

GENERAL SYNOD

February 2022

QUESTIONS

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MISSION AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL

The Revd Andrew Cornes (Chichester) to ask the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

Q1 What considerations led to the Rural Affairs Group being disbanded?

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

A The decision was made on the basis of the staffing requirement and the group’s effectiveness.

Through the Transforming Effectiveness/Simpler NCIs work, we have had to break the link between staff posts and very specific areas of responsibility in order to cover a wide range of issues with a smaller staff team. Staff capacity to service the Rural Affairs Group is just not available.

We also asked whether the Group was the most effective body to promote the needs and concerns of the rural church. The Group had few levers to make things happen and, whilst it was an excellent forum for expertise and thinking, it is harder to say what concrete changes it brought about.

We hope that the formation of a Synod members’ rural group will enable wider participation and representation linked with the ability to “rural proof” everything that comes before Synod, rather than delegating rural concerns to a small committee.

The Revd Prebendary Rosie Austin (Exeter) to ask the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

Q2 If, according to GS Misc 1307 (9), we want to be a church which ‘fully represents the communities we serve’, what steps can be taken to ensure our councils, synods and committees begin to do this too?

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

A Examples of some actions that can be taken can be found in GS 2243, in particular, the work on UKME/GMH representation in the House of Bishops and General Synod. GS 2243 hints at some of the difficulties of rebalancing the membership of such bodies – especially those whose memberships are elected, such as Synod – to ensure that the will of the electorate remains paramount. Many of our

Councils and committees have a constitutional provision to co-opt members to serve alongside those elected on the usual mandate.

Like others, the MPA Council has used that provision to ensure that it is as representative as we can make it. The last elections to the MPA Council produced an unusually well-balanced membership, and I urge Synod to bear that factor in mind when they come to vote for this and other Councils in the coming months.

The Revd Andrew Yates (Truro) to ask the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

Q3 It is now three years since the General Synod addressed the issues facing Gypsies, Travellers and Roma. On 23 February 2019 General Synod passed a motion that called on every diocese to appoint a chaplain to serve these communities.

1. How many dioceses have made this appointment;
2. What percentage of those appointed are clergy and lay; and
3. In how many cases is the importance of this ministry recognised with some form of financial reimbursement?

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

A Since 2019 there has been great progress in this area, and the Church has actively engaged with Gipsy, Traveller and Romany (GTR) issues both nationally and locally. Many dioceses have strategically engaged with GTR communities and have appointed full- or part-time chaplains, both lay and clergy, whilst others are still to make such appointments. While the National Statistics do not officially collect this data, informal Committee for Minority Ethnic Anglican Concerns (CMEAC) records report that 17 of the 42 dioceses currently have a designated chaplain or are in the process of appointing a chaplain. Other dioceses sometimes have a UKME or diversity & Inclusion officer who includes this work in their portfolio, which in some cases is an addition to other ministries.

CMEAC has recently commissioned the template for its annual update report (2022) on the progress of the 42 dioceses in Minority Ethnic concerns, which includes a section on diocesan GTR strategy, appointments and developments on synod commitments.

The Revd Ruth Newton (Leeds) to ask the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

Q4 As the climate and biodiversity crises are so important, how many Eco Churches and Eco Dioceses are registered, and how many dioceses have a nominated Diocesan Environment Officer?

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

A There has been a great deal of progress in this area.

Since the end of 2021, every single diocese in the Church of England is registered as an Eco Diocese, with 12 having received the bronze award.

Including LEPs where an Anglican church is involved, 3,106 churches are registered for Eco Church, 779 have reached bronze award, 257 silver and 15 gold.

All but 7 dioceses have a Diocesan Environment Officer, though there is a nominated contact in every diocese except one, where the post has recently become vacant.

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

Q5 Given the recently published freedom of information request showing that 1 in 17 women using abortion pills at home are being admitted to hospital with medical complications, what steps have been taken to request that the government now end this policy since all other Covid restrictions have been lifted?

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

A In our submission to the 2021 government consultation on the effects of the temporary measure to permit home use of both pills for early medical abortion, we submitted that the provision has had a negative impact on the health and wellbeing of women and girls accessing these services. For that reason, we argued that the provisions should lapse *at the latest* when the temporary provisions of the Coronavirus Act 2020 expire (24th March 2022). While the government's 'Plan B' restrictions have now been lifted, incidence of the virus remains high in the community and continues to pose a public health risk which current models suggest will be significantly lessened by Spring. We shall expect the temporary provision to be removed by the end of March, if not sooner, and the bishop of Carlisle (the lead bishop for healthcare issues) has written accordingly to the Secretary of State for Health.

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

Q6 What is the Church of England's position on the government's proposals to ban conversion therapy and how did they respond to the consultation on these proposals?

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

A Synod committed the Church to support a ban on Conversion Therapy in a debate in 2017 and our response to the Ministry of Justice consultation emphasised that commitment. The proposals from the Ministry of Justice trod a careful path between the scope of existing laws, the necessity of preserving fundamental human rights and the need for a ban to be effective in achieving its aims. We considered that the proposals got this balance about right. In the case of Conversion Therapy aimed at adults, the proposed approach to coercion as defining unacceptable practices that should be banned appeared workable without infringing human rights. Our response acknowledged the difficulties involved in defining Conversion Therapy, emphasised the need for any definition to be proportionate and effective, and broadly supported the proposals as the best way to make these practices a thing of the past.

BUSINESS COMMITTEE

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

Q7 Whilst welcoming the provision of hybrid facilities for this Synod and the next in July 2022 under the General Synod (Remote Meetings) (Temporary Standing Orders) Measure 2020 (GS2177), will he now consider making such facilities available indefinitely and on a permanent basis for those unable through health or last-minute business reasons to participate in person or in the eventuality of another pandemic affecting this Nation?

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

A The previous General Synod Business Committee took the view that Synod meetings should, wherever possible, be entirely in-person. The newly elected Business Committee has made available some hybrid facilities for this group of sessions at the express request of the Presidents, but has done so without prejudice to its future thinking, and has not made any long-term decisions regarding whether these should be developed further or expanded on a permanent basis. To make future Synod meetings fully hybrid will require considerable extra resource in terms of staffing, resourcing, training and communication and will require careful piloting, familiarisation and testing. We will however review the learnings from this group of sessions at our March and May meetings.

Mr Chris Gill (Lichfield) to ask the Chair of the Business Committee:

Q8 Thank you for arranging the induction sessions at the last Synod setting, which were generally very well received. It came as a slight surprise though that when one group of the young people who facilitated the sessions were asked if they called themselves Christians, they all replied 'no'. Could you please outline the arrangements that were put in place to choose facilitators and whether their faith or beliefs were considered a factor?

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

A The younger leaders were chosen by six secondary schools across the country that are part of the National Younger Leadership Groups, through which the Church of England Education Office works with around 250 primary and secondary young leaders in partnership with the Archbishop of York's Youth Trust. Because the young people were drawn from school contexts (rather than directly from churches) there will have been young people at a variety of stages of their own faith journey, and therefore not all would necessarily publicly identify as Christian or Anglican, as this was not a stipulation given to the schools for them to use in selecting the students to be part of the leadership programme in the first place.

CROWN NOMINATIONS COMMISSION

Mr Sam Margrave (Coventry) to ask the Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission:

Q9 It has been reported that the appointment process for the new Archbishops' Appointments Secretary was an internal advertisement, with a short time to apply, and there was an interview of one candidate. It is understood the process was conducted by an independent panel.

Please provide General Synod members with, and publish copies of, the following documents concerning the appointment of an Archbishops' Appointments Secretary so we can scrutinise this process of appointment to such an important and significant role:

- The Advertisement for the vacancy and where it was published;
- The membership of Independent panel;
- The Terms of Reference of the Independent Panel;
- The Job Description and Person Specification for the role of Appointments Secretary; and
- The Job Description and Person Specification for the role of members of the independent panel who chose the candidate.

The Archbishop of Canterbury to reply as Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission:

- A** This is a staff position appointed by the Archbishops. A vacancy arose following a restructuring of the role as part of the Simpler NCIs/Transforming Effectiveness process. The recruitment was in line with current best practice for all vacant or significantly reshaped roles within the National Church Institutions during this change.
- The post was advertised internally across the National Church Institutions' networks and open to all employees. Full details, including job description were publicly available. There is an occupational requirement to be a practicing / communicant Anglican.
- A number of experienced and potentially appointable NCI staff applied and all who applied were invited to interview. The identity of candidates is confidential so we cannot comment on the shortlist for a particular role.
- The independent interview panel of five lay members and one retired Bishop, reflected the other stakeholders in the process within the Church structures and Government.

The Revd Dr Tom Woolford (Blackburn) to ask the Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission:

- Q10** Please can you confirm that, in line with the recommendations made in *From Lament to Action*, there was an appointable candidate of UKME/GMH background in the shortlist for the Archbishops' Secretary for Appointments?

The Archbishop of Canterbury to reply as Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission:

- A** This vacancy arose following a restructuring of the role as part of the Simpler NCIs/Transforming Effectiveness process. The recruitment was in line with current best practice for all vacant or significantly reshaped roles within the National Church Institutions during this change.
- The post was open to all employees of the NCIs, including those from a UKME/GMH background. The identity of candidates is confidential so we cannot comment on the shortlist for a particular role.

Mr Richard Denno (Liverpool) to ask the Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission:

- Q11** A briefing document for a Vacancy-in-See Committee says the Committee needs to decide "whether it wishes to express a view as to whether the new bishop should be someone who will, or will not,

ordain women.” But the briefing document does not mention the Five Guiding Principles or mutual flourishing. What plans does the Commission have to add to the briefing document a need to show respect for the Church of England’s Five Guiding Principles and commitment to mutual flourishing?

The Archbishop of Canterbury to reply as Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission:

A The House of Bishops’ Declaration on the Ministry of Bishops and Priests (of which the Five Guiding Principles are part) is referenced in various stages throughout the appointment of Diocesan Bishops. For example, the Five Guiding Principles are attached to the role description for all vacancies considered by the Crown Nominations Commission. The briefing document for Vacancy-in-See Committees is currently being redrafted and I have asked the Archbishops’ Secretary for Appointments to re-emphasise the commitment to mutual flourishing in the revised version.

LEGAL ADVISORY COMMISSION

Mr Stephen Hofmeyr (Guildford) to ask the Chair of the Legal Advisory Commission:

Q12 General Synod Standing Order 144 provides that there is to “*continue*” to be a Commission of the Synod known as the Legal Advisory Commission (LAC) the purpose and membership of which are specified in the constitution approved by the Synod. Standing Order 144(3)(a) provides further that the constitution must make provision for membership, including the method by which members are to be appointed, elected or co-opted. The constitution of the LAC (at GS 1829) provides that the LAC shall consist of up to 28 members: up to 8 are *ex officio*, up to 3 are to be co-opted by the LAC and up to 17 are to be appointed by the Appointments Committee. When and by reference to what criteria will the 17 appointments be made; in the making of the appointments, what process and procedure will be followed; and, until the LAC is re-constituted, by whom will the General Synod (and the senior officers of the Church of England) be given “*authoritative and entirely independent legal opinions*” upon questions generally affecting the Church of England?

The Rt Worshipful Morag Ellis QC to reply on behalf of the Chair of the Legal Advisory Commission:

A At its meeting on 30th November, the Appointments Committee agreed to offer appointments to 17 individuals to fill the places for appointed members of the LAC. The Committee was advised by the Chief Legal Adviser that the variety of branches of the law with which

the Commission has to deal (its work is not confined to ecclesiastical law) mean that it needs to have a reasonably broad range of legal expertise within its membership, including (in addition to ecclesiastical law), charity law, property law, public law, human rights law and family law.

In the usual way, staff provided the Appointments Committee with a list of suggested appointments, together with information about those individuals' relevant legal experience and expertise. The Committee also considered other individuals. Most of those offered appointment have now accepted but the list is being finalised and will be published as soon as possible and the LAC will be able to resume its work.

ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL

The Revd Canon Andy Salmon (Manchester) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q13 How much of the Strategic Development Fund grants in the last or 5 years has gone to supporting mission in the most deprived communities in the country? Could we have a figure for the 10% most deprived and the 25% most deprived communities?

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

A Since 2017, 42% of SDF has been awarded to support mission in the most deprived communities. In 2020, the criteria for SDF were amended and now include mission in deprived communities as an explicit target. In 2021, 60% of SDF was awarded to support mission in deprived communities.

We do not have more detailed figures for awards focused on the 10% most deprived and 25% most deprived communities.

The Revd Robert Lawrance (Newcastle) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q14 How many unsuccessful bids have there been for grants from the Strategic Development Fund, and are there any common factors that have made them unsuccessful?

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

A The whole philosophy of the Strategy & Development Unit and Strategic Investment Board is to work with dioceses. We encourage early discussions so that applications that do not align to the stated purpose of the funding are identified before formal applications are made.

SDF has a two-stage application process. Since 2017, nine of the 66 Stage One proposals have not been invited forward to Stage Two. The main reasons are lack of fit with the criteria; because there is little evidence the mission approach will work; or because of concerns that the diocese lacks capacity to deliver the proposal successfully.

No Stage Two applications have been unsuccessful although sometimes less funding has been awarded than sought. In one case, one element of the proposal was not awarded funding due to concerns about its cost and future sustainability.

The Ven Stewart Fyfe (Carlisle) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q15 Given that Strategic Development Funding criteria are weighted in favour of larger population centres, in what other ways does the church prioritise central funding for mission in smaller rural communities and parishes?

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

A The Strategic Investment Board's policy to focus on larger urban settings was adopted for the 2020-22 triennium following consultation with the House of Bishops and governing bodies. It reflects the clear under-representation of the Church of England in such communities.

SDF has in fact invested an estimated £19m in rural contexts. This is a significant investment in helping to develop rural ministry for the future. Strategic Transformation Funding is available to help dioceses develop and deliver diocesan-wide mission and growth strategies which will include investment in rural communities. Dioceses and non-diocesan organisations wishing to test new approaches to rural ministry or adapt existing approaches may apply for Innovation Funding.

Discussions on the policy for the 2023-25 triennium continue but we anticipate there will be great emphasis on the Vision and Strategy – in all parts of the Church.

The Revd Dr Ian Paul (Southwell & Nottingham) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q16 What is the current total of known diocesan reserves, and what is the likely or estimated value of total parochial reserves across the Church of England?

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

A According to Diocesan Boards of Finance's financial statements, at the end of 2019 the total of unrestricted funds held by dioceses was £798m, £184m of which was held in cash. Since then, diocesan reserves have been adversely impacted by the pandemic, although deficits have been mitigated to some extent by sustainability fund grants totalling £24m across 2020 and 2021 combined.

According to data compiled for Parish Finance Statistics 2020 which will soon be made available on the Church of England website, at the end of 2020 the estimated aggregate of parishes' restricted and unrestricted reserves were £1,545m, of which £824m was held in cash and £721m in investments.

The Revd Marcus Walker (London) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q17 How many parishes have recorded a deficit in their annual accounts for the financial year 2020-21?

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

A From the data collected for the 2020 Parish Finance Statistics, 6,926 parishes (57%) recorded a deficit in 2020.

In aggregate parishes recorded a surplus of £8 million in 2020. Further information is provided in the answer to question 134 from Mr Ronson to the Chair of the Council's Finance Committee.

Mr Richard Brown (Chelmsford) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q18 In the November 2021 session, General Synod requested the Archbishops' Council to develop legislation to allow rich dioceses to share their wealth with poorer dioceses. Could the Council provide an update on progress in this matter since the last session?

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

A A note explaining the legislation that is required to give effect to the proposals in GS 2234 has been prepared, together with an initial draft of a Measure, and will shortly be sent to the Charity Commission to seek their agreement in principle in advance of First Consideration.

Given the strong support for the proposals in November 2021, it is being considered whether the Business Committee might be asked if the First Consideration stage might be deemed using the process set out in Standing Order 51A.

Mr Nic Tall (Bath & Wells) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q19 The report *From Lament to Action* estimates that people from UKME/GMH backgrounds make up 15% of those who worship in the Church of England, based on an estimate of the church's membership cited in GS 2156B. Could the method for reaching this estimate and any empirical research underlying it be shared with the Synod?

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

A The figure of 15% seems to have originated in the National Parish Congregation Diversity Monitoring study of 2007 which noted that, "among ... members under 35 years of age, the ethnic minority proportion matches the proportion in the whole population, around 15%."

Another study, "Everybody Counts" (2014) arrived at a figure for all age groups of roughly 7%. Clearly the larger figure, whilst very welcome so far as it goes, was repeated out of context and needs rethinking, although methodological limitations mean that neither figure is wholly reliable.

The Church Development Tool, developed by the Research & Statistics team in collaboration with the Evangelism and Discipleship team will, we hope, give more comprehensive and reliable information. Measuring and defining ethnicity is complicated, and many people of minority ethnic heritage chose not to self-define Ethnicity. As a result, this number varies across different reports as does the very definition of UKME/GMH.

The Revd Jacob Madin (York) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q20 In GS 2223 the Archbishop of York set out the vision for the Church of England in the 2020's including the strategic priority 'to become younger and more diverse'. Within this section he also mentions 'the poorest and most forgotten'. In light of this, are there any plans being made to increase the representation of those of a lower socioeconomic background (working class people) in the life of the Church of England?

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

A Yes, there are.

We are seeking to increase the representation of working-class people in leadership roles, building on excellent work including

Mpower in Blackburn, Mustard Seed in York and programmes in Birmingham and London. The Ministry Experience Scheme has facilitated many young adults from deprived background in discerning their skills and gifts. Many go on to a range of ministerial vocations.

For candidates seeking to be recommended to train for ordained ministry through the national discernment process, this is the first year in which socio-economic data has been requested from all candidates and it is hoped that the resulting data will influence policy, funding and support in this area going forward.

The same social diversity questions have been included in a pilot diversity data collection with senior trustees. This data could then be used to underpin and recommend actions required to address areas of underrepresentation and measure their effectiveness.

Mrs Debbie Mclsaac (Salisbury) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q21 How does the Vision and Strategy process envisage the “mixed ecology” of church playing out in a rural context, and what engagements have there been with rural parishes and dioceses to ensure that the Vision and Strategy proposals will land well in rural communities?

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

A It is clear that mixed ecology will look different in every context, reflecting the communities that the church is serving. In rural contexts it will include parishes at the core and, flowing from them, new partnerships for the common good, fresh expressions, new chaplaincies and other new forms of church including online and festival. Voices from the rural context as well as leaders from every diocese shaped the Vision and Strategy, and continue to engage in exploring what the Vision and Strategy looks like in practice. A Vision and Strategy Rural webinar in September 2021 focussed attention on the question of what the Vision and Strategy proposals mean in rural contexts and included church leaders from rural contexts in the Dioceses of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich and Carlisle on the panel.

Mrs Debbie Mclsaac (Salisbury) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q22 How can the Church of England be, as the strapline says, a Church ‘for all people in all places’ in rural areas where there is little or no public transport, poor connectivity and infrastructure and the norm is large multi-parish benefices with a single incumbent?

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

A The Church of England has always been deeply engaged in rural areas and intends to remain deeply engaged, both at a local and a national level. The rural context is not static but one that is vibrant and changing. Our presence needs to change to reflect this and working collaboratively across parishes can help provide the resources to do this. The vision of the Church for the 2020s aims for a mixed ecology of how churches work and encourages the participation of all God's people in the life of the Church. Rural churches have demonstrated how this is possible during the pandemic with benefices coming together virtually or using local connections to reach out by telephone and letter. Such innovation is inherently part of rural life and ideas such as focal ministry and festival churches are emerging from rural areas in response to the needs of those places.

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

Q23 Following the dissolution of the former Rural Affairs Group as part of the Mission and Public Affairs Council, what plans does the Archbishops' Council have for continuing its engagement with national rural issues and its support for rural parishes?

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

A The work of the Governance Review and Simpler NCIs is intending to reduce the number of governance structures and refocus the work of the National Church Institutions. Engagement with national rural issues and support for rural parishes are part of this ongoing work with the former being addressed by the newly formed Faith and Public Life team of the Archbishops' Council and the latter by the new Vision and Strategy team. Members of General Synod with an interest in these areas will be encouraged to monitor issues coming before Synod and ensure these interests are accounted for.

Mr Robin Hall (Europe) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q24 What work has been done to quantify the number of food banks currently provided by the Church of England?

Mr Robin Hall (Europe) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q25 If the data is available, can you share the number of food banks, broken down by diocese, since 2010?

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

A With permission, Chair, I will reply to questions 24 and 25 together.

The Church in Action survey 2020/21 shows that 78% of parishes are running or actively supporting a food bank or related provision. Twelve per cent started this activity in response to the pandemic. This is a marked increase on previous surveys. In 2011 the equivalent was 33% of parishes and in 2015 this had increased to 66% of parishes actively supporting a food bank. The most recent Statistics for Mission survey (2019) found that around 60% of churches (as opposed to parishes) actively support a food bank. Each survey has shown that support for food banks is widespread across all regions and communities, including rural and less deprived areas.

The Church in Action survey cannot be broken down by diocese.

Mr Charles Houston (Hereford) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q26 I understand that the percentage of weddings being conducted in churches has reduced significantly in recent years; many couples see the reception as the main event and will base their wedding plans around the location of the reception rather than their local church, leading to many wedding venues now having licences to hold weddings. I believe that this is due in part to the requirement for Banns to be read and this is discouraging couples from being married in church, resulting in lost revenue and evangelistic opportunities. What is the need for the reading of Banns and can the requirement for them be made voluntary?

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

A We know of no research which links the decline in Church of England weddings to the necessity for the reading of Banns. On the contrary, there is a good deal of anecdotal evidence that couples appreciate being able to attend church to hear their Banns (although this is not a requirement) and that this is regarded by many of the clergy as an important pastoral opportunity. The range of places where couples are able to have banns published and, therefore, where they may marry was significantly extended by the Church of England Marriage Measure 2008 so that a couple may marry in any parish with which one of them has a 'qualifying connection'. It would be possible to review the provisions concerned with qualifying connections. But removing the requirement for Banns would not result in couples having a wider a choice of parishes where they can marry.

The Revd Chris Collins (Leicester) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q27 Statistics for Mission are gathered by churches annually. However, they are overwhelmingly concerned with figures relating to church attendance and occasional offices, which strictly speaking are ecclesiastical rather than missional (though they may still offer opportunities for mission). Given our increasingly post-Christendom setting, could we not in future include attendance at evangelistic courses (Alpha, Christianity Explored etc), direct outreach activities (door-to-door visiting etc) and church-run outreach groups (toddler groups, food banks etc) in these statistics?

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

A Yes, in principle. Statistics for Mission has been used in recent years in some of the ways suggested in the question: information about social action projects was collected as part of Statistics for Mission 2017 and Statistics for Mission 2019; information about enquiry and Christian basics courses, including an estimate of attendance, was collected as part of Statistics for Mission 2018. In some cases, more detailed information would be better collected through more in-depth work with churches, such as the approach used in the Gra:ce project or the Church in Action reports. The appropriate survey methodology depends on the use for which the information is being collected.

The Revd Chris Collins (Leicester) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q28 Regarding Statistics for Mission, for what purpose(s) is the data currently used?

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

A Statistics for Mission data, and resources deriving from them, are made available to the churches and dioceses to which they relate, and to various teams within the NCIs. Many PCCs and congregations use them to help understand the changes that have taken place in their church over time. Many diocesan colleagues use them as a starting point in their work to support the churches within their dioceses. NCI staff use them to help understand the situation locally and nationally.

The Revd Andrew Cornes (Chichester) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q29 What has been the average length of parochial vacancies over the last 5 years, how does that differ from the length 10 years ago, and what are the reasons, financial or otherwise, for this difference (if any)?

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

A The requested information is not available within the NCIs.

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

Q30 Of the Benefices in the Church of England, how many are:

(a) Single Parish Benefices

(b) Multi-Parish benefices broken down by the number of parishes per benefice – i.e., how many 2-parish, 3-parish, 4-parish and so on, benefices there are?

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

A The list below has been produced using data from the Research & Statistics database system on 31st January 2022.

1. There are 4,501 single parish benefices.
2. There are 2,151 multi-parish benefices. These consist of:
 1. 860 benefices containing 2 parishes
 2. 477 benefices containing 3 parishes
 3. 312 benefices containing 4 parishes
 4. 171 benefices containing 5 parishes
 5. 136 benefices containing 6 parishes
 6. 68 benefices containing 7 parishes
 7. 45 benefices containing 8 parishes
 8. 24 benefices containing 9 parishes
 9. 22 benefices containing 10 parishes
 10. 8 benefices containing 11 parishes
 11. 5 benefices containing 12 parishes
 12. 6 benefices containing 13 parishes
 13. 5 benefices containing 14 parishes
 14. 4 benefices containing 15 parishes
 15. 2 benefices containing 16 parishes
 16. 2 benefices containing 17 parishes
 17. 1 benefice containing 19 parishes
 18. 1 benefice containing 21 parishes
 19. 1 benefice containing 27 parishes
 20. 1 benefice containing 29 parishes

The Revd Jacob Madin (York) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q31 Of all the single Parish benefices in the Church of England, how many have more than one 'worshipping centre' (location where worship is regularly held)? Can Synod please be provided with a breakdown of the frequency of multiple 'worshipping centres' per parish in single parish benefices (e.g. how many have 2 worshipping centres, how many have 3 and so on)?

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

A The list below has been produced using data from the Research & Statistics database system on 31st January 2022.

There are 1,202 single parish benefices containing more than one 'worshipping centre.' These consist of:

1. 777 parishes containing 2 'worshipping centres'
2. 239 parishes containing 3 'worshipping centres'
3. 95 parishes containing 4 'worshipping centres'
4. 44 parishes containing 5 'worshipping centres'
5. 23 parishes containing 6 'worshipping centres'
6. 10 parishes containing 7 'worshipping centres'
7. 7 parishes containing 8 'worshipping centres'
8. 3 parishes containing 9 'worshipping centres'
9. 3 parishes containing 11 'worshipping centres'
10. 1 parish containing 12 'worshipping centres'

For the purposes of the above 'worshipping centre' has been defined as a church, chapel, Bishop's Mission Order or fresh expression, contained within the Research & Statistics database system.

Mr Robin Lunn (Worcester) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q32 Taking into account the number of candidates coming forward for ordination, does the Archbishops' Council have a policy or a leaning re the reduction of Stipendiary Clergy numbers in individual dioceses?

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

A The availability of sufficient, equipped and capable ministers (lay and ordained) will be critical if local worshipping communities are to fulfil the aspirations of the Vision and Strategy. We see and receive the recent increase in stipendiary ordinand numbers as God's generous provision for the Church. Whilst it is for individual dioceses to set their own plans in terms of stipendiary ministry deployment, the Archbishops' Council will seek to encourage and support the

deployment of stipendiary clergy in roles and contexts consonant with the aspirations of the Vision and Strategy. If anything, we believe that over the next ten years that will require a small but continued increase in the number of ordinands beginning training.

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

Q33 Could we be given the figures for England for (a) the number of parishes (defined as any church or group of churches having a PCC) being served by an incumbent priest or priest-in-charge and (b) the number of parishes without an incumbent or priest-in-charge, as at the most recent date for which figures are available and on the corresponding date in the preceding two years. Please also supply a breakdown by diocese if available.

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

A Clergy are generally licenced to a benefice not a parish, so we do not hold the information required to answer the question posed. The clergy data to which we have access are at benefice level not parish level and should be treated as indicative rather than fully comprehensive.

As of the end of 2020 (the latest data available) there were 6,200 benefices with at least one ordained clergyperson. Of these, there were 4,940 benefices with at least one clergyperson whose job title was assigned as 'Incumbent or incumbent status'. The Church of England has approximately 6,700 total benefices.

In the available dataset, not all clergy are linked to a benefice, and if a clergyperson is licenced to more than one benefice (or combined benefices) that fact may not be apparent, which means that more benefices may have clergy than these figures suggest.

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

Q34 What was the total number of people employed in full and part time diocesan roles across the UK, excluding parish priests and lay readers, in (a) 1959, (b) 1979, (c) 1989, (d) 1999, (e) 2010 and (f) 2020? This number should include archbishops, bishops, suffragan bishops, archdeacons, governance managers, human resource managers, operations directors, inclusivity and diversity managers, directors of giving, mission enablers, directors of social justice, environment managers, PAs to bishops and archbishops, training leaders, youth leaders, conference centre managers and wardens, and all associated support staff.

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

A The requested information, where available, was presented to General Synod in November 2021 in response to a similar question (Q13). For reference, it has been re-posted on the noticeboard. 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 in the roles outlined in the question, 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.

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

Q35 Could the Council provide a year-by-year breakdown since 2000 to the present of 1) number of clergy ordained within the Church of England 2) number of Church of England clergy retiring, and 3) number of Church of England clergy leaving active ministry before reaching the Normal Pension Age?

The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich to reply on behalf of the Presidents 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 some of the information requested, figures have not been collected consistently, if collected at all, over the last 20 years; as much information as possible has been provided.

The Revd Fiona Gibson (Hereford) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q36 In the reorganisation of NCIs as part of *Transforming Effectiveness*, which posts have been or will be reduced or made redundant; which teams are being merged or reduced; and which teams are being retained intact or sustained at their current size?

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

A Transforming Effectiveness has joined up existing teams across six functional areas: Faith and Public Life, Buildings, Vision and Strategy, Ministry and Development, Data Services and Education and Growing Faith. A list of the existing teams involved will be published on the notice board.

Stage One proposals involved appointments to the new senior structure for the six functional areas. Directors are now in post in these areas. Four roles were removed at this point: Director of Renewal & Reform, Director of Evangelism & Discipleship, Director of Information Management, Library & Archives, and Head of Research & Statistics. There were significant changes to four further roles. Three senior staff left the NCIs following this phase.

We are now into the second stage of the process and since that is in a formal consultation phase at present it is neither possible nor appropriate to comment on the posts involved.

The Revd Fiona Gibson (Hereford) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q37 What is the rationale behind the grounds on which those decisions are made?

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

A Transforming Effectiveness looked to simplify national church operations to eliminate duplication where possible, bringing closely related operations into single teams and introducing new ways of working which provide clarity of function and priorities. The aim is to be both more effective and reduce costs. The rationale is to enable the Church to better serve God's mission. The work is based on two core questions which were the subject of a scoping exercise across the church – firstly, how does the work of the NCIs best support and enable the flourishing of the local church? Secondly, for a smaller area of the work in scope, how does the work of the NCIs best serve the Church in her national and international engagement?

The Revd Canon James Blandford-Baker (Ely) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q38 What has been the impact of the changes resulting from Transforming Effectiveness on:

a. the important specialist roles previously in the Evangelism and Discipleship team;

- b. the continued research in each of these areas; and
- c. the specialist support in evangelism and outreach which has been resourcing parishes and dioceses to date?

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

A The Transforming Effectiveness proposals bring together the Evangelism and Discipleship team, Renewal and Reform team and Strategic Development Unit into a single Vision and Strategy team serving the church in taking forward the Vision and Strategy. As you will know, evangelism and discipleship are core to the vision of a Jesus Christ-centred church shaped by the Five Marks of Mission, and will be core to the work of the Vision and Strategy team as they support dioceses and parishes to take forward the Vision and Strategy in their local context.

Stage One of the proposals appointed the former Director of Evangelism and Discipleship Dave Male as a Co-Director with Debbie Clinton of the new Vision and Strategy team.

Stage Two of the proposals are currently in a formal consultation period which ends on the 16th February, so no decisions have yet been made on specific roles or activities.

Mr Stephen Hogg (Leeds) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q39 The staff of Church House have worked hard during these difficult times to support members, for which I am sure we are all grateful. What changes are being proposed to the staff structures and workstreams within the NCIs, and are staff being consulted (formally or informally) about any proposed restructuring?

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

A Transforming Effectiveness proposes changes to six functional areas: Faith & Public Life, Buildings, Vision & Strategy, Ministry Development, Data Services and Education & Growing Faith, with the aim of alignment into single accountability structures, introducing new ways of working, and reducing costs.

Chief Officers designed the future organisation on the basis of principles from extensive scoping work across the church as well as input from senior staff. Senior staff were formally consulted on the Stage One proposals in August 2021, informal meetings were held

with affected team members and feedback was also welcomed by email. Decisions were made following extensive analysis of feedback, then communicated and implemented.

Stage Two involved appointed senior staff working with the Chief Officers, each other, and their prospective teams to co-create a set of proposals for their team structures. These proposals are now in formal consultation which completes on 16th February.

The Revd Canon Andrew Dotchin (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q40 Clergy who are not authorised to exercise ministry do not have vote or voice in Provincial and Diocesan Houses of Clergy. As members of Clergy, they are barred from being on the Electoral Roll of a Parish and have no vote or voice in the Houses of Laity either. What legislative changes would need to be put in place to redress this injustice?

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

A The circumstances in which clergy may stand for election to one of the Convocations and to vote in those elections are set out in Canon H 2 "Of the Representation of the Clergy in the Lower House of the Convocations". Any changes to enable clergy who are not authorised to exercise ministry to stand for election to General Synod would require an Amending Canon to amend Canon H 2.

Mrs Amanda Robbie (Lichfield) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q41 Is the Church in discussion with the Charity Commission to try to ensure that the forthcoming registering of the approximated 35,000 churches that are currently excepted from registration is done in a way that is simple and efficient, keeping ongoing reporting burdens to a minimum?

The Revd Charlotte Cook to reply on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

A Since 1st October 2008, parochial church councils with income over £100,000 have been required to register with the Charity Commission. So far as the Church of England is concerned, some 9,000 PCCs are currently excepted from the requirement to register because their annual income does not meet the threshold. As a result of legislation introduced in 2021, those PCCs with income not exceeding £100,000 continue to be excepted from registration until 31 March 2031. Around 30 to 40 PCCs register each year as their

income crosses the threshold. A complete set of guidance, agreed with the Charity Commission, for PCCs who need to register is provided on the Parish Resources website. If nearer to 2031 it becomes clear that the Government does not intend to extend the exception period for a further term, steps will be taken to provide all PCCs with the necessary guidance to enable them to register.

Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q42 Why has General Synod's Youth Council been abolished and who made the decision to abolish it?

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

A General Synod has not had a Youth Council. The Church of England Youth Council (CEYC) was established in its recent form in 2004 and three people (aged 18-25) were elected from its membership to attend and speak at General Synod. In 2019, after long and thoughtful discussions amongst its own core leadership group and diminishing membership, CEYC recognised that it was not attracting viable numbers (despite the fact that the National Society had funded an intern to try and add internal organisational capacity) so CEYC decided to disband. It was not 'abolished'.

Dr Janette Allotey (Chester) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q43 In order to ensure that the voices of young members of church are heard at General Synod, are there any plans to set up a successor to the Church of England Youth Council which I am told has been abolished?

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

A CEYC disbanded, it was not 'abolished'. The Education Office engages with children and young people as part of its own work and is running national younger leadership groups involving 250 aged 7-18. Some of these young people helped facilitate the 'vision' sessions in the induction programme at November's Synod but this group cannot have a representative role at General Synod as its members are not elected, nor is there a mechanism for a few members to be chosen to be 'representative' in this way. Following the decision of CEYC to disband, our hope was that we could identify a different way to provide representation at Synod, but this has not proven possible during the course of the pandemic. If Synod would now like to increase representation of younger voices in the light of

its recent elections, we would be happy to receive suggestions and formulate proposals for Synod to consider.

The Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q44 What steps are the Archbishops' Council taking to protect the members of the National Safeguarding Team and senior staff of the NCIs from online and other abuse, including cyberbullying, especially when it emerges from survivors, respondents and their supporters in and beyond this Synod?

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

A All members of staff should expect to be treated with dignity and respect and be able to work and flourish in a positive environment. Bullying and harassment towards a member of staff is not acceptable and appropriate action will be taken against those who conduct such behaviour. On the occasions this does occur members of staff have the right to be appropriately supported and protected from any such behaviour.

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

Q45 In each of the last five years, how many National Safeguarding Team (NST) Core Groups have been established to consider allegations and/or complaints about bishops' handling of safeguarding matters; and what was the outcome of the deliberations of those core groups?

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

A The NST only hold data for 2020 and 2021 that specifically relate to the volume of core groups relating to Bishops or retired Bishops handling of safeguarding allegations. In 2020 there were 8 core groups, 5 allegations were substantiated which resulted in 3 CDM applications. In 2021 there were 27 core groups, 12 allegations were unsubstantiated, 7 substantiated and 8 core groups are ongoing. This resulted in 2 CDM applications. The introduction of the Safeguarding Casework Managements System will allow better data collection and analysis in the future.

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

Q46 Will the Archbishops' Council publish a list of all the recommendations made in safeguarding Lessons Learned Reviews commissioned nationally or by dioceses over the past ten years; and

all recommendations contained in external safeguarding audits and inquiries (such as IICSA) over the same time period; and indicate next to each recommendation whether that recommendation has been accepted or rejected; and if accepted the progress made in implementing it; and if rejected, the reason it was rejected and the body that made the decision?

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

A The National Safeguarding Steering Group (NSSG) acts as the central point on behalf of the Church of England for the reception prior to publication of Lessons Learned Case Reviews and other reports on high-profile Safeguarding cases, reviewing and commenting on any recommendations prior to publication and stating on behalf of the Church of England whether the Church is in agreement with the recommendations made in any reviews as well as monitoring the implementation of any agreed actions. The recommendations from Lessons Learned Reviews are published on the safeguarding section of the Church of England website.

The Revd Canon Simon Talbott (Ely) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q47 An 'update on timing for the Smyth Review' (the Keith Makin Review) from the National Safeguarding Team (NST), published on the Church of England website on Monday 24 January 2022, states: "[the reviewers] hope to have a draft version of the report ready at the end of April which will be followed by a representation process. The length of time that takes will be dependent on the volume of representations needed and the level of engagement and feedback provided by the various people and organisations involved. When more details on this are finalised a publication date will be set." This update is welcome, but may Synod please be provided with an update on the progress of the review of the Trevor Devamanikkam case, announced over two years ago on 22 November 2019?

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

A The independent lessons learnt review into the case of Trevor Devamanikkam was referred to the Independent Safeguarding Board, for advice on how to proceed, due to delays in the process. The Chair, Maggie Atkinson, has now responded and recommended that the review progress to publication as a necessary part of the Church's learning on safeguarding. She noted that this will take some time to complete given that the reviewer will need to refresh

her work so far and pick up what now needs to be done. The ISB intends to contribute an initial chapter to the review outlining why it has taken as long, the stages and personnel changes it has gone through, and why the report is now being published, noting that the reviewer Jane Humphreys, is an independent expert with no C of E connections.

The Revd Canon Lisa Battye (Manchester) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q48 Given that Diocesan Registrars provide key legal advice on which Dioceses rely when dealing with complex and sensitive matters, are there standard terms of engagement under which they are employed which establish a clear chain by which they are held accountable for their professional and personal conduct when acting on behalf of the Diocese, and if so, please may these be published?

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

A Diocesan Registrars are solicitors in private practice. They are subject to professional regulation by the Solicitors Regulation Authority, the Code of Conduct for Solicitors and various other rules and regulations. The professional services provided by a diocesan registrar in respect of the annual fee ('the retainer') paid to him or her are currently prescribed in Schedule 2 to the Legal Officers (Annual Fees) Order 2021 (SI 2021.844). In 2014 the Fees Advisory Commission said that there should be an annual review discussion between the registrar, the diocesan bishop and other diocesan users of the registrar's services. Where work is carried out by a diocesan registrar over and above that which is included in the annual fee, it should be the subject of a client care letter providing information about the solicitor's services, including information about the likely cost and how to complain if things go wrong.

HOUSE OF BISHOPS

The Revd Canon James Blandford-Baker (Ely) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q49 Since the meetings of the House of Bishops are meetings of a House of the General Synod and therefore public, what are the future dates, how might someone be able to attend, and where can they find minutes of past meetings?

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

A Meetings of the House of Bishops are sometimes held in public. But many meetings are held in committee of the whole House under Standing Order 14. Members of the public are not permitted to attend

meetings held in committee. When meetings are expected to be held in committee, it is not necessary to publicise the dates and locations, other than for members. Similarly, the minutes of meetings held in committee are confidential to members of the House.

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

Q50 How does the new vision and strategy intend to support rural churches, both in the role as custodians of the nation's built heritage, and as local points of hope and help in communities facing rural isolation, worrying loneliness and suicide rates, and poor access to services, recognising that the Church is often the only agency left physically present in our rural communities?

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

A First of all, I want to pay tribute to the clergy and people who continue to provide a presence in all our communities, especially hard-pressed remote rural communities where the church is often the last agency left. The vision for the 2020s is deeply concerned with finding ways of maintaining that presence. The phrase "mixed ecology" refers to the whole ecosystem of the church, rural as well as urban. Our buildings will be an integral part of that mixed ecology and evolve in different ways to meet the needs of the communities they serve. The vision sees all God's people as missionary disciples reaching out to serve Christ in their community, especially for those who are isolated and vulnerable. Partnerships and new ways of working will be key in delivering our ambitions in the strategy recognising we need to be humbler in working with others to serve the common good.

Dr Felicity Cooke (Ely) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q51 What is the timetable for setting up the Standing Commission on the House of Bishops' Declaration, and how is it to be constituted (GS 2225)?

The Revd Mark Wallace (Chelmsford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q52 It was announced last year that the House of Bishops would be establishing a Standing Commission to monitor the way the Five Guiding Principles are being applied in the Church. Can any more now be said about the plans for its work?

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

A With permission, Chair, I would like to answer questions 51 and 52 together.

I regret that this has not yet been possible to establish the Standing Commission referred to in GS 2225. It will be established in the course of this year.

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

Q53 When can General Synod expect to see the publication of the Independent SCIE Safeguarding Audit in respect of Bishopthorpe Palace and the office of the (former) Archbishop of York?

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

A Thank you for raising this question. The SCIE audit of Bishopthorpe Palace looked at the safeguarding arrangements of the Palace and the role the Archbishop has in those processes. Due to a number of key staff moving on during 2021, we were unable to move as quickly as we had planned on the report but are confident it will be published by Easter 2022.

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

Q54 Prior to the endorsement by General Synod of the Setting God's People Free Report in February 2017, there had been a series of Reports from 1945 onwards identifying the need to equip and release lay people for faithful and distinctive Christian witness and service in everyday life. Please could you (A) list these Reports and publication dates for the record; and (B) state whether or not the House of Bishops has considered why these Reports failed to make a lasting impact. Finally, (C) what actions will the House of Bishops (indeed the whole College) take to ensure that the same fate does not befall the Setting God's People Free Report and, instead, that the whole of the Church of England truly becomes a Church of 'missionary disciples' in 'everyday faith'?

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

A *Kingdom Calling* (GS Misc 1254) identifies the critical factors that impinge on the lasting impact of work to encourage and equip lay people in Christian Witness and service. A working paper used in preparation of KC presents a chronological summary of reports and responses since 1945 and is available on the Church of England website.

The House have given time to these issues when receiving reports such as *Kingdom Calling* and *Ministry for Christian Presence*

(GS 1224). The College recently held group work sessions on the Missionary Disciples priority in which ongoing practical responses were discussed.

Specific cultural change and clear implementation is a success of the SGPF programme. This has been aided by lay and episcopal champions and a strong Advisory Group. Retaining an ongoing focus on cultural change will be included in future championing roles undertaken on behalf of the House.

The Revd Andrew Yates (Truro) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q55 Are there any positive specific examples from Dioceses of their DBF owned properties being used in a pro-active response to the current Housing Crisis?

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

A In Dioceses across England, plans for building homes on land owned by DBFs are progressing. There is ongoing dialogue with Homes England, local authorities and other partners, including those leading the Stewardship Initiative. In addition, there is a geospatial map of all Church of England land and buildings in England, enabling a strategic approach to development on DBF and Church-owned land. Housing development is a long process and there are good examples of initiatives in many Dioceses across England progressing towards getting planning permission. In most instances, partnerships with local authorities, developers, housing associations and other landowners add to the value of what is being done. The aim is both to provide high quality, truly affordable homes and to generate ongoing long-term income for the Church through retaining ownership, where possible, of freehold.

The Revd Mark Bennet (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q56 In view of the case study on p50 of the “Coming Home” report published in February 2021 by the Commission of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York on Housing, Church and community and the prominence of key workers during the pandemic, what has been done since the publication of the report to explore the possibilities of Almshouses further, and to develop the Almshouse model as a realistic option for affordable housing, including housing for key workers, in large scale developments such as are being built and proposed in the Oxford Diocese amongst others?

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

A The Executive Team following up “Coming Home” is discussing with the Almshouse Association the idea of a dedicated Church/ almshouse worker. Almshouses must be owned by a charity and are not subject to Right to Buy. They are for those in need of truly affordable homes, including designated groups such as elderly people, families and key workers. In Newham the proposal is for 240 homes, many for key workers, on 3 church sites. Opportunities on larger scale developments for almshouses are being actively pursued, with constructive conversations with Oxford and many other Dioceses going on. Consideration is being given to the possibility of creating a Housing Association, with a national remit but strong local pastoral links, and developing this idea is ongoing. 21st century almshouses lend themselves to this model.

Professor Roy Faulkner (Leicester) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q57 Can the Church of England’s Environmental Programme confirm that it supports achievement of net zero carbon by 2030 by means of, amongst other things, reducing industrial activity?

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

A In 2020 General Synod called on all parts of the Church of England to set out a plan to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2030. This target only covers the carbon emissions which we have control over, namely our own energy use and our work-related transport as defined in GS Misc 1262:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-11/GS%20Misc%201262%20EWG%20update.pdf>.

This does not include industrial activity.

During this year when the UK holds the Presidency of COP26, the Environment Programme, alongside other faith actors, is calling for the UK to lead by example with more ambitious NDCs*. This means the government would need to pursue policies to reduce the country’s carbon emissions, which includes decarbonising industry.

**NDCs are Nationally Determined Contributions, each country’s own contribution to reduce emissions to meet the ambitions set in Paris at COP21.*

The Revd Marcus Walker (London) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q58 How many parishes have recorded their Energy Footprint Tool data for 2020, broken down by emissions rating?

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

A The analysis of the 2020 EFT results is available here:

www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-11/EnergyFootprintTool2020.pdf.

It shows 4,700 churches (31% of all churches) engaged with the tool, of which 3,600 completed a response with usable data (23%). We are grateful to all who completed this, especially with the pressures of the pandemic.

By Emissions Rating (per m²) it is: 28% A or above, 12% B, 11% C, 7% D, 6% E, 7% F and 29% G.

Two striking findings are:

1. 7% of churches are 'net zero carbon'.
2. The carbon footprint of the average large, urban church is 15 times the average small rural church (21.4 vs 1.4 tCO₂e). This reinforces the fact that our small rural churches already have a low carbon footprint and might focus primarily on maintenance, whilst larger churches will be wanting to actively consider how to become more energy efficient and plan for a move away from oil and gas heating.

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

Q59 In the context of Safeguarding and CDM Reform, has the Archbishops' Council considered the merits and costs of an Ombudsman scheme for resolving issues within clearly defined parameters?

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

A The creation of an Ombudsman scheme was previously considered in or around 2018. At that time survivors who were consulted were not in favour of such an approach. Oversight of safeguarding is now carried out by the Independent Safeguarding Board.

The Implementation Group on the reform of the CDM has briefly considered the benefits of an Ombudsman-style scheme but consider the approach to be slow and ineffective in resolving complaints.

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

Q60 Given that:

the Clergy Discipline Measure 2003: Code of Practice, April 2021 revision states at Paragraph 147 that, "Where the bishop dismisses an allegation because it lacks sufficient substance for

the purposes of the Measure, but the conduct of the cleric in question nevertheless raises cause for concern, the bishop may take appropriate and proportionate action outside of the Measure. This might include advice or an informal warning as to future behaviour. The matter will usually be recorded on the clergy 'blue' file"

and that this paragraph gives no guidance as to the length of time that this note will be held on the file, and given that principle 5(1)(e) of the General Data Protection Regulation provides that data shall be held in a form "which permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the personal data are processed",

what guidelines have been provided to dioceses as to how the length of time shall be determined during which such matters shall remain on a member of clergy's 'blue' file?

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

A There have been no specific guidelines issued in relation matters which fall under paragraph 147 of the CDM Code of Practice. The Code, in reference to letters issued under similar circumstances, recommends that the document should be kept on the file for an "appropriate period" (see paragraphs 163 and 232).

In respect of GDPR, the current "Blue File" policy has a schedule which provides that for informal complaints the retention period is 20 years from the date of the cleric's death and for formal complaints under the Measure it is 70 years from the date of the cleric's death.

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

Q61 Canon C 4 (Of the quality of such as are to be ordained deacons or priests) states at paragraph 3:

'No person shall be admitted into holy orders who is suffering, or who has suffered, from any physical or mental infirmity which in the opinion of the bishop will prevent him from ministering the word and sacraments or from performing the other duties of the minister's office.'

Given that Canon C 4.3 was enacted before the Equality Act 2010, could guidance be offered by the Legal Office to the House of Bishops that states unequivocally that the Equality Act supersedes Canon C 4.3, and as a consequence the 2010 Equality Act also makes Canon C 4.3 null and void?

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

A Canon C 4.3 remains in operation. Advice recently provided by the Legal Office to the Ministry Division is that Canon C 4.3 can and should be interpreted in a way that does not conflict with relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010. That a person is disabled does not necessarily mean he or she is unable to minister the word and sacraments or perform the other duties of an ordained minister. A disability would exclude a person from ordination only if it meant that person was not able to do things essential for a priest or deacon to do in order to exercise ordained ministry – for example, an inability to speak or otherwise communicate. But having difficulty with speaking or communicating should not necessarily rule a person out. It will depend on the facts of the particular case and what, if any, reasonable adjustments can be made.

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

Q62 Since the amendment to Canon B 8 there have probably been about 400 Petertide ordination services. In order to “benefit the mission of the Church” (quoting B 8.4) through contemporary presentation at such public occasions, how many of these ordination services have been deliberately conducted without the use of cassock, surplice, alb, scarf or stole opting instead to follow the provisions of Canon C 27 and, for example (and given the formality of the occasion), to ask ordinands, bishops and other clergy to wear a suit and clerical collar?

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

A The requested information is not available within the NCI’s.

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

Q63 Subsection 3 of the report *Called to Full Humanity*, on which resolution 1.10 of the 1998 Lambeth Conference was based (<https://www.anglicancommunion.org/resources/document-library/lambeth-conference/1998/section-i-called-to-full-humanity/section-i10-human-sexuality>), condemns female circumcision (now usually referred to as “Female Genital Mutilation” or “FGM”) as “sinful in any context”. Does this remain the current position of the House of Bishops?

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

A We continue to assert that Female Genital Mutilation is ‘sinful in any context’ and is a practice that should be disavowed and halted globally. We agree with the WHO that it is ‘a violation of rights with no medical justification’ and with the UN that it ‘constitutes an extreme form of discrimination against women’. We support the UN’s ‘call to all States, international and national organizations, civil society and communities to uphold the rights of girls and women [and] on those bodies and communities to develop, strengthen, and support specific and concrete actions directed towards ending female genital mutilation’.

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

Q64 Please could the House of Bishops clarify if there is any record of how dioceses and churches are tackling HIV stigma in the Church of England?

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

A There is no formal record of how dioceses and churches are tackling HIV stigma in the Church of England, but we continue to welcome and support ways in which the ethos and recommendations of the 2004 report ‘*Telling The Story: Being Positive About HIV? AIDS: A Report by the Mission and Public Affairs Council (GS 1530)*’ have been endorsed and implemented in dioceses and parishes.

The Revd Canon John Dunnett (Chelmsford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q65 For which appointments to archdeacon, suffragan and diocesan bishops in the last two years has ‘substantial experience of leading a church into growth’ been a core criterion?

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

A Of the six diocesan and thirteen suffragan bishop appointments in the last two years, six role specifications included an explicit criterion of experience in leading a church into growth. A significant number of the role specifications referenced church growth and more analysis of this needs to be undertaken in order to provide an accurate response within the boundaries of the confidentiality of the appointment processes.

There is no central record of role specifications for archdeacon appointments.

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

Q66 Now that the Armed Forces Act 2021 has become law what steps and guidance are being taken by him as a signatory to the Armed Forces Covenant to ensure that the Church of England and its Dioceses, Boards of Education and Agencies including Church Housing Associations are able to show 'due regard' when it comes to applications for the provision of education and housing services to and by the Armed Forces Community and in accordance with the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant that no person should be disadvantaged because of their service to the Nation?

The Bishop to the Armed Forces to reply on behalf of the House of Bishops:

A The new statutory duty to have due regard to principles set out in the new section 343AA of the Armed Forces Act 2006 (which aim to remove disadvantages for service people and state that special provision may be justified for them) applies only to bodies specified in that section and does not cover diocesan or national bodies of the Church of England. The duty does apply to the governing bodies and trusts of Church of England schools and Academies. If the Secretary of State (as expected) issues guidance under the new legislation, this will be drawn to the attention of Church schools. Although not subject to the statutory duty, the National Church Institutions when recruiting guarantee an interview for veterans who have service-related injuries provided the application meets the essential criteria for the job. They also support the employment of veterans by advertising vacancies on the Career Transition Partnership website.

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

Q67 Is it the case that in advance of receipt of the Makin report into the abuse by John Smyth QC, and indeed in advance of all the evidence having been secured by Mr Makin, a policy decision has already been taken that no person who can claim victim status, to any degree, will face any sanction whatsoever concerning a potential cover up, no matter how prima facie culpable they may be, or how devastating such conduct might have been to Smyth's African victims?

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

A It must be acknowledged that victims of abuse are in a very difficult position in relation to challenges of disclosing their own abuse and this must be borne in mind in relation to their ability to follow the safeguarding guidance in place at the time of their abuse and

subsequently. All victims and survivors including those that are ordained should have the right to anonymity when engaging with the review team without fear that their identity will be disclosed. I can confirm a policy decision was made by the NST not to sanction any victims of John Smyth captured within the Terms of Reference 3.16 of the Makin Review unless they pose a current safeguarding risk. This is a proportionate and sensitive decision.

Mr Martin Sewell (Rochester) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q68 In the concluded case of the CDM complaint against the Dean of Christ Church, Oxford, Dr Martyn Percy, the President of Tribunals, Dame Sarah Asplin, in her Decision dated 28 May 2021, found that there was no sufficient evidence of 'serious misconduct' and decided that "it is entirely disproportionate that this matter should be referred to a tribunal."

At the November 2021 Synod the Lead Bishop for Safeguarding declined to publicly confirm that Dr Percy was restored by that decision to good standing in the National Church.

In the absence of either the National Church or Diocese of Oxford requiring the Dean to undertake an assessment under the Safeguarding (Clergy) Risk Assessment Regulations 2016, can you fully explain the basis for that reluctance?

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

A It is not appropriate to discuss individual cases or specific decisions relating to an individual case. All safeguarding investigations follow the House of Bishops Practice guidelines.

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

Q69 What regulatory and complaint management scheme currently exists to ensure consistency and fair practice across the Dioceses within Safeguarding Case Management Groups?

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

A Safeguarding Case Management Group is a term being considered to replace "core group" as part of the revision of the managing allegations guidance. House of Bishops Safeguarding Guidance sets the requirements for safeguarding processes. There is no national "regulatory and complaint management scheme" as individual cases are the responsibility of the diocese in question.

Ms Mary Talbot (Europe) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q70 Thank you for the detailed update on Safeguarding and the progress that is being made. You state that the National Redress Scheme is in the development stage. While realising that the Interim Support Scheme was introduced to allow time for this to happen, do you have any timescale for when development of the project will be completed?

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

A The Redress Scheme will continue to be developed over the course of 2022 with the aim of introducing it as soon as possible.

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

Q71 When does the existence and authority of a Safeguarding Case Management Group cease?

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

A “Safeguarding Case Management Group” is a term being considered to replace “core group” in the revision of House of Bishops’ guidance on managing allegations. There is no universal point for cessation as a decision would be made on a case-by-case basis. A key consideration would be satisfactory arrangements being in place for any risk to be managed. Thereafter, arrangements might be monitored by the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser through a Safeguarding Agreement as necessary.

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

Q72 Is it the case that, to the best of the knowledge of the Church of England, there has still been no investigation into the abuse by John Smyth QC in South Africa, and no steps have yet been taken to supply the Archbishop in Cape Town with all that he needs to investigate this abuse?

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

A The Archbishop of Canterbury wrote in March 2021 to the Archbishop of Cape Town asking if he would be willing to undertake a review of the activities of John Smyth in Southern Africa, and offering his support for this. The Archbishop of Cape Town replied outlining what they knew about Smyth, but as far as we know there has not been a further investigation. In my view once the Makin Review is completed, subject to any legal constraints, as much information as possible should be passed to the Anglican Church in Southern Africa, with a further offer of support for an investigation.

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

Q73 Is it correct that under the terms of the Past Cases Review no person will be held responsible for mishandling information if the perpetrator is dead?

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

A The objectives of Past Cases Review 2 (PCR2) refer to living clergy and church officers only, however nearly all dioceses undertook a Deceased Clergy Review in 2014 and some Dioceses have included all deceased clergy files during PCR2 or where specific safeguarding cases relate to linked members of clergy that are both living and deceased.

There are lessons to learn from survivors of abuse relating to deceased clergy, with survivors being encouraged to meet with independent reviewers. Any review of deceased clergy files will be included in local PCR2 findings, subsequent related local recommendations, along with overarching themes that are considered for inclusion in the final national report.

The handling of information relating to a deceased person does not constitute personal data and is not subject to UK GDPR. Any mishandling of such information would need to be considered on a case-by-case basis.

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

Q74 In the General Synod Questions & Answer session in February 2020 Question 55 sought assurance that Churches historically sympathetic to the private teaching and public leadership of worship by the Revd Jonathan Fletcher would be warned of his withdrawn PTO and given a recommendation that a proper Safeguarding Agreement ought to be in place should he wish to worship publicly in our churches. The then Safeguarding Lead Bishop reported that the Diocese of Southwark had undertaken responsibility for seeking such an agreement “in the Diocese *and beyond*”. Was such a countrywide protection put in place and is it still current?

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

A Jonathan Fletcher has neither license nor Permission To Officiate, information which is publicly available. Risk management measures have been duly considered and implemented where appropriate. The NST and the diocese continue to work together with statutory agencies to ensure any identified risks are managed effectively.

The Revd Jack Shepherd (Liverpool) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q75 Could legislation be introduced at this Session of General Synod, or the next, concerning the introduction of individual cups at Holy Communion? In the meantime, what specific practical measures are in place to reassure churches that, as Bishop Michael Ipgrave answered in response to questions 38 – 41 at the November 2021 Session, “we clearly, as a House of Bishops and as Bishops individually, are not interested in policing this in an inquisitive or a punitive way”?

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

Q76 The further easing of church guidance rules is welcome (25th January 2022, Version No 2.4).

Careful consideration needs to be given to the question of whether the sacrament should be administered in one kind or in both kinds, given the continued potential for risks to health posed by the common cup.

There are three ways currently for the administration of Communion: 1) the communicant can receive the bread alone; 2) the president may dip the bread in the wine before giving to the communicant; 3) the communicant can receive wine from the common cup in the way they did so before the pandemic. The order of these three ways reflects possible greater risk from infection from 1 to 3.

In view of the widespread reluctance amongst congregations to return to the Common Cup and (ii) the number of congregations across the Church of England which have now adopted individual cups at Holy Communion, and, in the light of Anglican theological and legal commitment to both eating and drinking as a central part of Holy Communion, what encouragement are they therefore planning to give for congregations who use multiple cups?’

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

A With permission, I will answer questions 75 and 76 together.

As I mentioned in November, the House of Bishops has agreed that it does not wish to propose the necessary legislative business to the General Synod which would make the use of individual cups indisputably lawful.

This very unusual season in the life of the Church has meant that different churches and ministers have adopted different churches and ministers have adopted different forms of administering Holy

Communion, including communion in one kind, simultaneous administration, and the common cup; some have also experimented with the use of individual cups. I am grateful to Andrew Atherstone and Andrew Goddard for their recent Grove booklet on administering Holy Communion which represents one view within the careful theological work that underpins these different approaches, and emphasises the importance of the unity of the ‘one bread and one cup’.

Miss Debbie Buggs (London) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q77 At the November 2021 group of sessions, in answer to a supplementary question from Andrew Atherstone relating to Questions 38-41, in which he said that “many parishes will be introducing individual cups during Advent” and asking whether “diocesan bishops would like to be informed of these local developments” the Bishop of Lichfield, replying on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops, said: “It would be interesting to know what is happening. We clearly as the House of Bishops and as bishops individually are not interested in policing this in an inquisitorial or a punitive way.” Bearing in mind also the report in the *Church Times* on 21 January 2022 (page 7), reporting suggestions that Communion online is valid and that “individual cups are the best way to obey Jesus’s commands for holy communion when the communal cup is restricted or not safe for all”, what, if any steps has the House of Bishops or its working group taken to ascertain the extent to which parishes across the Church of England have been using individual cups to distribute the consecrated wine to communicants during the current coronavirus pandemic?

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

A These data are not collected comprehensively either on a local or a national scale, so we are only aware of those congregations which have declared either to their bishops or to the Working Group that they intend to use individual cups.

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

Q78 Has the House of Bishops discussed the phenomenon of church members commuting considerable distances to be part of a large congregation rather than choosing to attend a local parish church and the effect that this has on the viability of local parish churches as well as the environmental impact of the travel involved?

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

A The House of Bishops has not considered this matter.

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

Q79 In anticipation of future General Synod debates, have the bishops or archbishops commissioned any recent studies looking at the language of difference and in particular the terms we use to describe theological positions and the offence caused to those othered by those terms? Specifically, in the examples that follow, when we use the first descriptor of ourselves, we may be unwittingly insulting those from different church traditions by implying they fit the second category: liberal/illiberal; orthodox/heterodox; inclusive/exclusive; catholic/sectarian; affirming/rejecting; progressive/regressive.

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

A The House has not commissioned any studies on the lines suggested by the question. Your question is a good one, however, and it is why the *Living in Love and Faith* resources have – as far as possible – avoided these kinds of labels.

Furthermore, there is a considerable amount of work about how we go about speaking to, and about, one another to be found in the *Pastoral Principles* and in the *Living in Love and Faith* resources, and I commend those to Synod both for study and continued reflection as members prepare to play their part in engaging with these matters together in fruitful and constructive ways.

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

Q80 Noting the past decisions of the House of Bishops to include women and UKME/GMH clergy into the House until such time as they are properly represented, and the absence of any openly LGBTI+ Bishops in the House, can the House outline the plans it has to ensure that identifiable LGBTI+ voices are present in the House as it discerns and discusses how to proceed through and beyond LLF?

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

A The Next Steps Group is putting a proposal to the House of Bishops about how identifiable LGBTI+ voices will be present and able to participate in the bishops' discernment processes this autumn. The House will consider this at its meeting in March.

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

Q81 The Archbishop of Canterbury has stated that it is an act of loving one's neighbour to be vaccinated against COVID-19, but can we make it clear that loving one's neighbour also extends to standing alongside and supporting people about to lose their jobs because their conscience is being violated?

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

A Love of one's neighbour is a gospel imperative and should be extended to all, regardless of their beliefs and actions or whether we agree with those beliefs and actions. How best to demonstrate such love is personal and unique to each individual and we are called to draw alongside them in their circumstances with empathy and understanding.

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

Q82 Given the disproportionate effects the restrictions of the past two years have had on children and young people what plans does the church have to support and prioritise the needs of this group as we emerge from these restrictions?

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

A The impact of the pandemic on children and young people has been enormous and concern for their mental health and wellbeing is uppermost in our minds. They have lost important time in school and missed out on those vital interactions they enjoy with peers in school and out of school activities. The Church of England's vision to be younger and more diverse will only mean anything if we instinctively prioritise our ministry with and amongst children and young people at local, diocesan and national level and so we will all need to be proactive in connecting with and supporting those many families, children and young people who have been most adversely affected. Work with schools is particularly important in this regard and the Church of England Foundation for Educational Leadership has focused its school networks on helping leaders address issues of mental health and wellbeing amongst children

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

Q83 What consideration has been given to safeguarding LGBT+ people in our churches from harmful practices, such as the practice of so-called "conversion therapy"?

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

A The Synod vote to support a ban on “conversion therapies” (CT) committed the Church to encourage the Government to introduce a legal ban and to examine our own practices. We hope a legal ban will provide a clear definition of “conversion therapy” but examining our own practices must go deeper than the law.

Work is under way through the National Safeguarding Team on forms of spiritual abuse. On behalf of the LLF Next Steps Group, the Faith and Order Commission is beginning a study of when prayer can become coercive to fill a gap in the Government’s work on banning CT, which did not specifically explore the concept of coercion in relation to prayer. We also hope that this work will reassure those who are worried that banning CT implies a blanket ban on prayer. Following through on a legal ban and internal guidance is a matter for individual dioceses.

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

Q84 Will the House of Bishops consider publishing pastoral guidance and liturgy to mark and celebrate an individual’s de-transition?

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

A The House has no current plans to develop work of this nature.

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

Q85 In her reply to my question (58) at the November 2021 Synod, the Bishop of London commented that “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.” Bishop Sarah’s response suggests that *Issues* is now recognised by the House of Bishops as a “failure”. In that case, will the “new phase of work” which will commence in February 2023 at the end of the LLF journey involve the replacement of *Issues*?

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

A The aim of *Issues in Human Sexuality* was to ‘promote an educational process [...] marked by greater trust and openness, of Christian reflection on the subject of human sexuality’. The Preface states that it is not ‘the last word on the subject.’ Inherent within it

was an invitation to further work – such as that prompted by the *Living in Love and Faith* process.

The remit of LLF is wider than that of *Issues*, and it represents further learning within the Church and in wider society about questions of identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage in the 30 years since its publication. In that sense the LLF process and what emerges from it is likely to supersede *Issues*. This will have implications for the way that *Issues* has become embedded in the selection criteria for the discernment of vocation for candidates for ordination, when it was never intended to function as such.

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

Q86 In her answer to my question (58) at the November 2021 meeting of Synod, the Bishop of London, speaking on behalf of the House of Bishops stated that section 5.8 doesn't refer specifically to conversion therapy, writing "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'."

Issues in Human Sexuality section 5.8 states: "The Church's guidance to bisexual Christians is that if they are capable of heterophile relationships and of satisfaction within them, they should follow the way of holiness in either celibacy or abstinence or heterosexual marriage. 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." What, then, does the House of Bishops believe to be the function of the recommendation of therapy in this section?

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

A I understand that the statement you refer to can be seen as a 'recommendation.' However, I refer you to my answer to your question 85, which clarifies the status of *Issues in Human Sexuality* vis-à-vis the work of *Living in Love and Faith*, as well as its intended aim to be part of an ongoing educational process.

Furthermore, the Preface to *Issues* states, 'We cannot expect all to agree with our conclusions and, indeed, in our own discussions we encountered a wide variety of opinions [...] We encourage clergy chapters and congregations to find time for prayerful study and reflections on the issues we have addressed.'

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

Q87 I have heard from a number of people, including members of Synod, who hold to a ‘traditional’ view on marriage who fear that there will be serious implications for them, including the potential for losing their job, if they share openly their view in favour of the historic Christian teaching on Marriage. Given that transparency and respect are meant to be at the heart of the LLF process, what measures are being or can be taken to ensure that all members can speak openly, without fear of intimidation, as part of this process?

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

A I am sorry to hear of your fears which are entirely unfounded.

The transparency and respect of which you speak, and to which the LLF process aspires, are embedded in the LLF resources. They present and explore diverse convictions regarding marriage and other related matters as well as the stories of how people have understood these questions in the light of their own journeys of discipleship. They encourage people from across the church, holding different traditions, to engage in learning and listening together using these resources.

It will be up to Synod members themselves to choose to engage with one another openly in ways that avoid any semblance of intimidation, and, instead, seek to deepen understanding of and respect for one another in ways that honour Christ.

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

Q88 The proposed changes in the Canterbury CNC made public last month (14 January 2022) were not mentioned in the press release for the meeting of the House of Bishops on 13 December 2021 <https://www.churchofengland.org/media-and-news/press-releases/meeting-house-bishops-13-december-2021-0>. May Synod and the wider Church know how much time the House of Bishops has been given to discuss and debate these highly significant proposals?

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

A The proposals for change and consultation set out in GS 2253 were put before the House of Bishops in December 2021. The House of Bishops will engage further with the proposals as part of the consultation process now under way.

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

Q89 Is the House of Bishops aware of the reason why the Archbishop of Canterbury's annual World AIDS Day message was discontinued after 2011?

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

A My predecessor posted a World AIDS Day video message in 2012 and I do not recall being made aware of the practice as a regular commitment from my office. However, I did so in 2016, and also posted a World AIDS Day reflection that year.

Sadly, I have not always been able to address every concerning issue on every day when they are marked.

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS

Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q90 Were there any substantive differences in the process for recruiting and selecting the new Third Church Estates Commissioner as compared with the process for recruiting and selecting her predecessor, and if so, what were those differences, and what were the reasons for them?

The Bishop of Manchester to reply as Deputy Chair of the Church Commissioners:

A No, there was no substantive difference in the process. As before, the panel tasked with making a recommendation to the Archbishop of Canterbury engaged high calibre search consultants and instructed them to identify a longlist of exceptional and diverse candidates. They advertised the role widely and the panel agreed that the field was indeed exceptional.

I am very pleased indeed that the Revd Canon Flora Winfield came through this thorough process. She brings outstanding skills and huge experience, and we are very much looking forward to working with her.

Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q91 Why was an interest in heritage—which appeared as a requirement in the job description for the previous Third Church Estates Commissioner—omitted from the current job description for the role?

The Bishop of Manchester to reply as Deputy Chair of the Church Commissioners:

A It wasn't. The role description made clear that the successful candidate would need a particular concern for church buildings, an appreciation of the unique role of cathedrals and church buildings,

understanding of issues relating to their resourcing and the ability to influence government and other agencies in respect of their funding and maintenance.

The role description also rightly made clear that other criteria, such as leading transformation and change, championing diversity and supporting the Church's efforts to meet net zero targets, would also be important elements of the role in this season.

The Revd Dr Chris Moore (Hereford) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q92 GS Misc 1312 has noted that respondents to the Mission in Revision were "anxious and in many cases angry" and "felt frustrated by the consolidation of parishes and benefices, particularly in rural areas, with some fearing that future decision making will solely be driven by financial concerns." What reassurances might be given to rural parishes that their voice is still heard in the national structures, particularly now that the Rural Affairs Group has been disbanded.

The Bishop of Manchester to reply as Deputy Chair of the Church Commissioners:

A There are two aspects to consider: policy and process. On policy, the Archbishops' Council continues to cover rural policy through the new Faith and Public Life team, and the Vision and Strategy team will seek to ensure that voices from all parts of the church, including rural parishes, are taken into account. The introduction of a new Synod members' rural group will enable new policies and proposals to be scrutinised from a rural perspective.

On process, under the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011, the Church Commissioners must take account of the needs, traditions, and characteristics of a parish when re-organisation is considered, so the local context – including whether it is in a rural setting – is always one of the factors considered, alongside finance and other issues. The Bishops of Bristol and Ramsbury, our Lead Bishops for Buildings, will also consider the particular issues around rural churches as part of their work on church buildings within the College and House of Bishops.

Mr Richard Denno (Liverpool) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q93 The Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011 Code of Recommended Practice for pastoral reorganisation sets out key principles for consultations to be fair. What plans do the Church Commissioners have to ensure that before a diocese brings a proposal for a deanery to become a large single parish, a fair consultation must provide a clear statement of loss of legal rights and representation under the proposal?

The Bishop of Manchester to reply as Deputy Chair of the Church Commissioners:

A The Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011 (MPM) and the Code of Practice set out the detailed requirements that dioceses have to follow for pastoral reorganisation. Consultation must be fair and provide sufficient information for everyone to consider. We would expect dioceses to have extensive conversations about the governance structures for a large single parish scheme. The options could vary depending on whether team or group ministry is considered. If Joint Councils were proposed as part of the approach, then PCCs have the choice whether or not to support the introduction of a joint council structure. If people opposed the governance proposals, or were concerned about a loss of rights, they could make these points as part of their written response against a Scheme. The Commissioners would take these representations into account in their decision making.

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

Q94 As National Church Institutions, (i) between 2011 & 2021, how have the annual aggregate staff numbers & gross staff costs of, firstly, Lambeth Palace &, secondly, Bishopthorpe Palace evolved & (ii) what are the estimated total costs of the current refurbishment of Lambeth Palace, including a subtotal for the Archbishop's apartments?

Mr John Brydon (Norwich) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q95 In respect of either full or part time paid staff in administrative, advisory or supporter roles for the Archbishop of Canterbury and, separately, the Archbishop of York and their respective offices, please advise the current numbers, stating if they reflect an increase or decrease since each Archbishop took office and if so by how many?

The Bishop of Manchester to reply as Deputy Chair of the Church Commissioners:

A With permission, I will answer Mr Baird's and Mr Brydon's Questions together.

The staff numbers and costs requested are as follows:

	2012	2021
Staff costs	£m	£m
Lambeth	2.14	2.65
Bishopthorpe	0.74	0.90
Total	2.88	3.55

Staff numbers (Full-time equivalent in brackets)

	Dec-12	Dec-21
Lambeth	47 (43.5)	41 (37.7)
Bishophorpe	23 (18.1)	25 (20.3)

Notes:

1. The current Archbishop of Canterbury took office in February 2013
2. The current Archbishop of York took office in June 2020, when there were 28 staff
3. 2011 data not available

The 2021 figures represent a FTE reduction of 3.6 over the period concerned.

The above figures include staff employed in administrative, advisory and supporter roles and those engaged to run events and to maintain the house and garden. In 2021 there were also 27 staff (26.2 FTE) at Lambeth funded by external donors and working on projects reflecting the Archbishop's three mission priorities (Prayer and Religious Life, Evangelism and Witness, and Reconciliation) and include support for two policy commissions and the Lambeth Conference (no equivalent in 2012).

The infrastructure of Lambeth Palace has not been updated since well before the Second World War (apart from repairs to bomb damage), and is at high risk of catastrophic failure, irreparably damaging the fabric of the building and its historic contents. Doing nothing is not an option. The project budget of £27million covers a scope of works which is focused on ensuring the Palace is a safe and secure place to live and work, as well as improving accessibility and to be a pioneer for sustainability as part of the Church's Net Zero 2030 target. The apartment is a relatively small and integral part of the works to the main Blore building.

Mr John Brydon (Norwich) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q96 The original paper GS 2222 stated either a vote or an update would be presented to the February 2022 Synod. It does not appear to be listed this time so please clarify the position and in respect of the open consultation regarding the proposals how many people responded and how many were overall supportive or overall against?

The Bishop of Manchester to reply as Deputy Chair of the Church Commissioners:

A An analysis of the responses to the GS 2222 consultation has been provided for the February session of Synod – as GS Misc 1312. A fringe meeting will be held on Tuesday 8 February at 7.30pm for Synod members who wish to discuss the analysis.

GS Misc 1312 is available at
<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2022-01/GS%20Misc%201312%20MPM%20review%20update.pdf>.

Over 1,600 responses were received to the consultation. The majority of the e-mail responses from individuals raised significant concerns, but those who responded to the detailed questions had a range of views, and there was a lot of support for some of the individual proposals. The feedback will inform a ‘white’ paper which will come to July Synod for debate if space can be found on the agenda.

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

Q97 *Mission in Revision: Review of the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011 Consultation Analysis July to October 2021* (GS Misc 1312) is an outstanding piece of work. Its excellent & laudable analysis of the staggeringly large number of submissions (1,686 in total) provides a unique and unvarnished insight into the current state of the Church, notably in the parishes.

Given the unbridled ferocity of many of the responses from anxious & exasperated parishioners, will the Church Commissioners undertake to consign the proposals outlined in GS 2222 to the waste paper bin? Or, failing that, to replace the proposed forthcoming White Paper with a suitably & substantially revised Green Paper? And do the Commissioners agree that either course of action would provide a splendid opportunity to demonstrate to parishes & congregations that they are being listened to, particularly in the light of parlous parish finances, post-pandemic anguish & devastation in the parishes & the Archbishops’ recent and repeated statements in support of the parish?

The Bishop of Manchester to reply as Deputy Chair of the Church Commissioners:

A The Commissioners are pleased that GS Misc 1312 has been well received. It is for General Synod to decide how the review of the Measure should be taken forward, so the next step is to develop a white paper for Synod to debate in July (if agenda time can be found).

We have used the same process as government; a green paper with ideas was presented for consultation, and now that the analysis has been completed, a white paper with actual proposals will be developed, drawing on the feedback received. Our aim will be to set out models for change in light of all of the input that we have received.

There will be a fringe event on Tuesday 8 February for those who wish to discuss GS Misc 1312.

The Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q98 At a meeting of the Ecclesiastical Committee of Parliament on 24th October 2018 Andrew Brown, Secretary of the Church Commissioners, indicated that the policy framework for the making of grants by the Church Commissioners to the Archbishops' Council would be made available to the public. Has this been done and, if so, where can it be seen?

The Bishop of Manchester to reply as Deputy Chair of the Church Commissioners:

A The policy framework was included in the answer to a Parliamentary question asking whether the Church Commissioners had the authority to make grants to the Archbishop's Council and can be found here: [Written questions and answers – Written questions, answers and statements – UK Parliament](#).

The policy is being reviewed as part of the work to determine spending plans for 2023-25 from the Church's endowment managed by the Church Commissioners. This review is taking account of current priorities including the Vision & Strategy for the 2020s as presented to Synod last year, the challenges to diocesan, parish and cathedral finance which have been exacerbated by the pandemic as well as structural changes made within the NCIs as a result of the Transforming Effectiveness programme.

The Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q99 Who are the members of the current Triennial Funding Working Group (which will decide spending priorities for 2023 to 2026) who appointed them, and to whom are they accountable?

The Bishop of Manchester to reply as Deputy Chair of the Church Commissioners:

A The Triennium Funding Working Group (TFWG) consists of five members each of the House of Bishops, Archbishops' Council and Church Commissioners' Board. Members are appointed by, and are accountable to, those bodies. The group has eleven members as four members are members of two of these bodies.

The TFWG has been tasked with making recommendations on spending priorities for the next few years to the Archbishops' Council and Church Commissioners' Board. It has no decision-making authority.

This is the same arrangement as was used three years ago when the previous time-limited TFWG made recommendations on spending priorities for 2020-22 to the Archbishops' Council and Church Commissioners' Board.

A list of the members of the current task and finish group are on the noticeboard.

Dr Cathy Rhodes (Sheffield) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q100 What is the national church doing to support dioceses in their efforts to raise funds and/or loans to implement net zero carbon measures in churches, schools and clergy housing to comply with the 2030 target set by General Synod?

The Bishop of Manchester to reply as Deputy Chair of the Church Commissioners:

A As I said in my answer to a November 2021 Question from Mr Stephen Hofmeyr:

“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”.

The Triennium Funding Working Group is considering funding proposals for a range of measures which would help the Church make progress towards the 2030 target set by General Synod.

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

Q101 Where the Church Commissioners own commercial properties, what steps are being taken to achieve net zero? Are lighting, insulation, heating and cooling systems considered within this net zero target?

Mr Alan Smith to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:

A As part of the Church Commissioners' commitment to net zero, we have undertaken a number of initiatives across the commercial property portfolio. We have recorded our current energy use across our portfolio, including commercial properties, which we will use as a

baseline to build upon. Commercial property under our direct operation is included in our initial combined portfolio target to reduce carbon emissions intensity by 25% by 2025. Lighting, insulation, heating and cooling systems will be considered as part of our net zero strategy and we currently have a number of targets in place, including:

- 5% reduction on electricity consumption year on year
- 5% reduction on gas consumption year on year
- 2.5% reduction on water usage year on year
- 70% recycling rates on generated waste on site
- 100% diversion from landfill on generated waste from site (non-hazardous)

In addition, all void properties' energy supply (where we are in control of the choice of the supplier) is procured from renewable sources and we have implemented 'Green leases' across the portfolio (including clauses regarding energy procurement/use and data).

Ms Gill Frigiero (Coventry) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q102 Do the Church Commissioners include investments made by oil and gas companies within their calculation of investment in 'climate solutions'? What proportion of the £630 million of 'climate solution investments' held by the Church Commissioners at the end of 2020 were investments made by oil and gas companies in renewable energy, which accounts for a small fraction of their capital expenditure?

Mr Alan Smith to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:

A The vast majority of our climate solution investments is in sustainable forestry, companies focusing on pure play clean energy and energy efficiency, and projects developing, building or operating renewable energy and related projects around the world.

We focus our climate solution investments in private companies, where our capital goes directly to building or operating assets contributing to the low carbon transition. More than 80% of our climate solution investments are in such private market investments. Examples include a \$10million investment in a battery storage facility in the UK, required to increase energy security from renewables, and a €30million investment into renewables and energy efficiency schemes (such as recycling and green data centres) across Europe.

We classify climate solution investments based on best practice international standards, and in many cases, we are more strict than recognised industry or regulatory norms.

The Revd Canon Andy Salmon (Manchester) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q103 Will the Church Commissioners follow the advice of the National Investing Bodies who have Exxon on its list of restricted companies and disinvest?

Mr Paul Waddell (Southwark) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q104 *Nest*, the UK government-backed pension scheme with £20 billion of assets under management, divested from Exxon in December 2021 after criticising its lack of progress on managing climate change risks. Following the decision to put Exxon on the National Investing Bodies' list of 'restricted' investments, why are the Church Commissioners continuing to invest in ExxonMobil?

Mr Alan Smith to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:

A With permission, I should like to answer Canon Salmon and Mr Waddell's Questions together.

There are some important principles we would note:

- We want to achieve a net-zero world, not a net-zero portfolio for the Church Commissioners;
- As Christians we should engage with those who are not-yet-perfect;
- In 2021 we helped persuade a majority of Exxon's investors to vote to change the Exxon board. Three new directors were appointed (a quarter of the board) with strong climate change leadership capabilities; this was an unprecedented outcome. We want to continue to ensure they are serious about climate change and have decided that it is responsible to still engage rather than divest at this time.

On 18 January 2022, Exxon announced its ambitions for net zero greenhouse emissions by 2050 to a degree that they have not done before. This was subsequent to the National Investment Bodies' (NIBs) 2021 hurdles assessment exercise which resulted in Exxon being recommended for restriction. However, in light of subsequent developments, we will delay implementing this restriction to continue our engagement with Exxon.

Remaining invested and engaged for now will enable the Commissioners to continue to push for change. This gives the new directors and the full board some more time to execute the plans and necessary change to address the urgency of the climate crisis. If the company does not demonstrate sufficient progress, the Commissioners will divest.

The other NIBs are supportive of the engagement the Commissioners have done and plan to continue with Exxon.

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

Q105 What proportion of commercial timber produced on Church Commissioners' land in England, Scotland and Wales is used for structural timber? Do the Church Commissioners promote the use of structural timber as a form of carbon sequestration within their house building projects and if so, how is it promoted?

Mr Alan Smith to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:

A We are unable to monitor the precise percentage of our harvested timber that ends up as structural timber, but an estimated 60% is sold into the sawn timber and construction market.

The Commissioners do not build houses themselves, but they are a member of Confor which helps promote the use of UK grown timber as a building material to the construction and logistics sectors.

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

Q106 The physical, mental and social benefits of access to nature are well-established, and recent evidence published in *People and Nature* indicates that increased access to nature also increases environmentally friendly behaviour. How much Church Commissioner-owned land has some form of public access, be it permissive footpaths, public rights of way or open access land? Is there a target for increasing the amount of land open to public access?

Mr Alan Smith to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:

A We understand the benefits of public access to nature and the environment.

The rural land in the Church Commissioners' portfolio is predominantly let to agricultural tenants. These tenancies include numerous permissive footpaths and public rights of way with the agricultural tenants responsible for their maintenance and upkeep. We also have some direct lets to community groups including village greens (many of which are let on peppercorn rents), allotments, cricket pitches, village halls and sports clubs including pitches.

All our forestry land in Scotland is open for responsible public access. Additionally, Coed Llandegla Forest in Wales hosts a visitor centre and extensive bike paths throughout the forest, which are open to the public.

256 acres of our land are included within local nature reserves and 33 acres in national nature reserves.

We are developing an ESG strategy in respect of our real estate portfolio and public access to land will be an element of this.

Canon Shayne Ardron (Leicester) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q107 Do the Church Commissioners have any investments in B-corp companies? I appreciate these are possibly smaller companies at the moment, but it seems a good movement to encourage in a similar way that the living wage worked compared to the minimum wage.

Mr Alan Smith to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:

A We agree with B Corp's ultimate goal of making all business a force for good, and believe the movement is a great way to promote social responsibility from companies. As a steward of the Church's capital, we hold the same belief as the B Corp movement; that through our activities and involvement in the business world we can have a positive impact on the real world.

It is difficult to screen our portfolio regarding B Corp status given lack of information from B Corp and also, as you mention, the vast majority of B Corps are very small companies that are not public investments.

More reflective for our portfolio is that a number of the investment managers we invest in are certified B Corps, and accordingly have very strong responsible investment practices. About one quarter of the money managed on behalf of the Commissioners in our public equity portfolio is managed by B Corp registered managers.

We will continue to support the B Corp movement as it develops, especially for investment managers where we have greater influence.

The Revd Canon Dr Anderson Jeremiah (Universities & TElS) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q108 Is any biomass from the Church Commissioners' forestry portfolio sold to Drax power station, and if so, from which countries and which specific forest properties is it sourced from?

Mr Alan Smith to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:

A We do not sell any timber directly to Drax. Our timber is typically sold to third-party timber buyers as a standing crop, so we are not able to definitively track end uses of biomass.

That said, we are not aware of any biomass from our UK forests ending up in the Drax power station. In our US forestry, most of the lower value timber is put to alternative uses (e.g. panel boards and pulp for tissues and packaging) but it is possible that a very small amount of biomass may end up in facilities which supply Drax power station.

Whilst not part of our forestry holdings, within the Commissioners' Infrastructure portfolio there is an investment to help fund the development of a pellet facility in Arkansas, US. This facility sources sustainably grown and certified wood, which is either unsuitable for sawtimber or residual wood from sawmills. The facility has a long term take-or-pay contract with Drax.

The Revd Dr Tom Woolford (Blackburn) to ask the Church

Commissioners:

Q109 What circumstances in the situation of the ministry needs of the national Church would trigger a suspension in the normal parameters of fund distribution by the Church Commissioners in order to make exceptional levels of contributions?

Mr Alan Smith to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:

A The Church Commissioners are committed to their role and responsibility to support the ministry of the Church of England, today and for the future. The consideration of intergenerational equity principles is an important guiding principle in establishing distribution levels.

Work to determine what sums can be made available in 2023-25 and what funding needs should be prioritised, has been underway for some months. The Triennium Funding Working Group (members drawn from the House of Bishops, Archbishops' Council and Church Commissioners) is considering the financial demands and priorities from across the church. The Assets Committee is responsible for making a recommendation to the Board on what sums can be made available for distribution. They aim for distributions at the maximum sustainable level. In doing so they have a legal obligation to have regard to actuarial advice.

In preparation for this work, the Commissioners and the Council have discussed briefings on the financial situation of the Church and updates on the emerging funding requests for 2023-25 and beyond. There have been discussions on the appropriate interpretation of 'intergenerational equity', including at a joint meeting of the two bodies.

In March 2020 the Commissioners made £35m available to the Council to distribute as Diocesan Sustainability Funding to help dioceses fund pandemic related deficits. Over £24m was distributed to 30 dioceses in 2020-21 and the remainder remains available for distribution in 2022.

The Revd Dr Patrick Richmond (Norwich) to ask the Church

Commissioners:

Q110 Given the significant growth in the Church Commissioners' assets, arising from their average return of more than 9% per annum over the last 30 years, what ceiling is there in place for the growth of the asset base, and what is the rationale for that ceiling or a lack of it?

Mr Alan Smith to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:

A Our ambition, responsibility and fiduciary duty is to provide the maximum sustainable distributions to support the Church's mission and ministry today and in perpetuity. The key factors in determining the level of distributions from the Church's endowment, managed by the Commissioners, are the current value of the fund, projections for future investment returns (i.e. expectations of the future value of the fund) and inflation (what our distributions will need to grow by to continue to provide the same level of support).

Asset growth from strong investment markets and good active management carried out in accordance with our ethical investment policies has fed through into growth in distributions. This was a key factor in enabling the Commissioners to introduce over £150m of additional funding in 2020-22, on top of pension obligations and core distributions, giving total distributions of more than £900m for the triennium.

Between 2005 and 2020 our funding support for the Church (excluding pensions) increased by an average of 6.7% p.a.: three times the rate of inflation.

The Revd Dr Patrick Richmond (Norwich) to ask the Church

Commissioners:

Q111 Given the actuarial assessment on p 45-6 of the Church Commissioners' last annual report of 2020, that £1.6bn of their £9.2bn assets would be sufficient to cover all current and future pension contributions for which they are liable, what would be the current cost of restoring the clergy pension to the level prior to the adjustment made at the time of the Government's introduction of SERPS?

Mr Alan Smith to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:

A Clergy pensions for pre-1998 service are met by the Commissioners. Post-1998 service obligations fall to the Responsible Bodies in the scheme (mostly Diocesan Boards of Finance, with the Commissioners responsible for pensionable service of bishops and cathedral clergy).

The Government introduced SERPS in 1978 and replaced it with the State Second Pension (S2P) in 2002. S2P was replaced by the higher rate State Pension in 2016. Clergy pensions were contracted into S2P in 2011 as a cost-effective way to provide additional benefits. At the same time, the full clergy pension accrual was reduced from 2/3 to 1/2 of stipend. We assume the question relates to this latter change.

Actuarial advice would be required to assess the cost of reverting to the pre-2011 benefit levels for future service. A rough estimate would be a 1/3 increase in pension contribution rates, i.e. an annual cost to the Responsible Bodies of over £25m.

PENSIONS BOARD

The Revd Ruth Newton (Leeds) to ask the Chair of the Pensions Board:

Q112 The Transition Pathway Initiative (TPI) has concluded that three oil and gas companies, including TotalEnergies, are aligned with the 1.5C target of the Paris Agreement in 2050, in spite of their exploration for new oil and gas reserves. What steps are the National Investment Bodies taking to ensure that the TPI incorporates the International Energy Agency conclusions that there can be no new oil and gas developments in order to limit global average temperature rises to 1.5C?

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

A The Transition Pathway Initiative (TPI) performance assessment is based upon the 1.5C scenario produced by the International Energy Agency (IEA). Therefore, the insights of the IEA are already embedded into the TPI methodology and assessment. Whilst a company can be assessed as having a target aligned in 2050 based upon the projected emissions at that point, it is essential that the path to 2050 is also assessed. TPI also undertakes this assessment and shows TotalEnergies is not aligned in the short or medium term to a 1.5C pathway. As such it remains a continued focus of engagement through the Climate Action 100+ initiative, of which the NIBs are key participants.

The Revd Stella Bailey (Coventry) to ask the Chair of the Pensions Board:

Q113 Given that Shell has been pursuing plans to conduct seismic blasting off the coast of South Africa to find new gas reserves, which is inconsistent with the International Energy Agency's conclusions that there can be no new oil and gas developments in order to limit global average temperature rises to 1.5C, why was Shell not mentioned in the Church of England press release of 20 January

regarding restrictions on National Investing Bodies' investment? And do the National Investing Bodies consider Shell to be aligned with the Paris Agreement, taking into account the latest Transition Pathway Initiative analysis?

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

A As the lead for engaging with Shell on behalf of the NIBs and Climate Action 100+, the Board is engaging with Shell in respect of its exploration and production activities, including the seismic testing off the coast of South Africa. We have also raised questions as to whether the gas development would be consistent with South Africa's new Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC). The South African Government announced their new NDC ahead of COP26 setting out how the country will transition to net zero. We are keen to understand the role of gas within that transition in replacing other higher emitting fossil fuels whilst renewable alternatives are developed and brought online. The framework for assessing capital expenditure alignment of an oil and gas company remains part of the ongoing engagement with Shell through Climate Action 100+. Shell were assessed as having passed the recent interim hurdles of the NIBs referenced in their press release. However, they have not yet aligned to our 2023 requirements. Engagement therefore continues.

The Revd Canon Lisa Battye (Manchester) to ask the Chair of the Pensions Board:

Q114 What are the National Investing Bodies doing to raise concerns about Shell, TotalEnergies and other major oil and gas companies paying nearly \$2 billion to the Brazilian government in December for drilling rights in new offshore oil fields?

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

A The Board, as one of the National Investing Bodies, has led a global process to create the first Net Zero Global Standard for the Oil and Gas Sector. We also co-lead the global process to create an assessment framework for sovereign bonds to assess Nationally Determined Contributions. This framework is expected to include assessments of government licensing of oil and gas. Both the Standard and the Sovereign Framework will provide a basis to independently challenge if such projects are consistent with the net zero transition. In this context the Board has been quite clear to the whole industry that any company seeking to exploit new offshore oil fields will need to demonstrate that it is aligned to independently verified short-, medium- and long-term net zero targets. They will also need to demonstrate that the capital expenditure required to bring production online is justified against those net zero targets.

Dr Cathy Rhodes (Sheffield) to ask the Chair of the Pensions Board:

Q115 What are the National Investing Bodies doing to raise concerns about TotalEnergies' plans to increase Arctic oil and gas production by 28% by 2030, according to research from Reclaim Finance published by Bloomberg in September 2021?

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

A The National Investing Bodies participate in the CA100+ collaborative engagement initiative, with each NIB leading on different companies. The NIBs support investor engagement leads at Total as well as the other 165 companies that are in focus. We are in active discussion with the lead investors for CA100+ at TotalEnergies about progress of engagement against the NIBs' 2023 requirements and the goals of the CA100+ initiative. The consistency of TotalEnergies future production is a live area of engagement related to the assessments by TPI and the CA100+ Net Zero Benchmark. We are clear that TotalEnergies needs to further strengthen its targets in the short and medium term to align to the 2023 Synod commitment.

SECRETARY GENERAL

Mr Sam Margrave (Coventry) to ask the Secretary General:

Q116 Do the NCIs provide advocacy and support to those who may have a disability or be traumatised, to access and engage in the complaints process, and if so, who are the named service providers used for advocacy or complainant support services?

Mr William Nye to reply as Secretary General:

A From the NCI Complaints Policy: "We want this policy and its associated procedure to be accessible to any individual needing to make a complaint. But we recognise that some individuals may have particular needs (such as physical or sensory impairment) and would require additional support or reasonable adjustments to make a complaint (e.g. via friends or other representatives, or the format of investigation meetings or documentation). Where possible the NCIs will help a person making a complaint to identify a suitable person to guide them through the process, and will where possible provide alternative ways of engaging with the process or providing documents in specific formats. This additional support cannot though be a legal representative or advocate who acts directly on their behalf. Help and support will also be offered to any member of staff subject to a complaint through normal internal channels (including line management support, Trades Unions, EAP etc)."

Mrs Rosemary Lyon (Blackburn) to ask the Secretary General:

Q117 What efforts have been made by the Church of England to comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, to make reasonable allowances for those who have disabilities such as hearing or vision impairment, and who are unable to use the web-based resources which are now taking the place of printed materials, such as the Church of England website, or the election portal now in use for Synod elections?

Mr William Nye to reply as Secretary General:

A The National Church Institutions of the Church of England make every effort to ensure the accessibility of information and resources by those with disabilities. For example, the Synod has long-standing arrangements in place for the assistance of Synod members with hearing impairments, including the provision of a Hearing Loop in London and York and British Sign Language Interpreters for members of the Deaf Anglicans Together constituency. Some arrangements for members with disabilities are made on a case-by-case basis. Members with disabilities are invited to make these known to staff who will work with them individually to ensure that Synod meetings and Church of England resources are accessible to them. The Synod team welcomes suggestions of any improvements which may be made and works to implement these learnings for future groups of sessions.

The Revd Canon John Dunnett (Chelmsford) to ask Secretary General:

Q118 How many senior NCI posts (bands 1 to 4) have been filled in each of the past 5 years, and for each year what percentage were advertised externally, and what percentage had a Genuine Occupational Requirement attached?

Mr William Nye to reply as Secretary General:

A NCI Senior posts are generally considered to be Bands 0-2 and we have therefore answered the question on this basis using the information available:

2017 – 25 posts filled, 12 with an Occupational Requirement (OR)

2018 – 17 posts filled, 5 with an OR

2019 – 31 posts filled, 6 with an OR

2020 – 25 posts filled, 1 with an OR

2021 – 24 posts filled, 5 with an OR

It has not been possible to provide exact information regarding external advertising.

Canon Andrew Presland (Peterborough) to ask the Secretary General:

Q119 To what extent will the new Director of Data Services – to be appointed following the recent ‘Transforming Effectiveness’ restructuring – be expected and encouraged to ensure that published church statistics continue to present an objective and unbiased picture of church attendance and related trends, whether or not his or her communications team colleagues consider the information to be good or bad news?

Mr William Nye to reply as Secretary General:

A There is nothing about this new role that seeks to change the objective and unbiased presentation of the data we produce. The Transforming Effectiveness vision for the Data Services team aims to drive change in several areas: enhancing how data is captured, reducing administrative burdens across the Church, developing systems to improve efficiencies around prompter outputs, and to develop strong team working with the communications team and all other colleagues across the Church to produce reports and data in ways that assist a wide range of people to understand and use them.

Canon Andrew Presland (Peterborough) to ask the Secretary General:

Q120 Does the Archbishops’ Council – in the interests of transparency and good practice – have any plans to comply voluntarily with the UK Statistics Authority’s *Code of Practice for Statistics* in producing and publishing statistics, in the light of Authority’s encouragement for non-government bodies to choose to do so?

Mr William Nye to reply as Secretary General:

A While we have no plans specifically to comply with this Code of Practice, our Data Services team will continue to work with the appropriate best practice guidance to continue to produce quality statistics for their users.

Mr Clive Scowen (London) to ask the Secretary General:

Q121 The 10th General Synod having had its term extended by a year because of the pandemic, has consideration been given to reducing the term of the 11th General Synod so that it ends in 2025? If so, what conclusion was reached? If not, will the matter now be considered?

Mr William Nye to reply as Secretary General:

A I am not aware that this has been considered so far.

CLERK TO THE SYNOD

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

Q122 Please update Synod on when the Reports of Proceedings for the Synod meetings in April 2021, November 2021 and February 2022 will be published.

Dr Jacqui Philips to reply as Clerk to the Synod:

A The Central Secretariat has been servicing an increased number of Synods in 2020 – 2021 and has had to prioritise the servicing of these meetings over other usual business matters. In addition, factors such as staff turnover and the need to prepare at short notice for the hybrid arrangements during the February group of sessions have also taken resources away from these activities. The Report of Proceedings for the April group of sessions has now been published on the Synod website. The Report of Proceedings for the November 2021 group of sessions is being checked and will be published after Easter. The Report of Proceedings for the February group of sessions will be made available prior to the July Synod in York. On behalf of the department, I would like to offer my apologies for the delay in making these reports available, which was due to the workload and staffing issues outlined above.

Miss Vanessa Pedro-Pinto (Leicester) to ask the Clerk to the Synod:

Q123 Can the Clerk to the Synod say whether the bi-annual reports to be produced by the Archbishops' Commission on Racial Justice as mentioned in Para 26 of GS 2243 will be provided to the Synod to enable members to keep up to date on racial equality matters?

Dr Jacqui Philips to reply as Clerk to the Synod:

A The Racial Justice Commission intends to publish its bi-annual reports on the Church of England website. They may be accessed by Synod members and by the general public.

Mr Stephen Hogg (Leeds) to ask the Clerk to the Synod:

Q124 Synod Support's email of 21 January 2022 stated, "during the group of sessions members are encouraged to test daily". Should a member staying in hotel accommodation in London test positive what advice would you give on isolation, and if isolation is required what pastoral, logistical and financial support will be given to a member required to isolate in their accommodation?

Dr Jacqui Philips to reply as Clerk to the Synod:

A Any Synod member who receives a positive Lateral Flow or PCR test result during the group of sessions is advised to follow Government guidance, which may be accessed here: [How long to self-isolate – Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) – NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)

Members who test positive whilst away from home will need to request their diocese to cover their accommodation expenses during this period and ask them to appoint a contact person to offer pastoral support during this time.

Members are not legally required to notify the NHS after a positive Lateral Flow test but should consider doing so. They are required to notify the NHS after a positive PCR test.

Canon Adrian Greenwood (Southwark) to ask the Clerk to the Synod:

Q125 (A) From the information available, please can you list by House the numbers and percentages of Synod members who identify themselves as of UKME/GMH heritage? (B) What external comparative figures exist against which these numbers might be assessed for their representativeness?

Dr Jacqui Philips to reply as Clerk to the Synod:

A As set out in the Privacy Notice sent to all Synod members at the start of this group of sessions, we asked Synod members to provide their race and ethnicity for the purposes of producing anonymised statistics about the demographic make-up of General Synod. Not all these questionnaires have been completed by Synod members. Once they have been, the Synod team will compile the figures on the demographic make-up of General Synod and make them available later this year on an anonymised basis. A comparative figure might be the figures provided by the House of Commons Library on ethnic diversity in politics and public life. These figures may be accessed here: [Ethnic diversity in politics and public life – House of Commons Library \(parliament.uk\)](https://www.parliament.uk/researchandpublications/articles/ethnic-diversity-in-politics-and-public-life)

Dr Janette Allotey (Chester) to ask the Clerk to the Synod:

Q126 Is it possible for reading materials to be sent out as soon as they are ready rather than in bulk a very short time before the meetings to permit a bit more time for us to read them and formulate considered questions and similarly, for written answers to questions to be replied to earlier even if they were sent back in several small batches?

Dr Jacqui Philips to reply as Clerk to the Synod:

A We do understand that preparation for Synod meetings often requires Synod members to read through substantial quantities of written materials. Agendas for Synod meetings are set by the General Synod Business Committee and the lead time for papers to be written, checked, approved by the relevant boards and committees and formatted for publication is usually less than six weeks. For this reason, unless materials have already appeared elsewhere, it is not usually possible for papers to go through this

process any faster and be made ready for publication. Similarly, the very short period available for Synod questions to be received, checked, replies drafted by officials and finalised with the relevant trustee bodies does not enable written answers to be published in stages. We regret that this can mean that Synod mailings are sometimes very substantial. The Business Committee has in the past arranged for Synod Questions to be submitted in between Synod meetings in order to reduce the number of questions being answered at a particular group of sessions, but take-up of this opportunity was not high in the previous Quinquennium.

NATIONAL SOCIETY COUNCIL

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

Q127 What revision to the *Valuing All God's Children* document is being considered now that there is clear evidence (for example concerns raised and accepted by the Judges in the case of Keira Bell), that social transition is potentially very harmful to young children?

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

A Without commenting on the individual case mentioned, or the successful appeal of the original judgement, it is clear that this is an area of controversy and strongly held differences of opinion. Our document is intended as a resource to help schools tackle homophobic and transphobic bullying so that, even in the midst of wider and often heated public debate, they can ensure that children are treated with dignity and respect (especially in relation to protected characteristics under equalities legislation) and also learn to respect the views of others. We are keeping the document under review and 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.

Mr Clive Scowen (London) to ask the Chair of the National Society Council:

Q128 To what extent (i) have young people from the 903 churches, identified in GS 2161 as having (at that time) 25 or more young people attending, been given the opportunity to participate in the National Younger Leadership groups, and (ii) is profession of Christian faith a factor in selecting young people as participants?

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

A The National Younger Leadership Groups, through which the Church of England Education Office works with around 250 primary and secondary school young leaders, are chosen by schools in

collaboration with their diocesan education teams and are drawn from school contexts, not directly from churches. These groups include young people at a variety of stages on their own faith journey, and not all will publicly identify as Christian or Anglican as this was not a stipulation for schools in selecting the students to be part of the leadership programme. As part of the vision for the church to be younger and more diverse the national vision and strategy team will continue to develop its thinking in partnership with churches and young people identified in GS2161 as well as many others.

CHURCH BUILDINGS COUNCIL

The Revd Canon Timothy Goode (Southwark) to ask the Chair of the Church Buildings Council:

Q129 Given the Church Buildings Council's assertion in its recently published Equal Access to Church Buildings Guidance that "It is essential that we find ways for accessibility and heritage to work together to the benefit of both" – what is the Council doing to ensure that this message is being shared with dioceses and their DACs and that church buildings casework is being scrutinised to ensure that access and heritage are properly balanced?

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

A The Council's guidance is founded on the principle that all are made in the image of God and should be able to access the house of God. The Council invited DACs to be part of shaping this guidance, along with access specialists, via formal consultation and a targeted session at a DAC conference. The Council's casework guidance, shared with DACs, is unequivocal that the equal importance of all users of a building should be paramount.

The Council is always attentive to accessibility when it scrutinises proposals. It regularly challenges proposals that do not include equal access. It considers that enabling access can justify altering historic fabric where this is the only reasonable way to achieve it. Council staff engage with bodies such as Historic England to help shape wider heritage responses in this inclusive model. There is much more to do and we welcome feedback to further improve practice.

The Revd Canon Andrew Dotchin (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich) to ask the Chair of the Church Buildings Council:

Q130 What can be done through guidance, support, and changes to the faculty system to make it easier for churches to make changes such as new low carbon heating systems and solar PV?

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

A Reaching Synod's 2030 net zero carbon target is a challenge that requires all of us, individually, in our churches, and collectively, to make changes to our buildings and lifestyles.

The national Environment Team works with the network of Diocesan Environmental Officers to provide support and resources to help. A national volunteer recruitment campaign is planned for 2022, to further grow this nationwide capacity.

Proposals being debated by this Synod seek to change Faculty rules, directly targeting works that lower carbon usage by our church buildings. This uses regulation to put low-carbon choices into consideration and practice.

The CofE website has links to the latest information on the route to net-zero carbon for churches, including on heating, lighting, solar panels, and EV car charging. The national net-zero carbon webinar programme shares guidance.

Parish Buying offers solar panels and low-carbon heating solutions, as well as green electricity, LED lights, and energy audits.

The Revd Canon Dr Tim Bull (St Albans) to ask the Chair of the Church Buildings Council:

Q131 Given that the consultation on the Routemap to Net Zero Carbon by 2030 closes at the end of February, how much feedback has been received so far, and what can Synod members do to help promote this engagement?

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

A Synod members can help greatly by encouraging their dioceses and other organisations to respond by the end February deadline – contact your Diocesan Bishop/Secretary to find out who is collating the response.

As of 28th Jan, there were 55 responses, of which three are from dioceses. If synod members would like to know whether their own diocese has responded, they can email denise.rowley@churchofengland.org.

The Routemap and survey can be found here: www.churchofengland.org/net-zero-consultation

Our engagement events have had well over 200 attendees. The majority of feedback so far is supportive, with the Routemap being

generally well-received. Most milestones have been agreed with by most respondents to date, although the timing on some is seen as stretching. Some additional, very useful suggestions have been made.

The Net Zero Carbon Sub-committee will work through all the feedback, before updating the Routemap accordingly, and bringing it to the July meeting of Synod (Business Committee allowing).

Mr Charles Houston (Hereford) to ask the Chair of the Church Buildings Council:

Q132 The Eco Church questionnaire overlooks the widespread use of one of the most damaging plastic-related products in current usage. There is, as yet no mention of floral management and the use of both Floral Foam (Oasis) or imported flowers in church buildings.

Will the Church of England adopt the following:

1. To bring in an immediate ban on all Floral Foam in its buildings both in weekly flowers but particularly at weddings and funerals (which will mean that outside floral contractors will have to comply);
2. That flowers in church buildings are viewed as an act of thanksgiving and of worship for God's creation, respecting that creation, rather than simply as decoration. This means that flowers should be sourced locally where possible and that wherever possible, only seasonal flowers, greenery should be used; and
3. That the Eco Church initiative includes a section addressing this?

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

A This is an interesting topic that we've not, as yet, engaged with at a national level. The Life Events team raise awareness of the choices that can be made, particularly for wedding flowers, through our website and other channels. For funerals, flowers are usually organised through the funeral director.

Individual parishes can also make up their own minds on this matter. Alternatives exist, and we understand some churches are already using them; for example, pebbles, marbles, sand, moss, wire mesh, or a "flower frog".

Plastic is not the only issue; there is a growing movement for "grown not flown" flowers. Locally grown, field-grown flowers will have a far smaller carbon footprint than imported equivalents or those raised in a hothouse.

The Eco Church framework is run by our partner organisation, *A Rocha UK*, and the suggestion of incorporating this in their framework has been forwarded to them to consider.

COUNCIL FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

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

Q133 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 in July 2021, ‘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.’ At the November 2021 Synod, the Chair was asked again about the ecumenical implications and the answer was: ‘The review of arrangements is ongoing, and recommendations will be published in due course.’ Would the Chair please 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 Coventry to reply on behalf of the Chair of the Council for Christian Unity:

A The work of the group is ongoing, as is the current public health situation. During its deliberations, the group has been mindful of important ecumenical matters among other considerations. As it becomes safe to do so, the pre-Covid practice of a larger number of bishops participating in consecrations is being restored and this will include ecumenical involvement as appropriate.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Mr Paul Ronson (Blackburn) to ask the Chair of the Finance Committee:

Q134 Please provide an update on parish finances during the pandemic.

Canon Dr John Spence to reply as Chair of the Finance Committee:

A Your question links to the pandemic. To date we only have returns for 2020. Clearly there will have been a significant impact on 2021, returns for which will arrive across this year.

We are hugely grateful to all those who continue to contribute financially to the Church, and to all those volunteers in parishes who have enabled us to achieve an 84% return rate for that year.

2020 was an exceptional year for parish finance. Income fell by 15% and expenditure by 14%. In 2020 there was an aggregate surplus of £8 million, continuing a run of surpluses since 2012 over which period parishes' total income exceeded expenditure by £290 million. The 2020 surplus breaks down into a restricted surplus of £20m and an unrestricted deficit of £12m: 1.7% of unrestricted income.

These are aggregate figures and I recognise that the situation in each parish will have been different.

Dr Simon Eyre (Chichester) to ask the Chair of the Finance Committee:

Q135 Has consideration been given to the use of a PCC's total annual income as perhaps a fairer basis on which to assess parish share?

Canon Dr John Spence to reply as Chair of the Finance Committee:

A Each diocese has the responsibility for deciding the basis on which parish share will be requested from its parishes. Some do this by formula which may include factors such as an indicator of deprivation, electoral roll or attendance. Others use an offer system, often providing guidance to each parish on the costs of ministry in the parish, and shared costs at diocesan and national level such as support for parishes and the cost of training ordinands.

MINISTRY COUNCIL

The Revd Zoe Heming (Lichfield) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:

Q136 The Church of England is promoting the rollout of psychological/ psychotherapeutic Assessments of Ordinands across all the Dioceses. Can you assure Synod that these assessments do not discriminate against people with a history of abuse, people with mental health issues, people with hidden or visible impairments, or people who are neurodivergent?

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

A The Church of England is seeking to develop Assessment for Psychological Wellbeing (APW) as a consistent and normative element of the discernment process.

A key feature of the new Shared Discernment Process is a commitment to widening diversity and this is included in all training for DDOs and Bishops' Advisers as we seek to attend to all candidates on the basis of their experience, enabling all to access the discernment process fully.

Assessment for Psychological Wellbeing is one part of the wider discernment process. Its aim is to provide insight into a candidate's

underlying levels of emotional well-being and personal integration, which may impact on a candidate's capacity to engage in ministry. An Assessment can, therefore, be helpful for a candidate in thinking through how they might best bring to bear their lived experience in a fruitful way, and as a resource in ministry. The insights from an Assessment are intended also to become a formational element in ongoing discernment.

Training and guidance have been provided to DDOs to enable them to establish best practice in Assessment for Psychological Wellbeing. Future work will include training for Assessors in understanding the context of Assessment for Psychological Wellbeing in the discernment process. There is also a requirement that Assessors are accredited with professional bodies, and are working according to the equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) policies of those organisations.

Considering this, there should therefore be no reason why any Psychological Assessment will discriminate against people with a history of abuse, people with mental health issues, people with hidden or visible impairments, or people who are neurodivergent.

The Revd Zoe Heming (Lichfield) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:

Q137 What proportion of those being put forward for a Bishop's Advisory Panel have been women, and what proportion of those women who did not make it to BAP were turned down as a result of psychological/ Psychotherapeutic Assessments?

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

A During the last discernment season, we were running a temporary online discernment process in place of BAP because of the Covid pandemic. During that full season (September 2020 – July 2021) 54% of the total cohort were women. Decisions regarding whether or not to send a candidate to a discernment panel are taken in the diocese based on a variety of factors. Assessment for Psychological Wellbeing is but one tool used in the discernment process. However, since decisions about sending candidates to a discernment panel are solely diocesan, we do not have statistics regarding the number of women who were not sent to a panel for any other reason.

The Revd Toby Wright (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:

Q138 The *Ministry Statistics* continue to show a lack of younger women ordinands. This has been a recognised trend for many years. What is being done to address this imbalance?

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

A In 2021, 40% of those beginning training for ordination aged under 32 were women. Every annual cohort of participants in the Ministry Experience Scheme for young adults has been between 45-49% female. The National Vocations team is currently engaged in a programme of work specific to this question. Consultation is underway with stakeholders including female ordinands, curates and clergy as well as TEIs and diocesan vocations teams to understand current experiences and to identify further effective interventions.

Guidance to Dioceses and TEIs on policies for ordinands about to become parents was issued in March 2020 (including arrangements for pooling the cost). This recommends how to support ordinands and curates in training who might not have worked long enough to be eligible for Statutory Maternity Pay and is intended to reassure female (and other) candidates considering starting a family that they will be supported. <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/clergy-resources/national-clergy-hr/family-friendly-policies>

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

Q139 In view of the plan to set up Ladyewell House which will provide an “alternative pathway” for Anglo-Catholic male ordinands who may seek mission-pioneer appointments, what plans are there to provide similar support in training and formation for women with a vocation to sacramental, catholic pioneer ministry?

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

A We believe an appropriate range of training pathways is already available to equip all kinds of ordinands, with the necessary support for them, and are grateful to many different clergy, parishes and organisations who contribute in various ways to provision for ordinands undertaking one of those pathways. Ladyewell House is an initiative of those who established it, which has not sought – nor does it require – the approval of the Ministry Council. Any ordinands at Ladyewell House will be undertaking a pathway at a TEI and fall within the normal expectations for ordinands at that TEI, as well as being sponsored by their bishop for that training.

Mrs Sarah Finch (London) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:

Q140 What metrics does the Church of England Research and Statistics department use for understanding and monitoring the social classes of clergy, ordinands and ordination candidates, and what numbers and trends have they seen in recent years?

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

A From September 2021 social diversity data has started being requested all candidates who go to Stage 1 in the discernment process for ordained ministry. The data is based on four questions recommended by the Social Mobility Commission which all have national benchmarks.

The same four social diversity questions have also been included in a pilot with senior trustee boards and there are plans to use with clergy involved in the Living Ministry research.

This is the first time this data has been collected systematically so we will be able to observe numbers after the first year and trends in subsequent years.

The Revd Jeremy Moodey (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:

Q141 The Living Ministry Panel Survey Wave 3 report published in January 2022 but based on data collected in March 2021 suggested that over two-fifths of clergy have experienced a decline in mental wellbeing and relationships since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, while a similar proportion have felt an increased sense of isolation in their ministry over the same period. These aspects of wellbeing are likely to have further worsened given the prolongation of the pandemic and continued financial and other pressures on parishes. How does the Ministry Council propose to address these issues?

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

A These are concerning findings and the Ministry Council is undertaking further qualitative research through the Living Ministry programme to understand properly their causes and effects. Support for clergy wellbeing should primarily be delivered locally with responsibility taken by Bishops. The Council is promoting awareness of these issues among dioceses and supporting the work of the Facilitation Group for the Covenant for Clergy Care and Wellbeing to monitor and resource dioceses in this area. We are actively working with organisations such as Clergy Support Trust and have made available a range of resources on the Church of England website designed to support the wellbeing of clergy.

Ms Fiona MacMillan (London) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:

Q142 Since the Archbishop of Canterbury's promising 2018 conference on Disability & Church, what financial resources have gone into or are planned to go into supporting the ministry, witness and presence of disabled people in the Church of England a) nationally and b) locally?

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

A A group from the Disability Task Group, working with the Bishop of Bedford and the Director of Faith and Public Life is developing a strategic programme of actions to enhance the experience and participation of Deaf and disabled people throughout the church. Some of these actions promise to be effective and cost neutral. Others will indeed require financial resources, and in due course a bid is likely to be made for appropriate funding. The Clergy Remuneration Review's recommendations include a bid for triennium funding to set up a diversity fund. Further discussions with Deaf and disabled clergy are needed about how this might work.

In one specific area, since 2018 £157k has been spent from Vote 1 funds on bespoke support for disabled ordinands.

Ms Fiona MacMillan (London) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:

Q143 The Clergy Diversity Audit (2005) showed that only 3.7% of clergy in the Church of England self-reported as disabled against a UK population average of 10%. In 2021 18% of UK working age population self-reported as disabled. What percentage of clergy now self-report as disabled a) nationally and b) by diocese?

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

A We do not have current figures for clergy reporting as disabled, either nationally or by diocese. People may choose not to disclose a disability. A survey of clergy carried out by the Remuneration Review indicated that, of the 2,800 clergy who responded, 17.3% had a physical or mental health condition or illness lasting, or expected to last, 12 months or more. 8.4% had a condition that reduced their ability to carry out day to day tasks by a little and 0.9% by a lot.

The Revd Dr Ian Paul (Southwell & Nottingham) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:

Q144 Is understanding of, and conformance to, the teaching of the Church as expressed in 'Issue in Human Sexuality' still required of all ordinands, and what is being done to ensure that this is both understood and enacted consistently across all dioceses?

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

A All candidates during the discernment process, before attending a discernment panel, are asked to give an assurance to their Diocesan Director of Ordinands (DDO) that they have read the House of Bishops Statement *Issues in Human Sexuality*, that they understand it, and they are willing to live according to its guidelines.

DDOs are required to ask all candidates to read *Issues in Human Sexuality* and the DDO is asked to affirm this by answering the following question in the candidate's Sponsoring Papers which are submitted before the candidate comes to a discernment panel:

'Have you discussed with the Candidate, and have they read, understood and agreed to live within the guidelines in *Issues in Human Sexuality*?'

The Revd Fiona Jack (London) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:

Q145 Are people applying for licensed lay ministry currently required to state that they have read and understood *Issues in Human Sexuality* and that they will live within its guidelines?

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

A There is no national guidance that requires people exploring a vocation to licensed lay ministry to do so. Such a decision would be at the discretion of the diocesan bishop and so practice may vary from diocese to diocese.

I also refer you to the answer to Question 85 regarding the status of *Issues in Human Sexuality*, especially in the light of the Living in Love and Faith process and the clearer sense of direction that the church-wide engagement in learning and listening together using the resources will give rise to in the discernment and decision-making phases.

The Revd Vincent Whitworth (Manchester) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:

Q146 Taking into consideration that some dioceses are having to significantly reduce the number of stipendiary clergy due to the financial impact of the pandemic on parishes and dioceses, will the national church provide additional financial support to ensure that parish ministry is adequately resourced, and stipendiary clergy retained in these areas?

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

A The Strategic Ministry Board was established in 2020 and since then has distributed national funding to support stipendiary curacies. In the most recent round of funding, about 25% of stipendiary curacies received support. Strategic Development Funding has also been applied to support stipendiary posts.

The National Ministry Team continues to monitor the situation and short- and longer-term proposals are in development. Naturally, any further developments will require governance approval. Broadly, it is likely that there will be some additional financial support for ministry (lay and ordained) in local worshipping communities where such ministry will help us all to meet the aspirations of the Vision and Strategy.

The Revd Jeremy Moodey (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:

Q147 In the context of cuts across dioceses in the number of stipendiary posts and given the answer to Q112 at the November 2021 session, could the National Ministry Team please provide an update on the number of stipendiary curates who fail to find suitable posts of first responsibility within a reasonable timeframe of having been 'signed off', and what plans does Ministry Council have to address this issue, including developing the funding proposals for posts of first responsibility mentioned in the answer to Q112?

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

A As indicated in our response to Q112 at the November 2021 session, we are continuing to seek funding provision to ensure that no eligible stipendiary curate finishing in 2022 will be without the possibility of a post of further responsibility. Beyond this, we are also seeking support for posts in the next triennium to try to ensure that there will be sufficient posts available for finishing curates. If and when such a facility becomes available, we will communicate plans to dioceses.

REMUNERATION & CONDITIONS OF SERVICE COMMITTEE

The Revd Roger Driver (Bath & Wells) to ask the Chair of the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee:

Q148 What is the working definition for the Church of England of a 'stipend' as distinct from a 'salary', as applied in the context of full-time clergy serving in parishes in the Church of England, and how many dioceses of the Church of England use and apply that definition?

The Bishop of Hereford to reply as Chair of the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee:

A As the remuneration review report suggests, a stipend is generally seen as a payment to enable ministry and applies to office holders who are provided with a house for the better performance of their office. Full time stipendiary office holders on common tenure are entitled to receive not less than the National Minimum Stipend. By contrast, a salary is more likely to accommodate an element of reward and will usually be paid to someone who is an employee and who is not provided with a house. This understanding seems to be shared by most if not all dioceses. However, given the varying financial circumstances of clergy and the varying nature of the roles they perform, there is inevitably a degree of flexibility around the application of any definition.

The Revd Roger Driver (Bath & Wells) to ask the Chair of the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee:

Q149 With increasing numbers of advertised posts for work in parishes advertised as 'half-time' Stipend, how many hours and/or days work each week constitutes 'half-time', and Under Clergy Terms and Conditions of Service, with the aspiration that fair and transparent terms and conditions of service contribute to well-being at work, to what extent can 'The Ecclesiastical Offices Terms of Service Legislation Measure (2009)' be applied to 'half-time' Stipend Parish positions, and if there is a difference in application between a full-time stipend Parish post holder what are those differences?

The Bishop of Hereford to reply as Chair of the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee:

A RACSC is currently consulting on draft guidance to provide additional clarity and consistency for clergy who hold office on a part time basis. A half-time post would normally be equivalent to three days. Most of the legal provisions apply equally to full-time clergy and those holding part-time office.

As office holders, clergy determine their own working patterns and are responsible for managing expectations about their availability, and not over-working. There are no defined hours nor a specified maximum. All office holders are entitled to a rest period of not less than 24 hours in a week. Clergy who are not full time are only entitled to a house if they are incumbents or if it is specified in their statement of particulars. Half time office holders often receive a half stipend, but, where a house is provided, some dioceses reduce the stipend to take account of this.

The Revd Prebendary Rosie Austin (Exeter) to ask the Chair of the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee:

Q150 Why were working hours and the six-day working week not discussed as a part of the CSA report with relevance to clergy wellbeing and retention? Is there research around the effects of regularly working a six-day week or the potential benefits of a shorter working week which should be considered by the Church of England? Should terms and conditions of service be reviewed as the clergy role changes?

The Bishop of Hereford to reply as Chair of the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee:

A The Remuneration Review and CSA report are primarily concerned with clergy stipends and remuneration and cannot address every aspect of clergy terms and conditions. However, we are aware that clergy working patterns can have a significant effect on wellbeing and family relationships and that this is supported by research undertaken as part of the *Living Ministry* project. Clergy working patterns were last discussed by RACSC in 2019. As there are no legal minimum or maximum hours and clergy have flexibility to determine their own working patterns, it took the view that this was best left to clergy individual discretion and that national guidance would not be welcomed. Many dioceses now recommend that, once a month, clergy should take two consecutive rest days.