	57(30%)	65(35%)	43(23%)	4.24

Q19. Can you give us details of your experiences in this group of sessions with regard to accessibility, whether positive or negative?

100 responses were received and they mostly focused on the themes below@:#

BSL provision

The BSL interpreters and Deaf reps were very grateful that the newer version of Zoom allows users to pin multiple screens, so they were able to interact as a group throughout Synod. Staff need to be aware, however, that using the 'spotlight' function cancels all settings for the individual user, so the Deaf reps were unable to follow the farewells (this was partly mitigated by pinning a BSL interpreter, but going forward is something we need to explore further with Zoom re enhanced functionality).

Whether as a result of the Question from Bill Braviner or happy coincidence, almost all of the presentations and formal speeches were made available in advance of Synod this

time, and the BSL interpreters and Deaf reps have expressed their thanks and encouragement to everyone to keep up the good work.

Several Synod members also commented positively on the work of the BSL interpreters, even though they do not personally need their assistance, and others were grateful for subtitles – again, whether or not they personally rely on that function.

Papers

Some members felt that there had been insufficient time to read the papers, that some had been sent late, or that the length and complexity of papers was a barrier to encouraging new people to stand for Synod. Whilst the current electronic-only circulation was understood, there was a desire from a few members to return to mailed-out hard copies.

One member asked that anything that could be done to help signal where the business had reached would be welcome; another suggested displaying the item number in the corner of the screen in a similar way to the live stream in London/York.

Technology

The App seemed to have caused issues for a number of members on this occasion, and needed to be deleted and re-installed in order to refresh content at the start of Synod. This may also have lain behind comments that members had not received Notice and Order papers during the sessions, though these were also emailed and uploaded to the website.

A few members felt that too many tabs or devices were needed in order to participate fully, especially where they did not always have the most up-to-date 'kit', or were physically less able to manage the range of screens or devices needed.

One member complained that the Chat function seemed to have been disabled at key moments, and there was concern that points of order were missed.

More/longer screen breaks were welcomed, including the informal break afforded by the change of platform party between items.

The fact that Zoom enabled attendance from hospital was welcomed by Mr Lamming, and another member commended his commitment to Synod.

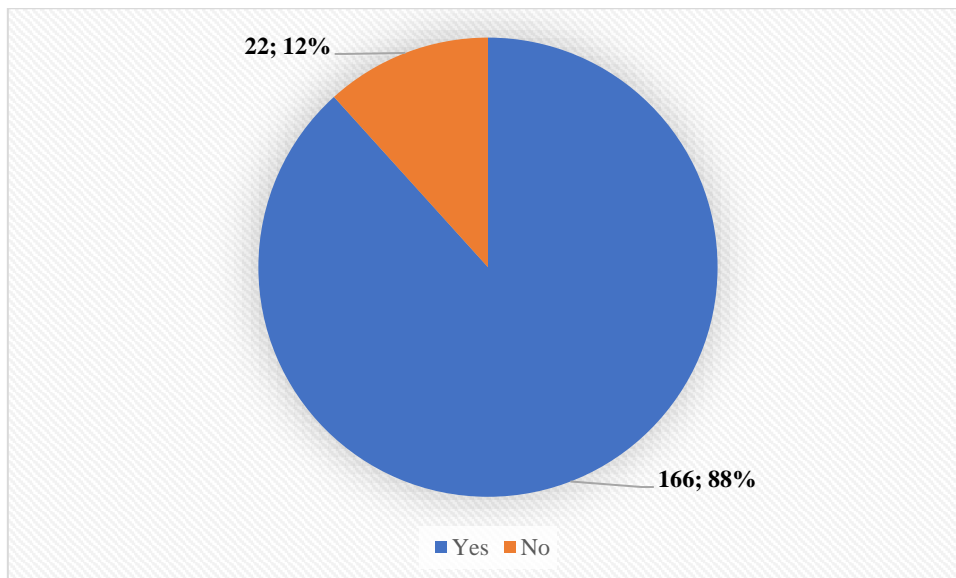
Other

One response voiced concern that meeting in-person [in York] would be excluding clinically vulnerable members from attending. The remaining comments pertained to domestic issues beyond the scope of the team's role.

After Synod Finishes

Q20. Do you feel equipped to report back to your diocese, constituency, organisation or department on what took place at General Synod? If not, what would make you feel better equipped?

Yes	88%	166
No (please specify)	12%	22



Some Synod members mentioned they would use the Church Times digest. A number of members would value a simple digest or report of the business done each day; the Legal Office produces the business done document as soon as it possibly can. Some members reflected that they moved around physically during the remote group of sessions, which affected their ability to get clear summaries of all issues.

General Comments

Q21. How would you rate the April 2021 General Synod meeting overall?

Very poor (1)	Poor (2)	Neutral (3)	Good (4)	Very good (5)
1	12	41	114	20

Q22. Weighted average: 3.74

Q22. Are there any other areas you wish to feedback to us on?

103 members provided additional comments. The vast majority praised the staff for being able to deliver this meeting over zoom. There were various reflections:

- Remote Synods have improved accessibility for people with family responsibilities and could potentially attract younger Anglicans to stand for office. There are also financial incentives. There were calls for having 1 remote and 1 in-person Synods.
- Many members expressed their desire to meet in person.
- One member suggested reducing the size of Synod.
- A member requested a breakdown by name and demographics of members asking Questions and Supplementaries; currently, only the list of speakers for debates were published.
- A member suggested having the name of the member and their Synod number projected on the Zoom screen.
- A number of members suggested a 'blended' or hybrid Synod in July.
- Some members suggested limiting the number of times members could speak, including Supplementary questions and in debates.
- One member reflected on the reduction on the missional focus of Synod items.