

# GENERAL SYNOD

November 2021

## QUESTIONS

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

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## **ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL**

### **The Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:**

**Q1** What steps are the Church Commissioners taking to ensure that 100% of the Lowest Income Communities Funding received by Diocesan Boards of Finance is being passed on to their most deprived parishes and what are the consequences for those DBFs who are still not using LICF as intended?

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

**A** The intention of the funding is to support mission and ministry in areas with the lowest incomes, where there is not the capacity for mutual support from elsewhere in the diocese.

Every diocese is asked to provide information on which parishes are supported by the funding. This additional level of focus on poorest communities from 2017 is a significant change to how national funding is administered. Therefore, there is a ten-year transition period, allowing for dioceses to move resources without causing high levels of disruption.

Each year, the level of accountability increases, and each year, dioceses are increasing the focus on deprived communities, as agreed for this ten-year transition.

### **Mr Andrew Presland (Peterborough) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:**

**Q2** Following the recent announcement that the first investment from the Church of England's Social Impact Investment Programme is to be £1.6 million for the Women in Safe Homes fund, what criteria are being used to decide which other funds or projects should benefit from the Programme? Are Synod members encouraged to nominate any projects that appear to be good candidates due to the way and/or scale in which they are tackling social or environmental challenges?

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

**A** Projects and funds to receive investment from the Social Impact Investment Programme are evaluated by The Archbishops' Council Investment Committee against the extent to which they meet both the impact and financial goals set out in the programme's Investment Strategy. In summary, the programme seeks investments which will have an impact in areas aligned with our mission, addressing housing need, strengthening communities, providing access to fair and affordable finance and protecting the environment. These investments

require a risk adjusted financial return which preserves the real value of the capital invested. The majority of the investments will be in funds or similar structures which provide diversification of risk. The programme maintains a pipeline of potential investments and Synod members may nominate investments for consideration.

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

**Q3** On the basis of the most recent and appropriate quantitative data available, what is the average income level for the population of each diocese. Please provide the answer in the form of a table.

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

**A** A table has been placed on the noticeboard showing for 2016/17 by diocese:

- Average gross incomes for taxpayers
- The proportion of those aged 16 or over who were taxpayers
- The estimated gross income per capita

This data has been used in the diocesan apportionment calculation. But as in recent years the percentage change in apportionment has been the same for all dioceses, staff time has not been allocated to update the data.

**Dr Simon Eyre (Chichester) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:**

**Q4** In view of the financial pressures facing many Dioceses, has there been a recent review of the cost-effective use of vicarages during interregnums?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich to reply on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:*

**A** This not been the subject of a national review. Diocesan teams are responsible for working with parishes on letting arrangements in vacancy, and many dioceses have enhanced the efficiency of their letting practice in recent years.

It is common practice for the vicarages to be let during an interregnum and for any necessary building works to be completed during that period. Letting is a popular practice because it is better for the property to have tenants, for security for example, and because the rental income can be used to fund building works and for other purposes.

The review of the Mission and Pastoral Measure, being led by the Church Commissioners, has been exploring the abolition of sequestration, which would make it easier to let vicarages during vacancies.

**The Ven Mark Ireland (Blackburn) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:**

**Q5** When 'From Anecdote to Evidence' was published, emphasis was given to the need for spending decisions on church growth initiatives to be based on solid evidence. Given the considerable investment by the Church Commissioners over recent years in establishing resource churches, what robust research has been commissioned, or studied, on the effectiveness of these new resource churches in making new disciples?

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

**A** All significant investment by the Archbishops' Council comes with a robust evaluation framework. Some of the resource churches have received funding from Strategic Development Funding, and these projects have a clear measurement framework, with agreed outcomes, an ongoing monitoring and evaluation process, and an independent final evaluation. This work is overseen by the Council's Strategic Investment Board. Whilst the Strategic Investment Board is a sub-committee of the Council, its membership includes both Church Commissioners and independent members to ensure total objectivity.

Resource churches are relatively new in the Church of England and so there isn't yet a large sample which have reached maturity to be evaluated as a cohort. Early findings from these evaluations show that resource churches are effective in making new disciples, including reaching de- and un- churching people, younger generations, promoting spiritual growth, volunteering in social action, developing vocations, and starting new congregations.

**Mr Sam Margrave (Coventry) to ask the Archbishops' Council:**

**Q6** Scripture charges us to remember and calls us to action for the bereaved "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted" (Matthew 5.4).

As we emerge from a pandemic into a cost of living crisis, now more than ever funeral poverty and the cruelty of existing arrangements for paupers' funerals are prescient.

Since my PMM on paupers' funerals was passed by General Synod when we last met in person in February 2020 (appreciating we have had a global pandemic), what work has been achieved or is planned to tackle and help the poor with funeral costs, in particular raising the issue with Her Majesty's Government?

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

**A** As the question hints, the circumstances of the pandemic, including the redeployment of NCI staff to deal with the implications of that crisis, have made it difficult to follow up on this motion and, indeed, to raise it as an issue with Government as their attention has also been on the pandemic. Recognising that the pandemic is likely to exacerbate the problem, and wanting to see real change and not just to make a gesture, we will be following up this issue as part of our wider engagement with the Government, at many levels, on their "Levelling Up" agenda. Two significant problems we face are that (a) the motion called for financial assistance, the source of which is not readily apparent, and (b) national coordination of matters devolved to Local Authorities is notoriously tricky.

**The Revd Canon Dr Tim Bull (St Albans) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:**

**Q7** How much funding has the National Safeguarding Team received in the years 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020 respectively?

**The Revd Canon Dr Tim Bull (St Albans) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:**

**Q8** How many people were employed as part of the National Safeguarding Team in the years 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020 respectively?

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

**A** The table below shows the expansion of the National Safeguarding Team across 2016-2020.

This rapid expansion has been driven by the need to respond urgently to various developments and very regrettable disclosures. It is recognised that there will be a need to review both resource and structures as the situation stabilises.

<b>Safeguarding activity</b>	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>2016-2020</b>	actual	actual	actual	actual	actual
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
Gross Expenditure	1,086	1,413	1,583	2,198	2,354
Staff Employed <i>December each year</i>	7 (6.2 FTE)	9 (8.4 FTE)	11 (8.9 FTE)	15 (12.1 FTE)	20 (17.2 FTE)

Clearly the cost of this expansion has been met by the Church of England and the Council is grateful to the Corporation of the Church House and the Church Commissioners for all their support in this. The Council has also used some of its own reserves to help fund these costs, which has resulted in only 8% of the cost of safeguarding at national level in 2016-2020 being funded from the diocesan apportionment.

**Mrs Jane Rosam (Rochester) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:**

**Q9** What are the terms of reference of (i) the Interim Redress Scheme (including the eligibility criteria for receiving payments) and (ii) the Redress Scheme Project Board?

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

**A** The Terms of Reference (ToR) of (i) the Interim Support Scheme (ie. not the "Interim Redress Scheme") demonstrate that the Scheme is intended to give immediate help and support to survivors of Church-related abuse and the Church's response to it, whose life circumstances have been significantly affected by the abuse suffered. The Scheme is designed to address immediate and urgent needs to help in the short-term to put the survivor's life back on track. It is not intended to provide compensation or restitution, nor is it a redress scheme. These ToR, which include eligibility criteria, are published on the Church of England website. The ToR of (ii) the Redress Scheme Project Board have been drafted and are currently being agreed by members of the Board. They are expected to be signed off at the next meeting of the Project Board.

**Mr Gavin Drake (Southwell & Nottingham) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:**

**Q10** As the employing, contracting, and/or funding body, will the Archbishop's Council publish the full terms of reference and responsibilities of the Lead and Assistant Lead Bishops for Safeguarding, the national Director of Safeguarding, the National Safeguarding Team, the National Safeguarding Steering Group, the National Safeguarding Panel and the Independent Safeguarding Board; and will the Archbishops' Council indicate which of these bodies has the authority to intervene in cases where a diocese is not managing safeguarding cases appropriately, effectively, safely and in line with the House of Bishops' practice guidance.?

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

**A** The terms of reference for the National Safeguarding Panel and National Safeguarding Steering Group are published on the Church of England's website [Governance | The Church of England](#) The Independent Safeguarding Board is currently finalising its terms of reference and these will be published in due course. The Key Roles and Responsibilities practice guidance outlines the role of the Lead Safeguarding Bishop and the National Safeguarding Team <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/roles-and-responsibilities-practice-guidance.pdf> . It is not NCI practice to publish the role descriptions of individual staff. Diocesan Bishops, the Lead Safeguarding Bishop, the National Safeguarding Team and diocesan safeguarding advisory panels all play important roles to ensure that there are effective safeguarding arrangements in each diocese and that the House of Bishops' guidance is followed.

**The Revd Dr Patrick Richmond (Norwich) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:**

**Q11** The *Church Times* <https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2021/9-july/news/uk/interim-support-scheme-has-caused-more-anxiety-abuse-survivors-report> reported that, in response to complaints by survivors about the Interim Support Scheme for victims of abuse, the Secretary General of the Archbishops' Council admitted In April 2021 that "the lack of published criteria makes applications difficult". What has been done to make the criteria for interim support more public and transparent?

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

**A** The Interim Support scheme was set up a year ago in response to a very concerning urgent need of a survivor and continues to support survivors in need. The terms of reference have been developed over the last year with the latest version being agreed on the 28th September by the Archbishops' Council. The ToR and guidance notes are currently being made available to new applicants to the scheme and are now published on the Church of England website which will provide clarity on the parameters of the Scheme for all parties concerned. As with all processes the operation of the scheme will be kept under continual review.

**Miss Venessa Pinto (Leicester) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:**

**Q12** The UK Minority Ethnic mental health toolkit that was prepared for the Mission and Public Affairs (MPA) Council of the Archbishops' Council by MPA staff (with the purpose of raising awareness and to provide information for Church leaders, Church workers and Chaplains to assist them in gaining a better understanding of issues relevant to UK Minority Ethnic mental health) highlights a key recommendation stating the following: *"a coherent strategy for developing UKME mental health services is needed, not simply more detailed planning of services. The Church of England should champion this initiative"*, could you please update Synod if this is currently being championed in the CofE and what the progress is?

*The Archbishop of York to reply as President of the Archbishops' Council:*

**A** Through MPA and the Bishop of Carlisle (the lead bishop for health and social care in the House of Lords), the Church of England has championed the need for the Government to develop a coherent national strategy for developing UKME mental health services. In particular, we have highlighted this in discussions on the NHS Long Term Plan and NHS Mandate and have held meetings with government ministers as well as the former Chief Executive of NHS England. A meeting is planned to discuss this and other issues with the current NHS England Chief Executive.

**Professor Roy Faulkner (Leicester) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:**

**Q13** What are the numbers respectively of usual Sunday attendance, parochial clergy, diocesan posts, archdeacons, and suffragan and diocesan bishops over the last 100 years, say in 1920, 1950, 1980, 2010, and today?

*The Archbishop of York to reply as President of the Archbishops' Council:*

**A** The requested information, where available, can be found in the spreadsheet posted on the notice board. All figures are taken from publications available on the Church of England web page:  
<https://www.churchofengland.org/about/research-and-statistics>.

These publications also contain methodological information and further detail. For most of the information requested, figures have not been collected consistently, if collected at all, over the last 100 years; as much information as possible has been provided. No information is held centrally about the number of staff employed by each diocese, so in this case the requested information is not readily available and could not be obtained without disproportionate cost – if indeed it were even possible to obtain this information.

**Mr Clive Scowen (London) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:**

**Q14** Over 75 years after the publication of “Towards the Conversion of England”, will the Archbishops' Council now treat the re-evangelisation of England as the overriding priority in the formation of its agendas and the allocation of its financial and human resources?

*The Archbishop of York to reply as President of the Archbishops' Council:*

**A** The conversion of England remains our priority and is expressed through our Vision and Strategy flowing from our life in Christ. There is much effort presently ensuring our financial and human resources are aligned to this. The original 1945 report highlighted three key things which are central to our present work. Firstly that evangelism is the work of the whole church, not just a few. Hence our call to be a Church of missionary disciples. Secondly, ‘the need for finding new means whereby a hearing may be gained for the Gospel message.’ We need to find new ways of living and sharing the gospel in a younger and more diverse church. Moreover, the final words of the report bring us back to the Vision of a Christ centred church, ‘The only spiritual dynamic is the Living Spirit of the Crucified and Risen Christ himself..... the dynamic for such a compelling witness is, in the good purpose of God, always available.’

**The Revd Barney de Berry (Canterbury) to ask the Archbishops' Council:**

**Q15** In Feb 2020 we were presented by the Evangelism and Discipleship team in GS2161, the stark reality of the decline in numbers of young people attending our churches. Is it possible at this stage to know how the pandemic and the effects of lockdown has further affected those numbers? And what does this mean now for the urgency that the report demanded of us then in our evangelism to children and young people?

*The Bishop of Durham to reply on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:*

**A** GS2161 was a data analysis of the Statistics for Mission figures from 2014-2018. Since then, while we have the 2019 data, this obviously doesn't show the impact of the pandemic. With the October count having just taken place, hopefully the 2021 data will help us to see where we now stand as a Church, but this data will not be available until summer 2022.

There has been very limited research on the impact of the pandemic on Youth and Children's ministry. The available research looks at specific snapshots within the pandemic and multiple lockdowns. Early estimates suggest that the pandemic has seen a reduction in young people's in-person attendance to 20-30% of pre-pandemic levels. However, this is an estimate and the 2021 SfM figures will offer more concrete data.

Additionally, we have just commissioned a piece of research into churches that have statistically grown in their attendance of under-16's, looking for factors common to growth. Inevitably some of this research will reflect some of the impact of the pandemic of children's and youth ministry.

**Mr Carl Hughes (Southwark) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:**

**Q16** With reference to the response, on behalf of the Presidents, by the Bishop of Durham at the July 2021 Group of Sessions to Question 22 raised by Dr Paul Buckingham concerning guidance in relation to the constitutional options for Diocesan Boards of Education under the DBE Measure 2021, particularly with respect to DBE's being unincorporated associations, whilst the amendment supported by the then Dean of the Arches and myself to the Measure during its passage through Synod failed due to lack of members attending the relevant debate, very clear statements were made that it was expected that those DBE's that remain unincorporated associations are moving away from this inappropriate constitutional form for large charities, and that it was expected that no such structures would remain across the dioceses with 'a few years'. The response from the Bishop of Durham in July states: "General guidance highlighting the benefits and risks of incorporated and unincorporated DBEs has been provided, with clear guidance being given that if the unincorporated structure is selected legal advice must be taken to mitigate the inherent risks. However, it is not considered that s.18 Guidance is appropriate here as, if it was to provide that one structure was the most appropriate, or was not generally considered appropriate, a diocese would need to have cogent reasons not to select or to select

structure for its DBE. This could be seen as undermining the choices available in law given to dioceses by the 2021 Measure.” Could the Presidents advise how many DBE’s remain constituted as unincorporated associations and confirm whether the statements made during the passage of the Measure that unincorporated associations are not a best-practice constitutional form for DBE’s in terms of contemporary charitable governance remains the Church’s view, and, if so, whether it is intended that the strongest encouragement and guidance will be provided to dioceses to ensure that any DBEs which remain unincorporated associations should have a clear plan to moving to a more acceptable form of constitutional governance within the next three years?

*The Bishop of Durham to reply on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops’ Council:*

**A** The Education Office (CEEEO) is aware that 18 dioceses expect to have brought a scheme to their diocesan synod for approval before the end of December to implement the Diocesan Boards of Education Measure 2021. Of these 18 dioceses, nine currently have incorporated DBEs and will continue to have incorporated DBEs and nine currently have unincorporated DBEs and have selected the Statutory Committee of the DBF option – none have chosen to remain unincorporated. A further six dioceses with unincorporated DBEs have indicated to the CEEEO that they intend to select the Statutory Committee of the DBF option. The remaining unincorporated dioceses have not yet indicated to the CEEEO which option they will select. However, as no diocese with an unincorporated DBE has yet chosen to remain unincorporated, it appears the CEEEO’s guidance is sufficiently clear and is alerting the dioceses to the significant risks of continuing with an unincorporated structure.

**Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops’ Council:**

**Q17** What cost-benefit analysis has been or is being carried out to underpin the development of the Church of England’s strategy, and will quantified estimates of the effects of proposals (including an enumeration of the factors taken into account at arriving at these figures) be made available?

*Mrs Maureen Cole to reply on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:*

**A** The development of the Vision and Strategy has used a wide range of skillsets, utilising expertise in theology, missiology, strategy, data analysis, finances, and leadership development, among other skillsets. This has helped develop the Vision and Strategy's three strategic priorities and six bold outcomes.

Cost benefit analysis is one tool which can help with this, but there are no simple ways to value either the costs of change, or the benefits of having a simpler, humbler and bolder Church. There are no simple equations for inputs guaranteeing outputs in developing missionary discipleship.

As the delivery of the Vision and Strategy rests with dioceses and churches, the evaluation of costs and benefits of making any changes aligned to the Vision and Strategy also needs to be locally led. The work and insight from this in local contexts will help build up national learning over time.

**The Revd Sam Maginnis (Chelmsford) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:**

**Q18** The Council states at para. 13 of its 2022 Financial Update (GS 2235) that it is "encouraged" by the younger age profile of those attending BAPs compared to the previous year. In line with the Church of England's vision for a younger and more diverse church, how is the Council working to ensure that sufficient full-time stipendiary posts will be available for younger ordinands - including many from low-income backgrounds - who are offering their whole working lives to ministry in the church?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich to answer on behalf on the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:*

**A** We continue to be thankful for the growth in the number and diversity of ordinands and sustaining that growth must be a priority for the Church in order to realise our Vision and Strategy. The Strategic Ministry Board since 2020 has been providing funding to ensure those completing initial formation can have a title post, and at its October meeting the Board approved funding to support a further 20 additional stipendiary curacies (on top of the 90 already agreed) for the cohort to be ordained in 2022. This gives us confidence that there will be sufficient title posts to allow all eligible finishing curates to serve their curacy in a stipendiary post.

**Mr John Brydon (Norwich) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:**

**Q19** With the reduction in stipendiary front line clergy now a reality and with more proposed, has or will consideration be given to a pro rata reduction in senior appointments across the Church of England, along with an embargo on all appointments to new clerical or administrative positions (i.e. where the appointment is not to fill an existing vacancy), pending a complete review of financing the church's activities?

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

**A** 2020 was the first year in over 20 years where the number of stipendiary clergy grew slightly rather than remaining stable or declining. All dioceses are clearly facing financial uncertainties, exacerbated by the pandemic. Some have shared their current expectations of a need to reduce the number of stipendiary clergy posts. But we have to ensure that short term changes do not undermine our long term aims. Crucially, we need to continue to prepare, deploy and support clergy in stipendiary roles to contribute to the Church's Vision and Strategy. The Strategic Ministry Fund was established in 2020 to support this intention. We are also seeing some dioceses reduce diocesan posts in order to support stipendiary clergy posts, the Simpler NCI's process will reduce central costs and there is a review underway into the future pattern of episcopal ministry.

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

**Q20** To what extent has the pandemic and, more recently, the rise in energy prices, affected the Parish Buying Energy Basket Scheme from the viewpoint of (a) the scheme's operation and (b) parishes using the scheme?

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

**A** The Parish Buying Energy Basket has continued to operate normally throughout the pandemic, but with staff working from home rather than in a central office.

The extraordinary rises in prices has provoked the closure of 20 energy companies and the sad loss of jobs for many people. Energy that is used in the Energy Basket in 2021/22 was bought before the current turmoil in the energy market. We estimate this forward purchasing strategy has reduced the cost of energy to parishes for the year ahead by at least £2 million, and potentially as much as £5

million, compared to the prices currently being charged by other suppliers.

Due to the current difficulties in the energy market, churches and cathedrals may currently only enter the energy basket on 1<sup>st</sup> October each year, but they are being offered fixed-term contracts for energy through Parish Buying until then.

**Mr Luke Appleton (Exeter) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:**

**Q21** In light of the governance review and the increasing financial and demographic pressure on our Parish Churches what steps are being taken to ensure the rights of PCCs and the local church are strengthened and not undermined?

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

**A** One of the bold outcomes of the Vision and Strategy work is 'a parish system revitalised for mission so churches can reach and serve everyone in their community.' The Governance Review Group Report's recommendations are intended to make the governance of the National Church Institutions simpler and clearer, and more accountable to dioceses and parishes. These proposals will in due course be brought to General Synod for debate. The intention in all of this is better to support the local church to fulfil the mission to which they are called.

**Mr Clive Billenness (Europe) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:**

**Q22** Since the Archbishop of Canterbury in April 2021 expressed his complete opposition to the use of Non-Disclosure Agreements or Confidentiality Clauses where payments are made to individuals by Church of England bodies in the resolution of litigation, and then jointly with the Archbishop of York issued guidance to this effect to Bishops, can this Synod now be assured that such restrictions are no longer being imposed in any financial settlements within the Church of England?

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

**A** The National Church acknowledges and understands the genuine concerns in this area and has liaised with external professional bodies such as ACAS on the use of settlement agreements. The NCIs are reviewing their policy in this area to ensure that in the limited and appropriate circumstances where agreements might be used to resolve disputes any use of confidentiality provisions are subject to

careful analysis of the merits in each individual case and take into account the potential impact on the individual concerned, including the provision of legal and pastoral support. Any ensuing guidance will be shared more widely in order to encourage a consistent approach. Dioceses and other church bodies are independent legal entities and the national church does not control the use of such agreements by those bodies.

**Mr Andrew Orange (Winchester) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:**

**Q23** Can the Council consider whether there might be a new, national programme led by our archbishops, designed to offer focused monthly core thoughts, and supported by both publicity and optional material for use in parishes – with the aim of communicating, promoting and underscoring essential Christian values (or the meaning of festivals at times when they occur) and thereby to make a monthly occasion when in-church worship could be made more relevant and attractive to those who do not attend regularly at the moment?

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

**A** Thank you for this suggestion of how we can encourage parishes to communicate the Christian message with their local communities. In fact, much of this is already being done through the Digital Team's work for various festivals, especially Christmas and Lent and the monthly online services. Plus there are many special Sunday services ideas, resources and publicity that are regularly produced by local churches, networks, charities and the National Church, and some bishops are using online opportunities to share and teach the Christian faith. Both Archbishops are regularly involved in many of these resources. It is really important that parishes consider how they could use these resources to enhance worship and teaching for those who do not attend regularly.

## **HOUSE OF BISHOPS**

**The Revd Dr Sean Doherty (Universities & TEs) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q24** In the light of the Archbishop of Canterbury's recent statement on the 'draft anti-LGBTQ+ Bill to be debated by the Ghanaian parliament,' with its welcome restatement of the opposition of the Primates of the Anglican Communion to the criminalisation of LGBT people, will the House of Bishops be considering what action they might take in response to the support of the Anglican Church of Ghana for the Bill?

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

**A** In a conversation I had with the Archbishop, bishops and senior clergy of the Anglican Church of Ghana on 3<sup>rd</sup> November, we affirmed that the 1998 Lambeth conference Resolution I.10. represents the last and most widely accepted statement on the question of human sexuality.

We agreed that all human beings are made in God's image and are worthy of love, respect and dignity, and that the Church of Jesus Christ is called to demonstrate the love of God by protecting all vulnerable people and communities.

The Anglican Communion is a global family of churches who are autonomous but interdependent. One of the key conclusions of our meeting was that cultural context, history and human dignity all matter greatly, and must be held together in Christ.

**Mr Philip Baldwin (London) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q25** Please could the House of Bishops update the Synod on what conversations have been had with the Anglican Church in Ghana on the Ghanaian Family Values 2021 Bill?

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

**A** I met online with the Anglican Archbishop and several bishops and senior clergy from Ghana on 3<sup>rd</sup> November. We affirmed that the 1998 Lambeth conference Resolution I.10. represents the last and most widely accepted statement on the question of human sexuality.

We agreed that all human beings are made in God's image and are worthy of love, respect and dignity, and that the Church of Jesus Christ is called to demonstrate the love of God by protecting all vulnerable people and communities.

I encourage good, courteous, clear and robust future conversations with the Anglican Church of Ghana on this matter.

**The Revd Sam Maginnis (Chelmsford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q26** The report of the CCM Implementation Group (GS Misc 1304) fails to mention the Following Motion brought by the Revd Simon Talbott during the July 2021 Synod debate which "identified a number of areas where further work is needed" on clergy discipline reform. That Following Motion, which was carried by a majority of 238-32, expressed Synod's concerns for any complaints process that fails to distinguish between misconduct justifying prohibition from ministry and loss of home and livelihood, and other instances of misconduct.

Can we now be reassured that the Implementation Group will seek to uphold the clear will of Synod expressed in Mr Talbott's Following Motion, specifically with regard to an initial assessment stage which distinguishes between (i) complaints not involving misconduct (ii) misconduct that is less than serious, and (iii) serious misconduct, with only serious misconduct being subject to investigation by a national agency and a formal tribunal process?

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

**A** As GS Misc 1304 sets out, the Implementation Group have identified a number of key areas for discussion including “*The creation of a ‘track’ system that distinguishes between different levels of seriousness, including considering whether there should be a distinction between different types of misconduct*”. The Implementation Group has begun considering this issue and will continue to keep Synod informed as the work progresses.

**Mrs Amanda Robbie (Lichfield) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q27** It would appear that the CDM Code of Practice paragraph 163 is now being used more widely by bishops writing ‘letters of admonition and advice’ which are then placed on a respondent’s blue file. What national guidance has been given to bishops about

- i. when it is appropriate to send such a letter; and
- ii. given that the letter will be attached to the blue file, what due process is there to follow to protect a respondent’s right to a fair process when there has been no fact-finding investigation so as to ensure due process and also to avoid a post code lottery?

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

- A**
- i. The Code of Practice, formulated by the Clergy Discipline Commission and approved by General Synod, is issued to provide uniform guidance on the operation of the CDM. Paragraph 163 of the Code provides that a bishop may advise or warn a respondent where the bishop is satisfied that misconduct has taken place, but has decided to take no further action. No other national guidance has been issued.
  - ii. In following due process, the circumstances where a bishop may take no further action are set out in paragraph 162 of the Code. These include where the misconduct is admitted but is of a technical or minor nature or, having seen the respondent’s answer, the bishop considers there may have been misconduct, but it is only of a technical or minor nature and would not merit any sanction under the Measure being imposed taking into account any mitigating factors.

**Mrs Amanda Robbie (Lichfield) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q28** Given the very few CDM cases that each diocesan registrar deals with and the huge annual cost of these reports how can we be assured that they are both properly trained and sufficiently experienced to advise bishops at the Preliminary Scrutiny Stage so that we get good outcomes for all concerned and value for money?

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

**A** Registrars are bishops' legal advisers and their training is not nationally controlled. Like all qualified lawyers, registrars are required to make sure that their knowledge and skills are up to date and that they are competent to practice. Diocesan registrars are members of the Ecclesiastical Law Association which offers general updates and training. To improve accountability the Fees Advisory Commission requires diocesan bishops to conduct annual reviews of the provision of legal services with their registrar. Moreover, registrars' fees in connection with the provision of preliminary scrutiny reports are subject to clear limits, and invoices in connection with preliminary scrutiny are subject to scrutiny by the Church Commissioners prior to payment to ensure that the costs incurred are reasonable and proportionate.

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

**Q29** During the debate on CDM reform at the July 2021 session of Synod I brought a Following Motion, carried by a majority of 238-32, that expressed Synod's clear desire to avoid any further lengthy delay in developing and implementing proposals for legislative reform. Can the CCM Implementation Group now guarantee that it will honour this desire and bring detailed legislative proposals to Synod for consideration at the July 2022 session as envisaged in GS Misc 1304?

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

**A** As set out in GS Misc 1304, the Implementation Group intends to consult with interested bodies in the early part of 2022 and thereafter to hold a panel discussion event for members of Synod in February 2022. The intention remains to present detailed legislative proposals to Synod in July 2022.

**The Revd Claire Robson (Newcastle) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q30** The CCM Implementation Group states in GS Misc 1304 that it intends to consult with "interested bodies" on its proposals for clergy discipline reform before the February 2022 session of Synod. Will the Implementation Group consult with survivors of abuse and survivors of the CDM as part of this process?

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

**A** The work of the Implementation Group builds upon the detailed work previously undertaken by the Lambeth Working Group on the CDM which through written submissions, meetings, and a public consultation heard from survivors of abuse and complainants and respondents who had been through the disciplinary process. The Implementation Group will certainly continue to consult with the groups identified in the question as its proposals are developed.

**The Revd Canon Lisa Battye (Manchester) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops**

**Q31** To whom are the bishops in the Church of England accountable when payments are made from Diocesan funds to people signing Non-Disclosure Agreements?

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

**A** Where payments are made from diocesan funds arising from settlement agreements the instruction to use to such agreements and any oversight ultimately lies with the relevant trustees who are required to comply with the same regulatory and reporting requirements as other charities. We expect that diocesan officers and trustees will take appropriate advice from their professional advisers

**Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q32** What is the research evidence showing the impact on church growth of grouping parishes into Mission and Ministry Areas or the equivalent, and how many dioceses are currently using or planning to use such schemes?

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

**A** Research has been undertaken for the Archbishops' Council on Team Ministries (which pre-date but share some similarities with Mission and Ministry Areas) in strand 3C of the Church Growth Research Programme, and follow up reports 'Stronger as One?' and 'Growing Deeper'. These are available on the Church of England website.

The conclusion of these reports was that while clergy numbers have a significant effect on the likelihood of attendance growth and decline, there is no statistically significant relationship between the number of churches in a benefice and numerical growth or decline when controlling for clergy numbers and other effects.

We conclude that culture, leadership, collaboration, missionary discipleship, and intentionality are more significant factors on growth than the structure of benefices. "Mission and Ministry Areas or the equivalent" could cover a wide range of both structural and informal arrangements, hence equating this to a specific number of dioceses is not practicable.

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

**Q33** What progress has been made with the implementation of the National Estates Ministry Strategy, which was approved by General Synod in February 2019? And what steps will be taken to ensure that the Strategy is embedded and delivered throughout the term of the new Synod?

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

**A** On a national level, the Estates Evangelism Task Group continues to work towards achieving Synod's goal of a worshipping, loving, serving Christian community on every significant estate in the nation. It is currently reworking its strategy around the goals of the national Vision and Strategy and continues to operate through partnerships, conferences, communications and direct support for some dioceses. However it is the dioceses themselves who carry the key responsibility for implementing Synod's motion and so it is important that every diocese develops a strategy for their urban estates, that LICF grants are directed towards the most deprived communities and that, in those dioceses where re-organisations are planned, the impact on estates and low income communities areas is carefully monitored lest it be disproportionate.

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

**Q34** Now that it has been made clear that the Church of England Chaplain to the Iranian/Persian community in England, Revd Bassi Mirzania, who was appointed to this role by the Archbishops, will not be replaced following her retirement, could you please state (1) who has ministered specifically to this community in the last 2 years and (2) what form this ministry has taken?

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

**A** The generous ministry of the Revd Bassi Mirzania has undoubtedly aided and encouraged the integration of Persian ministry into the parochial life of the C of E. The numbers of baptisms, confirmations, ordinations and the growth in the number of lay vocations are testament to that. I was personally heartened by the honour Bassi received recently in a Lambeth award. There is now discipleship and liturgical material widely available in Persian, including an authorised version of the Common Worship Eucharist. There is also a network of clergy across the country who share resources, experience and expertise with one another.

The Archbishops' Adviser on Minority Ethnic Anglican Concerns has met with various networks of Persian/Iranian heritage clergy and lay leaders in the last 6 months, since her appointment, and is currently exploring ways to develop a coherent strategy within the resources available, strategizing how these ministries could be better supported.

**Mr Geoffrey Tattersall (Manchester) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q35** Recognising that clergy are office-holders and not employees and that the financial situation of many dioceses is likely to lead to a reduction in clergy numbers, what is the estimated number of clergy nationally who are likely to be affected and what principles will be applied by dioceses to ensure that they receive appropriate compensation?

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

**A** This is not a figure that can be easily estimated as diocesan teams do not report numbers to the NCIs. However, clergy office holders may only be removed from office in very limited circumstances, including; resignation, retirement or on reaching the age of 70. Clergy can be dispossessed of their office under the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011, but diocesan teams generally avoid this option unless it is absolutely necessary. Clergy who are dispossessed as a result of pastoral reorganisation are legally entitled to receive compensation in the form of 1 year's stipend, and a lump sum equating to 1 year's pension contributions as well as being entitled to housing for 1 year. New guidance on dispossession under the Measure has been approved and will be issued to dioceses in November.

**The Revd Dr Ian Paul (Southwell & Nottingham) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q36** How many dioceses have announced plans to cut the number of stipendiary posts over the next five years, by how much, and by how many in total?

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

**A** Members of the National Ministry Team have been undertaking the analysis of the future national requirements for clergy, including stipendiary clergy and, so far, this is indicating a range of outcomes. They are in regular contact with dioceses seeking to build a picture of the anticipated need. This process will be on-going, and a more comprehensive communication of our provisional analysis will be completed and made available in a few weeks' time.

Although locally some dioceses have shared their current expectations of a need to reduce the number of stipendiary clergy posts, there remains considerable uncertainty in the overall national picture. Dioceses are still assessing their immediate and longer-term financial circumstances. The scale and pattern of future clergy retirements is very difficult to predict through the unique context of the pandemic and the full implications of the ambitious Vision and Strategy have yet to be fully reflected in the plans of Dioceses.

Meanwhile measures are already being developed and implemented to mitigate the risk of a short term mis-match between the continuing flow of stipendiary ordained vocations and the needs of the church. These include the extension of the already existing Strategic Ministry Fund to create additional curacy places.

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

**Q37** Given that the Report, 'Setting God's People Free' (SGPF), including its call for two important 'cultural shifts' within the Church of England (CoE), was overwhelmingly approved by General Synod in February 2017, given the endorsement by General Synod in July 2019 to 'embed' the culture change and given that culture change is usually said to take 7-10 years to bring about, what steps is the House of Bishops taking to ensure that all the recommendations of SGPF are taken forward into the strategic objectives of 'missionary disciples' and 'mixed ecology', indeed into the lifeblood of the CoE, throughout the life of the new Synod?

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

**A** The Vision and Strategy continues the aspiration laid out in SGPF to be a church where “all God’s people are set free and empowered and enabled to live the Christian life in and for the world” (GS 2223). Attending to necessary shifts in our culture remain vital in the implementation of this priority (see GS Misc 1302). The Bishop of Gloucester will continue to encourage conversation on this in her role as Episcopal Champion for SGPF whenever missionary disciples are spoken about in the House of Bishops.

Bishops have sponsored contextual implementation of the SGPF shifts in 29 dioceses through the Discipleship Learning Communities. This action/learning approach continues through a Disciple Enablers Network – with participants from all dioceses along with resource organisations and mission agencies. Engagement in this network offers both challenge and encouragement to bishops and their senior staff teams in identifying and persevering with this long-term culture change.

**The Revd Christopher Blunt (Chester) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q38** Notwithstanding the answer given to Q55 at the July 2021 Session, could the House of Bishops permit wine at Holy Communion to be consecrated in a common vessel and distributed to communicants (incidentally) via individual vessels?

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

**Q39** Given that the use of individual cups at Holy Communion remains an open question in the Church of England – not previously settled by any canon or legal ruling – can parishes which choose to introduce individual cups as a temporary local provision anticipate the goodwill of the House of Bishops?

**The Revd Jo Stobart (Bath & Wells) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q40** Given the difficulty of amending Canon law and the theological discussion that would rightly be required to do this, what pastoral response – beyond the existing guidelines and recognising the long-term nature of the situation we are in with Covid – would the House of Bishops like to offer to those of my colleagues whose congregations wish to receive in two kinds but are not ready for the common cup and do not want to use simultaneous intinction?

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

**Q41** The amended guidance (not instruction) issued by the House of Bishops on 1 September 2021 states, as regards the administration of Holy Communion, that “*there are three possibilities for administration: 1) under the form of bread alone, mindful that the president must still receive in both kinds; 2) in both kinds in the customary manner with a shared cup or chalice used to administer the consecrated wine; 3) in both kinds by simultaneous administration. (The simultaneous administration of consecrated bread and wine is effected by the president taking a piece of bread carefully from the paten or ciborium with the fingers and touching it briefly but carefully to the surface of the wine, allowing a small amount of the wine to suffuse into the bread.) Intinction should not be practised by individual communicants, and methods of administering the wine other than by means of a shared cup or simultaneous administration should not be employed*”.

In view of previous advice received from the Legal Advisory Commission that possibilities 1) and 3) are illegal and/or contrary to the tradition of the Church of England on the ground that the first makes a difference between priest and other communicants, contrary to the tradition of the Church of England, and the third goes beyond the departure from the general custom of the Church of England said to be justified by the doctrine of necessity (See paragraphs 9(a) and 10-11 of the LAC’s advice dated January 1991, revised in September 2003), will the House of Bishops now take steps to resolve the current impasse by bringing together those with expertise in liturgy, law, doctrine, viral transmission, ecumenical relations and the laity in whom so much is vested for the future running of our churches and long for the spirit of ‘simpler, humbler, bolder’ to include distribution of the wine in smaller vessels, even if only ‘pro tem’, and view the ongoing high risk of Covid transmission from a single cup as unacceptably high (see current exclusion – possibility 2)?

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

**A** With permission, I will answer questions 38, 39, 40, and 41 together.

The House recognises that different ministers and churches have in good conscience adopted a variety of forms of administration of Holy Communion while Covid-19 continues to circulate in the general population. Whatever approach is taken, ministers and churches should be guided by the symbolism and ideal of ‘one bread and one cup’.

With respect to individual cups, neither the House of Bishops nor any individual bishop may formally authorize a practice if it is not lawful, whether temporarily or permanently. At its October meeting the House agreed that it did not wish to propose the necessary legislative business to the General Synod which would make the use of individual cups indisputably lawful.

We do recognise that many churches have been discovering fresh insights into the meaning of Holy Communion, and we believe that there is much that we can and should learn from one another.

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

**Q42** Given that there are contrasting legal opinions on individual cups at Holy Communion, by respectable groups of Church of England barristers, will the House of Bishops facilitate conversations between them to seek consensus?

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

**A** As I reported in February, the Legal Advisory Commission has already considered the legal opinion solicited by Mrs Durlacher. The Commission exists to advise the General Synod and its Houses as well as senior officers of the Church of England; the House of Bishops will neither instruct nor forbid the Commission to engage in dialogue beyond that stated remit.

**Miss Jane Patterson (Sheffield) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q43** At a recent ordination service, the service sheet stated that “During coronavirus we follow the pre-Reformation practice ... The President of the Eucharist alone receives from the cup, as a representative of all the faithful, everyone is welcome to receive the consecrated bread.” In its Advice dated January 1991, revised September 2003, the LAC stated that a practice whereby a difference is made between priest and other communicants (such as was used at the ordination service) would be contrary to the tradition of the Church of England. Can the House of Bishops please confirm that it “cannot authorise or encourage [this] practice” on the ground that it would be contrary to the tradition of the Church of England?

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

**A** There is long precedent, from the time of the Book of Common Prayer onwards, for communicants receiving Holy Communion in one kind by reason of medical necessity; this might include the president if they were (for instance) immunocompromised.

No theology of the consecration of the elements or their reception accepts that the benefits conveyed by the sacrament (spiritual or otherwise) are impeded by reception in one kind. There is, therefore, no 'inequality' of benefit from communion between president and communicants, though there may in some circumstances be a difference in their experience of participating in the action of eating and drinking.

The consecration of wine is an essential part of the service of Holy Communion. Where it is judged inadvisable for health reasons for communicants to receive from a common cup, and because any remainder not required for purposes of Communion must be consumed, the Eucharistic president does so alone.

**Dr Simon Eyre (Chichester) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q44** With the continuing antagonistic stance of some Christian groups to the Vaccination programme against Covid 19, has the House of Bishops discussed this issue and formulated a response?

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

**A** While respecting that a decision to be vaccinated is one for individuals to make, the Church of England has been strongly supportive of the UK COVID-19 vaccination programme as well as equitable global distribution of vaccines through its participation in the vaccinaid.org campaign with UNICEF. Over the past year, statements encouraging vaccination have been made by members of the House of Bishops. Similar guidance has also been posted on the Church of England's website, most recently on 3<sup>rd</sup> November, where uptake of the booster vaccination programme is highlighted as an important part of countering an upsurge in hospitalisations and deaths from COVID-19 over the winter months.

**Mr Jonathan Baird (Salisbury) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q45** When will a public inquiry be held into the decision to close churches at the beginning of lockdown?

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

**A** The Prime Minister has announced that he intends to launch an inquiry into the pandemic in the first half of 2022. We don't know yet if the Government's decision to close places of worship for public worship and individual prayer at the beginning of the lockdown will be a subject of the enquiry.

**Mr Luke Appleton (Exeter) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q46** Including staff time, the cost of materials and promotional expenses how much has the LLF process cost to date?

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

**A** The table below shows the cost of the Living in Love and Faith Project from its commencement in January 2018 up to the end of September 2021.

The cost of producing the LLF resources is being met from a grant provided from the Archbishop of Canterbury's Charitable Fund. To date, around 19% of the cost of Living in Love and Faith has been funded from the diocesan apportionment.

Cost:

Salaries of staff	341,000
Other project expenses	150,000 (meetings and events)
LLF Resources	190,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>681,000</b>

These have been funded by:

Archbishop's Charitable Fund	190,000
Church Commissioners	109,000
Archbishops' Council Reserves	255,000
Archbishops' Council (Vote 2)	127,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>681,000</b>

**Canon Shayne Ardron (Leicester) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q47** According to the document GS Misc 1306 on Living in Love and Faith, in Spring 2022 there will be an opportunity for diocesan synods to 'reflect on engagement in dioceses so far and the role of Diocesan Synods in shaping the Church's discernment process. Resources and a process will be offered.'

When will these resources and details of the process become available?

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

**A** Thank you for this opportunity to expand on this element of the work of the Next Steps Group. The opportunity for Diocesan Synods to engage with LLF in the spring of 2022 is very much an invitation rather than a requirement – especially given the different pressures and priorities on Dioceses at this time. Resources will be available at the beginning of December 2021. Their focus will be to encourage Diocesan Synods to reflect together in the spirit of the LLF journey of learning, listening, discerning – about what it means to be human – and to consider the role of Diocesan Synods in shaping the kind of church we want to be.

**The Revd Neil Patterson (Hereford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q48** Noting that the Next Steps Group has met 14 times since July 2020 (GS Misc 1306), how many times has the Next Steps Reference Group been convened or otherwise been enabled to ‘act as a sounding board for the group’s work in enabling church communities to participate in LLF in appropriately sensitive ways’ (Question 67, November 2020)?

**Professor Helen King (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q49** How many times has the “diverse Reference Group” now met and how is it intended that it will be used by the Next Steps Group of Living in Love and Faith?

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

**A** With permission Chair, I will answer Mr Patterson and Professor King together.

Thank you for this question which appropriately calls the work of the Next Steps Group to account. The timetable for engagement with LLF was extended to 30 April 2022. This has shifted some of the tasks for which the members of the Reference Group will be used as a sounding board (it was not formed to meet, although if appropriate it can and will).

Also, many dioceses have put ‘reference groups’ in place locally to ensure engagement with LLF is appropriate for diverse people and contexts. This is monitored through meetings of LLF Advocates. The Next Steps Group is now drawing on the Reference Group to help with the questions that will be used for the Focus Group element of ‘Listening to the whole church’. They will also be called upon when the feedback is gathered and shaped into the ‘findings’ that will be made available in September 2022.

**The Revd Robert Thompson (London) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q50** At the 1998 Lambeth Conference, the full report (<https://www.anglicancommunion.org/resources/document-library/lambeth-conference/1998/section-i-called-to-full-humanity/section-i10-human-sexuality>) which led to Resolution 1.10 included these words:

"We call upon the Church and all its members to work to end any discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, and to oppose homophobia."

What progress has the Church of England made since 1998 towards ending discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation?

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

**A** Thank you for reminding the Church of this important task. It seems to me that there has been considerable growth since 1998 in understanding what constitutes discrimination in relation to sexual orientation.

A vital part of the work of Living in Love and Faith is to shine a light on areas where discrimination still exists and to talk more honestly, openly and graciously about these matters. The Pastoral Principles play an important role in continuing to challenge the Church to be shaped by them as the Church seeks to clarify the legitimate boundaries of disagreement about sexuality within the Living in Love and Faith process. These are some of the questions that LLF raises and about which there will be a discernment process following the phase of learning and listening together.

**The Revd Robert Thompson (London) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q51** The Governance Review Group (paragraph 83) refers to the "withdrawal" of the House of Bishops' 2020 Pastoral Statement. Like the 2005 Pastoral Statement, this affirmed that clergy "should not provide services of blessing for those who register a civil partnership" but also asked clergy approached for prayer by those entering such a partnership to "respond pastorally and sensitively in the light of the circumstances of each case".

If the 2020 statement was indeed withdrawn, does this mean that clergy are now permitted to bless opposite-sex civil partnership?

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

**A** The Governance Review Group report stated incorrectly that the House of Bishops 2020 Pastoral Statement had been withdrawn. In fact, the Statement was not withdrawn.

**Dr Nick Land (York) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q52** Those in favour of liberalising the Church of England's teaching on sexuality have suggested that this is an essential missional step to achieving church growth; whilst those who oppose change say it will cause schism and decline. Research on what has actually happened in terms of Church growth, attendance and finances in other Anglican provinces and UK denominations would give us more objective information as to the likely outcomes of different proposals.

Therefore, before we consider specific proposals flowing from the LLF process will consideration be given to commissioning a survey to look at the outcome of similar processes within other Anglican provinces and UK denominations?

Given that that the Next Steps Group may have limited capacity to do the careful scoping and commissioning required - what additional resource would you require for such a study to be undertaken?

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

**A** Thank you for sharing your desire for the Church to learn from the experiences of churches across the Anglican Communion and in other UK denominations.

The proposal you describe is an ambitious one as it would require an exploration of growth using a variety of metrics and then determining whether a causal relation with a church's decision-making regarding sexuality could be shown. A scoping exercise would therefore be needed to answer your question about what resources would be required to undertake such work. I will invite the Next Steps Group to consider this at their next meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

More significantly, your question also presumes that LLF is a 'single issue' exercise, whereas the LLF resources invite much broader exploration concerning a range of questions of identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage – an exploration which is inherently missional in deepening Christian understanding about being human.

**The Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q53** Given the importance in the life of this Synod attached to engagement with Living in Love & Faith, will the Clerk to the Synod conduct a simple survey of members of Synod to determine the level of engagement with the LLF material, to establish and publish by February 2022:

1. The number who have engaged through reading alone;
2. The number who have engaged through group work in their local church;

3. The number who have engaged through group work with wider groups beyond the local church; and
4. The number who have not yet engaged with any material published by the LLF Group?

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

**A** Thank you very much for highlighting the weight of responsibility that this Synod bears in relation to the Living in Love and Faith journey of learning, listening, discerning and deciding. Clearly, this responsibility presumes that all members of General Synod will have taken up the opportunity to engage with Living in Love and Faith together with others in line with the Bishops' invitation and appeal in the LLF Book and Course.

How members of General Synod exercise this responsibility will have a bearing not only on the decisions it may be called to make but on what kind of church the Synod wishes to portray in the manner in which it carries out its particular role through this process.

I will invite the Next Steps Group to consider your proposal at its next meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> November.

**Mr Philip Baldwin (London) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q54** Please can you outline what measures are in place to safeguard LGBTQ+ people engaged with the Living in Love and Faith process, including in relation to abuse directed to Synod members?

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

**A** It is unacceptable for people to be abused as a result of engaging with Living in Love and Faith. Measures to safeguard LGBTQIA+ people include:

- The guidance, 'Braver and safer: creating spaces for learning together well', to help recognise, avoid and manage abusive and damaging behaviours;
- Support through 'LLF chaplains' in many dioceses;
- Diocesan LLF Advocate(s), who can be contacted regarding further provision available locally; and
- The LLF Enabling Officer, who can be contacted – especially regarding abuse targeted at Synod members.

Finally, within Synod itself, Synod members are encouraged to avail themselves of these resources. In addition, members will engage with the Pastoral Principles in the July 2022 group of sessions. This will be an opportunity to raise awareness and understanding within Synod about behaviours which are damaging to others in the context of disagreements and diverse lived experiences.

**The Revd Fiona Jack (London) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q55** Prior to women being ordained to the episcopate there were women invited as participant observers to meetings of the House of Bishops, and in the report From Lament to Action the same is envisaged for people of colour. What plans are being formulated to allow openly LGBTQIA+ people similar access and participation given that much of the LLF process is about our status in the Church?

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

**A** There are no plans at present to invite openly LGBTQIA+ people to access and participate in House of Bishops' meetings. I will take your suggestion to the next meeting of the LLF Next Steps Group on 24<sup>th</sup> November.

**Mr Benjamin John (St Albans) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q56** In July 2021 General Synod Questions the Bishop of London stated, quoting from the Memorandum of Understanding on Conversion Therapy (2015) that "The Memorandum of Understanding on Conversion Therapy (2015) states "for people who are unhappy about their sexual orientation [...] there may be grounds for exploring therapeutic options to help them live more comfortably with it, reduce their distress and reach a greater degree of self-acceptance." How is "self-acceptance" defined here and does it preclude therapy affirming the orthodox understanding of marriage?

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

**A** "Self-acceptance" – as understood within the MoU – is about better understanding one's sexual orientation and learning to live more comfortably with it. This does not preclude a client affirming a traditional view of marriage. However, it is clearly inappropriate for therapists or counsellors to impose their own views of marriage upon their clients. A person-centred approach to therapy would properly take into account and work with the client's own understanding of the nature of marriage.

**Dr Julie Maxwell (Winchester) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q57** Will the recommended resources and bibliography in 'The Gift of the Church' relating to gender identity and transition include perspectives and resources that explore the different perspectives around the concept of gender identity and/or support adults and especially children experiencing gender dysphoria to live in accordance with their biological sex?

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

**A** Just to clarify, 'The Gift of the Church' and the proposal for a bibliography of resources about gender identity and transition are two completely separate initiatives, and your question is, I believe, about the latter.

The aims of this resource are to help the Church to be better informed about the questions relating to gender identity, fluidity and transition that are being so hotly debated in society; and to better understand the deeply damaging impact of these debates on trans and gender fluid people and others affected by them. The resource is not intended to make recommendations or support particular perspectives.

**The Revd Mae Christie (Southwark) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q58** In 2017, General Synod backed a motion calling for a ban on Conversion Therapy and, more recently, numerous bishops have publicly called upon Her Majesty's Government to formally ban this destructive practice. At the same time, this House specifically recommends conversion therapy in "Issues in Human Sexuality" (5.8). How can the House account for this contradiction?

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

**A** One of the reasons that the Church has embarked on the Living in Love and Faith project is because it recognised the failure of previous attempts, such as *Issues in Human Sexuality*, to enable the Church to find a way forward together. We are therefore currently in an uncomfortable period of transition within which such perceived contradictions occur.

For the record, paragraph 5.8 in *Issues of Human Sexuality* does not refer explicitly to conversion therapy nor does it use the language of 'recommendation'. It states: 'In the situation of the bisexual it can also be that counselling will help the person concerned to discover the truth of their personality and to achieve a degree of inner healing.'

**Mrs Jane Rosam (Rochester) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q59** Further to the answer given by the Bishop of Huddersfield, Dr Jonathan Gibbs, to a question during the Safeguarding item at General Synod in July 2021 and the statement in paragraph 3.1 of GS 2215 that "The members will not be employees of the Archbishops' Council, so it has been important to frame the relationship

appropriately”, what steps have been taken to ensure the independence, including financial independence, of the Independent Safeguarding Board?

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

**A** The Independent Safeguarding Board (“ISB”) is appointed by a panel, including survivor representatives, independent of the church’s leadership. ISB members are not employees, but independent contractors in order to ensure that they are not subject to a relationship of control or subordination. The ISB Chair has drafted Terms of Reference for the Board which underline its independence from the church structure, and the independence of its work plan and its recommendations, is written into members’ contracts.

**Mr Gavin Drake (Southwell & Nottingham) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q60** In order to reassure Synod members and the wider Church of England and public that existing checks and balances are effective, and in the interests of openness and transparency, will the Archbishops’ Council undertake to publish anonymised statistical analysis at the conclusion of the PCR2 project showing, for each diocese, the number of cases referred by the independent reviewers as showing cause for concern, and whether or not - prior to the PCR2 referral - those cases had been considered by the diocese following a complaint, by an Archbishop in response to a CDM complaint about the bishop’s handling of the case, and/or by an NST Core Group; and specify the outcome of those considerations?

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

**A** The final PCR2 report will include thematic recommendations, the total number of files reviewed and the overall number of new cases or cause for concerns that independent reviewers have identified within the PCR2 process. As is normal practice all data within the final report will be anonymised and it is not proposed to include specific information surrounding any particular case.

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

**Q61** The Metropolitan Police report dated 4/10/19 of retired judge Sir Richard Henriques into false allegations by a complainant “Nick” against numerous public figures in the course of “Operation Midland “ made a number of recommendations to prevent future injustice, and of the skewing of investigations by bad practice.

Recommendation 2 at page 384 identified a source of such bad practice, and made clear that "The instruction to believe a victim's account" should cease, it should be the duty of an officer interviewing a complainant to investigate the facts objectively and impartially and with an open mind from the outset of the investigation”.

What steps have been taken to ensure that this recommendation informs all CofE core groups and investigations commissioned by them, and to ensure redress is available to any respondent who finds that such a false presumption is being applied in their case?

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

**A** The House of Bishops 2017 Practice Guidance: Responding, assessing and managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against church officers 3.3 is very clear that the aim of an internal church investigation is to establish whether or not there are ongoing safeguarding concerns; the aim is not to establish the guilt of the respondent. 4.2 of the guidance sets out clear guidance when an investigation finds the concern or allegation is unsubstantiated and there are no ongoing safeguarding risks. Caseworkers both nationally and in dioceses utilise all their skills to conduct an unbiased/ open minded investigation. Conclusions & recommendations to the core group, are to address risk and based on unbiased review of the available evidence. Where there is evidence that the person raising the concern has done so maliciously, the core group will consider the advice to link the respondent to statutory agencies where this may be addressed.

**The Ven Ian Bishop (Chester) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops’ Council:**

**Q62** In the light of the pressure being experienced by many Diocesan Safeguarding Advisors, could the National Safeguarding Team share the results of any evidence being collected concerning their wellbeing?

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

**A** The NST does not collect this information systematically. However, some diocesan safeguarding advisers have reported that they are working under significant pressure. As the employer, the diocese has a duty of care to its Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers under the DSA Regulations 2016, bishops have a legal responsibility to ensure they have access to professional supervision and time to undertake continuing professional development on safeguarding matters. The NST urges dioceses to speak with their safeguarding teams to ensure that resources are adequate to ensure their well-being and to deliver a good service.

**The Revd Fiona Jack (London) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q63** Given the recent very public reports on social and in print media of safeguarding concerns around the pastoral ministry received by LGBTQIA+ people in the Church, can the National Safeguarding Team indicate:

- a) how many of these cases have been referred to them; and
- b) what plans there are to outline what is and what is not acceptable prayer ministry with LGBTQIA+ people in transient and specific terms?

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

**A**

- a) As a general rule the NST investigate concerns against Bishops and Deans. As pastoral ministry is mainly delivered by clergy other than Bishops and Deans referrals for this type of concern are unlikely to be addressed by the NST. The NST do not record the numbers, however NST have provided some guidance and advice on a small number of matters that have been referred either via Safeguarding mailbox or through Diocesan safeguarding advisors.
- b) The Government has recently launched its consultation on banning conversion therapy. As part of its response to the consultation, the Church will articulate how to identify prayer that causes harm to LGBTQIA+ people while allowing the prayer life of the church to continue to flourish.

**Professor Helen King (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q64** In July 2021 the National Safeguarding Team confirmed that the Makin review would be published "in 2022" (<https://www.churchofengland.org/media-and-news/press-releases/update-smyth-review>). As 2022 is only a few weeks away, when in 2022 will the review be published?

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

**A** We deeply regret the length of time this review is taking, and we understand the impact that this is having on victims and survivors, however the reviewers are processing an exceptionally large amount of information. A last call for evidence was announced on the 29th July, with a submission date of the 30th September. The reviewers are in the process of following up new information and writing their report. An announcement will be made in due course when we have clearer information on a publication date.

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

**Q65** In the 27th of October edition of Private Eye, the contents of an email secured under a subject access request, was made public following the conclusion of CDM allegations in the respondent's favour : the then Bishop at Lambeth acknowledged to senior NST staff that the trustees of Christ Church Oxford were using the Church of England procedures in a questionable manner against their Dean; the precise terms of the email reference was "I think we are being played but we all know that".

What steps were taken in the light of that suspicion, for the NST to scrutinise further complaints with special care, and to pass on an appropriate warning to the diocese of Oxford that there might be more to any subsequent complaints than met the eye?

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

**A** Allegations and concerns referred to the National Safeguarding Team are reviewed and addressed in accordance with the 2017 practice guidance: Responding to, assessing and managing safeguarding concerns. Each allegation and concern is assessed on its own individual merits according to the guidance.

**Mrs Kat Alldread (Derby) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q66** Can you please advise how many people have been assisted to date, under the Church's Interim Support Scheme?

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

**A** To date, 38 individuals have been assisted by the Interim Support Scheme pilot. Applicants continue to approach the Scheme and are having their needs considered by the panel on a regular basis.

**Mrs Kat Alldread (Derby) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q67** During the IICSA Inquiry there was some uncertainty as to whether a formal apology to the victim Fr Matt Ineson had been sent and received. Can you please confirm that an apology (both in respect of the abuse by a member of clergy, and the church's handling of his complaint) has now been delivered to Fr Ineson and provide for General Synod the date on which it was delivered?

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

**A** It is not appropriate as a rule to comment on individual cases, but in this case the Archbishop of Canterbury's apology is referred to publicly in the proceedings of the IICSA inquiry. The review into the case of Trevor Devamanikkam commissioned by the NST, which has in scope the Church's collective response, has been referred to the Independent Safeguarding Board for advice on how to proceed. It is not appropriate for me to comment further at this stage.

**Mr Clive Billenness (Europe) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q68** In view of the substantial body of published medical research identifying the physical and psychological harm caused to individuals of any age targeted by or simply witnessing incidents of bullying, and which therefore constitute 'abuse', what guidance has been given to Diocesan Safeguarding Teams on managing such incidents as a Safeguarding Matter where a victim states that they have suffered physiological or psychological harm?

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

**A** Definitions of abuse have been recently updated and are being considered by the House of Bishops. Bullying, including cyber bullying, can be a form of abuse and in some circumstances will warrant a safeguarding response. In other circumstances, other responses are more appropriate (e.g. Human Resources policies and procedures in an employment context). The NST will be updating guidance in respect of responding to safeguarding concerns of all forms of abuse during 2022.

**Canon Izzy McDonald-Booth (Newcastle) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q69** Has the House of Bishops recently been given additional advice from the National Safeguarding Team that states that deliverance ministry is never appropriate to change, suppress or influence a person's sexuality, regardless of apparent consent?

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

**A** The revised version of the *Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults* reiterates at section 4.15: “For the avoidance of any doubt, and in line with the decision of the General Synod of the Church of England in July 2017, it is made clear that nobody, whether a member of a Diocesan Deliverance Ministry Team or otherwise, is permitted to use any form of deliverance ministry in pursuit of changing or influencing somebody’s sexual orientation. This applies whether or not the individual concerned wishes to receive such ministry. Individuals asking for such ministry must be treated with compassion and understanding, and should be referred both to pastoral support and to links to appropriate resources.” This draft guidance will be reviewed by the House of Bishops in December.

## **CHURCH COMMISSIONERS**

**Mr Stephen Hofmeyr (Guildford) to ask the Church Commissioners:**

**Q70** Whilst the Route-map to Net Zero by 2030 Consultation takes place, what funding has been made available to parishes (whether by way of grants, subsidies or loans) to assist them in meeting the Church’s net zero commitment?

*The Bishop of Manchester to reply on behalf of the Church Commissioners:*

**A** Funding has been made available to develop the Energy Footprint Toolkit, across all the Church’s main building types, and to better resource the national Environment Programme. This additional funding has in part been used to hire fundraising expertise to help develop future funding for parishes, fund small projects in dioceses across the country, develop training, and support a strong faith voice in the run up to COP26. Parishes can also benefit from a nationally subsidised energy audit which churches can commission through Parish Buying.

**Mr Clive Scowen (London) to ask the Church Commissioners:**

**Q71** Over 75 years after the publication of “Towards the Conversion of England”, will the Church Commissioners now treat the re-evangelisation of England as its overriding priority in the discretionary allocation of financial resources above and beyond legally required expenditure?

*The Bishop of Manchester to reply on behalf of the Church Commissioners:*

**A** I am pleased to be a member of the time limited Triennium Funding Working Group which brings together members of the House of Bishops, Archbishops’ Council and Church Commissioners. This group has begun its work to provide the Archbishops’ Council and

Church Commissioners with recommendations on how funds the Commissioners make available in 2023-25 should be allocated to support our Church's needs and opportunities. Its key focus will be how to support the Vision and Strategy on which the Synod has a presentation tomorrow afternoon.

This looks forward to a future where:

- mixed ecology is the norm in every local context
- the parish system is revitalised for mission from which flows a flourishing of new Christian communities
- every person has the opportunity to encounter the transformation that a life centred on Jesus Christ can bring.

**Mr Jonathan Baird (Salisbury) to ask the Church Commissioners:**

**Q72** In the consultation process for the proposals, which are outlined in GS 2222 (Review of the Mission and Pastoral Measure), how many submissions were received and how many contained objections? And when will such submissions be placed in the public domain (as they are in any planning matter)?

*The Bishop on Manchester to reply on behalf of the Church Commissioners:*

**A** The consultation on the Review of the Mission and Pastoral Measure closed on the 31 October 2021. The results are now being analysed and we do not yet have the detailed breakdown of the responses. Over 1,700 responses have been received, either by email or through the online survey. The plan is to present the analysis of the responses to General Synod in 2022 in a GS Misc paper, if the Business Committee gives permission. The Commissioners are also planning to host a fringe event to discuss the GS Misc paper. We would like to thank everyone who took the time to respond to the consultation – all the contributions were greatly appreciated.

We have written an introductory leaflet on the review. See <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/parish-reorganisation-and-church-property/review-mission-and-pastoral-measure-2011>.

**The Revd Marcus Walker (London) to ask the Church Commissioners:**

**Q73** Would the Church Commissioners please list, by diocese, the expectations for (a) pastoral reorganisations and (b) closures given to the Church Commissioners in their survey detailed in sections 26-28 of GS 2222?

*The Bishop of Manchester to reply on behalf of the Church Commissioners:*

**A** It is not possible to provide a diocesan breakdown of the expectations for pastoral reorganisation and church closure as the information was given on the basis that the responses would be kept confidential. The aim of the exercise was to get an overview of the possible general trends. The numbers summarised in GS2222 are only intended to give a high-level indication of possible trends and should not be taken as representative of any detailed plans.

**Mr Sam Margrave (Coventry) to ask the Church Commissioners:**

**Q74** Can I congratulate the Church Commissioners on approval being given by Her Majesty for your appointment of a new First Church Estates Commissioner and ask for an opportunity to meet the new Commissioner with a delegation, to discuss the plight of Parishes and Parish Churches who are struggling to make ends meet and facing closure or have no clergy to call their own, to explore how the Church Commissioners could address the financial and resourcing challenges Parishes and Parish Churches are currently facing?

*Mr Alan Smith to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:*

**A** I am very grateful for this warm welcome and will of course be delighted to meet Mr Margrave and other colleagues to discuss ways in which the Church Commissioners can continue to support parishes.

A considerable amount of our funding does support the cost of clergy and others involved in 'front line' mission and ministry. This was nearly £100m last year (nearly double the previous year's amount).

Along with the House of Bishops and Archbishops' Council we will continue to review the prioritisation of resources and I assure Synod that all the participants in these discussions are well aware of the critical importance of parish ministry.

**The Revd Canon Priscilla White (Birmingham) to ask the Church Commissioners:**

**Q75** In July 2020 I asked a question about Queen Anne's Bounty and the international slave trade. It was stated that a working group had been set up to look at this. Has there been able to be any progress by the group on this issue?

*Mr Alan Smith to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:*

**A** The sub-group established by the Church Commissioners' Board to oversee this work has engaged independent accountants to oversee this work has engaged independent accountants to undertake detailed research and analysis, and they are also aided by academic experts with relevant experience and knowledge, as well as NCI staff.

The research is in progress and we will share the findings in a transparent way once it has been completed, which we expect to be during 2022. The group's Terms of Reference were shared with Synod members in July 2021.

**The Revd Canon Dr Rachel Mann (Manchester) to ask the Church Commissioners:**

**Q76** Have the Church Commissioners considered signing the 30x30 commitment to protect at least 30% of nature by 2030, in line with the UK Government's own commitment to this target?

*Mr Alan Smith to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:*

**A** In addition to our 2050 Net Zero target, we are also committed to tackling nature loss, and were the first investor to support the Science Based Targets for Nature initiative.

The 30x30 commitment made by the UK Government in 2020 is aligned with the Commissioners' ambitions to support the recovery of nature and we will be continuing to review our current commitments in the coming months to understand whether we should also sign up to this initiative.

We are passionate about protecting nature and biodiversity, as well as moving to a carbon neutral investment fund. In the last week, we have committed to becoming signatories of a Nature-Based Solutions Compact, led by the National Trust. This set of ambitious guiding principles seeks to ensure solutions deliver for nature and climate. This will sit alongside ongoing work to engage with farming tenants to consider more nature-friendly farming incentives and set a clear strategic vision.

**The Revd Canon Anne Brown (Truro) to ask the Church Commissioners:**

**Q77** In light of the Church Commissioners' August announcement that it is developing a 'net zero carbon strategy for its land investments', can the Commissioners state what will happen to the approximately 5,000 acres of deep peat soils they own in the Cambridgeshire Fens, and how it will be managed to reduce carbon emissions from the eroding peat soils?

*Mr Alan Smith to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:*

**A** All the Church Commissioners' land holdings in the Cambridgeshire Fens are held within farming tenancies, some of which are historic arrangements with security for our tenants to farm for up to three generations. Following a desktop carbon baseline assessment, we are developing a full environmental strategy, seeking to find ways of

encouraging more carbon friendly farming practices including cultivation methods that particularly benefit peaty soils to prevent erosion.

We continue to work on understanding the extent of the Commissioners' ownership of deep peat soils. The holdings around the Fens may be areas of focus including carrying out individual assessment and monitoring, with a view to developing collaborative approaches between landlord and tenant, allowing wildlife improvements across the Commissioners' estate as well as sequestering further carbon and protecting soil health.

**The Revd Canon Anne Brown (Truro) to ask the Church Commissioners:**

**Q78** The Independent highlighted in June of this year that BP is planning to drill for gas on the edge of the world's largest cold-water reef off the coast of west Africa. What are the National Investing Bodies doing to raise concerns about this with BP?

*Mr Alan Smith to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:*

**A** The Commissioners do not hold BP shares, which limits our ability to engage.

We support Climate Action 100+'s engagement with BP. Aligning capital expenditure with the energy transition is vital to a net zero plan, and is included in the CA100+ Net Zero Benchmark, which informs all engagements. Limiting capital expenditure and expansion will also reduce the sector's impact on fragile habitats.

In accordance with our commitment to Synod, the NIBs engage with high carbon companies, and will divest any fossil fuel companies not aligned with Paris by 2023. In practice, companies with plans to significantly expand capacity, in a way that is not consistent with the energy transition, won't pass this hurdle.

The impact of our Responsible Investment approach was demonstrated in June when we helped to replace a quarter of ExxonMobil's Directors with individuals with climate and energy transition expertise. These new directors have started to influence the company's strategic direction, as a result of which we hope to see, and will continue to press for, further progress.

**The Revd Ruth Newton (Leeds) to ask the Church Commissioners:**

**Q79** As more than 20 bishops from Southern Africa, as well as a resolution passed by the Provincial Synod of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa, have called for a halt to oil and gas exploration in Africa, do the National Investment Bodies (NIBs) have a plan to divest from any oil

and gas company that disregards this call from the Southern African Bishops and continues fossil fuel exploration in Africa?

*Mr Alan Smith to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:*

**A** The Commissioners address exploration and extraction plans when engaging with oil and gas companies. The Climate Action 100+ Net Zero Benchmark includes alignment of capital expenditure with Paris goals, which informs our engagements and AGM voting.

In accordance with our commitment to Synod, the NIBs engage high carbon companies, and will divest any fossil fuel companies not aligned with Paris by 2023. In practice, companies with plans to significantly expand capacity, in a way that is not consistent with the energy transition, won't pass this hurdle.

The Church Commissioners demonstrated the impact of our Responsible Investment approach in June by helping to replace a quarter of ExxonMobil's Directors with individuals with climate and energy transition expertise. These new directors have started to influence the company's strategic direction, as a result of which we hope to see, and will continue to press for, further progress.

The NIBs engage with companies failing to uphold UN Guiding Principles on Human Rights, among others. Companies that consistently demonstrate poor ESG practices can be restricted from investment.

**The Revd Canon Priscilla White (Birmingham) to ask the Church Commissioners:**

**Q80** According to a Bloomberg article in September, French oil company Total is among the oil companies planning to expand Arctic oil and gas production by 20% over the next five years. Given this, are the NIBs urgently engaging with Total with a view to divestment if it does not abandon these plans?

*Mr Alan Smith to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:*

**A** We do engage with Total. The company now assesses new investments for consistency with Paris and we have asked that its capital expenditure plans be aligned with a 1.5C scenario. This covers Arctic assets, where high costs and emissions are misaligned with Paris, and also the curtailment of new exploration and production projects worldwide.

In accordance with our commitment to Synod, the NIBs engage high carbon companies, and will divest any fossil fuel companies not

aligned with Paris by 2023. In practice, companies with plans to significantly expand capacity, in a way that is not consistent with the energy transition, won't pass this hurdle.

The impact of our Responsible Investment approach was demonstrated in June when we helped to replace a quarter of ExxonMobil's Directors with individuals with climate and energy transition expertise. These new directors have started to influence the company's strategic direction, as a result of which we hope to see, and will continue to press for, further progress.

### **The Revd Robert Lawrance (Newcastle) to ask the Church**

#### **Commissioners:**

**Q81** At the last Synod in July 2021, the Church Commissioners stated that "land in the Commissioners' ownership included approximately 2,094 acres of Sites of Special Scientific Interest, 948 acres (i.e. 45%) of which were in a 'favourable' condition". Have the Church Commissioners set any targets to increase the percentage of 'favourable' SSSIs in their possession?

*Mr Alan Smith to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:*

**A** As yet the Commissioners have not set any formal targets to increase the condition of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) within the rural portfolio as we wish first to continue to develop our strategy regarding tenant engagement. It is important that where targets are set these are realistic and achievable, being objectives that we can fully endorse.

All of the SSSIs within our ownership (approximately 17 sites) are managed by farm tenants, and we will continue to work with all stakeholders to encourage enhancement of the condition of designated sites.

Where parts of SSSIs are considered to be in 'unfavourable' condition these are being prioritised - such as land adjoining Wybunbury Moss SSSI in Cheshire. A 10-year lease has been granted to Natural England to allow reversion from arable farming to species rich grassland to protect the adjoining floating lowland bog.

### **The Revd Andrew Yates (Truro) to ask the Church Commissioners:**

**Q82** What is the NIBs' policy on the burning of biomass, in particular with regard to investment in companies involved in such activities?

*Mr Alan Smith to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:*

**A** Whilst the NIBs do not have an explicit policy on biomass, we are aware of its broader environmental impacts. The NIBs use the Transition Pathways Initiative's carbon performance assessment data, which covers the use of biomass in energy generation, to inform engagements on the topic. For example, the Commissioners have had successful engagements with a major paper manufacturer on their emissions from biomass energy generators, leading to improved emissions and renewable energy targets.

A small share (6%) of offcuts and timber unsuitable for other uses from our forestry investments go into biomass energy production. We also have a small holding in a pellet facility, which uses feedstock from forest thinning operations, which are necessary in order to grow high quality, large diameter timber suitable for construction purposes where carbon is locked up for the long term.

**The Revd Dr Ian Paul (Southwell & Nottingham) to ask the Church Commissioners:**

**Q83** In 2020, according to their annual report, the Church Commissioners made an excellent return of 10.4% on their assets which at year end were £9.2bn, an asset growth of approximately £867m. Of this, £281m was dispersed through LinC and SDF and to support the Pension Fund. Of the remaining £586m, how much went towards management fees and costs, how much was kept back to protect the assets against devaluation through inflation and to ensure intergenerational justice in resourcing, and on what basis?

*Mr Alan Smith to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:*

**A** Asset values are reported after all Investment management costs (which are detailed in our Annual Report). So all of the increase in value enhances the ability of the fund to release sustainable current and future distributions, informed by the assessment of our actuaries.

Returns in any one year only play a small part in that assessment as financial and real estate markets, where the fund has most of its investments, are volatile. It is long-term returns and, importantly, projections of future returns which determine the level of sustainable distributions.

As my predecessor told Synod in July, "The Commissioners aim to distribute the maximum funding for mission and ministry that can be maintained in real terms into the future. This balances the needs of the current and future beneficiaries: the task of a permanent endowment."

Over the current triennium (2020-22), we have plans to distribute £930m and in the coming months we will be considering how much can be distributed in 2023-25.

## **PENSIONS BOARD**

### **The Revd Canon Dr Rachel Mann (Manchester) to ask the Chair of the Pensions Board:**

**Q84** Shell is going ahead with plans in the UK North Sea for the development of the new Cambo oil field, whose emissions would be equivalent to the annual carbon pollution from 18 coal-fired power stations. Has the Pensions Board's engagement with Shell included very strong objections to this plan? As this is not Paris compliant, would implementation of this plan by Shell trigger divestment by the Pensions Board?

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

**A** We have recently held detailed engagement with Shell around the disclosures we expect on capital expenditure and absolute emissions reductions targets in line with the statement the Pensions Board delivered at the Shell AGM. The outcome of these ongoing discussions will be a basis to assess alignment of projects such as Shell's 30% stake in Siccar Energy that is leading the development of the Cambo oil field.

Cambo was not specifically discussed at the most recent engagement which focussed on the fundamental framework of disclosure of capital expenditure alignment to Shell's targets and the International Energy Agency 1.5 degree of warming scenario. We expect to raise alignment of such projects at the forthcoming engagement.

As set out to General Synod we will be making an assessment in 2023, based upon the independent analysis of the Transition Pathway Initiative (TPI), whether Shell is aligned to the Goals of the Paris Agreement.

### **The Ven Elizabeth Snowden (Chelmsford) to ask the Chair of the Pensions Board:**

**Q85** Until now, the Transition Pathway Initiative (TPI) has not included a scenario to measure alignment of companies with the 1.5C goal of the Paris Agreement. Following the publication of a 1.5C scenario in the International Energy Agency's (IEA's) World Energy Outlook, has this yet been adopted within the TPI's assessment of carbon performance? Is the IEA's 1.5C scenario now a criteria to determine whether the NIBs divest from an oil and gas company in 2023, as the NIBs' report to General Synod in July 2021 suggested?

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

**A** Yes. The IEA only published a 1.5C scenario in May 2021. After assessment of the scenario, the Transition Pathway Initiative (TPI) made a public statement that it will be incorporated into TPI's analysis, beginning in Quarter 4 of 2021.

<https://www.transitionpathwayinitiative.org/publications/53?type=NewsArticle>

The next TPI Energy Report will include for the first time the 1.5C as a benchmark to assess companies.

The Synod Resolution specifically stated disinvestment from fossil fuel companies not aligned '...with the goal of the Paris Agreement to restrict the global average temperature rise to well below 2°C.'

The NIBs will be using the updated assessment from TPI as a basis to inform its decisions in 2023.

## **SECRETARY GENERAL**

**Mrs Caroline Herbert (Norwich) to ask the Secretary General:**

**Q86** How does the Secretary General intend to include an understanding of the 2014 Settlement in the induction process for all newly elected or appointed members of the General Synod, as recommended in GS 2225?

*Mr William Nye to reply as the Secretary General*

**A** There is a briefing document which has been drafted and published as part of the induction documents in the Synod Resources page of the website, and can be found [here](#).

In addition, this will be covered as part of the formal induction programme on the afternoon of Monday 15 November.

**Dr Rosalind Clarke (Lichfield) to ask the Secretary General:**

**Q87** In GS 2225, the report from the Implementation and Dialogue Group on the House of Bishops' Declaration there were, among others, the following recommendations:

Recommendation Ten: That an understanding of the 2014 Settlement be part of the induction process for all newly elected or appointed members of the General Synod.

Recommendation Eleven: That resources reflecting the facts and practical implications of the 2014 Settlement are developed to communicate the procedural mechanisms to members of Deanery and Diocesan Synods, in particular the laity.

Recommendation Twelve: That the Church of England communications division, working with other staff, develop material suitable for communication to media and to others outside the Church about the House of Bishops Declaration and the Church's position on living with difference. Such material should be suitable also for use by diocesan communications officers.

What progress has been made on these recommendations?

*Mr William Nye to reply as Secretary General:*

**A** For recommendation 10, a briefing document has been drafted as part of the induction resources for members of the General Synod, and can be found [here](#). In addition, this will be covered as part of the formal induction programme on the afternoon of Monday 15 November.

It has not yet been possible to convene the Standing Commission of the House of Bishops. Once it has been established, one of its first pieces of work will be to look at the recommendations from the Implementation and Dialogue Group, and to consider whether and how they should be put into practice, including the other recommendations mentioned in the question.

## **CLERK TO THE SYNOD**

**Dr Rosalind Clarke (Lichfield) to ask the Clerk to the Synod:**

**Q88** What was the 'turnout' in the elections to the 2021 General Synod by diocese and by Houses? (please also provide comparative figures from 2015 and 2010)

*Dr Jacqui Philips to reply as Clerk to the Synod:*

**A** A breakdown of turnout by diocese and by Houses in the years 2021, 2015 and 2010 has been posted on the notice board.

**Mrs Catherine Stephenson (Leeds) to ask the Clerk to the Synod:**

**Q89** Is there the opportunity for analysis of the whole election process for members of the clergy, laity and special constituencies to General Synod, which would include identifying good practice that every diocese should consequently adopt in time for the next quinquennium?

*Dr Jacqui Philips to reply as Clerk to the Synod:*

**A** The General Synod Business Committee will form the Elections Review Group (ERG) in the New Year to carry out this analysis. The resulting report of the Elections Review Group will make recommendations for good practice in the future. Synod members and others are welcome to make submissions to the ERG to assist it with this work.

**The Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn) to ask the Clerk to the Synod:**

**Q90** Given the widespread reports of difficulties experienced in the recent elections to this General Synod what plans are there for a thorough review of the election rules and their implementation and will all those involved (including candidates and electors) be invited to contribute to any such review?

*Dr Jacqui Philips to reply as Clerk to the Synod:*

**A** The General Synod Business Committee will re-establish the Elections Review Group (ERG) early in 2022. The ERG will carry out an extensive review of all aspects of the 2021 Synod elections with the aim of learning lessons and making improvements for the future. The ERG would welcome feedback from diocesan offices, candidates and electors which they can then consider in their deliberations.

**Miss Debbie Buggs (London) to ask the Clerk to the Synod:**

**Q91** What steps were taken in the General Synod elections to ensure that those who were unable for any reason to “drag and drop” were able to vote even if they had provided an email address to their diocese and been sent a link to the voting portal?

*Dr Jacqui Philips to reply as Clerk to the Synod:*

**A** There was provision in the online election process for diocesan offices to be able to cast votes on behalf of members that were not able to access the online portal. This service was offered during the elections process.

**Mr Chris Gill (Lichfield) to ask the Clerk to the Synod:**

**Q92** A press release on 26 July, reported on the House of Bishops’ meeting of the same day and includes “The Clerk to the Synod addressed the House as to whether it might be necessary for the Synod to meet more frequently in 2022 or 2023, for reasons including the substantive work arising out of the Emerging Church work.” Could the Clerk to the Synod please outline the envisaged timetable for General Synod to be formally involved in taking forward the Emerging Church work and what role it will be expected to take either as a whole Synod or in “group” work?

*Dr Jacqui Philips to reply as Clerk to the Synod:*

**A** Under Standing Order 1 of the General Synod Standing Orders, all arrangements for the timing and dates of Synod meetings are done under the direction of the Presidents. No decision has yet been made regarding the possibility of additional meetings of the General Synod in 2022 and 2023 to deal with Emerging Church or any other matters.

Synod's main role with regards to Emerging Church will be to consider and debate any legislative changes arising from Emerging Church recommendations. A detailed plan for Synodical engagement – legislative or non-legislative – on Emerging Church has not yet been developed.

**Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford) to ask the Clerk to the Synod:**

**Q93** Why are General Synod members charged corporate rates, often amounting to hundreds of pounds when booking technical equipment (such as PowerPoint projectors and microphones), when they organise fringe meetings in Church House for other Synod members during General Synod sessions?

*Dr Jacqui Philips to reply as Clerk to the Synod:*

**A** The Corporation of The Church House is a charity established by Charter which uses its income to provide financial support for the National Church Institutions. The Corporation of The Church House charges commercial rates for the use of equipment in its meeting rooms.

If the National Church Institutions were to subsidise the costs of equipment used by Synod members at fringe meetings, the cost of this subsidy would either need to be met from departmental budgets which come out of the Vote 2 levy paid by the dioceses or the subsidy would need to be added on to the Synod Diocesan Re-charge which is paid by dioceses. Either way, the costs of subsidising equipment for fringe meetings would be met by the dioceses and parishes.

## **NATIONAL SOCIETY COUNCIL**

**Miss Venessa Pinto (Leicester) to ask the Chair of the National Society Council:**

**Q94** An answer to a question (Q.98) from Sophie Mitchell (Church of England Youth Council) in July 2020, asking you to explain "how the Church of England plans to engage young people in General Synod and ensure that their voices are heard in the next quinquennium?" you stated that "the National Society agreed to the proposal to transition to an annual gathering for young Anglican adults, retaining the breadth of tradition that CEYC has embraced and continuing to give a voice to young adults in the Church of England. This will be planned by young adults with the intention of exploring lived faith within the Anglican tradition. Representation to General Synod will be drawn from those involved, with a 2-year term of office as is currently

the case. General Synod Observers will also be drawn from this work. Progress on this has been impacted by the current Pandemic but will be picked up again soon.”

In response to your answer (and since the new quinquennium of Synod has started), could you please update Synod if any progress has been made?

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

**A** As part of the ongoing work developing the Church’s vision to be younger and more diverse, we have sought to engage the views of children and young people proactively. 250 young leaders in primary, secondary and further education colleges are now active members of our National Younger Leadership Groups and have been able to contribute directly to the emerging vision. We are delighted that some from this group are hosting the induction sessions for members of Synod on Monday, in partnership with the Archbishop of York Youth Trust. Development of our Younger Leadership Groups will be important to the future work of Synod and we will continue to shape our thinking to ensure the voice of our children and young people is heard actively by Synod.

**Canon Peter Bruinvels (Guildford) to ask the Chair of the National Society Council:**

**Q95** Bearing in mind that the Armed Forces Bill will be enacted in early 2022 to ensure that no service families are disadvantaged through their military service and that we have a large number of service children in our church schools, what training is being given to the heads and school governors as concerns the new requirement that ‘due regard’ must be shown in responding to applications from service families for example involving in-year admissions, home-to-school transport and SEN support provision?

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

**A** The Armed Forces Covenant was first published in May 2011 and [guidance](#) is already available to schools to ensure they offer respect, support and fair treatment to Armed Forces families. The new Bill will place a duty to have due regard to the covenant principles on public bodies responsible for the delivery of functions in housing, education and healthcare. It is expected that The Secretary of State will issue guidance relating to the duties to be imposed, and further guidance will be issued to school at that time.

**Mr Chris Gill (Lichfield) to ask the Chair of the National Society Council:**

**Q96** What is the policy of the Church of England towards people having no specific religious affiliation being represented, with voting rights, on local SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education), particularly where the Local Authority is "... recognising secular representation as a 'belief' within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998 and accurately reflecting the changing nature of religious and non-religious beliefs in current society ..."?

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

**A** The Church of England Education Office has provided guidance examining the representation of groups with philosophical convictions such as Humanism on committee A of SACREs. In 1994 the DfE provided non-statutory guidance on this point which stated that the inclusion of representatives "of belief systems such as humanism, which do not amount to a religion or religious denomination, on committee A of an agreed syllabus conference or group A of a SACRE" would be contrary to the Education Act. However, it is our understanding that the application of human rights law and the law on discrimination in England, specifically in the context of religious education, means that excluding groups such as Humanists from SACREs is likely to be found in contravention of human rights legislation so we do not think that it would be justified to limit membership of SACREs and exclude non-religious representatives such as Humanists in this way.

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

**Q97** How much have National Church Institutions paid to Stonewall over the last five years, and for what services?

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

**A** One member of the Education Office team attended the Stonewall children and young people day conference in 2019 at a cost of £216. Other than that, the NCIs have not paid anything to Stonewall for any services in the last 5 years.

And for the avoidance of doubt, the Education Office did not commission any work from Stonewall for our publication *Valuing All God's Children* and has not paid Stonewall for any services relating to that or anything else connected to our work.

**Mrs Rebecca Hunt (Portsmouth) to ask the Chair of the National Society Council:**

**Q98** Are the *Valuing All God's Children* Guidelines drafted in consultation with Stonewall now going to be withdrawn in the light of concerns about 1. the way Stonewall has presented the law on gender reassignment and 2. harm caused by the affirmative approach to gender dysphoria in children?

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

**A** *Valuing All God's Children* was written and produced by the Education Office, with help from a consultant who works as a member of a diocesan education team. Stonewall were not involved in writing it. We always keep the document under review and in Summer 2019 the list of protected characteristics on page 13, the comments on page 14 and the legal framework section of page 29 (Appendix C) were updated to ensure greater clarity about gender reassignment being a protected characteristic. The recommendation about the curriculum on pages 6 and 27 was broadened to ensure a wide understanding of identity. In the event that the DfE or Government produce any further guidance on how protected characteristics are treated within a school context, we will update our document accordingly.

**Mrs Sarah Finch (London) to ask the Chair of the National Society Council:**

**Q99** Will the National Society Council issue guidance to all Church of England schools that they should not use materials produced by Stonewall, a political campaigning group dedicated to promoting and normalising LGBT values in society, which promote (a) teachings that explicitly contradict the teachings of the Church, founded in Scripture, and (b) partisan political views, the use of which is explicitly prohibited by section 406 of the Education Act of 1996?

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

**A** It is for school governing bodies to decide which resources they use and which organisations they want to work with, not least because schools operate in a variety of different contexts. Schools have both the expertise and knowledge that makes them best placed to make these decisions. The National Society encourages schools to ensure any resources or external providers have a proven track record, come recommended by someone they trust and are sensitive to the ethos of Church schools.

Schools can use the DfE's guidance and must consider the [statutory guidance](#), which sets out clear advice on choosing resources. The Church of England [Charter](#) for Relationships and Sex Education also sets out helpful guidance for schools in this area.

## CHURCH BUILDINGS COUNCIL

### **The Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark) to ask the Chair of the Church Buildings Council:**

**Q100** Given the projected effects of climate change on sea levels and the likelihood of extreme weather events, what steps are the Church Buildings Council taking to provide advice to local churches to help them address the new and increased threats to many of our church buildings that are beginning to emerge?

*The Ven Bob Cooper to reply on behalf of the Chair of the Church Buildings Council:*

**A** Combining DEFRA data with Church Heritage Record data, we now better understand flood risk (see the answer to Newton 049). There is also a range of other climate risks such as higher winds causing stonework damage, and warm, damp weather bringing new moulds and pests. These risks are all set out, alongside the corresponding resilience actions and links to guidance, in the [new webpage](#) co-developed with the Diocese of Leeds.

We are funding the Diocese of Leeds to develop and deliver training for other dioceses on climate resilience, which will be launched in 2022. We have also partnered with the Tyndall Centre to secure funding for a researcher for a year, who will gather and share case studies of successful adaptation. This will help show what is possible, both to protect our buildings and also for the church to act as a sanctuary for climate-affected communities.

### **The Revd Ruth Newton (Leeds) to ask the Chair of the Church Buildings Council:**

**Q101** Extreme weather events will damage our buildings and our communities more and more over the coming years. How many of our churches and cathedrals are at risk of flooding, and what can the church do to support them to be more resilient?

*The Ven Bob Cooper to reply on behalf of the Chair of the Church Buildings Council:*

**A** Combining DEFRA data with Church Heritage Record (CHR) data, we know over 2300 of our churches and 12 cathedrals are within the 100m radius of a flood zone.

Of these, >1000 churches and 5 cathedrals are within 10m, with the majority in the flood zone therefore at substantially increased risk of flooding. We are working to create regularly updated map layers in the CHR to allow access to this data.

In the past, the Church has focused more on mitigation (reducing emissions) than on adaptation (responding to climate impacts) but this is changing:

- Working with the Diocese of Leeds, we have a new “[Climate Resilient Church](#)” area on our website
- The Diocese of Leeds is being funded to deliver training for other dioceses on climate resilience

We have partnered with the Tyndall Centre to secure funding for a researcher, gathering and sharing case studies of successful adaptation.

**Mr Andrew Presland (Peterborough) to ask the Chair of the Church Buildings Council:**

**Q102** What steps are being taken by the Church of England to secure clarity from the Government by way of new legislation on whether it is lawful for a parish council to contribute towards the expenses of providing or maintaining a churchyard?

*The Ven Bob Cooper to reply on behalf of the Chair of the Church Buildings Council:*

**A** Our clear and considered opinion is that it is legal and we have issued guidance on this:

[https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-02/CCB\\_Local-Authority-Investment-in-Church-Buildings-Guidance.pdf](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-02/CCB_Local-Authority-Investment-in-Church-Buildings-Guidance.pdf).

The ambiguity that has prevented some Parish Councils from providing funding arises from differing interpretations of the Localism Act. This can only be resolved through government action. The Taylor Review of Cathedral and Church Sustainability identified this as a need in 2017:

*“Repeal or the issue of guidance should clarify that certain parish councils are also able to fund church buildings using powers contained in the Localism Act 2011.”*

We are advocating for this clarification to be made as part of the current work on the new Planning Bill and are liaising with the relevant government bodies to achieve this.

**The Revd Canon Kevin Goss (St Albans) to ask the Chair of the Church Buildings Council:**

**Q103** How many churches have been materially affected by the presence of bats in the building in the past year, and also how many churches have been forced to close either temporarily or permanently as a result?

*The Ven Bob Cooper to reply on behalf of the Chair of the Church Buildings Council:*

**A** We do not have centrally held data on how many churches have been materially affected by bats and bat presence alone does not mean the church is materially affected. There is a current Bats in Churches citizen science project to gather some of this data. To date volunteers have surveyed more than 200 churches.

The Bats in Churches project has funded capital works at 33 churches materially affected by bats. All of these projects are complete bar one which will complete mid-November 2021.

No churches have been forced to formally close because of bats.

Across the project, 3 of the 108 focus churches were temporarily and unofficially closed when project started because of bats among other factors. Of these churches, Radstone has now re-opened and will be re-dedicated on December 12, Lamorran will re-open at a date tbc, and we are working with All Hallows Dean to re-open.

**The Revd Canon Kevin Goss (St Albans) to ask the Chair of the Church Buildings Council:**

**Q104** What is the progress on the current bats in churches project, detailing the funding received from central government to help mitigate the effects of bats in churches in the past year, and what government funding will be available in the coming year and whether this is sufficient to manage the problem of bats in churches?

*The Ven Bob Cooper to reply on behalf of the Chair of the Church Buildings Council:*

**A** The Bats in Churches project has £4.8m of National Lottery Heritage Fund and partnership funding over a five-year period, to 2023. There is no central government funding but Natural England, a government arm's length body, has made significant financial contributions.

The project supports churches by enabling church communities to understand their bats so they can plan work effectively; capital works projects; and building skills of church communities in conservation cleaning.

The project has funded capital works in 33 churches. All of these projects are complete bar one which is on track for completion mid-November 2021.

Speaking about the project, one churchwarden said: 'We had no hope before and were becoming despondent. This is the first time somebody seems to be caring about our situation. All we want is someone to assist and enable us both to live well together, side by side.'

## **COUNCIL FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY**

### **The Revd Canon Dr Judith Maltby (Universities & TElS) to ask the Chair of the Council for Christian Unity:**

**Q105** At the July 2021 meeting of Synod, the Chair of the Council for Christian Unity was asked about the ecumenical impact of the non-pandemic related decision in 2020 to limit consecrations in the Church of England to only three consecrating bishops – not only in terms of restricting the laying on of hands by bishops from the Anglican Communion – but also the ecumenical impact on relations with the Old Catholics, the Mar Thoma Church of South India, and Porvoo Churches. The Chair replied ‘The Council for Christian Unity has not had these discussions so far. A review of arrangements for consecrations is currently taking place and will take ecumenical aspects into consideration.’ Would the Chair update Synod on this review and in particular what conclusions have been reached as a result of taking ‘ecumenical aspects into consideration’?

*The Bishop of Chichester to reply as Chair of the Council for Christian Unity:*

**A** The review of arrangements is ongoing, and recommendations will be published in due course.

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

### **Mr Richard Denno (Liverpool) to ask the Chair of the Finance Committee:**

**Q106** What guidance is given to Dioceses regarding use of funds arising from the sale of church buildings or land?

*Mr Carl Hughes to reply on behalf of the Chair of the Finance Committee:*

**A** The permitted uses of funds from the sale of Church property including Churches no longer required for public worship, clergy housing and investment property and land are set out in various Measures (e.g. the Church Property Measure 2018 and the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011) and in charity law. The Legal Office and the Commissioners’ Pastoral and Closed Churches offer general guidance and training for diocesan teams. Dioceses also take their own local legal advice as needed.

In 2020 and 2021 the Pastoral and Closed Churches Team has worked with the NCIs’ Finance Team and one of my Finance Committee members to deliver several workshops to diocesan staff on issues around this subject. This has included guidance on the most efficient process for such sales to maximise options for the use of funds and a discussion on the total return approach for Diocesan Stipend Funds.

## MINISTRY COUNCIL

**Dr Felicity Cooke (Ely) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:**

**Q107** What are the figures for the cohort of ordinands which began training this September (2021) 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 and Ipswich to reply as Chair of the Ministry Council:*

**A**

Age	Full-time residential		Full-time non-residential		Part-time course	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
20-24	14	7	4	3		
25-29	20	12	8	7		3
30-34	22	10	16	11	4	6
35-39	11	6	7	12	8	7
40-44	7	4	7	16	8	21
45-49	2	3	5	16	20	18
50-54		3	3	3	18	33
55-59	1		1	3	11	33
60-64				1	15	19
65-69					1	8
<b>Totals</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>148</b>

**Dr Felicity Cooke (Ely) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:**

**Q108** Are all dioceses offering and promoting clearly the Family Friendly Policies agreed by Ministry Division?

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

**A** We do not know, as policies are set by individual dioceses. The policies referred to are on the Church of England website and recommend a minimum level of provision that should apply in all cases whether or not someone is legally eligible for Statutory Maternity Pay. The content of the policies remains a matter for diocesan discretion, but there is an expectation that they should be followed. DDOs play a part in ensuring this, as does including maternity provision in the pooling of training costs. Dioceses are encouraged to take a flexible and generous approach to support clergy and ordinands who become parents, in such a way that they will be able to resume ministry or ministry training when they are ready to. Support at this time is a valuable investment in someone's future ministry.

**The Revd Mark Bennet (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:**

**Q109** In each of the last five years how many faculties have been issued for ordination under Canon C4.5 and how many applications have been refused? Please give separately the numbers for men and women.

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

**A** This data is not centrally captured in the form in which it has been requested and is not therefore readily available within the timescale of this session of Synod.

**The Revd Mark Bennet (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:**

**Q110** In the same period and with the same analysis how many serving clergy have remarried following a divorce or have married a person who is divorced in circumstances where there is a former spouse still living, and how many of these have been inhibited in any way from exercising their existing ministry?

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

**A** This data is held in individual dioceses and has not been collected nationally and so is not readily available.

**The Revd Dr Sean Doherty (Universities & TEIs) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:**

**Q111** Thank you for the update provided in GS Misc 1303 to Synod as to the progress of the Resourcing Ministerial Formation Review and in particular the welcome proposal for reclaiming unspent block grants. What are the next steps for the work of the review group, and from when might we expect possible changes to take effect?

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

**A** The next steps for the Review are the development of detailed proposals in line with the intentions set out in GS Misc 1303, including the modelling of the effect the proposals would have on dioceses and TEIs. This will lead to a request for formal approval of the proposals, including full Synodical discussion of them. As part of the development work there will be further consultation with dioceses and TEIs. We hope to be able to undertake this work in time for at least some of the proposals to be implemented from autumn 2023. We believe the proposals will mean money is better used to support the formation of both ordained and lay ministers, so we are keen not to delay their introduction unnecessarily.

**The Revd Neil Patterson (Hereford) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:**

**Q112** Given the reductions in stipendiary posts around the dioceses, can Ministry Council report whether any analysis has been done on the number of current stipendiary curates unlikely to find a post of first responsibility, and if the analysis has been done, what percentage this represents of those currently seeking such positions?

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

**A** Members of the National Ministry Team are currently undertaking this analysis and are in regular contact with dioceses on this issue. Because posts of first responsibility can begin at any point in the year and often rely on a decision to move by the previous incumbent, it is difficult to be certain on specific numbers/proportion. More broadly, we recognise that it is vital that we are able to continue to have strong numbers of ordinands entering training and formation, and that we then retain and support the clergy to serve the mission to which God calls the Church, including through the aspirations of the Vision and Strategy. Proposals are now in development, subject to governance processes, to secure funding to assist wherever possible in maintaining capacity for posts of first responsibility so clergy can be deployed in roles where they can flourish and will contribute to the realisation of the Vision and Strategy.

**The Revd Canon Andrew Cornes (Chichester) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:**

**Q113** It is enormously encouraging to hear of the increased numbers offering for, and being recommended for, ordination training. It is, however, equally concerning to hear of Dioceses cutting back, for financial reasons, on title posts and on incumbencies. What steps are being taken to ensure that all those finishing ordination training will have curacies to go to, and all those completing their curacies will have incumbencies or other suitable posts?

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

**A** Similarly, we believe that the increase in ordinand numbers is an immense blessing and encouragement to the whole church, and we give thanks to God for this. We trust that our responses to Questions 018, 064 and 119 adequately address your concerns.

## MISSION AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL

### **Mrs Rebecca Hunt (Portsmouth) to ask the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:**

**Q114** Given the recently published FOI request showing that 1 in 17 women using DIY home abortion pills are being admitted to hospital with medical complications, will the Mission and Public Affairs Committee change its position that the policy (of pills-by-post DIY Abortion) end when the temporary provisions of the Coronavirus Act 2020 expire and call on the government to end the policy immediately?

*The Bishop of St Albans to reply as Vice-Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:*

**A** The 'Consultation on home use of both pills for early medical abortion up to 10 weeks gestation' did not address the ethics of abortion, but focused on issues of safety in the context of women attending clinics during the COVID-19 pandemic with associated risks of infection to both clients and staff. In its submission to the consultation, MPA highlighted a range of risks associated with mifepristone and misoprostol and argued that they were likely to be higher than RCOG estimates suggested. Accordingly, the submission proposed a *latest possible* date of March 2022 for ending the temporary provisions. In the light of the effects of the vaccination programme, relative risks ought to be re-evaluated and we shall seek to see if such a re-evaluation is being conducted.

### **Miss Debbie Buggs (London) to ask the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:**

**Q115** In April 2021 General Synod called on the Government to strengthen its commitment to protecting the freedom of religion or belief for all in its foreign, international development, defence and trade policy. Following the withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan in August 2021, what steps have been taken by the committee (or others) to urge the Government to protect LGBT+ people and religious minorities including Christian converts (who are viewed as apostates by the Taliban and therefore deserving of death) and to help them find safety abroad including permanent resettlement in the UK?

*The Bishop of St Albans to reply as Vice-Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:*

**A** The Bishop of Worcester has raised these concerns directly with relevant Ministers in the House of Lords. The Bishop of Leeds alongside religious leaders from the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, the Methodist Conference and the Church of

Scotland have also written privately to the Foreign Secretary on this matter. MPA staff also assisted in the drafting of a wider civil society letter to the Foreign Secretary that was signed by the Bishop of Truro. Despite the assurances given by the Taliban, the situation facing women, girls and minority groups remains perilous and uncertain. Further consideration needs to be given by the government and the wider international community as to the steps necessary to ensure the protection of these groups, including where necessary their resettlement outside Afghanistan, whether that be in the UK or in another country that can provide safe and permanent resettlement.

**Mrs Sarah Finch (London) to ask the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:**

**Q116** Following the Government's announcement that the UK will host a Ministerial Meeting in London in July 2022 on the subject of Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB), what steps is the Council taking to support the call from Fiona Bruce MP, the Prime Minister's Special Envoy for FoRB, for participation by UK Civil Society, and specifically by the Church of England as part of this community, in this global conference?

*The Bishop of St Albans to reply as Vice-Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:*

**A** MPAC staff have been involved in the three previous international Ministerial meetings on Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) and are in regular contact with the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office as to the preparation for the London Ministerial in July 2022. Staff are also working with and through the UK FoRB Forum to ensure the active participation of expert civil society organisations and religious and belief bodies in this event. The Prime Minister's Special Envoy for FoRB attends the monthly meetings of the UK FoRB Forum.

**The Revd Leslie Siu (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q117** What progress has been made on the future work listed in GS2197 with regards to continued engagement with government and raising awareness of Freedom of Religious Belief across the Church?

*The Bishop of St Albans to reply as Vice-Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:*

**A** Many conversations and discussions with government, the Civil Service and others, involve the encouragement of greater religious literacy. That is part of our on-going engagement below the radar. We are proactively promoting Freedom of Religion and Belief (FoRB) through a government-funded partnership with Oxford University, the

**A** FoRB Leadership Network. This is a major and project, active in a number of countries. I must also pay tribute to the work of the Bishop of Truro and his work with the government in this international field. More information on all this work is available on request. Domestically, our work is more “slow-burn” as we follow cases through the legal system where a FoRB element is present and seek ways to counter the misrepresentation of religious belief and its manifestations, and to challenge the secular assumption that religion belongs solely in the private realm.

**Mr Benjamin John (St Albans) to ask the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:**

**Q118** Which individuals and organisations are the Mission and Public Affairs Committee consulting with to determine its own policy and response to the government’s consultation on conversion therapy regarding what any legislation banning so-called conversion therapy should look like?

*The Bishop of St Albans to reply as Vice-Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:*

**A** The Church of England’s policy on Conversion Therapy follows from the General Synod vote of July 2017 which commits us to support a ban on this practice. We have therefore had no further consultation with individuals or organisations on that policy. The Government’s consultation on Conversion Therapy was launched on the 30<sup>th</sup> October and we have not yet examined it in detail. Our response will judge how far the Government’s recommendations are likely to achieve a really effective ban on these practices whilst avoiding the infringement of basic human rights.

**Dr Julie Maxwell (Winchester) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:**

**Q119** Will the Mission and Public Affairs Committee, in its response to the consultation on conversion therapy, urge the government to protect ordinary and exploratory pastoral and therapeutic practices for those (especially children) who are questioning their sexuality and/or gender identity?

*The Bishop of St Albans to reply as Vice-Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:*

**A** The consultation on Conversion Therapy was launched by the Government Equalities Office at the end of October and neither staff nor the MPA Council have yet had time to examine it in detail. The views of MPA Council members will be sought as part of the process of responding. The GEO has had the difficult task of defining

Conversion Therapy in ways which capture the government's commitment (shared by the church) to ban such practices, whilst avoiding the infringement of basic human rights or introducing a "chill factor" which might prevent people, including children, getting the support they need. We will assess how well the GEO has managed this task when we draw up a response to the consultation document.

**Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:**

**Q120** Was the Church of England approached by the Government Equalities Office as part of their pre-consultation on the government's proposals to ban conversion therapy, and if so, what did the Church of England recommend to Government about their proposals?

*The Bishop of St Albans to reply as Vice-Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:*

**A** There have been two conversations between officials of the Government Equalities Office and staff of the NCIs concerning the consultation on Conversion Therapy. The first was to appraise the church of the likely terms of the consultation and the second was immediately prior to the consultation's launch to give us a heads-up on the launch, the general approach adopted by the Government, and the time frame for responses. The position of the Church of England was already known to GEO officials as they were fully aware of the Synod vote to ban conversion therapies.

**The Revd Canon Smitha Prasadam (Europe) to ask the Chair of the Finance Committee:**

**Q121** What representations were made to Her Majesty's Government prior to the new approach of registering marriages being adopted?

*The Bishop of St Albans to reply as Vice-Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:*

**A** MPA and Legal Office staff spent some two years in dialogue with the General Register Office on this matter. It began in response to Parliament's call, which I and the then Second Estates Commissioner strongly supported, to include mothers' names on certificates and registers. Enacting this decision created an opportunity for the GRO to move toward a digitised system for all registrations, but as the technology was not ready, an interim solution had to be found which would work for weddings in all contexts. In the course of sometimes difficult and protracted negotiations, the GRO made many amendments to their initial proposals as a result of our interventions,

and told us that the church's role in framing the new system had been crucial. The new system is not perfect – but neither was the old one – and we believe we have arrived at the best compromise that was on the table.

**Dr Cathy Rhodes (Sheffield) to ask the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:**

**Q122** As a new Synod member, concerned about climate and nature, how can I engage and make a difference?

*The Bishop of St Albans to reply as Vice-Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:*

**A** Climate and nature are high on the agenda of church and society. They are likely to come before Synod regularly, so Synod members can engage fully in the processes of Synod – questions, motions, debates, votes. In 2022, Synod will debate revisions to the faculty rules to enable net zero, and the “Routemap to Net Zero Carbon by 2030” (see GS Misc 1299).

There is a special interest group, the General Synod Environment Group (GSEG), which is open to any member of Synod and which you can join here: <https://bit.ly/JoinGSEnvGroup>. There is a steering group for GSEG which you may wish to join.

The national Environment Working Group supports the church's Environment Programme and usually has two members of Synod as members of the group.

And finally, take what has been discussed and agreed at Synod back home so that everyone in the Diocese can also engage and make a difference.

## **BUSINESS COMMITTEE**

**Mr John Brydon (Norwich) to ask the Chair of the Business Committee:**

**Q123** The use of abbreviations in Synod papers is widespread. Can all future papers contain a list at the end of all abbreviations used and their meaning?

*Canon Robert Hammond to reply as Chair of the General Synod Business Committee:*

**A** The Business Committee does encourage all those preparing papers for General Synod to keep the number of abbreviations used in them to a minimum. Where abbreviations are used, we would expect them to be explained in the main body of the text as they occur. We will repeat this request to all those preparing paperwork for future groups of sessions.

**Mr Christopher Blunt (Chester) to ask the Chair of the Business Committee:**

**Q124** Who made and who can change the decision (communicated by email from Synod support, 21/10/21) that clergy are "required" to wear convocation robes at the inauguration of the new Synod?

*Canon Robert Hammond to reply as Chair of the Business Committee:*

**A** When the Convocations of Canterbury and York are called together, as they are when a new General Synod is inaugurated, and when they formally meet, Convocation dress is worn unless the President of the Convocation dispenses with the wearing of robes. As a matter of practice, the Presidents now routinely dispense with the wearing of Convocation robes except for the most formal occasions such as the inauguration and the formal presentation of Loyal Addresses to the Sovereign.

**Canon Peter Bruinvels (Guildford) to ask the Chair of the Business Committee:**

**Q125** Recognising that COVID-19 has not gone away and that the whole Synod is meeting in person the first time for a considerable length of time and the danger that COVID-19 may not leave these shores for a number of years, will he now consider implementing the answer given to me that mechanisms will now be put in place to enable Synod to be operational both In Person and Hybrid for those who are still reluctant to attend in person because of health reasons or there is another partial Lockdown or growth in COVID-19 cases?

*Canon Robert Hammond to reply as Chair of the General Synod Business Committee:*

**A** The Business Committee did consider at its last meeting the possibility of Synod meeting on a hybrid basis in the future and decided not to have hybrid groups of sessions. Noting that unfortunately some members are unable to be at a particular group of sessions, it took the view, that Synod operates better when conducted face to face as in person meetings are more conducive to good debate, deliberation, discussion and fellowship. The current Business Committee has no plans to reconsider this decision.

## **DIOCESES COMMISSION**

**Dr Richard Mantle (Leeds) to ask the Chair of the Dioceses Commission:**

**Q126** Has the Dioceses Commission received proposals for filling the Provincial Episcopal Visitor (PEV) sees of Ebbsfleet (currently vacant) and Beverley (to become vacant in February 2022) and been informed of what the timetable for filling those sees is likely to be?

*The Revd Paul Benfield to reply as Vice-Chair of the Dioceses Commission:*

**A** The Commission has not yet received any submission to fill the sees of Beverley or Ebbsfleet. However, I understand that the Archbishop of York is to make a submission regarding Beverley for consideration at the Commission's December meeting and the Archbishop of Canterbury a submission regarding Ebbsfleet for consideration at the March meeting. The timetable for filling those sees is a matter for the relevant Archbishop.

**Mr Andrew Orange (Winchester) to ask the Chair of the Dioceses Commission:**

**Q127** Given the financial strains placed on the Church of England as a consequence of the recent lockdowns, has the Council considered a possible reorganisation of the diocesan structure, either reducing the number of dioceses or capping diocesan spend, with a view to guarding the funds available (directly or indirectly) for sustaining worship at parish level?

*The Revd Paul Benfield to reply as Vice-Chair of the Dioceses Commission:*

**A** The Dioceses Commission as a Commission of the General Synod is governed by the 2007 Dioceses Mission and Pastoral Measure. It is required to keep under review the provincial and diocesan boundaries, consider the need for suffragan appointments, and encourage shared administrative support across the dioceses.

The Commission is aware of the pressures on the Church at all levels following the Covid pandemic but has no power to cap diocesan spending.

The Commission has received no instruction from the archbishops or diocesan bishops to start developing schemes. Currently, no proposals for boundary reorganisation or for closer diocesan administrative working together have been received from dioceses.

The Commission continues to monitor the Emerging Church workstreams and has been invited to engage informally with the Transforming Effectiveness team, who are seeking to encourage dioceses to share administrative functions. The other workstreams are yet to ask for input from the Commission.

**The Revd Canon Martyn Taylor (Lincoln) to ask the Chair of the Dioceses:**

**Q128** Has any work been done by the Inter Diocesan Generosity Group, the Dioceses Commission, or any other group, by way of reviewing the impact on pooled historic resources in the creation of Leeds Diocese?

*The Revd Paul Benfield to reply as Vice-Chair of the Dioceses Commission:*

**A** The Dioceses Commission published the lessons learned review of the process to create the Dioceses of Leeds in July 2021, and it is available on the Dioceses Commission area of the Church of England website.

The Dioceses Commission continues to keep the resourcing of dioceses under review and encourages dioceses to develop closer working relationships with their neighbours. The Commission looks forward to receiving further proposals for closer working schemes from the dioceses, which will enable mutual generosity and the Church's ministry and mission to flourish.

## **FAITH AND ORDER COMMISSION**

**The Revd Marcus Walker (London) to ask the Chair of the Faith and Order Commission:**

**Q129** Has any report been prepared or is being considered into the theological, ecclesiological, and doctrinal consequences of certain dioceses moving to a minster model of ministry?

*The Bishop of Coventry to reply as Chair of the Faith and Order Commission:*

**A** FAOC has not been asked to undertake any formal work specifically on the minster model, though wider work on missional ecclesiology is taking place in a variety of ways and may feed into local reflection on shaping ministry and mission. Some individual dioceses considering the minster model of ministry have themselves, locally, undertaken a process of discernment and reflection as they move towards this model.

## **LEGAL ADVISORY COMMISSION**

**The Revd Chris Moore (Hereford) to ask the Chair of the Legal Advisory Commission:**

**Q130** The Commission's updated eighth edition of the Legal Opinions in 2007 stated, "8. Section 214(6) and (8) of the Local Government Act 1972 enables ... parish councils ... defined in the section as burial authorities to contribute towards the expenses of providing or maintaining a churchyard ... (This replaces the former provision in the Parish Councils Act 1957, s.10.)".

In December 2019, the county association for parish councils in Herefordshire advised councils who were contributing towards the cost of maintenance of open churchyards that: "NALC's [National Association of Local Councils] View, as sent out to you all in 2018, is that this would be an unlawful expenditure and your Parish council could be at risk of a costly Judicial Review challenge."

*Morag Ellis QC, Dean of the Arches and Auditor (ex officio) to reply as Chair of the Legal Advisory Commission:*

**A** The Legal Advisory Commission will be reconstituted from the beginning of 2022 and this is work which it might consider undertaking. However, as explained by the Church Buildings Council in the answer to question 111, it is considered that Government action is needed to resolve this issue. The Cathedral and Church Buildings Division is advocating for the necessary clarification to be made in the course of work on the new Planning Bill and are liaising with the relevant bodies.

**Mr Charles Houston (Hereford) to ask the Chair of the Legal Advisory Commission:**

**Q131** The Burial Laws Amendment Act 1880 s.1 provides that every parishioner has the right to be buried in the parish churchyard without any service whatsoever. The Open Spaces Act 1906 section 10 provides that a parish council may maintain a burial ground: section 6 refers to disused burial grounds.

Section 20 states: The expression "burial ground" includes any churchyard, cemetery, or other ground, whether consecrated or not, which has been at any time set apart for the purpose of interment:

The expression "disused burial ground" means any burial ground which is no longer used for interments, whether or not the ground has been partially or wholly closed for burials under the provisions of a statute or Order in Council:

Please can the Commission publish an opinion, as it has with the Local Government Act 1972, on the relevance of the Open Spaces Act 1906 as a means of assisting a PCC in the cost of maintaining an open churchyard?

*Morag Ellis QC, Dean of the Arches and Auditor (ex officio) to reply as Chair of the Legal Advisory Commission:*

**A** The Legal Advisory Commission will be reconstituted from the beginning of 2022 and this is work which it could consider undertaking.

## LITURGICAL COMMISSION

### **The Revd Dr Patrick Richmond (Norwich) to ask the Chair of the Liturgical Commission:**

**Q132** At the virtual meeting of Synod members in July 2020 the Bishop of Exeter said, “The impact of the pandemic and churches being closed for public worship have indicated the need for further theological work on Holy Communion.” Is the needed theological work being done?

*The Bishop of Lichfield to reply as Vice-Chair of the Liturgical Commission:*

**A** As previously reported, a Working Group has been invited by the House of Bishops to engage in a programme of theological and liturgical investigation of various issues related to the sacrament of Holy Communion. A considerable amount of time has been invested in resourcing the House’s discussions of the administration of the sacrament; and a study day was also organised for all serving bishops last October. The Working Group is looking forward to further work on other issues raised by the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as contributing to other work by other bodies on Holy Communion within the life of the Church of England. The Group looks forward to publishing some of the fruits of its labours in due course.