

# **Report of Proceedings 2022**

## **General Synod**

**Tuesday 8 February 2022 –  
Thursday 10 February 2022**

**Church House, London**

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## **Full Synod: First Day Tuesday 8 February 2022**

THE CHAIR *Very Revd Andrew Nunn (Dean of Southwark)* took the Chair at 1.45 pm.

### **ITEM 1 REVIVAL OF TEMPORARY STANDING ORDERS (GS 2177)**

*The Chair:* Good afternoon, Synod. Welcome to this group of sessions. Whether you are here in the chamber or joining us online, you are very welcome. Before business begins properly, we have some business to do, if that makes sense. We are on Item 1, which is Standing Orders under section 1 of the General Synod (Remote Meetings) (Temporary Standing Orders) Measure 2020, for which you need GS 2177. This is a motion for revival under section 3(6) of the Measure. I invite Geoffrey Tattersall to speak to this motion. Geoffrey, you have ten minutes in which to do so.

*Mr Geoffrey Tattersall (Manchester):* Those members of the Synod who were members of the last Synod will remember that the Covid pandemic caused a particular problem for the Synod of the Church of England as it is a legislative body. This was because our constitution, as set out in appendix D of the Standing Orders, requires that for members of the General Synod to vote they must be present together in the same place. It was thus necessary for the Synod to pass legislation to allow it to transact business remotely and not in accordance with its constitution.

This it did on 24 September 2020 when it met with a minimum number of people being present. At that session the General Synod (Remote Meetings) (Temporary Standing Orders) Measure went through all its legislative stages and was given Final Approval. It was then considered by the Ecclesiastical Committee of Parliament, received Royal Assent and became law. That enabled us to meet on Zoom - hooray (sorry, I should not have said that) - and transact business. At its first meeting on Zoom the Synod approved the Standing Orders which are at GS 2177. Section 3(4) of the Measure provided that they continued in operation for a period of 12 months from when they were first approved.

I remember that before the Ecclesiastical Committee I was specifically asked whether we would have to pass a further Measure at the expiration of that 12 months if events should prove that to be necessary. I think it was asked in humour. The answer was that we would not have to pass a further Measure because the Synod could resolve to extend the period of the operation of these Standing Orders under section 3(5) before they expired or, if they were allowed to lapse, by section 3(6), Synod could resolve they should be revived and continue in operation for such period as specified in the Resolution. In fact, the temporary Standing Orders were allowed to lapse, but by this motion I am hoping to persuade the Synod that they should be revived under section 3(6) and remain in operation until 7 August 2022, i.e. until after the scheduled Synod in York.

Although in the recent past we have either met entirely on Zoom, or in November entirely in person, the Measure did permit a hybrid meeting where some attend in person and some attend on Zoom. I suspect that this did not happen, as it did in Parliament for some time, partly because of the frequency of our meetings and partly to do with financial resources. We all know from experience that some members of Synod feel unable to attend in the current circumstances and, as we each take our lateral flow test before attending each day's sitting, it is not inconceivable that we will not be able to do so because we test positive.

The purpose of this motion is to allow members of this Synod who cannot be present in the chamber to participate in our proceedings. Such participation may be, or may prove to be, less than perfect, and indeed in one of the papers that have been sent around it has been described as "somewhat clunky", but that is the best we can do. Voting for this motion will have no effect on those present, but allow those who are not able to be present to participate, and I would suggest that that is highly desirable and that we should have the greatest possible participation in all that we do here. I hope that the Synod will therefore feel able to support this motion standing in my name.

*The Chair:* Thank you. This item is now open for debate. Those wishing to speak should stand or indicate. I call Peter Bruinvels. You have up to five minutes, if you need it, Peter, followed by Fiona MacMillan for a maiden speech.

*Canon Peter Bruinvels (Guildford):* Whilst welcoming this temporary Measure, and in fact it is in response to a formal request from members, including myself, during the September 2020 special Synod debate, I do request further consideration be given to removing the end date of 7 August 2022. I make this request with the ultimate aim of making hybrid facilities permanent. I think it is really important that we are inclusive. It would make General Synod much more user friendly and, as I said, inclusive. It would enable those unable to participate through health issues, personal choice, last-minute work commitments, appearing on the Bench of Bishops in the House of Lords, to attend. All of this, plus there could be another pandemic, which we do not want to be caught out by. I urge Synod, while obviously supporting this, to give serious consideration to extending it and to making it permanent.

I thank the Business Committee, and Robert Hammond in particular, for the fact that he was prepared to listen to us. I know that the Synod members who are not here are so grateful that they can still be part of it. I am conscious that, as William Nye would say, there might be additional costs, but in the same sense it will enable people like teachers, rather than having to get replacement teachers in, to still be a full member. I urge Synod to think about it further.

*Ms Fiona MacMillan (London):* I welcome this Measure, and I would like to give some greater context as to why. Within the tragedy of the pandemic there have been unexpected opportunities to learn and grow. Society as a whole experienced something

of many disabled people's daily lives: being shut in, shut out and shut up. The swift switch to online platforms for communication and work, community and entertainment was unprecedented. Even when people were unable to get out, they were able to join in, creating unexpected new opportunities for participation.

This has been life changing for many disabled people, particularly those living with energy-limiting chronic illness. We have been able to join worship, build community, attend online theatre or concerts, participate in public life, many for the first time in years. Yet, as society has begun to open up, disabled people are again forgotten, further excluded from new patterns of public life; our voices and experience largely unheard in society or church as things get back to normal.

Disability is a social justice issue for the Church. The ability to attend wholly or partly online alongside those in the building makes access and participation possible for those who have long been left out. Personally, the cost of participating in Synod is high. I have lived with energy-limiting chronic illness for 25 years and with long Covid for the last two years. I hesitated to stand for election because for me these three-day sessions of Synod will use two to three weeks' energy. I welcome this Measure because it will open up participation for disabled people, a group distinctly under-represented on Synod, as well as to others, for example, those with caring responsibilities.

I realise that creating hybrid sessions may not be simple and may not work for all. There is work to do to ensure it does not become a two-tier system. I recognise that there is both a resource implication and a learning curve ahead, but a vote for this Measure, and for extending this Measure to be open ended, will send a message that Synod takes access and participation seriously; a message that the Church of England takes disabled people seriously. And it will also enable future Synods to benefit from the wisdom and experience of a wider range of people, as is fitting if we truly aspire to be a more diverse Church. I urge Synod to support this Measure and to consider extending it.

*The Chair:* I see no one standing or indicating they wish to speak, so I will call on Geoffrey Tattersall. Sorry, you can sit down Geoffrey. Valerie Plumb on the Zoom platform.

*Revd Canon Valerie Plumb (Oxford):* I thought it was appropriate to hear from somebody at home. Mr Hammond and myself have been in contact regarding this concern for a number of months now. I am a clerical person who actually does not have the choice to come as, unfortunately, I am on immunosuppressant medication, and it is just plain unsafe, and I value my life more than Synod, funnily enough.

What I need to say today is I think it is really good that this message has been heard. I have been shielding and remotely working now for two years, and it is really important that those who cannot participate face-to-face do not have their work and their ministry non-validated. Being on Synod is a really important part of my call to ministry and my call to God. Sitting and watching last time, and feeling so terribly excluded, was one of the worst feelings I have had, because I had prepared to be part of this Synod and had done

all the preparation, and then it came to nothing. I wanted to say I feel quite proud that at this moment finally we can say we do value our people, all people; it does not matter if they cannot be present. Because we are present, just not physically. I was very conscious when I was listening to Justin's talk last time, he said one simple phrase that really stuck in my heart and it was simply this, "it is not Christian to exclude".

I urge you, brothers and sisters, to vote for this and, as my two colleagues have said before, it would be wonderful to make this open ended because we do not know the future. It is in God's hands. Let us leave it with God. That is all I wanted to say, thank you.

*The Chair.* I see no one standing or indicating. Geoffrey, you have up to five minutes to respond to the debate.

*Mr Geoffrey Tattersall (Manchester):* First of all, I am very grateful to each of those people who have spoken. They are probably raising the same issue. The difficulty is that this is a temporary Measure, these are temporary Standing Orders, and, absent a new Measure, which you would need to do what I think might be wanted by some people, we have to put an end date in the Standing Orders being extended or revived to a certain date. There is no amendment put forward by anyone. All I can say is I hope that those who are in charge of these events are listening to that, but it will require a new Measure to adopt a different way of working if we are going to adopt this permanently.

I would be grateful if the Synod could at least pass this motion because then it would allow there to be remote participation today and tomorrow and the day after. Thank you very much.

*The Chair.* Thank you, Geoffrey.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair.* That is clearly carried. We can move now to the next item of business. Thank you very much.

THE CHAIR *The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby)* took the Chair at 2.02 pm.

*The Chair.* I invite Sue Lucas to lead opening worship.

## **WORSHIP**

*Revd Dr Susan Lucas (Chelmsford):* We were expecting that the Chaplain, Andrew Hammond, would be leading this worship. He is, unfortunately, ill and therefore engaging from home, so we keep him in our prayers.

*Revd Dr Susan Lucas (Chelmsford)* led the Synod in an act of worship.

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby)* led the Synod in an act of worship

*The Chair.* Before we go on to the Introductions and Welcomes, we keep a moment of quiet for reflection and prayer. Thank you, Sue, for stepping in.

## **ITEM 2**

### **INTRODUCTIONS AND WELCOMES**

*The Chair.* We now move to the moment at which the Prolocutors of the lower Houses of the Convocations of Canterbury and York, and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the House of Laity will be presented to the Presidents.

*Revd Dr Sue Lucas (Chelmsford):* Archbishops, I present to you the Ven. Luke Miller to take up his role as Prolocutor of the Convocation of Canterbury.

*The Chair.* I think that has broken a lot of rules. I have just shaken hands with him.

*Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn):* Archbishop, I present the Revd Kate Wharton, duly elected as Prolocutor of the Convocation of York.

*Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark):* Archbishops, we have great pleasure in presenting to you Dr Jamie Harrison who has been duly elected as the Chair of the House of Laity for this quinquennium.

*Canon Lucy Docherty (Portsmouth):* Archbishops, I present to you Alison Coulter who has been elected as the Vice-Chair of the House of Laity.

*The Chair.* I suggest and invite you to greet them with applause.

We are now invited to greet three new members of the Synod elected since the last group of sessions. I will announce them by name. Would they stand and then we will have the names of Bishops attending during vacancies, and we will welcome them warmly at the end of all of that.

The new members are: the Very Revd Rogers Govender, Dean of Manchester; the Revd David Tolhurst, Diocese of Durham, replacing the Revd Bill Braviner; the Revd Ross Meikle, Diocese of Oxford, replacing the Revd Andrew Lightbown.

I am now going to read out the names of Bishops who are attending this group of sessions under Standing Order 123. The Bishops attending this group of sessions in place of the Diocesan Bishops are: the Bishop of Taunton, Ruth Worsley, for the Diocese of Bath & Wells; the Bishop of Berwick, Mark Wroe, for the Diocese of Newcastle. We have a longstanding connection - and I am not allowed to say this but I am going to - because he

was my immediate successor in our respective title parish, so very nice. Andrew, and everyone else, I am not showing favouritism really. The Rt Revd Rob Wickham for the Diocese of Portsmouth (he is not here and, if anyone wonders, he is a commissary); the Rt Revd Simon Burton-Jones for the Diocese of Rochester; the Rt Revd Karen Gorham for the Diocese of Salisbury; the Rt Revd Debbie Sellin for the Diocese of Winchester.

May we greet them all. That concludes our Introductions and Welcomes. I hand over to the next Chair for our next item of business.

THE CHAIR *Canon Izzy McDonald-Booth (Newcastle)* took the Chair at 2.18 pm.

### **ITEM 3 PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS**

*The Chair.* Good afternoon, Synod. We come to Item 3, the Presidential Address. I would like to invite the Archbishop of Canterbury to deliver his address.

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby):* A few weeks ago I was part of a meeting of leaders of different faiths from across the United Kingdom who met online to talk about the challenges and opportunities we are facing within our religious traditions and in our communities. It was a meeting of very different people, from very different backgrounds, with very different beliefs, but I was struck enormously by the huge areas of overlap expressed. It was clear that we all shared a certain loss of confidence about our communal life as we emerge from the pandemic. One person put it best when they said it was as though the pandemic had caused us all to “lose the muscle memory of how to be together”.

A key lesson of Covid has been unequivocally that the illusion of individualism and atomisation is just that: it is an illusion, a fallacy. The very nature of a virus is that it is contagious or infectious - it needs many people to spread and thrive. It took that physical manifestation of connection for many of us to realise how we are connected in all sorts of other ways. From staying at home, to bulk buying supplies, to getting the vaccine, to wearing a face mask - the message was clear: our actions affect other people. We cannot do what we want without it having an impact somewhere else. Even when we stayed at home, however difficult - and however lonely as it was for many people - we did not live without an effect on others.

However, in the debate over vaccination especially, it is noticeable that individuals and groups talk extensively about their own rights, needs and wants as though still entirely autonomous.

Amongst the greatest challenges we face as communities, as a nation and across the world are the challenges of the tension between individualism and community. Global

intergenerational equity, technological change, climate change, vaccine, nationalism, these are all interrelated issues with a common feature - those who have gain more and those who have not bear the consequences. The strong do what they will and the weak suffer what they must.

What is demanded then for a common future where all can flourish?

Know it or not, it is a challenge from God who created all to answer that question. And “all” means not just our immediate family, or even our next-door neighbour, or the people who live in our town, city or country, but globally. We have to learn to care about those people we may never meet and might never know as though they were among our visible neighbours. As we face the pandemic, as we look at the threat of climate change, we are standing before issues that affect every single one of us across the globe, no matter where we live and who we are. We are being called to look at the world as one, rather than through the lens of narrow nationalism, factionalism, politics, economic union or self-selecting group. We face the call to see every single person with whom we share this world no longer as a stranger, a foreigner, an alien, but as a neighbour. God’s answer to the question, “Am I my sister or brother’s keeper?” comes back unequivocally: “Yes. Yes you are, and your sisters and brothers are found in every community on the planet. In their flourishing is also your own. In their decline is also your judgment.”

The challenges of our time go to the heart of understanding what it means to love our neighbour.

For many richer countries the philosophical, moral and, above all, spiritual loss of even a notional underpinning of what it means to be a society leaves us without the means of navigating the huge changes of the near future. That is the loss that results in radical individualism and autonomy, while we forget the lessons of the last few years that stare us right in the face: almost nothing we do fails to affect other people.

Some things we do in fact affect other people more than they affect us - mask wearing for instance - that’s why we have all made so many sacrifices over the last few years.

But there is nothing in heaven or on earth that exists in total isolation. God Himself, the triune God, is a God of dynamic relationship.

The result is that in our national life, there are two areas in which we miss out when we become autonomous and individualistic. The first is responsibility. The second is truth.

In John 14:6, Jesus declares, “I am the way, the truth and the life.” Too often Pilate’s mistake is made, asking “what” is truth, when we should be asking “who” is truth. In David Ford’s recently published commentary on John, he repeats again and again that in looking at Jesus we see the truth about the triune God, about ourselves and about the world and its creation.



The truth in Jesus Christ is that it is not principally communicated in dogmatic statements. Truth is relational and personal. Truth is a “who” that relates to us and reveals the truth to us.

Truth is found in the pattern of the life and indwelling presence of the Christ who remains, dwells, pitches his tent with us. The first question the disciples ask of Jesus is not, “What are you?”, but, “Where are you abiding?” Where are you staying? Where do you remain? That is a question of personal relationship - with Christ and with each other.

Recently, I have had the opportunity to talk to some fascinating people as part of a series of interviews for the BBC. Rather unusually, on this occasion I was the one doing the interviewing. One of them was Elif Shafak, the Turkish writer and political activist. She spoke so movingly about seeing people - truly seeing them for who they are, not judging them for who we think they are or who we want them to be.

She talked about our tendency to put people in boxes, to separate out and label people, to reduce them to one word which is based on our judgment. Yet, by contrast, how intimately God knows each of us! Below the surface we present to the world, he sees the rich inner life we all live with, and he calls us to see others, in all their nuance, their story, fully too.

In her novels, Elif writes about people who have known conflict and trauma, who have inherited intergenerational memories of pain and loss. She writes about people whose histories and present life have been defined by an “enemy”. And, crucially, she writes from the different perspectives of the characters, getting inside their skin to understand them, see them and know them.

In Jesus, God becomes fully human. He lives with us, dies for us, but most of all, he loves us in holiness and grace, justice and mercy, as people, not as categories. He comes to each human being to be the way, the truth and the life.

The truth of God is to be expressed by individuals and communities of love and service. Jesus says, “If you love me, keep my commandments” (John 15:14). It is a direction that is preceded by the commandment to which he refers, to imitate him and “wash feet”, and to “love one another”.

That is the context that builds the strong foundation for Jesus’ final public prayer as he prays in John 17:21 that Christians may be united for the very exact and precise purpose that the world will know the truth, that Jesus has come from the Father. When the truth is known, the life is found and the way is seen. And it is all in the person of Jesus. That way, truth and life will transform the nature of the world, of the whole creation, and has done so throughout the centuries.

A society that forgets about God, that loses the sense that it needs God (something discussed in the second interview I did), that no longer desires God - for John’s Gospel

has desire at its heart - such a society loses the profound call to see the wholeness of the individual human person and the call to love, by that person being set free to be in relationship with others. And without the church, without that community of faith, as the salt and light - and life - of that society, that society loses its way. Without God it cannot maintain a determining objective except power, as Nietzsche shows so clearly. Jacques Maritain, the Roman Catholic philosopher, wrote during the deepest darkness of 1942: "...deprived of a determining objective, political communion will carry its demands to the infinite, will absorb and regiment people, swallow up in itself the religious energies of the human being. Because it is not defined by a work to be done, it will only be able to define itself by its opposition to other human groups. Therefore, it will have essential need of an enemy against whom it will build itself; it is by recognising and hating its enemies that the political body will find its own common consciousness."

Does that not speak to us as much today as it did in 1942? From the individual events like the shocking, disturbing and utterly abysmal harassing of Keir Starmer and David Lammy yesterday, to the threats of war in Eastern Europe, to the actual wars around the world, do we not see societies forgetting God and therefore existing by the creation of an enemy? Do we not see it in our own society, and I fear do we not see it far too often in our own church?

And so in politics our concern about truth-speaking and truth-acting is not about political groupings - or in the Church - but about where we find the foundations for confidence in Government, confidence in leadership and above all the confidence in one another which enables us to function as a good society which seeks the common good. (I have always been reluctant to put in commas and sometimes I run out of breath. That was not in my script!)

It is through that community which seeks the common good and that sense of the common good that we gain the ability to recognise that in serving Christ we are not a church of loss and gain, factions in a zero-sum struggle, but of abundance and grace. It is in showing such a way of living that society can learn that lesson when they see us living it.

Grace and wisdom call us to find our way into God's abundance from the selfish scarcity of the world; and then to be that abundance in the world, and that has been what has happened so much over the last two years, praise God. But somehow, even though we, as the Church of England, are a church that God has blessed so abundantly, a church with enormous gifts of people, history, schools, money, all kinds of resources, parishes, dioceses, so much, we nevertheless have convinced ourselves, have talked ourselves into a sense of impoverishment and inability to meet the issues with which God has faced us.

Again, the question is not to ask what we are, but whose we are, who we follow.

Think of the Vision and Strategy diagram which has right at its very heart who we are - Christ-centred and Jesus-shaped, working along the Five Marks of Mission. When our

centre is Christ, Christ holds us together across all of our differences and disagreements. That is what marks us out as Christians. It is not that we all agree, or even that we are good at disagreeing well much of the time, but in foot washing, in service and love, we open a way to express the steadfast love of God to each other, and so we are strengthened to be the abundant love of God in the world. That is true, God knows, of the genuinely impoverished churches of the global majority world as well as the lavishly endowed ones like ourselves.

When we become God's abundance, we find God's unfathomable grace. We find forgiveness and reconciliation. In service and in love we minister and receive grace which means we are not consumed by rivalry, but we are able, by grace alone, to set an example to the world of how we can disagree and struggle but still love.

The French philosopher Paul Ricoeur compared the human economy to the divine economy. And he said that the life of faith should not be about exchange and equivalence but abundance and grace. Living together as the church is not about "your gain is my loss" or "my win is to your detriment". The "synhod-os", the walking together of the Church, does not mean some people "win" and others "lose". It means Christ died for every one of us and together we seek to follow where He leads and to grow together in salvation. Abundance and grace means we become a kind and a forgiving church. It is something we have to receive, and to share, not something we deserve.

Being the Church of England, being the Anglican Communion, is about living together in community. There is no foreigner or stranger. We are one people, one Communion, brothers and sisters together in Christ, with all our failings.

On the Agenda for this Synod are many different items. We will discuss racial justice, safeguarding, governance. All of these many and difficult issues are of vital importance to the Church and even to the wider world, and all of them are really about how to live in abundance and grace: how we love one another in the light of all of our differences, how we listen to each other across divides, how we seek to bring reconciliation across barriers imposed by history, and how we face together the division, the messiness and the pain of this world.

You will hear a presentation on two resources, the Difference Course and the Pastoral Principles, both of which provide tools for a divided society, or a divided church, to disagree well.

The Pastoral Principles identify six "pervading evils" - addressing ignorance, paying attention to power, casting out fear, acknowledging prejudice, speaking into silence and admitting hypocrisy - and they call us to build relationships which see and value each other as made in the image of God. Reflecting on them, we can see where and how people might be excluded and hurt, and we can make steps to make every person feel welcome and integral in Christ's Church.

Developing the reconciling habits suggested in the Difference Course can shape us to look more like God's people. The Difference Course has been developed by the Reconciliation Team at Lambeth Palace, and piloted around the world - drawing on theology and practice from different global contexts.

Over this Synod, this series of sessions, amid all the difficult and complicated conversations we will have together, we can all remind ourselves of the habits of the Difference Course, which are rooted in Scripture, seen in the life of Christ and lived in daily life. Am I present? Are we encountering people with authenticity, bringing our entire selves - with our convictions, vulnerabilities and gifts - to the conversations?

Are we curious? Do we want to hear the story that each precious person in the Synod has to tell? Do we want to know them? Do we see the innate value in other people and come to discussions with humility and room to grow and learn?

And will we have the courage to reimagine? Will we allow ourselves to be renewed by the Holy Spirit? Will we dare to work towards the world God wants for us, a world where all things are made right, where relationships are restored, justice flows down like a torrent and mercy like an ever-flowing stream?

Three small habits for each of us. But if we practise them now, there will be transformation. The grace of God will guide, hold and encourage us.

And at the Lambeth Conference later this year we will be talking about how we walk together as God's Church in God's world.

We will do that as we pray like Jesus, live like Jesus, serve like Jesus, listen like Jesus and in being one, with all our disagreements, reveal Jesus to our boxed-in, dragged-down, conflict-ridden world. And we will walk together with the God who has called us out of darkness and into his marvellous light to declare his great wonders. And we will do it with one another, until every person can stand in the light of God who sees, knows and loves each of us.

*The Chair.* Thank you very much. Archbishop. That concludes this item of business. We will now move to Item 4.

THE CHAIR *Professor Canon Joyce Hill (Leeds)* took the Chair at 2.43 pm.

*The Chair.* There is a slight problem with one of my screens and we are attempting to rectify that. Just bear with us a moment or two and then I will start the next Item of business. We think that we have to live with the difficulty that we have with one of our screens and so we will proceed. We have got a sufficient number of screens to keep us going up here, I think, so we will do our best with the situation that we find ourselves in.

## **ITEM 4**

### **REPORT BY THE BUSINESS COMMITTEE (GS 2241)**

*The Chair:* We come now to the Report from the Business Committee, and for this members will need GS 2241. I invite Robert Hammond to speak to the Business Committee Report and Robert you have up to ten minutes.

*Canon Robert Hammond (Chelmsford):* Synod, welcome to this group of sessions, which is a first as we are meeting face-to-face and also with some hybrid elements. The Archbishops and the Business Committee wanted to allow as many members as possible to take part, even if they were unable to attend in person. So, we are including as many hybrid elements as we can. That means members unable to be with us here in the chamber in London can speak and vote in our debates and hopefully feel part of the proceedings.

I need to say upfront that this is new, we have not done it before, and I am conscious that many new members will not have had the experience of wholly online Synods to draw on. So, it may be a bit clunky and it may not always work, and there may be a few teething problems, but the staff, the Chairs, the officers, the technicians and the Business Committee will try and get it right. Please bear with us if something does not work, we are doing our level best to make it so.

And it is important, please, that members here in London try and include those 50 members, or so, who are joining us remotely, and help them to feel part of Synod. The Chair of each item will explain how it will run, so please listen to what they say.

Now, specifically for those of you here in London, we have tried hard to improve on the Covid safety measures we introduced in November. Specifically, we have opened up the whole of the public gallery so you can vote from there, although not speak. We have also arranged for live streaming of the proceedings by Zoom in the Charter Room, where members can be more distanced than here in the chamber, and you can vote using the Lumi platform from that room, but not with the handsets. If you are here in Church House, you cannot alternate voting between handsets and Lumi platform with a device, I am afraid, you have to make a choice at the start of the day.

We do ask that you wear a face covering whilst in Church House when not speaking or eating and we also ask that you are aware of others' needs, requirements and preferences. Please respect others' wishes, avoid crowding and, above all, show Christian love and charity to each other.

Before I comment on the overall Agenda before us, I want to say something about the feedback from November Synod on one of the items of business in particular.

The Business Committee was grateful, if not slightly overwhelmed, by the number of you who took the trouble to either write in or to complete the online survey after Synod. More responses, I think, than we have ever had before. For a technical reason it took longer to collate the SurveyMonkey responses than is usual, and so the Business Committee has not had a chance to consider them together in detail, but we have looked at the considerable amount of other comments.

Two things stood out. Firstly, not understanding how or why things are done the way they are. Now, I have to confess that it does take a long time to understand how Synod works. Because we do not meet that often, the learning curve is steep, and we hope that the induction day, which seems to have gone down well, helped, but there is always more to learn, and proceedings are governed by our Standing Orders, and although not the most stimulating of reads, that is where the answer usually lies. I would also recommend checking the Synod Members' Survival Guide, which explains many things in a less formal way, the difference between a take note debate and a following motion, for example. Both of these are available under the Members' Resources on the Synod pages of the Church of England website.

And now, questions. The overwhelming feedback was that not enough questions were answered. Many members suggested to the Business Committee that more time should be made available for questions and that the number of supplementary questions each member can ask be limited. The Business Committee has tried to address this in two ways. Firstly, we have increased the time available for questions by one hour. When we set the Agenda, we do not know how many questions we will have but we hope that at least two-and-a-half hours will enable all questions to have supplementary questions asked of them. We have also asked, due to the hybrid arrangements for this group of sessions, members voluntarily limit themselves to two supplementary questions. We also asked for advance notice of supplementaries to help the Chair and the staff run this session in a hybrid way.

That does mean that if you have submitted two questions, you can ask a supplementary on each of them. Again, this is a voluntary limit for this group of sessions, and we are not seeking to reduce accountability or scrutiny, we want to try to get through all the questions, and you can still, as always, stand to ask a supplementary question, or indicate in another way. We will welcome your feedback after Question Time again.

Could I also draw your attention to the Notice Paper issued today, which explains that we will take some questions in a different order to that on the Question Paper, so please be prepared for that.

I also need to say that many members, especially newly elected ones, felt that the last Question Time was a little aggressive, hostile and unpleasant in tone, although some felt that it is right to robustly hold the various bodies to account in this way. So, when we get to Question Time today and tomorrow, could I please ask that you again consider others.

Some of you are more used to asking questions than others, but please be aware that your acceptable robustness may appear to other members as unacceptable aggression.

Finally on this point, your newly elected Business Committee, most of whom are sitting behind me - and can I congratulate those who were elected - really wants to work with you to make Synod better. To that end we are holding a feedback session on the evening of 24<sup>th</sup> February by Zoom where you can give us your thoughts and comments on the work of the Business Committee and General Synod. As a consequence of the governance review, we will also be looking at whether Synod needs to be reformed to fulfil its role. That is a big piece of work for us to undertake, and we hope to start consulting and talking with Synod in the July group of sessions in York, possibly in a fringe event, with some ideas put forward in a discussion document.

And can I just thank the Synod staff for the way they have all stepped in to help to run this unusual hybrid group of sessions. As always, they do a brilliant job and we are immensely grateful to them. I should also say that unfortunately two key members of Synod staff are unable to be with us this week due to illness, Dr Jacqui Philips, the Clerk to the Synod, and Conor Gannon from the legal office, I am sure you will remember them in your prayers, and also bear with the staff who are covering their roles in their absence this week.

Now to our business for the next few days. The Business Committee always tries to balance business so that it covers all the main areas of Synod's work. We will be looking at important issues affecting how our church engages with the world, including safeguarding, *Setting God's People Free*, and are pleased to have scheduled time for a presentation by Lord Boateng - and I welcome you, Sir - Chair of the Archbishops' Council on Racial Justice, followed by a take note debate.

We have important matters affecting the life of the Church, the Clergy Remuneration Review Report, how we take forward the Governance Review Group's Report, as well as engaging with the consultation process for reviewing the membership of the Canterbury Crown Nominations Commission.

We have just one item of legislation to deal with this time, the Faculty Jurisdiction Amendment Rules. We have been able to schedule two Diocesan Synod Motions, one from Durham Diocese on challenging slavery and human trafficking, and one from Lichfield concerning the persecuted church, which we have brought forward, given its reference to the upcoming Lambeth Conference.

We have also found some time for two sessions of group work, one on the Vision and Strategy work tomorrow, and on Thursday to engage with the resources available for us for effecting a change in culture around diversity, difference and disagreement, which the Archbishop of Canterbury spoke about in his address. As always, in collaboration with the Synod Chaplain, we have woven prayer and worship into our Agenda, including the Eucharist tomorrow morning.

Finally, following the elections to General Synod last year, the Business Committee will be establishing an Elections Review Group to review how those elections went. If you are interested in being part of that, please contact Synod Support. We hope you still find the Synod App helpful. It is constantly being updated, so please keep using it, and again we would welcome your feedback.

So, on behalf of the Business Committee, thank you for being here in person or on Zoom. We hope you have a safe and enjoyable Synod, and I look forward to hearing your contributions in the debates. Chair, I beg to move the motion standing in my name.

*The Chair:* The Report is now open for debate, and I will begin by calling some people from this chamber, but I will notify you when I am going to switch to calling people from Zoom and then I will come back to the chamber again. It is a bit complicated but that is the way it has to be.

May I, before we begin, just remind everyone that the purpose of this debate is to make brief points about the Agenda and any other matters addressed in the Report that we have just heard. It is not an opportunity to anticipate items that will actually be discussed later on in Synod, or to try and open up an entire debate about something that one wished might have been on the Agenda and is not. So can I ask members to be restrained and targeted, please, that would be very helpful.

I would like to begin by calling Andrew Cornes, and after Andrew Cornes, Vivienne Goddard, please. You have up to five minutes in these initial speeches. I may find it necessary to reduce the time subsequently, but for the time being it is five minutes – up to five minutes, you do not have to have five minutes.

*Revd Canon Andrew Cornes (Chichester):* I want to thank the Business Committee and the Synod Presidents for allowing two times for questions. It is good also to point out to us, Synod members, who ask questions that we have too often done so in an aggressive and hostile way. It is right, as we are increasingly having to recognise, to hold those in power to account, and that will sometimes involve asking difficult questions. But even this can be done in a spirit of kindness and generous inquiry, and all the more because we are followers of the challenging but compassionate Christ.

I think sometimes that those who answer, precisely because they fear or dislike hostility, have answered in as bland a way as possible, saying as little as they can get away with, and to shut the issue down. I recognise that from parish AGMs. Incumbents know there may be awkward, confrontational questions, and we often answer in a way that will, we hope, get the questioners off our back. But that approach defeats the whole purpose of Synod questions. Can we hope that a more gentle spirit from Synod questioners will result in answers that genuinely want to respond to concerns, and give full and honest responses, including acknowledging when mistakes have been made.



I entirely accept that it is we questioners who must start with our open, unbarbed questions.

*Mrs Vivienne Goddard (Blackburn):* I do not wish to distract in any way from those excellent speeches we heard earlier about the value of hybrid meetings, and especially for the disabled. However, I do want to draw Synod's attention to what I think is a bit of a worry. I first came on this Synod while most of you were still at school and in most of my life in ministry I have lived in urban priority areas and have always felt it was a very important principle that anyone could stand for Synod and that finance would not be something that would prevent people.

And so we have good systems of paying expenses, which can be paid in advance if necessary, and we refund loss of earnings if necessary. Now, I know Covid intervened, and much of what is happening at the moment was caused by that, but I think we are in danger of losing this important principle. If I might give a personal example. For the past 15 years, I think, I have been the lay rep on Ministry Council, and I am not standing again so I am not trying for votes, and normally my expenses are all paid, but recently I had to purchase, at my own cost, a Chromebook, at £250, in order that I could continue to represent you there because of Zooming. And that, of course, I cannot reclaim back.

And now, in the papers that we received, there was a comment that in order to join in properly in the group work, you need your mobile phone or your tablet. Well, I have not got a tablet, and I cannot afford a tablet, and if you try to follow something on a mobile phone, especially an old one, it is really very difficult.

So, I am just hoping that somebody behind the scenes - I am not quite sure what department it is - could have another look at the cost of some of this, so that people are not prevented from attending Synod or standing for election through finance.

*The Chair:* Next Gill Verschoyle for a maiden speech. After that Sam Margrave, and after that I am going to switch to Zoom and then come back to the chamber.

*Mrs Gill Verschoyle (Salisbury):* The timetable for this session of Synod, in my view, has got its priorities wrong. I, along with many others, put a great deal of effort into being elected for the first time to the Synod. I hope to be able to do a small bit for the Church of England's parishes. However, now that I see the list of subjects to be debated at this session, I feel deeply disappointed. These subjects are important and deserve debate and our attention, even though some elements of the press believe that the Church's diversity mission has gone too far.

However, we must focus our energies on the essential issues. The Church is in crisis, we all know what the problems are: falling congregations and consequently falling revenue, falling numbers of priests in the parishes, the growing size of benefices, which the shrinking number of clergy are supposed to care for, even greater parish groupings in some areas, fear that our churches may be closed never to reopen.

The parish share is a subject raised in everyone's inbox. In my own parish, before we even look at the share, the church's insurance is well over £5,000. We should be debating these issues today and this week. It is not too late. Why could we not have had a longer Synod in order to give time for these priorities? There are remedies which we could be discussing if we had the time. Dioceses should be amalgamating, although the *Times* article on Monday seems to have overstepped that.

The ever-growing bureaucracy in the diocesan offices should be cut, and the resulting savings should be given to the parishes and used to increase the numbers of local, trained stipendiary priests and to help with parish finance. Mission and the delivery of the Eucharist should be our first priority. I assume, in my ignorance, that it is too late to add anything to the Agenda in this session. However, I seriously hope that the timetable in York in the summer will reflect these hugely critical issues, which are so important to people in the pew.

*The Chair:* Sam Margrave next and then I am going to switch to Zoom and call Gavin Drake, still on five minutes.

*Mr Sam Margrave (Coventry):* My comments may relate to what is not on the Agenda but I make an appeal for emergency business or a special extraordinary meeting of this Synod online between now and July. So, I hope that my comments will be in order and I will be brief, I will not use the five minutes.

While I do not represent clergy, as laity we have stewardship and a duty of care to clergy. Clergy have expressed online, and off, how they have seen soaring bills rising in this cost of living crisis in their homes and in their churches. They are well-placed to respond to their communities, but it is our job to look after them and to offer a plan to support clergy in churches.

At a time when giving is likely to fall, and inflation will go through their uninsulated, leaking roofs, I believe that we need to take time to discuss the cost of living crisis by a motion or an extraordinary meeting of this Synod, to give voice and to hear what actions will be taken to help clergy heat their homes, and churches meet increasing bills, especially in those areas with financial difficulty, and we need to know what resources there will be to support communities and to ensure we show Jesus Christ in every corner of the nation in a time of need.

So, I am asking the Presidents or the Business Committee to bring forward a motion as a Special Agenda item at this Synod, or to organise a special online Synod, between now and July, so that we can discuss and give voice to the concerns of clergy and churches across the country about the cost of living, and also to offer them some solutions, because waiting until July is too long. By then, their bills will have piled up and they will be struggling.

Finally, with your indulgence, Chair, I would just urge anybody struggling out there to contact the Clergy Support Trust or other organisations to get help and to know that you are not alone. We care about you and we will get through this together.

*The Chair:* As I said, I am going to switch to Zoom for the next speaker, Gavin Drake, and then after that, Emma Gregory please.

*Mr Gavin Drake (Southwell & Nottingham):* I am a new member of this Synod but I have been following it for around 30 years and I am aware of increasing concern expressed by members over the past few years over the number of presentations, take note debates and group work which prevent the Synod from actually expressing its corporate view.

When the last Synod was prorogued in July 2021 there were three Private Member's Motions that had received 100 signatures, and another was very close to achieving it. Thirteen Diocesan Synod Motions were awaiting debate, mostly dating back to 2018, if you exclude the early one held back for other reasons.

I think as a Synod we need to be responsive to the requests made by diocesan synods if we are to remain credible as a Synod, and if a diocesan synod asks us to debate something, we ought to do that. I worry that presentations and take note debates are being used as a form of consultation, but a consultation in which we are not allowed an opinion. For example, the brief summary of the House of Bishops' meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> November last year said that the Bishops had reflected, and I quote "on the reception given to the Governance Review Group and Vision and Strategy presentations at the November Synod". But at the Synod, those items were presentations followed by questions, and it was not even the subject of a take note debate, and so Synod members were not allowed to make points or to express an opinion during that Question Time, so it is difficult to see how the Bishops can effectively reflect on the reception such items received if we were not given the opportunity to express a view.

For this group of sessions, we have the benefit of a written report on safeguarding and also a presentation, but there was no opportunity for the Synod to actually debate this vitally important area of the Church's work, an area of work which many people are concerned about.

I have tabled a following motion with Clive Billenness and Martin Sewell, and that will enable a debate to take place. Now, on that point of presentations and clergy discipline and safeguarding, we were promised a panel discussion at this group of sessions by the Working Group on the proposed Clergy Conduct Measure. And it is a pity this important area of work has been relegated to a fringe meeting in a small room where Synod members have been told that attendance is on a first-come first-served basis. This work is too important to be squeezed out and made available only to a few of us. Can we please ensure that for future groups of sessions more time is given to substantive motions rather than presentations?

Finally, well, two finallys. The first finally, the Fourth Notice Paper gives details of a change in the order of Question Time. Now, I welcome the additional time given to questions, and I suspect I am not alone in welcoming that, but the revised order allows for 43 questions in 90 minutes tonight, and 107 questions for 60 minutes tomorrow. That means tonight's questions will have more than two minutes per question for supplementaries, while tomorrow will have just 56 seconds per question if we are going to get through them all. So, I just ask for that to be looked at again, please.

Question Time is a vitally important part of the Synod Agenda, particularly with the focus on presentations, take note debates and group work. It is our chance to hold the national structures and those who work in them to account. Yes, respectfully, as has been said, but it is still important to us.

My second finally is just to agree with the Chair's thanks to the staff of the Synod. Convening a meeting in this way is not easy when they cannot really practise it in an effective method, so as somebody who has tested positive for Covid and cannot be with you in London, I am very grateful for the opportunity to take part online.

*Mrs Emma Joy Gregory (Bath & Wells):* My speech is also on the important matter of Question Time. I would also like to thank the Business Committee for including two slots for Question Time. It is so important because it maximises the chance to hear the voice of any member of Synod and is a direct link to the pew. It is always exciting to explain to the lay person in Bath & Wells that they can ask questions to any senior bodies of the church via me, their General Synod rep. Question Time is also an important way to read the temperature of the Synod on what matters to us and it reminds of the raw advantages and disadvantages of democracy.

In spite of concerns about the tone and atmosphere of questions, as mentioned in one bullet point on the paper, I think maintaining accountability is crucial. That sometimes means that difficult conversations need to happen and happen in a public forum. I wonder if the Chair of the Business Committee could just take time to clarify, again - I think he mentioned this, but it would be nice for more clarification - on the advance notice period for supplementaries in this group of sessions, because it did originally say it was supposed to be 4 pm Friday, then it was slightly more vague in the next advice that was sent out, that it just needs to be in advance, or can it be there in that very moment. I think some more explanation on that would be very welcome. And does it vary between the two different groups of sessions?

One other matter from the Business Committee Report is that of the allocated number of supplementaries per person. I just wanted to say we should be careful that in trying to solve one problem we do not create another. Whilst it is only human to inwardly groan at hearing the same old voices, it does not mean that what they have to say is not important or that they are not actually speaking for us.

Now, a recommendation that we stick to two supplementaries each is a gentle way of suggesting a better balance, but I ask that this goes no further, as sometimes freedoms once taken away can be hard to put back. If I can offer an analogy from my day job as a teacher, classroom management is a constant management of personality types. There are always one or two pupils in every class who constantly have their hand up and never fail to want to contribute regardless of the topic of the lesson.

As a teacher it is hard to achieve a balance of voices but the solution is not to impose a rule which stifles the most enthusiastic child in the class. Rather, to encourage the rest of the class to put their hand up. That is the ideal that every teacher wants to get the best out of each pupil. So, let us keep the vehicle, for our voices to be heard, as open and without restraint as possible.

*The Chair* imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

*Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark):* Robert, I am very grateful for the information that you presented about the Elections Review Group, of which I was a member in the last Synod, and for the plans to set up a working group to review and implement Recommendation 5 of the Governance Review Group. This is a very important piece of work and I hope it will be a wide-ranging review of the workings of this Synod. In particular, I would urge the review to consider the overall size of this Synod.

There has not been a review of the size of the Synod for about 20 years, since when the numerical attendance of the Church of England has continued its decline. Synod is primarily a legislative body and we need sufficient numbers and expertise to make sure that legislative business is conducted as effectively and as efficiently as possible. I, for one, would suggest that our current number is more than we need to achieve that purpose.

*Revd Tim Goode (Southwark):* In the light of the excellent speeches in our opening debate and the experience of hybrid that we have already experienced, would the Business Committee consider bringing to the July Synod a new Measure inviting Synod to consider making the hybrid facilities a permanent feature.

*Revd Julian Hollywell (Derby):* I want to thank Robert for a very clear report, and wish you and the new Business Committee good luck for the quinquennium ahead. I want to refer too to the passing comment on questions and to perhaps just add to what Andrew Cornes has said about behaviour being seen as aggressive or disrespectful. Sadly, I do not disagree, but I think it is a rather one-sided view. I also believe it is becoming rather more endemic in Synod as a problem, with our conduct as a whole. It is just that Question Time is, perhaps, a lightning conductor.

Aggressive behaviour indicates there is some disparity in the power differential in a given situation, and I suggest that in this case what is perceived as disrespect is frustration. It can be all too easy for those asking questions to forget that those providing the answers

are making themselves vulnerable, and we also easily forget that one of the consistently most impressive documents produced for the Synod is the answers booklet itself, because it is testament to the wealth of talent and commitment the Church has at its disposal across a wide range of issues. And yet, that being said, I believe over my time on Synod, the answers provided seem increasingly to be designed to deflect or shut down rather than engage and this can be extremely frustrating.

So, I make a very simple suggestion, which some of you may think is a bit crass, but perhaps if we were to rename it Questions and Answers it might remind everybody of our joint purpose and that whether questioning, writing or delivering answers, there is no need for us to be combative. Those answering do not need to be made to feel attacked, and those questioning should expect to be taken seriously. We are all on the same side and, in the life of this Synod, good disagreement is not about catching each other out or putting the knife in, but doing it with courtesy. It is about engaging with and trusting each other.

*Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark):* I just wanted to pick up a point made by Gavin Drake earlier in the debate about the Clergy Conduct Measure work that is going on. We have heard already in the life of this Synod in November the considerable concern that is around, and inevitably the situation is that when we meet for panels - and it was never intended that that group should meet in a panel in full Synod this time - when we meet at Synod and in groups that lots of groups will be meeting at once.

It is particularly unfortunate in this Synod that room space is at such a premium that we are unable to have large rooms, but I would say to anyone who is interested in coming to the CCM presentation that there are still places to book if you want to come. Most importantly, I wanted to say for those of you who cannot because you have got other commitments, there are at least two members here, myself and you, Madam Chair, who are on the working group, and we will be very willing to answer questions over the next two days if people cannot be at the meeting, and we stand ready to hear your responses and thoughts.

If I may just add one contribution on the subject of questions, there are three parties in Question Time, there is the questioner, the answerer, and the Chair. And it is open to the Chairs, if they do not feel an answer has been given, to ask that it is, and it seems to me that that could help us avoid some of the obfuscation and waffling that sometimes comes from answerers. It is very difficult, I have been there myself, answering questions at Synod, you have to think on your feet and you do not always know, but some help on the way from Chairs would, I think, go some way to making the whole process satisfactory for everybody.

*Mr Martin Sewell (Rochester):* I would like to take up what Simon has just said about how difficult it is to think on your feet and be frustrated, and I think that is partly what happens at supplementary, because especially when you are not expecting to give a supplementary question, you suddenly see that there is a point you want to make. I am very experienced at this sort of thing, but even I find it really quite pressurising, because

you have to formulate the thought, you have to get the right words, put it together and try and keep within three sentences maybe, knowing that the Chair may cut you off, and that is not a criticism, our Chairs are always excellent at that. But I think you can see how the pressure can be on the questioner as well as on the answerer, and so a little more space and time will enable us perhaps to be more positive and reflective and get our thoughts together and be a little more relaxed.

A final point on the question of the answers, and taking up a theme that I think Julian made, I have a positive suggestion, Robert - I have already put it to you - about some of the answers. Sometimes the same question has to be asked because the answer is never given and it can be very frustrating. So, I wonder whether can look at instead of just having questions can be ruled out of order, whether we should have a provision so that answers can be ruled out of order.

*Canon Peter Bruinvels (Guildford):* I would particularly congratulate Robert and the Business Committee on bringing forward the hybrid side today. What I would like, and I support Tim Goode, is a new Standing Order brought forward at the next Synod making the temporary Measure for remote meetings permanent. I think it would have a very strong amount of support from Synod. I am also concerned about Question Time and how the sessions should be handled.

Compared to the House of Commons we were spoilt by being given advanced notice of the answers only just before we went into the chamber to ask the question, so we were not really spoilt at all. Here we get it really early. Doing that does encourage more supplementaries, but actually more informed questions. In the other place, the questioner always has priority in asking the supplementary ahead of any other member, and it is rare, may I say, Madam Chair, for the supplementary to be ruled out of order. I know the Speaker gets annoyed occasionally, but he normally allows it.

I would also like us to consider topical questions to be offered, as in Parliament. If one member has two questions down for oral answer, under this new rule does this mean that they can only ask supplementaries twice for those two questions with no other supplementaries being allowed in that party or session, or both question sessions?

On the front of my *Times* on Sunday morning was the leaked report, alleged report, from the Bishop of Ely with some fascinating suggestions, including a Bishop for Brexit. Well, I wish that bishop well. I have to say that I was sympathetic to the possible merger of more dioceses, but the debate that I would like would be more than merger, I would like consideration in the debate, when we come to it, to be given to having a senior suffragan in each diocese, as also the archdeacon in that same diocese, as we used to have in the Diocese of Lichfield.

So, Madam Chair, I congratulate the Business Committee on bringing forward so many different Agenda items in such a short time because of Covid. I look forward to an Agenda which can be more topical, as the Archbishop, his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury,

mentioned earlier on, the opportunity to talk about matters that happened today or yesterday, and I wish the rest of Synod continued success, and the Business Committee.

*Ven. Pete Spiers (Liverpool):* Just picking up the point about questions, yes, I can remember a time when you never got the supplementaries written down for you in advance, and people were saying that is so much pressure, that is so much pressure, so then we decided to write them down and give them to you in advance so that you could think of what you were going to ask. So, I just leave that there.

I wonder two things. I wonder whether the Business Committee would consider putting on a training event for all Synod members in how to ask a question so that we do not have speeches masquerading as questions. We would get through an awful lot more if we had them shorter and succinct.

My other point is about Diocesan Synod Motions. I wonder whether the Business Committee could give more creative and imaginative thought as to how we deal with them. I notice, for example, Guildford's Diocesan Synod Motion is on a subject that I think is going through Parliament at the moment, and it would have been really good if we could have had a debate at this Synod on that very important issue. At the moment it could be two or three years from now before we get to discuss it. And anyone in a diocese who wanted to propose a Diocesan Synod Motion is going to have to wait for a similar length of time. So, we do need to have a better way of doing it. We could have a straw poll of Synod members, you could ask other people to indicate some other way, so I would like to hear more about that.

*The Chair:* The Bishop of Leeds and then, since no one else is standing, I will move to invite Robert Hammond to reply.

*The Bishop of Leeds (Rt Revd Nicholas Baines):* I was hoping someone else would get up and do this but they have not. Gavin Drake referred specifically to the Governance Review and the presentation on making the plea, with which I have a certain sympathy, that we should not use presentations in place of debates. But I would put it to you that I think it is entirely intelligent and respectful of Synod that we brought the Governance Review Report for first consideration, with an opportunity to ask questions along with a fringe meeting, in order that we can have a proper, informed, intelligent debate, with a Synod that understands better second time around how these things work. That is the point of a presentation, not to replace debate but to enable and facilitate informed, intelligent and better debate.

*The Chair:* I now call upon Robert Hammond to reply to the debate. You have up to five minutes and it has been quite a meaty debate, so all I can say in handing over to you is good luck.

*Canon Robert Hammond (Chelmsford):* Talk about pressure and responding quickly. Here we go. I cannot respond to everything, please forgive me for that. I will try and pick



up a few things. Andrew Cornes and Father Julian, your points around questions and the tone of the questions, I hope that everybody has heard both questioners, answerers and Chairs, those points that were made around questions. Yes, answers do need to be honest. The Business Committee will keep Question Time under review. I think that is what we need to say. We will keep it under review. We value all the comments that have been made about questions, and we will continue to keep them under review.

To Vivienne Goddard and Gill as well, I think there were two issues there and some of those were more aimed at diocesan level in terms of both expenses and changing administration. I think General Synod has to be really careful that we understand what General Synod can do and what needs to be done at diocesan level, and so we need to keep those two and just be really clear about those.

Merging dioceses, and I think there were another couple of comments, I think Peter Bruinvels maybe you mentioned this one as well, that is clearly for the Dioceses Commission, and if a report or proposals are tabled to us, proposed to the Business Committee for those matters, then the Business Committee will consider those from the Dioceses Commission, so that needs to be your route through. The Business Committee cannot create business in its own right, it has to come from Private Member's Motions, Diocesan Synod Motions, boards, councils, those sorts of things, so, please, that is where you need to put the emphasis in.

Sam, there is scope, I think, for some of what you said to be incorporated into the debate on clergy remuneration, that we are having. I think that that gives us an opportunity now to bring some of those cost of living arguments for clergy into that debate that we are having later this week. So, I think there is an opportunity to bring some of that in. Thank you for mentioning the Clergy Support Trusts and the other trusts, and the Presidents will have heard the other point you made there around a specific separate item.

Tim Goode, I cannot speak for the whole of the Business Committee about hybrid meetings going forward. This Business Committee has not discussed that yet, so I cannot speak because we have not discussed it, but, as I said, we will keep hybrid and the whole matter of Synod under review, and we will consider that at our next meeting and those other people that spoke about wanting hybrid to continue. I think we do need to review how this went and we will take that into our considerations as well.

There were some other comments but I think I probably need to just cover a couple about questions. I think we were confusing in what we were saying about the time limit - where is Emma - for submission. That was because, again, we have to set the Agenda way in advance. We were trying to work in a potential hybrid and we needed to try to make hybrid as easy for the staff to manage as possible which is why we did put a time in. That was confusing. The simple answer is you can raise supplementaries from the floor.

Peter Bruinvels, you commented that it was a new rule of two supplementaries, it is not a rule, we are asking for that to be voluntary, it is a voluntary self-denying ordinance, if you like, please think of it in that way, and we will review that.

And lastly, Gavin Drake, I am sorry it was missed from the Order Paper and the Notice Paper for the change in the order of questions. When we get to the end of the questions as on the Notice Paper, we will revert to Question 9 and then carry on, so we are not only dealing with those questions today, there is not a hard stop for those questions, we will get as far as we can, as we normally do, then continue and pick up at the second Question Time where we left off.

Chair, I think I need to stop.

*The Chair:* The motion “That the Synod do take note of this Report” will now be voted upon. In the chamber, it will be voted up by a show of hands, and for those on Zoom, it will be through the method of the green ticks. I put the motion to the Synod that the Synod do take note of this Report.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* We will move on, earlier than we had perhaps anticipated because we have gained time this afternoon, immediately to the next item on the Agenda, which is Item 5, dealing with pattern of meetings, but we need to change the platform.

THE CHAIR *The Bishop of Dover (Rt Revd Rose Hudson-Wilkin)* took the Chair at 3.37 pm.

## **ITEM 5**

### **PATTERN OF MEETINGS 2024 – 2026 (GS 2242)**

*The Chair:* Good afternoon, Synod. We come now to Item 5 entitled Pattern of Meetings. This paper is for Synod to agree the envelope for the future dates of meetings. Members of Synod, you will need GS2242. I am going to be calling on Robert Hammond to speak to and to move Item 5. He has already informed me that he does not need up to ten minutes, so I shall just ask him to make his contribution. Robert?

*Canon Robert Hammond (Chelmsford):* Every few years, Synod, the Business Committee asks Synod to agree the dates, or rather the time windows or envelopes, for future Synod meetings. Although it seems a long way off, we are asking you to agree the envelopes for groups of sessions in 2024, 2025 and 2026. Synod meets twice a year, once in February here in London, once in July in York, and occasionally, if business requires it, for an additional group of sessions in November here in London.

There are also a number of other meetings of boards and councils which have to be scheduled to take place before and after each group of sessions. And we want to avoid meeting on significant days in the Church's calendar, Ash Wednesday, for example, so timetabling Synod meetings is a tricky task.

The York dates, because we have to fit in with the university, are pretty fixed, and we tend to use the full time available to us. The November group of sessions are always short, and we only schedule them for urgent or outstanding items of business. So, that leaves the dates for the February group of sessions. We ask Synod to agree an envelope for those meetings. That means that we do not intend to use the full dates shown in GS2242, but it gives the Business Committee flexibility in setting the Agenda.

Now, in 2019 Synod agreed that future February groups of sessions should include both weekend and weekday options, although we have not yet met in London over a weekend. We are very aware that there are differing views about meeting in London over a weekend, but, in line with the Synod's decision in 2019, we will look carefully at when we meet, and it would be good to hear some views on that in this debate.

The Business Committee does not know the full extent of the business that will need to be dealt with at each group of sessions too far in advance. We know what is in the pipeline, but it is only at our meeting around eight weeks before the start of each group of sessions that we are able to schedule the business and let you know the actual dates and the actual outline timetable.

So, today we are asking you to approve the overall envelopes during which Synod will meet. The actual dates will be decided by the Business Committee depending upon the amount of business to be dealt with. With that short preamble, Chair, I beg to move the motion standing in my name.

*The Chair:* This item is now open for debate. You will have up to five minutes.

*Mr Stephen Hogg (Leeds):* I cannot support the proposal for the February dates. Towards the end of last year, I detected quite a lot of anxiety amongst particularly newer members of Synod, when would we know the February dates. Some of us old timers said, "Do not worry we will have them in mid-December". That works when you are talking about a four or five-day period, I do not think it works with a nine-day period.

You are asking us to block out nine days in our diary for February Synods. This is even worse for those of us who live in the far-flung provinces. I have to travel the night before to guarantee being here, and if Synod finishes after about 3:30, I have to stay in London because my last train home is terribly early. I live in a field in North Yorkshire. So, I cannot balance - as I am sure most of us cannot balance - blocking out 11 days in my diary. I suggest that the Business Committee thinks again and narrows down these windows to five days, and if you want to try a weekend, just go for it.

So, a request: can you set a start date for each Synod because that helps with planning? Can you set a shorter window for us to hold? I am all in the spirit of compromise, and if for some reason you cannot do that at this stage, could you by the previous February or July Synod inform us of a shorter window so that we can plan our diaries more effectively.

*Mrs Rosemary Lyon (Blackburn):* Firstly, I want to acknowledge that the Business Committee have a difficult task in arranging dates. We all know that from parish life, how hard it can be. But I have to say, like Mr Hogg, I do feel that this needs looking at again. We know that you cannot please everybody all of the time, but we do need to have clear dates.

I have been asking a number of people what arrangements they have to make for their leave of absence requirements and it seems that a number of people have to make between three and six months in advance their request for such leave of absence. This is tricky when we can only find out in the December before the February what the actual dates are going to be.

We talk a lot in this Synod about welcoming people and ensuring that all voices can be heard, and I really do not feel this is very helpful for working people who have to make arrangements. And much as I do not want to be one of those people who have recently retired and say, "Gosh, I do not know how I had time to go to work", because I always used to find that incredibly annoying myself, we do know that retired people do actually have a lot of commitments, whether it is childcare, grandchildren, and indeed elderly relatives in their 90s.

So please, could we have a start date - I endorse what Mr Hogg said - and also clear dates well in advance, please. And I would really like to revert back to the week time in February as Mr Hammond has requested us to ask.

*Canon Dr John Mason (Chester):* Just a very quick question of clarification. As we all know, the November sessions are held for contingency basis except, of course, when I understand they would be the first in the quinquennium. If my counting is correct, the 2026 November sessions would be of that nature and yet in the paper it says November "if required". I am assuming that is just a mistake and we are not setting aside the possibility of having yet another six-year quinquennium.

*The Chair:* We will go online now.

*Mrs Sian Kellogg (Derby):* I understand the complexities of organising these Synod sessions, but I would like to ask if the Business Committee could consider school term dates, avoiding half-terms where possible to ensure that members of Synod with young families are included. Committing to serve as General Synod members is often not only a commitment by us but also our families and so I would appreciate avoiding the clash in our diaries - February half-term in particular - if that is at all possible.

*Mr John Wilson (Lichfield):* I want to endorse what previous speakers have said, and particularly Stephen in the first speech about the length of time allocated for the February sessions. I have been on Synod now for - I had a lot of hair when I started - I have lost count of the number of years and I have yet to work out how each time we have allocated time for our February sessions we have only used perhaps three days of it.

Earlier in the Business Committee's Report debate, we heard people asking for other things so that we could lengthen the time of our sessions, but we never seem to use the time allocated. Like other people, although I am retired, or supposedly, my diary is fuller now than when I actually worked and so having to fit time in for Synod is incredibly difficult these days.

So, please, could we at the earliest opportunity either say we are going to reduce the size from nine days to something more workable and we are either going to do it at a weekend or we are going to do it during the week, but let us reduce the days as soon as possible.

*Mr Luke Appleton (Exeter):* I appreciate the utility of meeting on the weekend, but I am just reminded of Scripture saying that in six days you shall work and on the seventh day rest. Is it right for the Church to be conducting business on the Lord's day?

*Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark):* I just want to explain to new members of Synod that there was quite a lengthy debate in the last quinquennium about whether or not the February group of sessions should or should not include weekends. You have yet to have the joys of a long weekend in York. It is a completely different experience from being here in London and it does, my friend Luke, include the weekend.

Traditionally, the February was midweek but, recognising that it was important to attract lay people with working lives, we opted - I was on the Business Committee last time - to alternate between a weekday and a weekend because, obviously, the clergy are very busy at the weekend. In the spirit of compromise, that was why it was put forward that we alternate.

I know the Business Committee is trying to respect that in the dates that it has put forward and I hope we will keep to that alternate practice. It will have heard the fact that we would like to have as early notice as possible if the window can be reduced from eight days to, say, five as we go along. We are still talking about two years away, but I hope we keep the alternate practice.

*The Chair:* I see no one standing and so I am going to invite Robert Hammond to respond to the debate.

*Canon Robert Hammond (Chelmsford):* Thank you, Chair, and thank you, Synod. Can I deal with a couple of specifics first and then I will come to some of the more general points. John Mason, yes, good spot, sorry. It should not say due for November 2026 "if required". We do plan to be meeting then. It will be the start of the new quinquennium.

We are not trying to sneak in another six year group of sessions by the back door and so, sorry, yes, that will not be "if required".

To Sian Kellogg who joined us online, the problem with school half-terms is they differ all over the country. There is not one week that is a half-term. That adds yet another layer of complexity, I am afraid, to our already big mix of things we have to consider. Adrian, you almost gave my summing-up speech, brilliant. Thank you very much for clarifying some of that.

The Business Committee has heard very clearly that you want the window to be shortened and advance notice given as that is tightened. We will look at that and we will look at all the things that you have said to try to give you advance notice of a shorter window where we can and then look at ways to be clearer about what the actual dates are going to be. I cannot explain how that will work. We will need to consider that and we need to work with those who are providing us with business. But, if you vote for this, we will take that away and we will look to give you more notice of shorter windows and then be as clear on the actual dates as soon as we can. I think that covers all of the other points that were made.

*The Chair.* Thank you. I now put Item 5 to the vote.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

THE CHAIR *Revd Zoe Heming (Lichfield)* took the Chair at 4.56 pm.

## **ITEM 6**

### **THE ARCHBISHOPS' RACIAL JUSTICE COMMISSION: INTRODUCTION AND UPDATE TO GENERAL SYNOD (GS 2243)**

*Revd Canon Andrew Dotchin (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich):* Point of order. Noting the importance of this debate, following from a previous session, could I ask is there a quorum of the House of Bishops in the chamber?

*The Chair.* Yes, you can. I am assured that we are quorate. Members will need GS 2243 and the Third Notice Paper. The Financial Statement paragraphs are at paragraphs 6 and 7. I call upon the Archbishop of York to introduce Item 6, which is a presentation.

*The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell):* Dear friends, it is my great pleasure to welcome as our speaker this afternoon somebody who needs no introduction, but I will just give a little one. Lord Boateng is well-known as a great parliamentarian, both as a Member of Parliament and now in the House of Lords, and a great champion for racial justice in our nation and across the world. When, last year, Archbishop Justin and I set up the Commission for Racial Justice, it was with great, great

thanksgiving that Paul Boateng agreed to chair it. This is, as we will hear this afternoon, a critical issue for the life of our Church, the life of our nation and the life of our world and I hope now you will join me in welcoming Lord Boateng as Chair of the Commission for Racial Justice to speak to us.

*Lord Paul Boateng:* Chair, Archbishops, Synod, sisters and brothers in Christ, it is good to be with you this afternoon. This is my first experience of Synod, but when I heard that Point of Order I knew I was at home. Sisters and brothers, when I was asked to speak to you this afternoon, I asked, perhaps not surprisingly, "Well, what shall I say?" And they said, "Well, just introduce the Commission". Introduce the Commission.

I was born in Hackney - not something you mentioned, Archbishop. But I was brought up and, even more importantly, christened in what was the Gold Coast that is now Ghana. My christening was somewhat delayed because my parents were determined that I should be christened in the church that my grandfather built. He had been educated by the Basel missionaries and he was the first chief to be converted in his village and he built this church and my mum and dad were determined that I should be christened in it.

I can actually remember my christening. I can remember it very well. There was the moment when the priest said, "We deliver this child up unto you, O Christ" and, at that moment, I jumped out of my parents' grasp and ran off - literally. I was, what, three and a half. I could run and, of course, I have spent most of my life running from Jesus Christ. Most of my life running from Jesus Christ. But at this stage in my life I have stopped. I have stopped running, which is why I accepted your invitation, Archbishop, to be Chair of your Commission for Racial Justice.

Because this is about Jesus. We are all of us here followers of Jesus Christ and, in our Akan tradition, the tradition into which I was christened, when you are introduced to the leaders and elders of the community, the linguist who speaks on behalf of the chief and the community does not ask you your name. You know the names of the members of the Archbishops' Commission. He does not ask you your qualifications or your titles. And there are plenty of titles on the Commission: the Very Revd this, Professor that, Dame this, Lord that, the Revd, I mean there are lots of titles on your Commission - you will be glad to hear no doubt. They do not even ask you your qualifications, and there are lots of people with qualifications on your Commission: academics, entrepreneurs, theologians, liturgists, public servants. They do not even ask you your qualifications.

The linguists on behalf of the community ask you one question and one question alone and there are one or two people, three or four, who might know the answer to this question. What is the question that the linguist asks you, do you think? Not your name, not your title and not your qualifications. The linguist asks one question and one question alone, "Why are you here?" If you think about it, it is the best possible question to ask by way of seeking an introduction, "Why are you here?"

Well, your Commission is here not just, of course, because you asked us to be and we have a mandate from you which we respect and we are answerable to you for the fulfilment of that mandate and, yes, we will report, I promise you, once every six months, as you have asked. We will disband after three years, as you have asked - they were very keen on that bit. We will do all of those things. But we are here as followers of Jesus Christ. We are here to go on a journey with you, to be with you on the journey as we seek justice and, in this instance, racial justice.

And it is a journey. You have already been on it for some time. It is not easy. It is not comfortable. At times, it is very uncomfortable. I do not find it easy. No black person, no person of colour in this room finds it easy to talk about racism believe it or not. We do not like it, you know. We do not like having to do it, but we have to do it because it is part and parcel of our reality that never goes away.

So we have to talk about it. But, you know, you have to talk about it too. Each and every one of you, whatever colour you are, wherever part of the Church you see yourself as being part of, whatever your preoccupations, whatever your causes, you have to talk about racism. You have to talk about those things that divide us. You have to talk about those things that make us less able to follow Jesus Christ because we are diminished by racism. All of us are diminished by racism. We have to talk about those things that cause hurt - hurt not just to one another but cause hurt to Him.

Racism is a gaping wound in the Body of Christ. Every time we succumb to it - every time we succumb to hit - we hurt Him. We hurt Him. And we love Him, do we not. We are trying to love Him. We are seeking to love Him. We love Him imperfectly, but we are trying, are we not. We are seeking to follow Him and we are seeking to bring others on the way with us.

So, when we are worried, as we should be worried, about empty pews, well, we have to seek to bring others on the way with us. When we are worried, and we should be worried, about our failures in mission and in service, we have to ask ourselves the hard question are we, in fact, utilising all the resources that are out there? Are we making the most of the people we have? Are we really doing that? Look around you. Can you say honestly that you have got and you are making the most of the resources of the people who are around you?

Look at this platform. Look at this platform. The Government front bench looks better than this platform. Oh, yes. Oh, yes. It is diverse: people of every colour, of every background. Your Parliament looks better in terms of diversity than you do, people of every race and of every background. And that has not just happened. It has not just happened. I can remember what it was like being just one of four members of Parliament who were people of colour. I can remember what it was like to be the only black junior minister and to be the only black cabinet minister. I can remember what that was like and I am not that old.



Now, look, the great offices of state are held by people of colour. Parliament does not look now like it did in 1987. That required intentionality. It required the will to make a difference and the willingness to do what it took to bring about change. I have to tell you that there is no shortage in the Church of England of policy, is there? There is no shortage of good intentions, is there? No. There is a shortage of delivery. There is a shortage of delivery.

I want to pay credit to the authors of *From Lament to Action*. I salute them. I salute the Co-Chairs, Revd Arora and Revd Barron. I salute all the members for the hard work that they put into this Report. Of course, we are charged with monitoring implementation. We are charged with reporting to you, Archbishops, on progress, and we will do that. There are some very important recommendations in this Report. Most of them you have accepted.

But the most chilling thing about this Report, the most concerning thing about this Report, are the appendices - the long list of previous recommendations which have not been implemented, promises made that have not been fulfilled. It is chilling, it is wounding, it is a scandal and it has to be addressed. It will require intentionality. It will also require, my dear brother, resources. It will require resources. It will require that the Church Commissioners step up to the plate. It will require that the Triennium Working Party step up to the plate. But, above all, it will require each and every one of you to embrace it, each and every one of you to see that in every parish and in every diocese there is a strategy. A strategy. Sentiment is not enough. We have to have a strategy. Love not as a soft sentiment but as a strong strategy. It is that strategic love that changes things.

Let me just say to you as we go along this path together, I want you, and I am hugely grateful to the National Church Institutions, I am hugely grateful to Sanjee and Venetia, all those who serve our Commission, I am hugely grateful for the work you have put into it. I am hugely grateful for enabling us to meet with the Church Commissioners; to meet with the Secretary General and the Central Secretariat; to meet with the Education Office; to meet with the Liturgical Commission, to meet with the Cathedral and Church Buildings team. We have done all of that in the three months that we have been in existence. We have met in London. We have met in York. We have met in Bristol.

All of that is critically important, but I want all of you to feel that we are with you. We are with you to wash your feet, to serve you and I want you to feel, as we go out - and we will be going out in the coming months; we are in Manchester later on this month, in Liverpool in March, in Truro in April - I want you to feel that we are there for you, that you can call us to meet with you in the parishes. You can call us to meet with you wherever you want to see us that we belong to you. Because when you do that, we will, yes, wash your feet, but sometimes we will hold your feet to the fire because that is what we have to do. But it is a privilege. It is a privilege to serve you. It is a privilege to be with you.

There is a Balm in Gilead. There is a Balm in Gilead. Yes, there is hurt, and you see that hurt in the debates and discussions around monuments to slavers in churches and in

cathedrals. There is hurt. Imagine what it is to go into a place of worship to look up - and you do have to look up - and see a monument to someone who was a party to the enslavement of your ancestors. We are a part as members and worshippers in churches which have themselves benefited from the horrors of the slave trade. That is the reality.

They were men and women who were marked with the brand of society of the propagation of the Gospel. They had society burnt on their skin. But there is a Balm in Gilead to heal the sick soul. There is a Balm in Gilead that makes the shattered whole.

So if we cannot all preach like Peter, if we cannot pray like Paul, we can tell the truth of Jesus that He died to save us all - that He died to save us all. We can tell it and we can do it. We can tell it, but we can and must do it. That is why I and your Commission are here.

## ITEM 7

*The Chair.* I now call the Archbishop of York to speak to and move Item 7. You have up to ten minutes.

*The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell):* Dear sisters and brothers, please remind me to make a mental note never to have Lord Boateng as my warm-up act. I want to call you Paul. Paul, we are deeply in your debt and we are convicted by your words and we are determined to be different. I want to build on what we have heard in what may seem a strange way. I want to say that doctrine matters. If we follow Scripture, doctrine tells us what we need to know in order to live consistently as members of the body of Christ.

Doctrine, therefore, as Rowan Williams has put it, serves Communion. If one were looking for an example of new doctrinal definition in the face of lethal distortion of Christian truth, the best example might be the Barmen Declaration of 1934 by representatives of the Protestant churches in Nazi Germany who affirmed, in the face of the most hideous racist ideology, that there could be no meaningful Christian fellowship with those whose pseudo-theology justified discrimination and racial exclusivism. To do otherwise was to show that you do not understand the confession of Christ as Lord. The Kairos Document issued in South Africa in 1985 also appealed to the fullness of what is opened up to us in Christ as a redeemed humanity, therefore challenging a state's theology that sought to justify oppressive racism.

Doctrine matters. Doctrinal fidelity and theological precision are not luxuries. They shape the way we live in a Christ-centred and Jesus Christ-shaped Church where there can be no room for racism, but where we must honestly and painfully and penitently confess that racism is a gaping wound in the body of Christ. Theologians matter too. No less a person than Karl Barth was the main author of the Barmen Declaration and a large group of mainly black South African theologians from Soweto produced the Kairos Document. Sometimes, the Church's opposition to racism, particularly in our own day, is dismissed

as some sort of inappropriate dallying with race politics and culture wars. Not so. Not so. We make our stand on Christian doctrine, particularly on what we learn about ourselves through the revelation of God in Jesus Christ.

So, with you, Synod, I do thank Lord Boateng and the members of the Commission for that challenging, prophetic and, yes, sometimes deeply uncomfortable presentation and for his willingness to share our Commission for Racial Justice. But the reason that Archbishop Justin and I have commissioned this work is because of what we believe about Christ and what it is to be a Christ-centred Church and to make it clear that there can be no racism in the Church and that we must now face up to the failings of the past and change our future for ourselves but also for the world that Christ came to save. We now move to a take note debate and it is my privilege to update you on a number of areas of this work, and I am very grateful to the Business Committee for giving us this time.

As we have heard, the Anti-Racism Taskforce was commissioned last year and, through its Report, *From Lament to Action*, identified 47 actions which, of course, included the establishment of the Commission for Racial Justice - all so that we can be held to account as a Church and that we can deliver systemic change across the Church and ensure a properly resourced Racial Justice Unit is set up.

The Commission has already met three times. GS 2243 starts to outline the progress. You will see that 35 of those recommendations, those that lay within the remit of the NCIs, work has begun immediately on those and you can see where progress is still needed. Other recommendations were reserved to take into account the thinking of the Racial Justice Commission as it emerged. However, I want to assure you that all the recommendations are being carefully and prayerfully explored both by CMEAC and the Racial Justice Commission.

I say that with some feeling because, as I will go on to say in a moment, many Synod members will know that I have had the privilege - CMEAC, by the way, is the Committee for Minority Ethnic Anglican Concerns - to be a member of that Committee for nearly ten years. Some of those recommendations from some of those reports which were not acted upon, I was one of the authors of those. But under the Chairmanship of the Dean of Manchester, who we welcomed to the Synod earlier, and with new terms of reference, CMEAC remains the body for taking this forward.

It is worth reminding ourselves yet again of all the work that that group and its predecessor has done. In the coming months, CMEAC will publish new information around race and ethnicity, including a diocese by diocese report on the work undertaken on anti-racism, racial justice, belonging, inclusion and diversity and, hopefully, there will be a project to commission a collection of sacred liturgical objects that will narrate the rich diversity of heritage, culture and ethno-social community found in the Church of England and the Anglican Communion.

The resource, *Staying Awake in Gethsemane; Catalyst Theology for Racial Justice in the Church of England* will be published with SCM press later this year and will be available to dioceses so that our parishes can begin to engage more fully with this Agenda. Other work has included a national conference in collaboration with the British and Irish Association for Practical Theology and a roundtable on how to support the planned migration from Hong Kong in collaboration with the Teahouse, which is the support network for the Church of England East Asian and Chinese heritage clergy. As you will remember, those of you who have been on Synod for a while, there have been a variety of roundtables and activities also supporting the work of Gypsy, Traveller and Roma networks and Persian and Farsi speaking networks.

Synod, much is happening but there is so much that still needs to be done. All is far from well. But I think all we can do today is clearly demonstrate our determination to put in place a clear national strategy that will support the work of racial justice and enable our dioceses and parishes to be involved and to build capacity. Our desire is nothing less than to ensure and to share with the world the fullness of what is opened up to us in Jesus Christ as a redeemed humanity.

This work is so important and it is why becoming a diverse Church, as one of our stated objectives, flows directly from what it means to be a Church that is in Christ. Therefore, of course, we do not do this alone. It is for every diocese, every parish and every congregation to be involved and to see this as a Gospel imperative. Of course, there will be decisions, strategies, policies and structural changes and hard and important decisions lie ahead. But, as our inspirational and dedicated adviser - who is behind me, and we must pay tribute to her work, thank you - Sanjee Perera often reminds me and reminds us that this can only be achieved by love and with the guidance of the Spirit and anchored in the Gospel. It cannot be mandated, but it can be compelled by love, that love and that new humanity we see in Christ.

Companions, the work of racial justice is the work of the Gospel. In Christ, there can be nothing less. Let me quote from the Kairos Statement of 1985 written by black theologians in Soweto and still a challenge for the Church of England today: "For those Christians who find themselves on the side of the oppressor or sitting on the fence, the way forward is to cross over to the other side and be united in faith and action". It is now, at last, to this faith and action and delivery that the Church of England must now commit itself in love and for the sake of the Gospel. Synod, I move the motion standing in my name.

*The Chair:* This item is now open for debate. I am pleased to say that there are quite a lot of requests to speak and a lot of interest. My proposal is that our time will be used thus. We will take some speeches from the chamber and, after the first couple of speeches, I will reduce the speech limit from five to three minutes to give as many people and as broad a sweep as possible. We will then take some speeches from those of you joining us on Zoom and then return to the chamber.

*Revd Sonia Barron (Lincoln):* Thank you for the invitation to speak in this debate. Having been the former CMEAC adviser and Co-Chair of the Anti-Racism Taskforce, as a current member of the Racial Justice Commission and a black priest in the Church of England, I am glad of the opportunity. Firstly, it is encouraging to see that the Report outlines the work being done on the recommendations of the Taskforce to date, which Archbishop Stephen has just told us about. There are some that are well underway, others in progress and several others dependent on resource allocation.

I am also encouraged to see the intervention related to the Nationality and Borders Bill by the MPA and the Bishop of Durham who is there as we speak, and the commitment of a team of Bishops to following it through the Lords. I totally concur with the Report saying, "The pursuit of racial justice in the Church is inseparable from our mission to the world. If our own practices and life are deficient, we have no locus from which to call out racism and injustice in the world at large".

I think most members of this Synod would agree with that and it is to this that I would like to speak this afternoon. In previous reports that have come to the General Synod, two of which were written during my tenure as CMEAC adviser, we highlighted that every person should be present and participating at every level in the Church and that matters of racial justice is a matter of unfinished business which the whole Church should engage with. Years of inaction and the less than positive response to two of the key recommendations of the Taskforce has left me as Co-Chair with a question: can I continue to trust this Church when trust has been broken so many times?

The Church should be a sanctuary, a place of safety where all who come can feel safe and find refuge. However, if the place you go to for safety turns out to be a place where you are left wounded, bewildered and feeling marginalised, it is no longer a sanctuary or a place you can trust. I do not need to rehearse what has been written in the Report, *From Lament to Action*. Those members who served on Synod during the last quinquennium will remember GS 2223 setting out the Church of England's strategy for the 2020s, speaking of, "A humbler Church, recognising our failings and working with others to serve the common good". It then goes on to talk about this Church being younger and more diverse.

Trust has been lost. As a humbler Church, we need not only the desire to put things right but to take action to rebuild the trust that has been lost. I could tell you many stories of ordinands and clergy from my former role here in Church House and since then the many I have supported, mentored and encouraged to stay when they have felt let down, unsupported and passed over by this Church that I have come to call my home. In making the recommendation for a Racial Justice Directorate, the Taskforce wanted things to be different. Our hope was that this would be a place where we would know that the work of racial justice was being led by a director who holds the Church to account without an intermediary who may hinder its progress.

This Church to which I belong and have been faithful for the past 30 years has hugely underinvested in the work of racial justice because of a lack of will. The Report of the Taskforce calls for the Church to be intentional, to recognise that racial justice is something for the whole Church to own. Trust has been eroded and needs to be rebuilt. As we take note of this Report, let us remember that we all have a part to play in rebuilding the trust that has been lost and that the work of racial justice is the work of the whole Church not just a select few. Synod, let us resolve to do our part in making this truly a place of safety, a place of refuge and a sanctuary for all God's people.

*The Bishop of London (Rt Revd & Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE):* I look forward to speakers that follow on from me but particularly those from the global majority heritage. I want to take this opportunity to thank those who contributed to *From Lament to Action*. It personally challenged me and continues to challenge me and it also challenges the Diocese of London. Over the last few years in London, we have been developing our vision for 2030: to be there for every Londoner, to enable them to encounter the love of God in Christ Jesus.

The challenge of this vision is not limited but includes the need to identify, respond to and root out systematic racism that purposely and unintentionally privileges certain people and groups whilst marginalising others. Our need to name and repent of our systematic racism while listening to the voices that can help us change is paramount. We are seeking in the Diocese of London to acknowledge, challenge and remove any inequality that restricts the flourishing of global majority heritage people. The commitment to the task of anti-racism is one which I agree with Sonia will require intentionality, resilience, persistence, patience and co-operation.

In the Diocese of London, we have established a Racial Justice Priority Group to provide strategic oversight and to act as a steering group that supports us in taking forward the Racially Just Priority Area of 2030. They have chosen to appoint a Capacity Building Consultant from the global majority heritage. What they are seeking to do is to help us fully integrate racial justice into our operational and decision-making processes as we build leadership and representation that truly reflects the diversity of London to achieve equality of access, opportunities and outcome; undergirded by prophesy, however difficult it is to hear; undergirded by prayer, which we have to be persistent with; and also patience.

They said to me that words are not enough today. They wanted me to talk about the action that we are undertaking. You may think it is not enough and others in this chamber may well know what it has taken to get there, but our action to date has included a Racial Justice Strategy to frame our aims and key priorities and an operational plan to capture all the tasks, to confirm our commitment to change, that we will seek and monitor to progress against targets. We are writing an Anti-Racism Charter for the diocese. We have implemented a programme of unconscious bias training for clergy and anyone involved in recruitment processes. We have started work on appointment packs for clergy posts with a view that each parish in every area have adequate information about good

recruitment processes with a particular focus on racial justice, equality, diversity and inclusion.

We are reviewing the representation of global majority heritage and UKME people on leadership programmes. We are looking again to run with Southwark Diocese the Bishop Wilfred Wood Leadership Programme to create better pipelines for leadership roles and proactively dismantle racial inequality in our senior leadership. We are developing a programme of communication that involves highlighting some of the key dates during the calendar year, featuring stories and events relating to racial justice in our diocese and we recently formed a Racial Justice Prayer Network. We are encouraging with our Board for Schools to discuss how we might communicate the shared history in a way that fully respects the contributions of all.

We have begun discussions on how we might best enable parishes to engage with the issues relating to historic monuments' legacies surrounding slavery. I know that we are on a journey and you may think that our steps are small. However, it is in the right direction and, through being rooted in the love of Christ, we hope that we will recognise the importance and urgency of racial justice and I am grateful for all of those who will hold me and the diocese to account.

*The Chair* imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

*Revd Andrew Moughtin-Mumby (Southwark):* Exactly two years ago, just before we all went into lockdown, this Synod, which we are all part of, voted unanimously to lament the racism experienced by members of the Windrush generation and other black and brown people right here in the Church of England and to work to get rid of racism and racial abuse in our Church and in our world.

We agreed to request that the Archbishops' Council appoint an independent person external to the Church to assess the current situation as regards race and ethnicity in the Church in order to present a report to this Synod with recommendations for actions to achieve reconciliation and authentic belonging so that we can move towards truly being a Church for all people. Thanks to a wonderful plain-speaking speech from David Ashton from Leeds, we recognised that it would cost money as well.

On that day, I spoke about the awful racism that our sister in Christ, Doreen Brown, experienced when in 1961 her family were literally barred from coming into the parish church where I now serve as rector because of the colour of their black skin. I apologised to Doreen, who was here in the public gallery, and so did Archbishop Justin. We lamented and we pledged action. Since then, we do not need to go into all the things that have woken us up even more to the dangers of racism. But last night I saw Doreen in church for our evening worship and, as everyone was leaving, I said to Doreen, "I'm going to be at General Synod, please pray for us". And her response cut deeply. She said, "I don't know why they bother. Nothing will change". Our sister, Lena, piped up and said, "Never in a million years".

These are two very faithful, lively, Christian women in our parishes and their hope is being sapped because they see a Church in which things change oh so slowly. I want to really encourage us to take to heart Lord Boateng's energy and urgency about this issue which should affect each one of us.

I want to suggest, friends, that discrimination in our Church anywhere is a gateway to discrimination everywhere. We have explicit and implicit discrimination and all of it is a wound in the body of Christ. I want to encourage us as Christians to believe in the doctrine of Communion and to stand up for others around us because, as Lord Boateng said, it is costly having to speak to justify your own place at the table.

*Mr Robert Zampetti (London):* I am an associate for one of the "big four" and I will start by acknowledging that I hardly embody the much needed racial diversity which is the subject at hand. My firm is known for the work we do in diversity, equity and inclusion. Our mission is published as *Building a Better World*. We are convinced that successful enterprises can no longer afford to systemically limit the full participation of those of global majority heritage. What about the Church?

We know that the Gospels are filled with occasions when Jesus came to those who were excluded or deemed unworthy. It surely rests with us, his disciples, to emulate the same thing 2,000 years later. Although fresh to this body, I understand that the purpose of this take note debate is to, "Serve as a valuable opportunity to hear views on the issues and proposed actions, some of which will require significant financial investment if they are to be achieved".

I want to start by saying if we need to spend to achieve these things, so be it. It is from this vantage point that I make the following observation. First, let us not bemoan the fact that the National Church Institutions face significant obstacles such as "needing a substantially larger budget than is available in the NCIs". I am encouraging, as the Commission moves forward, that we should look for the most effective and fiscally responsible ways of achieving these goals.

Second, I note that the recommendation to appoint full-time racial justice officers in every diocese was rejected by the Archbishops' Council on its face. This fact indicates that some degree of cost benefit practicality can and must be applied. I am not convinced that the creation of these director level roles will necessarily produce the meaningful change in culture and behaviour, which is what is needed. Building a diverse set of leaders who live and act out these values that works may take money. Empowering racial justice champions works.

Here, I might suggest a vision of priests in the pulpits of their parishes preaching the Gospel according to the right doctrine, such as we heard just now from the Chair of the Commission and the Archbishop of York. Either of these recommendations do require intentionality - as I say, even if we must spend a good deal on them - but either of those would be preferable to creating more managerial feudalism in our ever growing dioceses.



*Mrs Busola Sodeine (London):* Dear friends, thank you to those who have taken the care and time to be present in this discussion. I ask for more leaders to shine your light with selflessness to wholly support this Commission. We have not done enough and I ask that we strip away pride and suspicion so that we may seek peace and justice in our communities. We are one body in Christ. My brothers and sisters, let us support at each level the deliberations that consider appointments in key roles, leadership roles and committees where critical decisions are made to ensure our leadership reflects the communities we serve.

I would like to thank both Archbishops who jointly appointed me as a Church Commissioner last year - after a thorough process, may I add. I believe I am the first black woman to sit as a Commissioner - I may stand corrected. But I remember when the interview panel opened and I saw Alan Smith, now the First Estates Commissioner, on the interview panel, it immediately eased any nerves and I gave my best interview. I am now a representative at General Synod as a first-timer. My representation will open the doors to others who see us in action and we pledge to support those coming behind us.

I sympathise with Doreen, whom Andrew referenced, but I want to encourage us all that change is now and here. Here we are, as we start our journey. Help us listen to these voices. Help us reflect. Help us prayerfully act. Help us rise, not to erase our discomfort but to be fully present seeking solidarity and repentance. The Racial Justice Commission is just the beginning to support our actions which affect others. To love our neighbours, as Archbishop Justin earlier mentioned in his address. But it goes beyond the Church and will make a real impact to society, what we all present here today will model a Christ-centred Church that unites us all.

*The Bishop of Burnley (Rt Revd Philip North):* I just want to urge us to keep the vision big and strong in this debate because if we do so it is not just an opportunity to repent of chronic sin, it is also, if we bear the fruit worthy of repentance, a chance for us to recover what it means to be the Church of Pentecost.

Not long ago, I was interviewing for a job. One of the candidates was of South Asian heritage and, when he began to speak, it was as if the windows and the doors of a tired, complacent Western Church had been thrown open to allow in the awesome wind of the spirit. That candidate with their massive evangelistic zeal and passion for the Gospel zoomed us out from our tired binaries and tedious theological infighting and it was fresh and thrilling. That is the opportunity this conversation provides, to allow the Church of England to be re-evangelized by the energy of global Christianity.

But there is another way in which we need big vision in the struggle for racial justice in the Church. 65% of UKME people in this country live in the 20% of our most deprived parishes. That is a really shocking statistic: 65% of UKME people live in the 20% most deprived parishes. If we are serious about increasing UKME representation at every level

of the Church, we cannot do that if we are continuing to withdraw Christian presence from income deprived communities.

We can only be a Church that is serious about racial justice if we are also a Church that belongs to those who are poor. We know what that means. It means placing the Gospel bias to the poor right slap-bang on the front page of our vision and strategy. It means re-investing in our urban areas and increasing Lowest Income Communities Funding. It means our finest leaders offering themselves to the most challenged and diverse communities. It means planting back into the areas we have left behind. If we do not do that, this whole debate is hollow.

How can we claim to be making a stand for racial justice whilst simultaneously drifting away from the communities where 65% of UKME people live? To prioritise racial justice means proclaiming good news with the energy that we can learn from the global Church and it means proclaiming good news to the poor, which sounds to me like the Church of Pentecost. So, please, keep the vision big and maybe this complicated, desperately painful conversation will end up teaching us who we really are.

*Very Revd Rogers Govender (Dean of Manchester):* It was Dr Alan Boesak, who was President of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, who in the 1980s declared internationally that racism is a sin and a heresy. That was a game changer in South Africa where racism was part of daily life and, indeed, made a huge impact in the rest of the world. In the words of our Lord, in the words of Simeon, we are called to be a light, to be light, to be light to the nations, including our own.

It was again, rather sadly, pointed out to us today by Lord Boateng that in the nation, our country, the front bench of Parliament is more diverse than our Church. That is a very worrying observation and reminder for us. We ought to be setting the pace, the example and the inspiration to the nations, not the other way around. It shows how much work we still have to do, how much catching up we have to do and it does have everything to do with intentionality. In my role as Chair of CMEAC, I want to thank Lord Boateng for his report and the work of the Commission and the work of the Task Group before it. You are doing a fantastic job in reminding us and working with the rest of the Church to address the scourge in our common life.

I am standing here publicly, Lord Boateng, to pledge my personal support and that of CMEAC to work with the Commission, because together we can do so much more, as servants of God and as servants to our Church, to enable its mission to be holistic and to move forward.

*Mrs Anna De Castro (Sheffield):* This is a subject pertinent to both my personal life as the mother of two mixed heritage daughters and the wife of a black African, as well as the majority of my ministry and training experience. I am glad that our united sentiment across the full spectrum of this Synod seems to agree that racism in all its forms is a sin.

As Christians, we have a unique and robust biblical and theological foundation for why all humans as image bearers are inherently equal in dignity and value. We fundamentally believe that Lord Jesus gave his life to save for himself a Kingdom, a diverse body made up of every tribe, tongue and nation. Therefore, I am deeply grateful for the care and work that has gone into this process so far. Our sentiment and desire for racial justice needs to be translated into not just diverse posters on our church walls, but beautiful diversity represented in flesh and blood in our congregations and in our church leadership at all levels.

I love serving in the Diocese of Sheffield but, sadly, our diocese is not an anomaly in its profound lack of GMH representation. Therefore, I hope sufficient resources will be allocated to allow all dioceses to adopt the roadmap as suggested in Action 6 on page 9. I would like to make some suggestions.

Firstly, that further attention is given to unveiling the existence of racism and exactly what the barriers are that contribute to the profound lack of diversity at all levels within the Church of England. The Archbishop's candour in confessing the existence of racial prejudice within the Church of England was, although heart-breaking, welcomed and refreshing.

Secondly, that careful consideration is given to how we can be investing in the flourishing of the Gospel in parish churches where there is a high GMH representation. Can we have a commitment to be training and ordaining people who are excited to be involved in Gospel ministry in these areas? Focusing on reaching out with the saving Gospel of Jesus, especially to young people in areas where there is high GMH population would be a transforming and positive way to effect grassroots change within our national Church.

Finally, a huge proportion of those who have come to make their home in the UK who are GMH are professing followers of Christ and already have a churchgoing background, but the reality is when they walk into their local parish church they find a church that is unwilling to bend its white British non-culture, despite being in an area that is predominantly not white British. The timing, habits and expressions of a church gathering and even the pattern of a church calendar rarely representing anything other than typically white British norms, regardless of the demographic of the parish. It would be wonderful to see parish churches expressing Gospel-hearted worship representative of the communities they are there to serve.

*Revd Preb. Dr Amatu Christian-Iwuagwu (London):* I just want to start by thanking the Bishop of London for setting up the Racial Justice Priority Group in the Diocese of London to which I am a member and, also, to commend the speech by the Archbishop of Canterbury where one of the things that struck me was "strong to do what they will and weak to continue to suffer what they must". When you look around here, Synod, I was expecting this House to be a full house because we are talking about something that is very important. It is either that my eyes are getting worse that I need to go to Specsavers or we are getting our priorities wrong.

Look around you and see how many seats are empty. If we are serious, to move from lament to action, there needs to be culture change, serious culture change. I speak as the Edmonton Area Director of Mission and Racial Justice. The practicalities of what we see and the reality of racial injustice in our system is huge and we cannot solve those problems in the three years given to the Commission to resolve the problems. I, therefore, encourage this Synod to begin to look at ourselves in which ways and asking questions in which ways we will begin to dismantle the powers of racism from the grassroots.

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby):* I want to agree very strongly, particularly with the last two speeches from Anna De Castro and Amatu Christian-Iwuagwu. Thank you very much for what you said. What you are both emphasising is that lament to action means action. I want to just comment very briefly on about three or four things. One, we have to change the way we do appointments. That actually means change the way we do appointments. It means you cannot say, "I want someone like me". You cannot say, "I want someone with my theology rather than someone who I am not quite sure about".

I have sat through so many occasions where it is, "Oh, yes, they are wonderful but just not here and not now". That has got to change. Why not here, why not now, asked by an archdeacon in an appointment meeting, led to the best appointment I have made in my life and she is sitting over there. We need to change our practices. On faculties, why is it so much agony to remove a memorial to slavery that sits in front of the dean of a college, Jesus College, Cambridge, who has to look at it every time she sits in her stall?

Why is it so difficult to do that? Why do they have to go through hearing how it does not really matter, it is not strictly accurate and so on and so forth, when all they want to do is put it somewhere safer, somewhere that they can comment on it, not to blow it up. The strategy. It is great to have strategies but they must turn into local action, engagement at every level. We cannot continue to say, "Not here not now".

*Mr Clive Scowen (London):* I think this is the first time I have had the Archbishop of Canterbury as my warm-up act. I want to offer an update on Action 1 on participation referred to on page 7 of the Report. I am a member of the Standing Committee of the House of Laity which will be bringing proposals to the House on Thursday for co-option of five UKME/GMH members as recommended by the Anti-Racism Taskforce. The Standing Committee reflects a diversity of views within the House, but is unanimous in supporting these proposals.

Like many, I hoped the elections we have just had would produce a Synod which reflecting in its membership the ethnic make-up of worshipping Anglicans in England. While we do not yet have official figures, it is already clear that that has not yet been achieved, although there has been an improvement. Co-opting five will not solve the problem, but it will do a little to help redress the balance.

What we are proposing is to gather nominations from those who identify as UKME/GMH from members of the House, from dioceses or even self-nominations. Each person would provide or be asked to provide a personal statement and then the House will select five for co-option by means of an STV vote, thus respecting the outcome of the election in terms of the diversity of churchmanship and other issues which are within the House. The Standing Committee will then propose each of those five so selected to the House for co-option.

That is what we are going to propose to the House and I very much hope that it will agree. I would like to commend that model to the lower Houses of the Convocations for their considerations too. If the House of Laity agrees to proceed with this process, it will make the House just a very little bit more like the courts of heaven where men and women of every tribe, nation, people and language stand before the throne of God and before the lamb.

*The Chair:* After our next speaker, a final call to you Zoomers, after which I will take one more speaker and then test the mind of Synod on a motion for closure because we have timed business at 5.30. Nobody on Zoom. Oh, hang on, there is a Zoomer.

*Ven. Paul Ayers (Leeds):* Nobody, of course, can disagree with the aim of what this debate is trying to achieve and no one can disagree with the passion of the speeches today. What people in my position need beyond the rhetoric is practical steps to actually name the actions more specifically that we need to take. The question that all of us who manage diocesan budgets is concerned with is what do you want us to do and what do you want us to stop doing.

I think my diocese is probably like many, if not all, dioceses in having to cut budgets at the moment but always being asked to commit more resources to things. We need to know specifically what we should cut in order to do more in this respect on the ground that he who wills the end must will the means. Like a previous speaker, who was cut short a little bit, I am not at all convinced that diocesan directors are of much use in something like this.

My second question is, in terms of representation I think it is very important that members remember that England is not London and that representation is very different in different places. I think we need to think more broadly about what we should do about UKME people who are not members of our Church and do not want to be, people who are of other churches and of other religions: Muslims, Sikhs, Hindus, Jews, Ethiopian Orthodox, Pentecostal and so on, of which there are many in my area. Just responding to Archbishop Justin, I am not aware of having experienced what he has experienced in interview panels. If that is happening, that really does need to be challenged and I completely agree with him about that.

I think the only thing I would say about faculties - and I am an archdeacon - is that the reason it is difficult is because lots more people have to be consulted and it cannot just be done by a fiat from on high and we do not want a culture of deference, as we all know.

*The Chair.* After our next speaker, I will call John Spence to speak and then we will test the mind of Synod on a motion for closure.

*Miss Rosemary Wilson (Southwark):* I really did not want to make this topic my maiden speech but, Lord Boateng, you moved me so much. I grew up in Battersea, I was born in 1969, and it is people like you who gave me a vision of a life that could be lived beyond what expectations were for me at school, and so I thank you so much.

I have got two more points. In terms of change and intentionality, Father Andrew mentioned Doreen and her experience of being shut out of the church back in the 60s. When we think about lament to action, we think about lamenting almost as if we have done it: we have lamented, we have had our day, we have had our week, we can move on. But the thing about it is the consequences of living in a racist country, dare I say it, is an ongoing experience. It is something that we never get past. The experiences that we have had as peoples go on for generations. Often, some of the things that we see going on in our communities now are still a result of what happened in the past. The idea that we can just lament and move on, which ought to be a new phase of development, is not the reality for people who live lives with the skin colour that I have, for example.

In terms of intentionality, it is in terms of making bold decisions. We have on the table at this session the possibility of co-opting people of colour into the House of Laity. I have heard discussions already which have basically put that idea as if we do not need it, it is not fair. If we are going to make changes, we have to take on board what we are hearing, what is being recommended and go for it. In terms of intentionality as well, we might be in areas where you might not have people that look like me or people of colour right now, but the way that this country is going you will do. Are you prepared for the people to come?

The primary purpose of us as a Church is to carry the message of the Lord Jesus Christ to every nation, every tongue in this country and we have to. Even if you are in a parish where right this minute you do not have people of colour, you will do. They are there, they are coming and you need to be prepared.

*Canon Dr John Spence (ex officio):* Could I just thank Paul Boateng. I could not be in the chamber today, Paul, but your overpowering case - which I have now had the chance to listen to twice - has, I am sure, helped this meeting today understand just the urgency.

Reference was made earlier to the Archbishops' Council rejecting a certain proposal. I would just say to you, ladies and gentlemen, sometimes things get voted on not because of their content but because of the process which arrived at the point of decision. The Archbishops' Council fully understands the importance of this.

Paul in Leeds, this is too important for us to be working out how we fit it in alongside other cuts that have to be made. It was said at a meeting yesterday that we are a wealthy Church that sometimes acts as a poor Church. We will find the money. The Triennium Funding Working Group is already debating it. The Archbishops' Council has already said that money will need to be brought forward. It will be for the Racial Justice Directorate to shape exactly how to take these proposals forward.

But I said to you a couple of years ago that if we need to find money for safeguarding we will find it, and that commitment stands, and so it will be for racial justice. Justin, you asked the question why now? Why now? Because you cannot have a vision and strategy for the future without repairing the past.

*The Chair.* Synod, I now wish to test your mind on whether Item 7 has been sufficiently debated because we have timed business at 5.30 and I would like to ensure time for voting. Those in favour of a motion for closure on Item 7, please show.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair.* I now invite the Archbishop of York to respond to the debate, thank you.

*The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell):* Well, I do not know what to say. It has been a really, really moving, powerful, beautiful and important debate and I will not even try to sum things up or even go through an order, if you will forgive me. But I did want to pick out a few things that have been said that have touched my heart.

Anna, when you spoke about the beautiful diversity needing to be represented in flesh and blood, that is a vision worth pursuing. Andrew, when you told us again about the parishioners you serve, it does break my heart. Robert Zampetti, your short speech shows us that we do not just have things to learn from Government, we have things to learn from the world about how we can tackle these issues more intentionally and to greater purpose.

I want to say on the matter of racial justice officers, I am part of Archbishops' Council and I do not think we have rejected that. I think we said we need to work out how to pay for it and where that money is going to come from and we also need to work out exactly what are we trying to do here. We just think there needs to be more work on it, but I am as committed as ever to what that is wanting to achieve. Robert, we need the wisdom and experience that is in this Synod to help make that happen.

My dear brother, Bishop Philip, once again you remind us how things are not separate and that we must as a Synod in our mission and ministry have a bias to the poor because this painful conversation will teach us who we really are. My dear brother Justin, I too have been in a room many times when good, sensible people have come up with a really good sensible reason why the UKME candidate just came second to that nice white bloke.

That has got to stop and it requires a change of heart from all of us and a much greater intentionality.

Busola, my beloved new colleague in the Church Commissioners, you show us, you know, woe to you who say peace when there is no peace but, Synod, let us not fail to see that some change is happening and that there are little shoots beginning to emerge. We give thanks for that and we want to build on that. Busola, as I begin to get to know you, goodness me, you are definitely one of them and so is Alan.

But I want to finish where we began, with Sonia's speech. Sonia, you said, "Can I continue to trust this Church when that trust has been broken so many times?" Certainly, as I have gone through the debate, I have not really got much beyond those words, "Can I continue to trust this Church when trust has been broken so many times?" Sonia, I do not know the answer to that question because it does not lie within the power of any one of us, but it does lie within the power of all of us when we catch hold of that vision to be that Church which is centred in Christ and that in Christ we see what our humanity is supposed to be like and, therefore, we cry out against the scourge of racism which diminishes us and blunts our witness in the world because, as our last speaker, Rosemary, said, "There is and continues to be racism not just in our Church but in our wider society and even though we act we will also continue to lament".

Let me finish with a very quick story. Oh, I have not got time for a story. It is half past 5 and we need to get to questions. No, I will stop. OK, I will tell the story. Forgive me, it is not half past 5 yet, there are a couple of minutes. The vote is not going to take long, Chair. When I was a parish priest, there was a guy in hospital who had had a massive heart attack and when I went to visit him he told me this, "All my friends from church come to visit me and say they are going to pray for me. My friends from work come to see me and say they have mowed the lawn". So, yes, let us pray for this; yes, let us write lovely reports about it; but, Synod, now, please, let us do something.

*The Chair:* There is still time to get to our timed business. We now put Item 7 to the vote, which is a take note debate and we are going to vote by show of hands and green ticks on Zoom.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* That now concludes this item of business. I have been asked, in anticipation of questions, for you to have ready the Questions Notice Paper which you can get via the app, the email, over the shoulder of a friend. Be ready, thank you.

THE CHAIR: *Miss Debbie Buggs (London)* took the Chair at 5.30 pm



## ITEM 8 QUESTIONS

*The Chair:* Synod, shall we move on. We are at Item 8, questions and answers. You will need the Questions Notice Paper and the Fourth Notice Paper which enables Bishop Mullaly and Bishop Seeley to answer their questions today rather than tomorrow by reordering some questions. Questions 1 to 6 are to the Mission and Public Affairs Council to be answered by Mr Mark Sheard.

### MISSION AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL

1. *Revd Andrew Cornes (Chichester)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: What considerations led to the Rural Affairs Group being disbanded?

*Mr Mark Sheard replied as Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:* 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.

*Revd Andrew Cornes:* Thank you for your answer and also for answers to later questions about rural ministry. Given that so many of England's parishes are rural and that an increasing number of them are already holding services only monthly and are in danger of becoming unviable, what steps will be taken to ensure that rural ministry is not only fully supported but actively strengthened?

*Mr Mark Sheard:* Andrew, thank you so much for your question. I was delighted to receive it, not least because I am speaking to you from very rural Suffolk where I am very alive to many of the challenges that you are talking about. I think that the answer to your question is inevitably quite a complex one and I am not sure that time will allow.

What I would like to emphasise at this point is that, as we have gone through our Vision and Strategy work and simplification of NCIs, and we have therefore cut our cloth

accordingly with the Rural Affairs Group and the removal of a number of specialist posts, or the transformation of a number of specialist posts into more generalist posts, what has not changed is our commitment to be a Church for the whole of England and to rural proof all the policies that we make.

Actually, I am going to be a bit naughty here and I am going to take this opportunity to recognise the great work of the Rural Affairs Group and, in particular, of your Bishop, Bishop Robert from Exeter, in chairing it and Mark Betson as our Rural Affairs Officer. Mark remains a core part of the team and has shown his adaptability in the way he has tackled the Covid recovery work. Those of us who know him know that he will continue to advocate strongly from the centre for rural proofed policies.

In other respects what can be done, my experience - and, as I say, I speak from rural Suffolk here - is I would want to commend the mixed ecology work that is going on and, in particular, the development of lay ministry within the rural context and to see that strengthened I think will become increasingly important if we are to see the rural church flourish in the way that it can do. Thank you for your question. I do note there is another one coming up and so you may get the opportunity of a second supplementary in due course on the same topic, but thank you so much for that.

*Mrs Debbie McIsaac (Salisbury):* Thank you for the endorsement of the Rural Interest Group on General Synod which was set up by the Rural Affairs Group before it was axed. Before that decision to axe us was taken, what consideration was given to make things happen to improve the lot of the rural church and Church engagement with rural issues?

*Mr Mark Sheard:* I hope I have already largely answered that in the question already and so I can only reiterate that we have a commitment, a total commitment to being a Church for the whole of England. Large proportions of that, as I say, we recognise are rural. We recognise the very particular challenges of rural work. We also have to recognise the particular challenges of being a simpler and humbler Church and a Church that will flourish from the bottom up not from the top down, so that I would be wary of putting too much burden on dioceses to build big central resources to manage things like this when, actually, those resources are better distributed or allowed to remain in parishes where they can flourish. There, of course, is much more to say about the way in which ministry can flourish and a number of other questions touch on that later, but I hope that is helpful in the short-term.

2. *Revd Preb. Rosie Austin (Exeter)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: 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 replied as Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:* 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.

3. *Revd Andrew Yates (Truro)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: 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 replied as Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:* Since 2019 there has been great progress in this area, and the Church has actively engaged with Gypsy, 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.

*Revd Andrew Yates:* Thank you for your answer and good to hear the work that has been going on since that. I have a question for everybody here. Tonight at 8 o'clock, Ed Stafford, the explorer, has a programme on Channel 4, "60 Days with the Gypsies". I have not seen it, but in the trailer it talks about the persecution that that group feels. You might try and watch that tonight or play it back if you have got a fringe meeting. But the real question is, following the so-called joke by Jimmy Carr, I just wondered - and I may be too late, hopefully - whether we as a Church ought to have said something about that.

*Mr Mark Sheard:* Andrew, thank you for highlighting that. I am sure that I speak for many if not, I hope, for all members of Synod when I say I was very disturbed to hear that joke. I have heard some explain it to me as being an opportunity to laugh at those who hold

such views. To be perfectly honest, I would rather not hear those views expressed in any way, come what may. It has been said that this is the last form of acceptable racism. It clearly is not and I would like to hope and pray that all that we talked about in the previous debate will apply as much to the GTR community as to any other ethnic minority. Thank you for your question and in highlighting this topic.

4. *Revd Ruth Newton (Leeds)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: 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 replied as Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:* 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.

*Revd Ruth Newton:* Thank you for your answer to my question. Could I have a breakdown, please, of how many of the Diocesan Environmental Officers are full-time and how many of them are paid?

*Mr Mark Sheard:* Yes, I can give you a breakdown as best we can from the information we receive from dioceses. We have three roles that are paid as exclusive Diocesan Environmental Officer roles, but it is worth noting that none of those are full-time roles. We have ten paid roles where the Diocesan Environmental Officer is part of a wider brief and we have 15 doing the role as part of a clergy role and seven volunteers in total.

5. *Mrs Rebecca Hunt (Portsmouth)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: 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 replied as Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:* 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.

6. *Mr Benjamin John (St Albans)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: 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 replied as Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:* 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.

*Mr Benjamin John:* Can you confirm that in your response to the consultation and support of the Government's proposals to ban conversion therapy that you supported the use of criminal sanctions, including imprisonment for up to five years, particularly in the case of Talking Therapy which can include pastoral conversations between a minister and a lay person, especially given that over 700 Church of England ministers have signed a letter opposing the Government's proposals and saying that they are willing to disobey the Government to provide pastoral support to congregants in obedience to God.

*Mr Mark Sheard:* I think what would be most helpful for you and for other members of Synod is if we arrange for the full response to that consultation to be made available and I will speak to the Clerk of Synod about how that can best be done.

*Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford):* Thank you, Mark. May I flag that this was actually a consultation from the Government Equalities Office, which is part of the Cabinet Office and not part of the Ministry of Justice. But my question, if I may, is I wonder if the Archbishops' Council is aware of the Cooper Report, a set of recommendations by Baroness Kennedy QC and colleagues of senior international human rights lawyer status, which set out in strong recommendations that there should be no loopholes for consent on conversion therapy and proposed a definition as to how to tackle the difficult topic of religious practices which are harmful. Their definition was that this needed to be any practice which had a predetermined purpose focused on an individual that sought to change, cure or suppress their sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

*Mr Mark Sheard:* Thank you very much, Jayne. As ever, you are massively in command of your subject. I am afraid I cannot tell you specifically a response to the Cooper Report. I know that you have recently just published a report yourself.

*Ms Jayne Ozanne:* The Cooper Report.

*Mr Mark Sheard:* Or the Ozanne Foundation has, which we have received and are currently digesting. I am sure we will be coming back to you in relation to your Report and so let me also come back to you on the Cooper Report at that time.

*Ms Jayne Ozanne:* Thank you, Mark. It is one and the same.

*Mr Mark Sheard:* Well, that is good to know, thank you very much. As ever, you highlight your superior knowledge on this subject more than I do. In that case, that is very helpful.

*The Chair:* Questions 7 to 8 to be answered by Canon Robert Hammond, Chair of the Business Committee.

## **BUSINESS COMMITTEE**

7. *Canon Peter Bruinvels (Guildford)* asked the Chair of the Business Committee: 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 (Chelmsford)* replied as Chair of the Business Committee: 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.

*Canon Peter Bruinvels:* I am afraid it looks like I am a one issue person today but, whilst welcoming the answer from Canon Hammond and recognising that 50 plus members of Synod are on hybrid at this moment, would he now give serious consideration to making it into a new Standing Order, a temporary Measure being done away with and, instead, remote meetings to be permanent, recognising that you have a review meeting in March

and May and recognising all the people who are disadvantaged on health, on business and other duties in the House of Lords.

*Canon Robert Hammond:* We will take that and look at that at our meetings. I cannot talk for the Committee until the Committee has discussed it but, as I said in the debate and my response to you then, we will discuss that.

*Mr Sam Margrave (Coventry):* When considering whether to continue to have hybrid meetings, will the Business Committee undertake an equality impact assessment and consider its obligations under the Equality Act before making any final decision and make available the assessment to this Synod for our purview?

*Canon Robert Hammond:* The Business Committee will take advice on how the Equality Act relates to Synod and, if it does, we will take that forward, yes.

8. *Mr Chris Gill (Lichfield)* asked the Chair of the Business Committee: 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 (Chelmsford) replied as Chair of the Business Committee:* 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.

*The Chair:* We move then, as I can see no one standing, to questions 79 to 87.

*Mr Sam Margrave (Coventry):* Point of order, thank you, Chair, with indulgence. The Fourth Notice Paper was issued, we understand, because of individuals who were not available to answer questions. But you will notice question 9 is to be answered by his Grace, the Archbishop of Canterbury, who, my eyes may deceive me, is sitting right there. So can I ask why ---

*The Chair:* Sorry, this is not a point of order.

*Mr Sam Margrave (Coventry):* Well, you have changed the Agenda.

*The Chair.* Sorry, would you please resume your seat, Mr Margrave. We now move to questions 79 to 87 to be answered by the Bishop of London on behalf of the House of Bishops.

## HOUSE OF BISHOPS

79. *Revd Christopher Blunt (Chester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 (Rt Revd & Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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.

*Revd Christopher Blunt:* My supplementary question is, hopefully, fairly simple. You have pointed us towards the LLF resources and the Pastoral Principles to help us sort of define who we are within some of the debates that are going to be coming up. I am concerned that that does not go far enough. Are you aware of, or are there any resources that far more explicitly define our theological or Church tradition without causing offence to others that we can draw on in the future? We have been reminded several times today that we are one Church, but our differences of approach within the one Church remain massive. I am describing reality not egging on any division. We need the tools to talk about that openly, frankly, and without causing offence. So, please, if there is any help, that would be great.

*The Bishop of London:* Thank you for your question. Before I give an answer, I would like to thank the Chair of the Business Committee and Synod for having changed the order of the questions. It is because I will be somewhere else tomorrow evening. I would love to say that I will be sad to miss you, but I will be at a confirmation service and, in fact, I have also just found out that Bishop Martin will be at the same service as well. Thank you for your indulgence in changing that.



Thank you very much, Christopher, for your question. Part of LLF really is around equipping us to understand things from other people's points of view. In the resources in the LLF book, which I am sure you have looked at, in chapter 5 it does discuss the sensitivities around words that were used and there is a glossary of terms as well. The facilitation training itself does offer opportunities for people to understand better how they can establish an environment and listen better to somebody else and, therefore, in hearing you are less likely to offer offence.

Also, there is the Braver Safer guidance as well that is there. But, in a sense, the Pastoral Principles are there for me to learn better how I listen, for example, to you. I have learnt probably the hard way, particularly in the last year, how my words can damage other people. I think we only learn to do that better when we begin to listen and so, in a sense, the *Living in Love and Faith* resources are there about us, in a sense, graciously beginning to listen and to learn in that way.

80. *Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 (Rt Revd & Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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.

*Revd Canon Simon Butler:* Could I ask the House to reflect on a couple of things here. One is, firstly, given that women and UKME clergy are there in observer status, whether LGBT clergy should be included on the same basis as those protected characteristics? It may be the House might also give some further consideration to the sort of drip drip approach we are going to have with all the protected characteristics that are laid out in equality law and how they might be better represented and whether there is a better system than just picking them off one by one as the issues face the Church from time to time.

*The Bishop of London:* Thank you, Simon. I think that was a statement of fact.

*Mr Clive Scowen (London):* In considering the question that the Bishop has said that the House will be looking at in March, will they also ensure that there will be representation from those who experience same-sex attraction but believe that Scripture calls them to a celibate life?

*The Bishop of London:* Those people in the group will involve people at grassroots level. They may be lay or ordained. They are people who will embody the widest possible diversity of the lived experience and conviction. That means that there will be people who will identify as LGBTQI+ and people who do not, but there is for us around how we also ensure that the individuals are protected from being a focus of unhelpful and potentially damaging attention through social media et cetera, so it will be a mixed group. But we are taking very seriously the question that has been raised about how we ensure that people are in the room to be able to give voice where maybe that voice is not expressed within the House and the College.

81. *Dr Julie Maxwell (Winchester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 (Rt Revd & Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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.

82. *Dr Julie Maxwell (Winchester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 (Rt Revd & Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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

83. *Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 (Rt Revd & Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:* 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.

*Ms Jayne Ozanne:* I welcome the steps that are being taken to enable us to examine our own practices but it strikes me that, given two-thirds of LGBT+ Christians do not feel safe enough to be out in their churches according to a recent survey, I believe we need to have far more urgent and practical steps to address what is a serious safeguarding issue. Will Bishop Sarah consider implementing a whistleblowing mechanism so that those LGBT+ people who have or who are suffering abusive practices in their churches can report their abuse without fear? And will all safeguarding training contain a new module that can educate people about the harm that certain religious practices can cause?

*The Bishop of London:* Thank you, Jayne, for your question and also thank you to you and your partners who put together the piece of research that was recently published. The research, I think, does demonstrate some uncomfortable realities that are there and I would encourage Synod to read it if they have not already. In a sense, there are two parts. Education is probably the most effective way of helping the Church communities become safer, whilst I also recognise your point around how people feel safe to express that and I think your point made about a whistleblowing policy is helpful. I will take that away.

The other thing I would also encourage people to look at is there is work going on around spiritual abuse. The NST are doing that. I also think that some of the more recent training, both the foundational programmes that are online as well as those in the Canon C 4, do open up to the wider possibility of behaviours that we could have that are coercive or abusive. Whilst not focusing specifically around those that you relate in your question, I do think that we are creating a wider environment where we become more aware of our power and the way in which it could be abusive or coercive.

84. *Mr Benjamin John (St Albans)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Will the House of Bishops consider publishing pastoral guidance and liturgy to mark and celebrate an individual’s de-transition?

*The Bishop of London (Rt Revd & Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:* The House has no current plans to develop work of this nature.

*Mr Benjamin John:* A dear friend of mine, Libby Littlewood, when she de-transitioned was initially discouraged from doing so by her church. You are welcome to hear her testimony at a fringe event I am hosting tomorrow. Do the House of Bishops recognise a need for de-transgender people to be welcomed and affirmed in their parish church?

*The Bishop of London:* I think we have heard today in Synod in some of the contributions that, actually, the fundamental of our Christian faith is that everybody is made in the image of God and, therefore, churches are places that welcome all. I think that we have also heard in our debates today that the Church sometimes has problems doing that and that there is much for us to do. In a sense, *Living in Love and Faith*, the conversation there is in its widest sense a conversation about identity, sexuality and what it is to be human.

One of my hopes has always been that, by listening to other people's stories and listening to each other, we will have a better understanding as a Church around what it means to be able to be welcoming to others and to understand what that looks like. There is a sense in which we may have some way to go, but I would hope that when we begin to hear back from the Church we will hear not just of where it has not worked well but also those places where it is working well and to be able to say this is what we are hearing and this is what that sense in welcoming others made in the image of God looks like.

85. *Revd Mae Christie (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 (Rt Revd & Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:* 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.

*Revd Mae Christie:* Thank you so much, Bishop Sarah, for your reply to me. I do have a follow-up question. Appreciating the tricky transition period that we are in with the *Living in Love and Faith* process, which I know we are all committed to, if *Issues in Human Sexuality* was, as you say, never intended to be embedded in the selection criteria, then why are we using it in that way?

*The Bishop of London:* Thank you for your question and it is a question that I get asked. You may feel this is like me passing the buck but, in a sense, it is a question for the Ministry Division to consider and there will be things that come out of *Living in Love and Faith* that relate, in a sense, not just to the Next Steps Group. It will relate to all of us and it will relate to ministry and it will relate to the rural aspects of the Church. What I cannot do is give you a final answer. I absolutely hear and have heard that question and I do think it is something that we have to take seriously in terms of *Living in Love and Faith* and what, therefore, does that mean. It is not just about those specific issues that relate to identity sexuality, but it relates to our whole ministry and how our ministry is impacted by that.

86. *Revd Mae Christie (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 (Rt Revd & Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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.'

*Revd Mae Christie:* I know you are all going to think I am obsessed with *Issues in Human Sexuality*, but I am at the moment.

*The Bishop of London:* That is fine.

*Revd Mae Christie:* My takeaway is please read it if you have not read it. I know it is out of print but it is available on the website.

*The Chair:* Your question, please.

*Revd Mae Christie:* As *Issues in Human Sexuality* is still in force and we have no commitment for its removal, and this Synod has voted in opposition to conversion therapy, I would like to press the House of Bishops in their reply to me: what is the function of the therapy that is mentioned in section 5.8 of *Issues in Human Sexuality*? What is the function of it?

*The Bishop of London:* The truth is that is a book that was written 30 years ago. What we are clear is that the memorandum of understanding on conversion therapy in the UK makes it clear that there continues to be a place for informed and ethical counselling and psychotherapy to help people who wish to explore experienced conflict with or are in distress regarding the sexual orientation of gender. There is a place for counselling and therapy, but I understand where your concern comes from.

*Revd Mae Christie:* In the sense that bisexual people have to have therapy so that they are not bisexual.

*The Chair:* Sorry, you are not allowed to ---

*Revd Mae Christie:* I am so sorry, but that is what the document says.

*The Bishop of London:* But, Mae, if I can just finish.

*Revd Mae Christie:* Yes, I am sorry.

*The Bishop of London:* *Living in Love and Faith* is where we are now. That is the process that we are doing and it is 30 years away from *Issues in Human Sexuality*. As you rightly commend the document to people, I would rightly commend the process to people. It is a listening exercise and, therefore, we want to hear from you, Mae, and from others.

87. *Mr Luke Appleton (Exeter)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 (Rt Revd & Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:* 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.

*Mr Luke Appleton (Exeter):* Firstly, thank you, Bishop Sarah, for your initial response. You say that my concern is unfounded. However, when I first put my question to you, I had heard concerns mainly from lay people, some out in the wild and some from within Synod. They pointed to examples like that of Keith Waters who lost his job for speaking publicly about the biblical position on marriage. Since, however, posting my question and your detailed response, I have had several members of the clergy ---

*The Chair:* Your question, please, Mr Appleton.

*Mr Luke Appleton (Exeter):* Yes, thank you. My question is: if substantiated, what additional measures can be taken to ensure that clergy, upholding the historic teaching on marriage, can participate fully in the LLF process considering that I have had people get in touch with me to say that they are facing disciplinary procedures?

*The Bishop of London:* I cannot comment on any specifics, Luke. What I have spoken about before in this Synod is that one of the challenges for us is that what often holds us back from getting involved in *Living in Love and Faith* - and that would be as true of me as anybody else - is fear. Therefore, in *Living in Love and Faith*, we have gone on to try and enable to develop - they are never going to be safe - safer, braver spaces in which people can talk about what they believe. That is what we are seeking to do. At the heart of it is the Pastoral Principles.

I recognise that the fear for some is very different to other people and the fear you are talking about is one where they fear for their roles but, in a sense, I think that is very unfortunate. Their fear, I know they may feel it but it is unfounded. However, I recognise that does not take away their fear. Maybe there is something around how we create an environment in which we learn about how - my words - you know, I can talk so it does not

offend others as well as how I can listen to create an environment in which, actually, people feel braver to talk about their views.

*Mr Sam Margrave (Coventry):* Bishop Sarah, in response on behalf of the House of Bishops, the answer to the question says it will be up to Synod members themselves to choose to engage with one another openly in ways that avoid any semblance of intimidation. You can never blame the victim for the intimidation, so what is the House of Bishops' plan to ensure that no intimidation takes place, and that it protects individuals who face intimidation?

*The Bishop of London:* When we talk about the members of Synod and how they choose to engage, there are different ways. In a sense, this is encouraging all of us to take responsibility for our involvement to create a safer space, wherever we are. I am not talking about the victim. The reality is a lot of us have power in different ways, so how do we all with all our power (and some of us will feel more powerful than others) create an environment which enables others to feel safer. That is the first thing.

In terms of *Living in Love and Faith*, we have listened to the concerns that people raised about whether the space was safe. As a result of that, we have developed material (braver and safer guidance); we have put in facilitation for training; we have advocates; we have the Reference Group. We have begun to do things that try to make those spaces safer.

At the end of the day we cannot control those spaces, which is why I always say I am not making anybody engage in this conversation if they do not feel safe. What they should do is go to a space where they do feel safe and have that conversation. I do not have full control over people's behaviours in this, but what we have tried to do, specifically around *Living in Love and Faith*, is to create an environment which is safer, which enables us to be braver, and I hope to be able to spot that movement of the spirit in what God wants to do with us, and to show us, through this process.

*The Chair:* Thank you, Bishop Sarah.

*The Bishop of London:* Thank you, Synod, for changing the times. I am very grateful.

*The Chair:* We come to questions 30 to 40 to be answered by the Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich on behalf of the Archbishops' Council.

## **ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL**

30. *Revd Canon Dr Tim Bull (St Albans)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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 - ie, how many 2-parish, 3-parish, 4-parish and so on, benefices there are?



*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich (Rt Revd Martin Seeley) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:* 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

31. *Revd Jacob Madin (York)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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 (Rt Revd Martin Seeley) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:* 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.

32. *Mr Robin Lunn (Worcester)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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 (Rt Revd Martin Seeley)* replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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 10 years that will require a small but continued increase in the number of ordinands beginning training.

*Mr Robin Lunn:* I thank the Bishop for his answer which I found very encouraging. Does the Archbishops' Council recognise that when individual dioceses set their plans in terms of stipendiary ministry, their actions move away from the stated aim not because they are trying to undermine the mission of the Church but because their policy is dictated by their finances, or lack thereof? What is being done to reconcile the two?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* Thank you, Robin. Absolutely, one of the things, and I think I said it at the last Synod, that is going on here is we have a long-term vision and strategy and short-term pressures around finance, and those two timetables do not meet. One of the things we need to do is try to find a way to mitigate the current situation that is prompting dioceses to consider cutting posts - and it still is not clear quite how many that means - and to mitigate that through some form of financial provision.

If I can give a concrete example, one of the things we are trying to do from Ministry Council through the various channels is to look at the situation with finishing curates, and the recognition that there may be fewer posts of first responsibility available for finishing curates, and to make provision to support there being posts to ensure that every finishing curate who is eligible is able to find a post. That work is in hand.

I am hoping we will get something in place for this year, 2022, and we are working very hard and fast now with John Spence and others to try to do that. That is one step we are taking to try to ensure that we overcome this discrepancy between our ambitious

aspirations that require stipendiary clergy and our current short-term situation in relation to finance.

*Revd Dr Ian Paul (Southwell & Nottingham):* Bishop Martin will recall that in November, at the last Synod, I did ask a specific question asking for a collation of the actual information from dioceses, and subsequently in correspondence I suggested this could be effected by a simple email to diocesan secretaries. Would it be possible to have an answer to that question, which you did previously promise me would come within a month of the last Synod?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* I lose track of time. Ian, one of the things we are doing, you may remember that we went through a ministry planning tool with every diocese, and that has given us a picture, a snapshot. We are planning to do that again towards the end of this year. The problem at the moment is that it is a kind of moving target, so any picture we take now, so your suggestion of simply sending an email to diocesan secretaries, would give a partial snapshot, and what we want to have is a much more comprehensive picture so we can look at the planning that together we can make for stipendiary posts and the deployment of self-supporting posts.

*Revd Dr Ian Paul:* I think I would find a snapshot very helpful.

33. *Mr Andrew Orange (Winchester)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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 (Rt Revd Martin Seeley) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:* Clergy are generally licensed 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 licensed 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.

34. *Professor Roy Faulkner (Leicester)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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 (Rt Revd Martin Seeley) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:* 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.

Category	1959*	1979*	2000*	2010*	2020**
Parochial clergy	<sup>1</sup> 13,075	10,662	8,744	7,324	7,210
Archdeacons	106	104	106	109	129
Suffragan bishops	<sup>2</sup> 70	72	67	58	67
Diocesan bishops	<sup>3</sup> 43	43	41	39	39
Stipendiary posts	<sup>4</sup> -	-	9,675	8,501	7,670
Self supporting clergy	<sup>5</sup> -	-	2,083	3,151	2,880
Readers/licensed lay ministers	6,452	6,575	-	6,856	4,590
Readers/licensed lay ministers including those retired with PTO	-	6,811	10,308	10,056	7,590

\* Data refer to full-time roles within diocesan framework only (i.e. excludes non-parochial roles such as chaplains in HM Armed Forces, prisons, secular charitable organisations, religious communities, theological colleges, etc)

\*\* Data refer to stipendiary roles only (with the exception of self-supporting and licensed readers categories)

<sup>1</sup> For 1959, this includes Dignitaries with parochial cures of souls; Incumbents; Ministers-in charge of Conventional Districts; Assistant Clergymen  
For 1979 onwards, this includes Incumbents (excluding dignitaries); Incumbent Status; Assistant Curates

<sup>2</sup> For 1959 to 2000, this includes Suffragan and Assistant Bishops

- For 2010 onwards, this includes Suffragan bishops only
- <sup>3</sup> For 1959, this includes Archbishops and Diocesan Bishops  
For 1979, this includes Diocesan Bishops only
- <sup>4</sup> For 2000, this includes full time stipendiary parochial clergy only  
For 2010 onwards, this includes all stipendiary clergy
- <sup>5</sup> This includes Non-Stipendiary Ministers (NSMs) and Ordained Local Ministers (OLMs)

**PTO** Permission to Officiate

*Professor Roy Faulkner:* I was disappointed that you were not really able to provide any statistics of the sort that I was looking for before the year 2000. I have to say that the facts are this: since 1926, or in the last 100 years ---

*The Chair:* Question please.

*Professor Roy Faulkner:* --- the number of people employed as members of the bureaucracy has gone up from 500 to 5,000. This was not in the answer to the question. At the same time, the number of priests had gone down. My question really is, and I never ask a question unless I know the answer - I have just given you the answer - why were you unable to give me the answer yourselves?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* I gave the answer I could give you.

*Professor Roy Faulkner:* Not before the year 2000.

35. *Revd Sam Maginnis (Chelmsford)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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 (Rt Revd Martin Seeley)* replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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.

		2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016*	2017*	2018*	2019*	2020*
Number of clergy ordained within the Church of England	Stipendiary	313	295	311	301	235	261	226	267	321	309	284	264	261	288	286	315	300	320	320	360	330
	Self-supporting	256	201	229	192	234	251	255	288	253	255	279	240	233	196	214	183	190	170	180	220	250
	Total *	569	496	540	493	469	512	481	555	574	564	563	504	494	484	500	498	490	490	500	580	580
Number of Church of England clergy retiring	<sup>1</sup>	368	386	367	337	313	292	296	312	294	337	322	302	272	-	-	276	334	330	300	310	320
Number of Church of England clergy leaving active ministry before reaching the Normal Pension Age	<sup>2</sup>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	207	160	150	130	120

Some data rounded to the nearest 10 from 2016 onwards

- <sup>1</sup> Clergy in active retirement are included in these figures  
No data are available for 2013 or 2014
- <sup>2</sup> Normal pension age' here is taken to mean 65 years old  
Clergy in active retirement are included in these figures  
No data available pre 2016

36. *Revd Fiona Gibson (Hereford)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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 (Rt Revd Martin Seeley)* replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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 noticeboard.

Stage 1 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 teams involved in the consultation process are listed below.

- **Vision & Strategy**  
Teams that are involved in shaping this area: Emerging Church of England, Evangelism and Discipleship, Strategy and Development Unit.
- **Ministry Development**  
Ministry, Clergy HR, Archbishops' Advisers for Appointments and Development (parts of).
- **Education & Growing Faith**  
Education Office.
- **Faith & Public Life**  
Mission & Public Affairs, Anglican Communion, Interfaith and Public Affairs (Lambeth Palace), Ecumenical Relations (AC Central Secretariat, Lambeth Palace).

- **Data Services**

Information Management and Governance, Research and Statistics, People Systems (HR).

In addition:

- **Buildings**

The reporting line for Cathedrals & Church Buildings moved from the Archbishops' Council to the Church Commissioners at the beginning of November. CCB, Bishoprics & Cathedrals, and Pastoral & Closed Churches will form a new Buildings unit.

37. *Revd Fiona Gibson (Hereford)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: What is the rationale behind the grounds on which those decisions are made?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich (Rt Revd Martin Seeley)* replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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?

*Revd Fiona Gibson:* I welcome the Bishop's response that the mission of God, the flourishing of the local church and equipping those who need to speak into the national setting are the drivers of the work of the NCIs. Given that is the case, how will those engaged in making decisions within Transforming Effectiveness ensure there is theological and missiological literacy and specialism within each team and that that is given as much weight as efficiency and cost saving?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* That is a really helpful question because there is no attempt in this process to, in some sense theologically or missiologically, eviscerate the extraordinary teams that work here in the NCIs, and so there is strong engagement with ensuring that those gifts and qualities are there in the staff and the personnel that will be engaged in all of those units. I am grateful to you for the question because it is a really important point that we need to ensure is present.

38. *Revd Canon James Blandford-Baker (Ely)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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 (Rt Revd Martin Seeley) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:* 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 1 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 2 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.

*Revd Canon James Blandford-Baker:* Thank you for your answer, Bishop. What research about work effectiveness informed the move from specialist to generalist roles, and will the emphasis on evangelism, which is key to the life of the Church, be specifically called out and named in the new structures? Will there be an occupational requirement to be a Christian in all those roles?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* Working backwards, I do not think I can answer the third one. In terms of the rationale and working through this, our starting point was the huge number of conversations that we had in the scoping exercise where we reached out to parish clergy, to various networks, to dioceses, to a whole range of folk, and out of that one of the things that became quite clear, not in every area but in some areas, was that what people recognised was that the expertise lay in the parishes or the dioceses or the Church organisation, and what we did not need was, as it were, another source of expertise in a national office. What we needed was some way of enabling the learning from the expertise where it was on the ground. That whole focus of serving, enabling, facilitating has shaped the work in some of the areas, not all of the areas at all, but some of the areas.

On the evangelism point, and I have been rightly questioned on the same point by Chris Russell, for example. First of all, Dave Male who was the Director of Evangelism and is now the Co-director of the Vision and Strategy Unit - I think there is an ongoing question about what we call the Vision and Strategy Unit, but in terms of the actual names we will need to make sure that the things that each team is really about is there on the tin, so we will be looking at how those names are reflected.

*Ven. Mark Ireland (Blackburn):* Could I ask the Bishop why he felt unable to give an assurance that those responsible for the vision and strategy of the Church of England



that those posts should not have a genuine occupational requirement to be a practising Christian given that it is so central to our vision and direction as a church?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* I know what my own view is, but it is an HR question, and I would want to engage with the HR on that. When I look at the people who are in those roles, there is absolutely no question about their Christian faithfulness and dedication, but I am not prepared to answer a question where I feel ill-equipped to give an accurate answer.

39. *Mr Stephen Hogg (Leeds)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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 (Rt Revd Martin Seeley)* replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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 1 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 2 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.

40. *Revd Canon Andrew Dotchin (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Clergy who are not authorized 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 (Rt Revd Martin Seeley)* replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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 authorized to exercise ministry to stand for election to General Synod would require an Amending Canon to amend Canon H 2.

*Revd Canon Andrew Dotchin:* Thank you for your answer, Bishop, and it is good to hope that we move to a place where every member of the Church of England has a voice in the Church of England. Following up on that, whose responsibility would it be to arrange for the amendment to the Canon to correct this injustice?

*Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* If it was considered that we needed to look at an amendment here, then I would engage with Alex McGregor and the Legislative Reform Committee. That would be the process we would go to, so I am very happy to refer it to Alex.

*The Chair:* Questions 61 to 62 to be answered by the same Bishop on behalf of the House of Bishops.

## **HOUSE OF BISHOPS**

61. *Revd Canon Timothy Goode (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 (Rt Revd Martin Seeley)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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.

*Revd Canon Timothy Goode:* Thank you ever so much for your written answer. Could the legal advice you mentioned please be shared with all dioceses and with the CMDDP together with guidance to take professional counsel, for example, from specialist medical, occupational and health practitioners so as to ensure that diocesan directors, ordinands

and sponsoring bishops both adhere to the provisions of the Equality Act and do not unintentionally practise discrimination.

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* My short answer, Tim, is yes. My slightly longer answer is to recognise that we are in territory that we have not been honestly engaging with in a straightforward way. I think what we need to do, and I am going to ask you to help me, is to engage in some work to help shape what we are talking about here, and to establish what the criteria and parameters might be to assist DDOs and others in dioceses.

*Mr Sam Margrave (Coventry):* In respect of the response, and in order to understand our legal position in relation to the Equality Act 2010, will work be undertaken to establish the legal obligations under the Equality Act of the Church of England, in particular in response to this, and will that be published?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* Sam, I took that as being part of what Tim had asked for, so I will ensure that we do that as best we can.

62. *Revd Christopher Blunt (Chester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 C27 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 (Rt Revd Martin Seeley)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: The requested information is not available within the NCI’s.

*Revd Christopher Blunt:* My question could have been about representation; actually it was about cultural awareness with clerical vestments as a symbol. I spent eight years in cross-cultural mission and I am very concerned about our approach. My supplementary question is this: are there any legal barriers to Petertide ordination services being carried out, for example, without the use of clerical vestments, in a public open space, and with contemporary worship music? Could the Church collect some data on this in future?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* I know there is absolutely no issue about contemporary worship music because we use it even in Southwark. I am looking over in the direction of the Chair of the Liturgical Commission. He does not know. We do not think so. We will come back to you. Robert, can you help me on that?

*The Chair:* Thank you. We now come to questions 136 to 147. You are still answering but as Chair of the Ministry Council.

## MINISTRY COUNCIL

136. *Revd Zoe Heming (Lichfield)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: 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 (Rt Revd Martin Seeley)* replied as Chair of the Ministry Council: 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 wellbeing 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.

*Revd Zoe Heming:* Given that the psychological assessment reports that will be carried out pre BAP for selection of candidates will be routinely held by DDOs and sent to DDOs ahead of the candidates, and which contain quite a lot sensitive information, what assurances can be provided that these acknowledge the vulnerabilities and imbalances of power that we have heard quite a lot about already this afternoon?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* I think it is a really important question and really helpful to be pressed on this. One of the things we have got to make sure as we embark on spreading out the whole programme of assessment of psychological wellbeing is that we have the best and consistent practice across dioceses, and that best and consistent practice enables the candidate to feel as safe as possible in that process, and, that, I think, probably means looking at in what way and form the candidate receives the Report and to have conversations - and I know these conversations are going on between

the Vocation Group and the Disability Taskforce - to ensure that there are no missteps here and that we do ensure that best practice is followed across all dioceses. I hope that is a reassurance, but we need to be actively engaged in getting this right.

137. *Revd Zoe Heming (Lichfield)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: 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 (Rt Revd Martin Seeley)* replied as Chair of the Ministry Council: 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.

*Revd Zoe Heming:* Given that, as you rightly point out, that these are going to be normative and ideally transparent and consistent across dioceses, what mechanisms are going to be able to put in place for such sensitive and vulnerable information which is not held in other sectors?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* I think this falls into the same category as references, in the sense that this is material that is not held in a person's file beyond ordination. It is simply there to assist the bishop in making the decision to ordain and at the point of ordination a person's file is stripped out quite dramatically. I need to go back and confirm that. It certainly will not continue to exist in a person's blue file, and it may come out sooner, but it has a very limited purpose, a very important purpose but a limited purpose.

*The Chair:* Thank you. I think we have a supplementary on Zoom from Clive Billenness.

*Mr Clive Billenness (Europe):* May I just ask the Bishop if he will ensure that because the data that has been gathered is patient-specific data, advice is obtained from a Caldicott guardian (these are the guardians of patient health data) to ensure appropriate safeguards are put in place?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* Yes, thank you. That is a "yes, I will ensure".

138. *Revd Toby Wright (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: 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 (Rt Revd Martin Seeley) replied as Chair of the Ministry Council:* 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/clergyresources/national-clergy-hr/family-friendly-policies> .

139. *Dr Felicity Cooke (Ely)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: 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 (Rt Revd Martin Seeley) replied as Chair of the Ministry Council:* 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.

140. *Mrs Sarah Finch (London)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: 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 Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich (Rt Revd Martin Seeley) replied as Chair of the Ministry Council:* 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.

141. *Revd Jeremy Moodey (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: 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 (Rt Revd Martin Seeley)* replied as Chair of the Ministry Council: 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.

*Revd Jeremy Moodey:* I declare an interest as a past chief executive of the Clergy Support Trust, which is mentioned in the Bishop's reply. May I also point out that the first Living Ministry Report on clergy wellbeing was published in July 2017, almost five years ago, and that the causes of poor clergy mental health and isolation are quite well known, as even the briefest of glances at the Sheldon Hub will confirm. Does the Bishop therefore agree that the time for further research is now coming to an end, and it is time to start addressing these issues urgently, including, amongst others, a complete overhaul of clergy discipline, a robust review of clergy remuneration and retirement provision, measures to deal with bullying and dysfunctional curacies and a recognition that clergy workloads are currently (in many cases) completely unsustainable.

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* I would have to give a detailed response to each of those elements. I certainly agree with you that we know plenty about the causes that impede clergy wellbeing. There are many of us here in this room who can cite the experience of those causes ourselves. I am aware that dioceses, and others, are engaged actively in trying to mitigate those causes. In the list you just gave there are some major issues. Actually, the very first question I had about multi-parish benefices and how many parishes there were, what I was wanting to say, and I will say here, is I think we are in serious danger of creating impossible jobs and many jobs have become impossible where the ministry of the cure of souls becomes the ministry of managing a team.

While that is important, we need to ensure that the jobs are manageable and life giving. God calls us to a vocation where we share and receive life. I am really concerned about the shape of many incumbency jobs and other jobs. I will take that list away. Some of those I think we can address more readily than others, but I will take that list away and we will continue to engage actively with this.

*Revd Leslie Siu (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich):* At risk of hitting on another topic in advance and too early, given that Church Commissioners' contributions to Church funding between 2005 and 2020 increased by an average of 6.7%, which is three times the rate of inflation (question 110) why has clergy remuneration not reflected that money from the centre going to dioceses and dioceses should be spending that on ministry on the ground?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* Leslie, I am going to leave that for the debate tomorrow on clergy remuneration.

142. *Ms Fiona MacMillan (London)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: 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 (Rt Revd Martin Seeley) replied as Chair of the Ministry Council:* 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:* I am delighted to hear there is work under way. Synod members may not be aware of the Disability Task Group. Good work in dark corners deserves to be brought into light. Could the Disability Task Group's membership, remit, governance, strategy and budget be shared with Synod?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* Yes, certainly. I cannot do it right now, but I will do it. I am hoping that someone is noting down all those things that I have said I will do.

*Mr Sam Margrave (Coventry):* Just to add to that, and in relation to budgets and spending nationally, I understand the staff member responsible nationally for disability issues and supporting disabled people and furthering work for disabled people has left post and has



not been replaced. Will that post be replaced with a full-time or part-time member of staff to oversee the Church's mission as being there and supporting disabled people?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* This gets into the territory of what we have been doing with Transforming Effectiveness. Tim Goode has been working closely with Malcolm Brown to ensure that not necessarily with a post, or with a different sort of post, but with a clear plan of ensuring that the work that that post is intended to do is fulfilled. What we are looking at in the way in which we work is making sure that the objectives are achieved and working out the best possible way to achieve those objectives. I am not trying to be evasive in answering this, but that is to give you an idea of the kind of steer that we are on. I know Tim and others have been actively engaged in making sure the objectives are achieved.

143. *Ms Fiona MacMillan (London)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: 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 (Rt Revd Martin Seeley)* replied as Chair of the Ministry Council: 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.

*Ms Fiona MacMillan:* I am delighted to hear that based on this response there seems to have been a 500% increase in disabled clergy over the past 15 years to almost 20%, yet unlike age, gender or ethnicity statistics are not routinely collected and most disability work in the Church of England is done in unfunded roles without a national strategy, or indeed, a national adviser. What national resources will now be allocated better to understand these growing numbers and needs?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* Thank you. There are two areas working together. The new Faith in Public Life, which is taken in the Mission and Public Affairs department and which is what Tim has been engaged with in relation to Malcolm Brown, and ministry in engaging with the task group are the two areas where this work is going on, but it is going on at a pace. Hold me to account and next Synod ask how far we have got.

144. *Revd Dr Ian Paul (Southwell & Nottingham)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: Is understanding of, and conformance to, the teaching of the Church as expressed in 'Issues 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 (Rt Revd Martin Seeley) replied as Chair of the Ministry Council:* 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*?'

*Revd Dr Ian Paul:* Bishop Martin, thank you very much for your clear and helpful answer. In the light of very widespread anecdotal evidence that this is not implemented consistently and also in the light of some very diverse comments coming from diocesan bishops, what further steps are being taken to ensure that this policy is being implemented consistently so that we avoid having a kind of diocesan postcode lottery on policy here?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* It is interesting, is it not, because I suspect there is a variety of practice. Because we have been quoting from *Issues in Human Sexuality*, I was helped to go back into that document to see what it was that we were being urged to do. In answer to an earlier question, when the House of Bishops adopted the document in 1991 that was the mechanism by which it became part of the process of inquiry. In that text the authors say: "We do not think it is right to interrogate individuals on their sexual lives unless there are strong reasons for doing so. Ordinarily it should be left to candidates' own consciences to act responsibly in this matter."

What has happened is we have moved in various directions and the question will be and this is a question - and I am not kicking the can down the road - that really needs to come with this raft of questions that we look at when we have moved through the LLF process of what do we do now in the light of this. I tried about three years ago pre pandemic and asked Christine Hardman, who was Chair of the Pastoral and Advisory Group, if they could look at this issue now, and the answer was very clearly and appropriately that we needed to wait until the LFF process was gone through. Of course, that process has taken longer than was expected, but that is the point at which we need to try to ensure whatever it is we are engaging is consistently done.

*Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark):* Bishop Martin, you wear so many hats and you are up there such a long time. Could you confirm that the questions that the questioner asks and that you have responded to are questions that are asked at any other point in a candidate's journey, or simply at the moment of preparing for ordination? Are there points at licensing, ordination, consecration where those questions are asked again?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* As far as I know, they are only asked at the pre-ordination point in the discernment phase. I am looking for anybody to correct me, but I cannot imagine they are asked at any other point. I have certainly never been asked.

*The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker):* Proposed bishops. If you are ordained as a bishop you are also asked then.

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* Nobody asked me. Apparently we ask - not we, they - they ask the nominating bishop in the nominating statement.

145. *Revd Fiona Jack (London)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: 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 (Rt Revd Martin Seeley) replied as Chair of the Ministry Council:* 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.

146. *Revd Vincent Whitworth (Manchester)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: 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 (Rt Revd Martin Seeley) replied as Chair of the Ministry Council:* 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.

147. *Revd Jeremy Moodey (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: 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 (Rt Revd Martin Seeley) replied as Chair of the Ministry Council:* 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.

*Revd Jeremy Moodey:* Thank you, Bishop Martin, for the assurance that stipendiary curates finishing their curacies this year are apparently guaranteed a post of further responsibility, although I note that your remarks on this point earlier this evening were rather less definitive. Do you agree that one of the key problems is that many stipendiary curates are not, in practice, given family and other commitments truly nationally deployable, which limits their options? Do you also agree that the task of finding a post-curacy post is made even harder by 42 dioceses each having their own policies for interviewing for posts for further responsibility, including whether a curate has to be fully signed off or not? Would a national policy on this not make the process much easier for curates to navigate?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* I am surprised to hear about not being signed off, because I think you need to be signed off to be moved to another post, or at least there needs to be a very clear plan of how you become signed off.

*Revd Jeremy Moodey:* The point at which you are interviewed, whether you are going to be interviewed without being signed off. I have heard of different policies in different dioceses.

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* Can I just note what you have said and take that away to see what we do about exploring consistency? But I recognise it is difficult.

*The Chair:* Thank you, Bishop.

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* Am I done?

*The Chair:* You are done. We now return to the original question order. We are at questions 9 to 11, to be answered by the Archbishop of Canterbury as the Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission.

## **CROWN NOMINATIONS COMMISSION**

9. *Mr Sam Margrave (Coventry)* asked the Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission: 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 (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby) replied as Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission:* 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 practising/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.

*Mr Sam Margrave:* While the answer has provided a narrative and an opinion, I asked for the documents, which the answer says were published and publicly available. Can these now be made available, and the names of the independent panel to be published for transparency? Will the names and documents now be made available therefore to Synod?

*The Archbishop of Canterbury:* Thank you very much, Sam. To the extent that it is proper to do so given obligations under GDPR and personal pastoral confidentiality, yes, of course. They will be published online.

*The Chair:* Could they be put on the notice board, please? I am sure someone will sort that out for you, Archbishop.

*The Archbishop of Canterbury:* I have no idea how, but yes.

*Mrs Rebecca Chapman (Southwark):* Given that Synod Questions are the appropriate place for scrutiny, Archbishop, could you please confirm that prior to appointing Mr Knott to this role you were aware of the contents of the lawyer's report sent to your office in April 2017 which explicitly lays out seven identified breaches of employment law perpetrated by Mr Stephen Knott when dealing with my return to work at Lambeth Palace

following maternity leave, and whether or not you shared that information with the panel who approved Mr Knott for this role?

*The Chair:* I am sorry, that contains imputation so should not be asked, and you need not reply, Archbishop. We move to question 10.

10. *Revd Dr Tom Woolford (Blackburn)* asked the Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission: 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 (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby)* replied as Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission: 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.

*Revd Dr Tom Woolford:* Thank you for your answer, your Grace. Given the importance of this appointment, and given what you said in Synod this afternoon about changing the culture in which we make appointments, and in light of both the internal advertisement and the short timeframe, what particular consideration was given to ensure that GMH candidates applied and that the way the post was filled complied with equal opportunities legislation?

*The Archbishop of Canterbury:* Thank you very much indeed, Tom. Two things on that. First that the NCIs have had a programme, and continue to have a programme, which is aimed at improving diversity at all levels the workforce. Around 15% of the NCI workforce is in fact from global majority heritage people and they were of course fully able to apply. During a time when significant numbers of redundancies are being made, there is always a tension between seeking to minimise the number of people who may lose a job, which would incline you towards internal advertising, and seeking to get the greatest possible diversity. Your question is a very good one and it will be further considered by chief officers.

*Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford):* Point of order. Madam Chair, I just want to remind you of a response to a question in July last year which I asked about imputation and why imputation was ruled out of order.

*The Chair:* I am sorry, this is not a point of order.

*Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford):* It is a point of order because what the Synod notes is a question that draws attention to the shortcomings of the Church of England is not a consideration, so the previous question was not out of order.

*The Chair:* I have consulted with the legal adviser and he informs me that it was a question that contained imputation. I am sure he will be able to answer you more fully if you speak to him behind the stage. We move to question 11.

11. *Mr Richard Denno (Liverpool)* asked the Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission: 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 (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby)* replied as Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission: 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.

*Mr Richard Denno:* Thank you, Archbishop Justin, for your answer to my question which referred to the briefing document for a Vacancy in See Committee, and the fact that there is a question to the Vacancy in See Committee concerning the next Bishop being somebody who is willing to ordain women, or not, but the briefing document contains no reference to the Five Guiding Principles explicitly.

I am very pleased that you have already instructed your Appointments Secretary to review this document on this matter, but what plans does the Crown Nominations Commission have to make sure that the question is fully understood by all members of the Vacancy in See Committee given that not all will have read the Five Guiding Principles or understand how Synod arrived at those principles? Has the Crown Nominations Commission considered ways of training and education that could bring people up to the level where they can make an informed view?

*The Archbishop of Canterbury:* Thank you very much, Richard. First of all, let us be clear, the Crown Nominations Commission changes with each diocese. There is not a single Crown Nominations Commission. There are central members where we have regular meetings a couple of times a year, and then there is a separate Crown Nominations Commission for each appointment. The Crown Nominations Commission does not exist as a single continuing entity and therefore has not made these decisions.

However, both the Archbishop of York and I as the Chairs from the Province of York and the Province of Canterbury are committed to ensuring that, to the greatest degree possible, members of the Crown Nominations Commission for any appointment are fully briefed on the Five Guiding Principles and understand them, and during discussions with potential nominees for a particular post there are always questions involving the Five Guiding Principles.

*The Chair.* Thank you, Archbishop. We now move to question 12 which is to be answered by the Rt Revd Morag Ellis QC, Chair of the Legal Advisory Commission. The questioner is on Zoom, and I am just checking whether he has a supplementary.

## **LEGAL ADVISORY COMMISSION**

12. *Mr Stephen Hofmeyr (Guildford)* asked the Chair of the Legal Advisory Commission: 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 reconstituted, 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?

*Rt Worshipful Morag Ellis QC (Dean of the Arches & Auditor)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the Legal Advisory Commission: 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.

*Mr Stephen Hofmeyr.* I am most grateful to the Dean of the Arches and Head of the Legal Office for the detailed answer to my question. Before asking my supplementary question, may I congratulate the Head of the Legal Office on his recent appointment as a Recorder.



My supplementary question is this: mindful, first, of the importance of the LAC to General Synod, second, the process which has been and still is being followed in the appointment of the LAC and, third, the fact that permanent members of the judiciary are being advised against assuming roles involving the giving of legal advice, might consideration be given to members of General Synod being invited to nominate individuals for appointment to the LAC by the Appointments Committee before appointments are made?

*The Chair.* Before you respond, may I just apologise and say I got Morag Ellis' details wrong. She is replying on behalf of the Chair of the Legal Advisory Commission; she is not the Chair herself.

*Rt Worshipful Morag Ellis QC:* Thank you very much, Chair. Thank you very much, Stephen, for your question and for the extremely courteous and helpful way in which you have given us notice of your supplementary question, embodying the principles that were espoused this morning about the way to do these things. I am very grateful indeed.

May I just clarify one thing before I answer the question itself? The new Legal Advisory Commission has not yet been fully appointed, and so there is not yet a new Chair of that Commission. I am an *ex officio* member of the Commission, and I think that is why I have been asked to answer your question, Stephen.

The answer to your question, and it follows on from what I have just said, that the process of appointment is still under way and especially because of what you have alluded to about the difficulties in relation to recruiting full-time secular judges, that is judges who sit over the secular courts, given all those things, the Appointments Committee would, I am sure, welcome suggestions as to the membership of the Commission from members of the General Synod.

In putting forward any such suggestions, I would like to ask General Synod to bear in mind the factors which are set out in the written answer to your question which explains the skills and qualities required of members. I will not go into the details of that now. The material is there before the Synod and I would ask people to bear that in mind when putting anybody forward. It is very good to see you on screen.

*Mrs Caroline Herbert (Norwich):* Apologies for being slightly too hasty to come in on a supplementary here. Given that the Legal Advisory Commission is currently being reconstituted, at the moment by whom will the General Synod and senior officers of the Church of England be given the authoritative and entirely independent legal opinions on questions affecting the Church of England which the Advisory Commission would be doing if it were in existence?

*Rt Worshipful Morag Ellis QC:* I will do my best to answer that question, and if I am getting beyond my remit I am sure I will be told from my left. The Legal Office of the Church of England has outstanding officers who work within it. We see them coming to the stage to assist. There are other ones, as it were, off stage. Wearing my various different hats,

I have quite a lot to do with them and I am always staggered by the breadth of knowledge and by the skill and devotion with which they give advice. Members of Synod who will not know those details should be very reassured to know that we are in such very skilled hands.

Because I sit in a judicial capacity, I need to be quite careful and limited, as do the other judicial members of the Church of England, in what we say about things, especially publicly, but several of us sit in *ex officio* roles in various bodies and we contribute as best we can from our knowledge. There is quite a range of highly skilled lawyers giving, as it were day-to-day advice and support. The Legal Advisory Commission looks at particular questions which might arise from time to time and it steers clear of controversial questions which either are before the courts now, or are likely to come before the courts imminently, and so, if you like, it is practical but slightly more academic in its approach. The Church is in very safe hands in the meantime, but I am sure that the process of appointment to the LAC will fairly soon be completed. Thank you very much for your question.

*The Chair:* We have a few more minutes left so we have got time for a few more concise supplementaries and concise answers. We turn to questions 13 to 18 to be answered by Canon John Spence on behalf of the Archbishops' Council.

## **ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL**

13. *Revd Canon Andy Salmon (Manchester)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: How much of the Strategic Development Fund grants in the last five 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 (ex officio) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:* 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.

14. *Revd Robert Lawrance (Newcastle)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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 (ex officio) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:* 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 1 proposals have not been invited forward to Stage 2. 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 2 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.

*Revd Robert Lawrance:* Will the Archbishops' Council consider adding qualitative criteria for successful bids from the Strategic Development Fund that promotes Anglican polity - pastoral, spiritual, contextual - reinvigorating the existing church communities in addition to the current quantitative criteria - strategic impact and programme delivery confidence - which appear to favour church planting over other models of church growing?

*Canon Dr John Spence:* Thank you, Robert, and of course it is absolutely in everybody's interests that we re-energise existing churches. We can only plant so many, and there is no point in doing lots of planting if the existing entities are not doing well. I think we do take them into account. I am very happy to consider whether that needs to be more explicit as we go forward in light of the independent review, to make sure. Please be assured that there is no attempt to favour planting over other forms of growth of the Church.

15. *Ven. Stewart Fyfe (Carlisle)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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 (ex officio) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:* 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.

*Ven. Mark Ireland (Blackburn):* Referring, John, to the last paragraph of your answer which mentioned that discussions on policy for the 2023-25 triennium continue, could I draw you out on where those discussions are taking place? Are those discussions being

had and decisions made by the Triennium Funding Working Group and, if so, who appointed the Triennium Funding Working Group, and who does it report to?

*Canon Dr John Spence:* I am delighted to clarify this. It is a rather ingenious device which I think we might give William Nye the credit for, in that what happens is we have five members each drawn from the House of Bishops, the Church Commissioners and from the Archbishops' Council, each of those bodies nominating people who serve on it. It is actually 11 people because some people have two hats. On that basis, we are a close-knit group who are able to work very carefully together. We have absolutely no authority, so what we are doing is working out, on receipt of all the different pieces of information coming before us, where we believe the greatest opportunities and priorities to be, and, having done that piece of work, we will then make recommendations to the appropriate governing bodies who with their trustee responsibilities will determine how the funding allocations are made. No authority whatsoever.

*Ven. Stewart Fyfe:* I thank Canon Spence for his answer to my question. Given the fear that many rural parishes seem to be expressing about being left behind, is there any intention of ensuring the explicit inclusion of rural communities in future funding strategies in the same way that we specifically name, for example, deprivation parishes for funding inclusion?

*Canon Dr John Spence:* Thank you, Stewart. I would not want to anticipate the outcome of the independent review, or of the policy which we are asked to operate to. The Strategic Investment Board does not invent its policy. We have the guidelines we have been given. The current guidelines around urban were devised when it was recognised that there was a deep under-representation in urban areas which appeared to have some correlation to the amount of church going and the size of worshipping communities. It was never intended that there should be a long-term exclusion of rural.

If we are going to be focused on the Vision and Strategy going forward, it will be critical that we follow the Vision and Strategy in all parts of the Church of England. It would be my personal view that I would be recommending to my colleagues that, as we go forward, we really need to focus on vision, strategy, on that piece about younger and poorer; all of those pieces should guide and, as you know and I know, there is significant rural poverty.

16. *Revd Dr Ian Paul (Southwell & Nottingham)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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 (ex officio) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:* 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.

*Canon Dr John Mason (Chester):* Given that more than 50% of parish reserves are held in cash, and as we are entering a period of high inflation, has any thought been given to how encouragement might be given to parishes to potentially prevent the value of their reserves being eroded by increasing the proportion that is held in investments, perhaps by offering some central pooling arrangement or, arguably even better, by encouraging them to spend the cash on funding local mission and evangelism?

*Canon Dr John Spence:* I think you take us beyond our remit. I would always urge parishes to make best use of their money. I would always urge them to use devices like the CCLA where they do not need the money in the very short term. In my experience, having been a DDF chair and parish treasurer, I was often very cautious and liked to keep stuff in cash or near cash. One can publicise the opportunities, and one can encourage; one cannot compel. The question of how they then use the money in terms of today or saving for tomorrow is entirely for them, and I would not want to opine. There are many parishes which are saving up for projects or whatever.

*The Chair:* Thank you. That brings us to the end of this item, but we will resume with question 17 in the Question Time tomorrow.

I have a notice. Any members who are planning to attend the meeting this evening about the review of the Mission and Pastoral Measure, please note the location of the meeting has been changed, and it will now be held on the fifth floor of Church House. Staff will be by the lifts on the fifth floor to guide you to the meeting room. Thank you for your questions and answers. Please stay here for closing worship which will be led by the Community of St Anselm.

*The Community of St Anselm* led the Synod in an act of worship.

## **Full Synod: Second Day Wednesday 9 February 2022**

### **HOLY COMMUNION**

*The Archbishop of Canterbury* presided at a celebration of Holy Communion.

THE CHAIR *Canon Professor Joyce Hill (Leeds)* took the Chair at 10.20 am.

*The Chair:* Good morning, Synod. We start our regular Agenda items this morning with a session on safeguarding, but before we launch on that I need to invite up the Chair of the Business Committee because there is a need to propose a variation in the order of

business. We will start by dealing with that and then we will move on to the Safeguarding item, which is more complicated than was originally envisaged. I will explain as we go along how we are going to steer our way through the complication.

## **VARIATION IN THE ORDER OF BUSINESS**

*Canon Robert Hammond (Chelmsford):* Chair, I wish to propose a variation in the order of business for this morning. We have one following motion on the Safeguarding presentation and a following motion on *Setting God's People Free*, and a number of amendments to the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules, so we need to allow more time this morning for the important Safeguarding item. I therefore propose we introduce the rubric "no later than 12 pm" to start Item 500, Legislative Business, and ask that if the business is not completed before we break for lunch, it be continued as the first item of business this afternoon.

*The Chair:* Thank you. I now put this proposal to the vote.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

## **ITEM 9 SAFEGUARDING (GS 2244)**

*The Chair:* Thank you very much. That allows us to move on to Items 9 and 22 on Safeguarding. For this you will need GS 2244 and Order Paper II. When we get to the following motion, Order Paper IV has it on as well, if you have already picked that up. To start with we are going to have an updating on the work on safeguarding. I am going to invite the Bishop of Huddersfield to give us a presentation along with Zena Marshall, the interim Director of Safeguarding, and they will speak for up to 10 minutes between them on the work being undertaken by the National Safeguarding Team. We customarily have an update and that is what this presentation will be. It is not a detailed analysis of strategy or anything of that kind. It is an update, it is a working presentation. That will immediately be followed by a presentation of similarly up to 10 minutes by Maggie Atkinson, who is the Chair of the Independent Safeguarding Board.

After those two presentations, there will be an opportunity for members of Synod to ask questions. I stress the word "questions", so targeted and with a rising inflexion in the voice, please, so that we know it is a question. When we have had some time on that, bearing in mind the timed business at 12, we will switch over to the following motion, but I will not describe now how we go about doing that because we do not want to confuse ourselves at this stage. Let's just focus on the two consecutive presentations and the questions. That is enough on our plates for the moment.

I invite the Bishop of Huddersfield to introduce the presentation and then I think he will be handing over to Zena Marshall. Between them they have up to 10 minutes.

*The Bishop of Huddersfield (Rt Revd Dr Jonathan Gibbs):* Thank you very much indeed. Good morning, Synod. As you have heard, this presentation is in two parts. First, Zena Marshall and I plan to give you a whistle-stop strategic overview of the structure and current main workstreams of the NST, especially, but not exclusively, for the benefit of new members of Synod. This is designed to complement the Report you have received (GS 2244) which gives our regular update to Synod on the current work of the NST. Secondly, Maggie Atkinson, the newly appointed Chair of the Independent Safeguarding Board, will introduce herself and the work of the Board and, as you have heard, there will then be a Q&A session.

A little bit of background. The NST was set up in 2015, recognising that the Church of England needed a team at the centre to lead on a number of key priorities. There had been a National Officer for Safeguarding since 2006 but the team was created in 2015. Those priorities were to develop and promote a business plan, to implement a report promoting a safer church, to provide expert advice on safeguarding, and to support dioceses and cathedrals, and to implement the recommendations that would arise from IICSA.

A little bit about the NST structure. The National Director is supported by four Deputy Directors, as shown on the slide, for casework and strategy, for development of learning and policy, for partnerships and stakeholder engagement, and for communication. They are in turn supported by a team of dedicated colleagues - full time, part time, permanent and temporary project-related - with the NST consisting currently of 26 full-time equivalent posts.

Governance structure. This could be called a hybrid model, not necessarily of the plug-in variety, which mirrors the structures of the Church of England. The NST is part of the National Church Institutions and, as such, reports to the Archbishops' Council which funds the NST's work, sets its objectives and KPIs, and monitors progress regularly. At the same time safeguarding policy and guidance are ultimately set by the House of Bishops.

The National Safeguarding Steering Group was set up in 2016 to allow for more detailed oversight of the work of the NST delegated by both the Archbishops' Council and the House of Bishops, with members on it representing both bodies. As you have seen, the NST and the NSSG also report regularly to Synod through written reports, questions, presentations and debates at each group of sessions.

This structure also includes two other bodies, the National Safeguarding Panel, which acts as a scrutiny committee, examining aspects of the Church's safeguarding work and making recommendations to the NSSG; and a new body, the Independent Safeguarding Board, about which Maggie Atkinson will say more shortly.

*Ms Zena Marshall:* The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) published its overarching investigation report into the Anglican Church of England and Wales in October of 2020. The Report makes six recommendations specifically relating to the

Church of England, which were unanimously accepted by this Synod in November 2020. Since that time, there has been significant progress to deliver these recommendations as part of our ongoing commitment to improving safeguarding across the Church.

We are indebted to those people with lived experience of abuse who have been working with us in a number of different ways, including project working groups, interim support panels, policy development, Past Cases Review 2 and recruitment, to name but a few. We recognise that we cannot stand still and we continue to improve our response to victims and survivors by the development of a survivor engagement framework. To shape this work, we will be conducting a national anonymous survey of victims and survivors later this year. I would like to take this opportunity to say a heartfelt thank you to all of those who do so generously work with us at a national, diocesan and parish level on these really important issues.

*The Bishop of Huddersfield (Rt Revd Dr Jonathan Gibbs):* IICSA has been a key driver of change over the last few years. Recommendations 1 and 8 of IICSA concern the proposed change from diocesan safeguarding advisers to diocesan safeguarding officers, emphasising greater independence of decision-making, together with the introduction of professional supervision and quality assurance work at diocesan level, through the NST. One issue to be resolved is whether this is best done at a regional or on a national basis. A pilot scheme is running over the next two years and there will then be a national rollout of the agreed model between 2024 and 2025.

*Ms Zena Marshall:* The Safeguarding Learning and Development Framework was published in July last year and sets out the safeguarding learning needs to contribute effectively to the overall organisational change that is required. Some of the learning pathways are completely new. Others have had their materials radically revised in keeping with the shift in vision. Core safeguarding learning pathways have been developed as a modular programme which builds learning accord to role, and have been accredited by the continuing professional development service. This approach enables learning to become conscious and proactive rather than passive and reactive, and has a real impact on practice.

We also continue with our programme of refreshing safeguarding guidance documents, with four new guidance documents being approved in 2021. All new guidance now has a six month lead-in time to enable the NST to deliver a range of support to prepare dioceses for implementation.

The Safe Spaces service is an ecumenical project with the Catholic Church in England and Wales. It is a free and independent support service providing a confidential, personal and safe space for victims of church abuse, which is currently being delivered by Victim Support. We are now 18 months into this pilot, which has been independently evaluated after one year, and will be evaluated again towards the end of the pilot. We are currently in the process of planning for the future of the service post the pilot: listening, responding



to the evaluation to establish a longer-term service meeting the needs of survivors that use the service.

The National Casework Management System is part of our commitment to improve our safeguarding arrangements across the Church. The computer software MyConcern is in the process of being tested. The first phase of the implementation of the system will take place in 10 dioceses and cathedrals and will start later in the spring.

*The Bishop of Huddersfield (Rt Revd Dr Jonathan Gibbs):* Abuse ruins people's lives and causes lasting harm on so many levels. I will say more about redress in a moment, but at times we need to be able to respond quickly to urgent need. The Interim Support Scheme arose out of a crisis situation in 2020 and was developed very quickly with the support of the Archbishops' Council. It has since been reviewed and revised.

The setting up of a redress scheme is a commitment made by this Synod in 2020, two years ago. Redress is about not only financial compensation but also therapeutic and pastoral support, and also apology. The project team has established a victim and survivor working group and needs to be progressed at a pace and in ways that they as survivors are content with.

*Ms Zena Marshall:* The Past Cases Review 2 was a commitment by the Church to have an independent reviewer examine files held in parishes, cathedrals and dioceses and other church bodies, to ensure all allegations of abuse have been handled appropriately, and where they have not, to take action to rectify this, and identify and manage any ongoing risk.

I am pleased to say the majority of dioceses have now completed these reviews and we are now in the process of analysing the findings. We are holding workshops with key stakeholders to identify emerging themes and recommendations that will shape the final report and practice going forward, which will be published at the end of May this year.

Learning lessons reviews are one mechanism through which the Church as an organisation can learn and improve. Reviews which focus on identifying learning can help us to change and become an environment in which both the systems and practice can be safely challenged and improved. Part of the work ongoing from the national team is to contribute to and collate and analyse and respond to the diocesan and national reviews to ensure the recommendations are shared and shape future policy and practice. We are also currently in the process of developing learning lesson review guidance which will be implemented later this year. The NST currently has four ongoing independent learning lesson reviews. The details of all are on our website and we update them regularly.

*The Bishop of Huddersfield (Rt Revd Dr Jonathan Gibbs):* As I said at the start, this is and has been a whistle-stop tour of the structure and some of the main workstreams of

the NST. I hope it has been helpful for Synod, and especially for new members. We look forward to responding to your questions later on.

Now over to Maggie Atkinson, the Chair of the Independent Safeguarding Board.

*Professor Maggie Atkinson:* Synod, good morning. No death by PowerPoint. It is a rule. You have had the paper to which I am going to speak. There is no other script. I am only here to report on where we have been so far in the very early stages of phase 1 of the work of the Independent Safeguarding Board.

You know that there are three members of that board. We now have a third member who has been in place all of three weeks, and his name is Steve Reeves. There is myself, and I have been a teacher, local government officer, Children's Commissioner for England and now work in safeguarding in wider society; and Jasvinder Sanghera, who founded Karma Nirvana, and is our survivor advocate and already very deeply involved in talking to survivors and victims and the organisations which represent many of them. We have one staff member. Her name is Niamh and she is brilliant, but there is only one of her, and we are all part time apart from her. Please forgive us if you feel that we are not going as quickly as you would have liked us to have done at this point.

We want and will commit to ensuring that the voices, views, wishes and feelings of victims and survivors, and indeed those who have been accused, in terms of safeguarding failures within the C of E are constituent members of the work we do and are very strongly helping to drive where we go, particularly those who have not yet had their voices listened to or heard.

We meet six times a year, twice for strategic planning and overview meetings and four times for general business. You will know from paragraph 6 of our Report that we do not have a re-investigative reviewing, instigating, insisting, sanctioning or directing role. This is phase 1. If, when we advise on phase 2, the need for such very strong direction in the hands of an independent safeguarding body ends up being our advice back to the Church and to you as a Synod (who passed the policy paper that set us up in the first place) then we will, without fear or favour, say that. I would imagine the Gordian Knot you will then have to untie - and you will forgive a Catholic for saying this - is you do not have a curia which can insist. I look forward to being part of those debates in due course.

In our first few months of operation we have some feedback to give back to the Church in very broad, very headline and very new terms. It starts in paragraph 8 of our paper. We consider from all we have seen so far and everybody we have spoken to in our very early days that there is deep sincerity in the Church's wish to improve how safeguarding is undertaken at all levels - national, diocesan, parish, school and all other levels - and in all institutions. Your language of concern is sincere. We believe what you say when you say you want to improve matters. We are keenly aware, all of us, that from past failures and their associated pain, shame, ongoing confusion, understandable anger, lifelong trauma sits in the lives of people who have been involved, and very often overshadows those lives and leads to lifelong suffering. We consider that the failings that were found

through IICSA on safeguarding in the C of E and the failures made public through its reports tell a very powerful but by no means the full story of safeguarding in the Church.

We want to help the Church to ensure that as well as responding more swiftly with a stronger victim, and not institutional, focus to any shortcomings, you develop and really sustain a sense that is out there in wider society of safeguarding being everybody's responsibility; safeguarding that is pre-emptive, preventive and based on early intervention, and that ensures safety rather than trying always to respond or react to when safety has not been assured.

We consider that beyond your boundaries as church institutions and bodies, there is rich practice out there in wider society - and I would say that given I am involved in five localities across England - where you could learn from each other, and where there is a mutuality of support and frameworks and ideas and ideals and training.

We do find it regrettable, and, inevitably, we are going to end up focusing a good deal of our attention there, that in spite of the Church's acceptance of IICSA and its findings, what survivors come to us with are all-too-common threads, and they are these: still overcomplex, still hard-to-navigate structures, bodies, boards, at national, diocesan and other levels. We consider that a review and reform of those should have been considered, even in headline terms, alongside the other governance issues considered by Bishop Baines in his governance review; an ideal opportunity that we want to talk to him about.

Survivors and victims continue to tell us about slow institutional and defensive responses, with the person making a disclosure considering themselves still disbelieved, alongside a continuation of their sense of institutional interests and the potential of upset for the accused mattering more rather than on an equal basis with themselves and their concerns.

Promises of action that will follow and redress that will be made are too often only partially or simply not delivered, or very seriously delayed, and bound about with what they experience as legalistic defence. There is a culture in some settings - and I must emphasise in some settings - where safeguarding is still seen as an "also-to-do" thing on a list, a secondary set of tasks, rather than a culture which should infuse all that you do and all your practice given you deal with human beings; and human beings bring their failings and their problems into the heart of what you do.

A child-unfriendly approach, if it is a child who approaches you. The understanding that many adults will come to you with their difficulties is there in our thinking and our work so far, but if a child comes, you need to speak to them in a voice which a child will understand, and your processes need to be child friendly. Too often they find the issues are escalated on a young person's inquiry into formal complex complaints processes when if your practice had been child friendly it would have been nipped in the bud on day one.

And a sense that in the midst of all of those problems, and in the list of things which has come across our desk so far, somehow you find it almost not permitted to celebrate when

you have done brilliant work in safeguarding. We know there is a lot of it and the NST tells us about it all the time. There is tremendous work being done every day, in parishes, in schools, in your dioceses, in your communities that keeps people safe, that discerns when things are going wrong and that steps in to heal. It is not allowed to be shouted about, and we think it should be.

When I come back in July - hint, hint - I am hopeful that I will have a great deal more to say to you, because the three of us come from lives where when we say soon what we mean is, "Can we do that in 10 days, please", rather than, "Can it take as long as it will to build a cathedral".

So, we are impatient, we are passionate, we are professionals in safeguarding, and we really look forward to working with all of you in moving this forward, but this is very very early days.

*The Chair.* We now move to the opportunity for questions. I am going to start with a few questions from the hall and then I will announce that I am going switch to look for questions from Zoom. We have to manage these two things. Questions from the floor, please, and I stress the word "questions".

*Ven. Pete Spiers (Liverpool):* This is a question from the PCR Reference Group in Liverpool Diocese. We did our Report and got it done on time. We would like to be able to publish the executive summary, conclusions and recommendations of the Report, so would like to know why we cannot do it now, and when we will be able to do it.

*The Chair.* I am going to ask for two more questions and then we will go to the two speakers to answer the questions according to whether they feel it is theirs or the other person's. They are going to work that out between them.

*Revd Canon Mark Bennet (Oxford):* Thank you for that challenge. May I invite you to be more challenging in future, and leave us uncomfortable until this is sorted, please.

*Mr Paul Waddell (Southwark):* Taking into account where we are in the process, the redress scheme will likely not be open for claimants until the middle of 2023, at the very earliest, and cases may take time to process. The terms of reference of the Interim Support Scheme have recently been drastically narrowed; a limit of 12 months' support for any individual has been introduced in all but a very few cases. Survivors were not given notice of this or consulted about it, despite the potential drastic impacts. The effect is that many survivors' support from the interim scheme will be ended long before the full redress scheme is up and running, which seems to run counter to promises about supporting survivors. Can you commit to ensuring that there will not be a funding gap between the Interim Support Scheme and the redress scheme?

*The Chair.* That is a little set of three questions. I presume that the speakers have decided how they should be appropriately carved up. If you are asking a question and

you are very clear in your own mind who it needs to be, because it is a question to the NST or it is a question to the Independent Safeguarding Board, do indicate that in your question, that is fine; otherwise, they are quite capable of working it out themselves.

*Ms Zena Marshall:* Thank you, Pete, for your question on PCR2, and well done for completing your review. We have given this a lot of consideration and we have decided that it would be better to do the publication of the executive summary in a co-ordinated way. That is not to say that you cannot work on the recommendations, embed them into your local practice and start that work now. That is our decision, but please do that work on the recommendations.

*The Bishop of Huddersfield (Rt Revd Dr Jonathan Gibbs):* With regard to Mark Bennet's challenging question, the three of us have all said amen to that. Thank you very much indeed. Absolutely. I value enormously the impetus Maggie is giving us and the new role she has taken on. We look forward very much to her challenge.

With regard to the final question about the Interim Support Scheme, the Interim Support Scheme is about urgent and immediate need, and it was set up to meet that need. There is under the new terms of reference of the scheme a 12-month limit. Individual cases of course are considered. That is to set the boundary. The aim is that something like the Interim Support Scheme will be in place and will be needed, even once the full redress scheme is in place, because there will still be urgent and immediate need even while someone's case is being assessed. Yes, following an internal review, the terms of reference have been tightened up, but there is in there, above all, consideration for the needs of individual survivors.

*Professor Maggie Atkinson:* I will simply say in answer to the question about future challenges, as a set of church bodies, you will need to decide how far Phase 2 will take you into having a completely at one side independent body that has authority and challenge functions rather than our main function, which is the oversight of the quality of the work that is done by the National Safeguarding Team.

I know there are views within the Church about the possibility of putting in a completely arm's length body with charitable status somewhere over there. I would go to the barricades to try to stop you doing that because it enables other people to abdicate their responsibilities if you have a completely external body. Your society colleagues all co-fund their safeguarding partnerships and safeguarding adult boards and they are as independent as you would wish any organisation to be despite being funded by those bodies. Trust me: I work in five. We will need some really rigorous conversations with all of you about where Phase 2 goes and how it is shaped, but, yes, by all means, I am up for challenge.

*The Chair:* Synod will tolerate it, I hope, if we slow down slightly while I check whether there are questions from Zoom. If anybody who is attending this session on Zoom and wishes to ask a question, would they please use the yellow hand to indicate that.

*Revd Dr Sean Doherty (Universities & TEs):* My question is for Maggie Atkinson. I am really encouraged to hear about the good practice you have shared that you have seen. As a head of a theological college, I am also encouraged by the change in culture that we see in the ordinands who are come into training. They really do get this. They do not see it as a box tick. They are really passionate and feel it is core to their mission and their vocation. As you said, it is very early stages, but are there ways the Board will share the good practice? Obviously, we have got to be so careful not to be patting ourselves on the back and making ourselves look like we are doing better than we are in order to embed that good practice as widely as possible.

*The Chair:* Can I just check if there is anyone else on Zoom who wishes to ask a question at this point? There does not appear to be, so I will now turn to the floor for two more possible questions.

*Mrs Penny Allen (Lichfield):* Page 14.5, I am quite concerned about the children's complaints. Has any advice been taken from state schools' child protection officers offering their services there to assist the Church in its work? I am speaking as a retired teacher who has dealt with complaints in the classroom. I think children often have very great difficulty in explaining, if they do not have the terminology, what they want to say about abuse and safeguarding issues. I am heartened to hear that there is some reference to that in what is being said this morning.

*Revd Dr Ben Sargent (Winchester):* Given the rich resources that are at our disposal, it seems to me there has been a real lack of biblical and theological reflection on abuse and safeguarding. There is so much more that could be said than just the simple observation, profound of course, that we are made in the image of God, which is repeated in many of our safeguarding publications. What work is being done on the theology of abuse and safeguarding, and could there be a project or workstream which could be focused on this?

*The Chair:* Over to the team to answer those.

*Professor Maggie Atkinson:* May I make the first remarks about the first two questions. Interestingly, much of the good practice that has already been brought to our attention has been with ordinands, with those coming in, in a culture that is so alive to the notion that if you work with human beings one of your primary focuses should be on their safety and their wellbeing proactively rather than reactively. I echo what was said by the questioner in terms of that discernment process and that willingness of those who are coming through to be very heartily involved in safeguarding.

I managed to be at the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers' Day on 1 November and I know from talking to some people there that there is terrific work going on to create a culture where nothing is too small for you to bring to the attention of those who might need to act on it. You do not have to take it home with you. You can take somebody on one side and say, "I'm concerned", or you take somebody on one side and say, "That family that's just come in through the door of the church was fine last week and there's something not

right in the way their body language is speaking to me. Can we try to find a way of speaking to them quietly?" That very simple human one-to-one safeguarding work is going on all over the place, and certainly in your C of E schools and C of E colleges it also is part of the daily culture.

There is fantastic practice, and in answer to your question is this going to be publicised by us, we are about to go out to tender for branding of the website, and part of our website will be, "Here are things to celebrate", as well as our terms of reference, our legal standing, and what we do and do not do we do, and all the rest of it. We need a section of our website which speaks to people about what safeguarding looks like when it is good.

Thank you very much, as a former teacher myself, for the question about children and young people. Many children and young people know what is going wrong, and cannot put a name to it, or are uneasy, either in the presence of some of their peers or some adults, and cannot put a name to it. Part of our work and the journey we are on, surely, is to make spaces where even if they cannot express it, if it is clear from their body language or other things in their behaviours that they are troubled about their own safety or wellbeing, we find a means, we find somebody in our communities who has always worked with children and young people, who can actually lead them into a conversation in a safe way, and in a way that does not further compromise or traumatise them to express what it is that is going wrong. It might not be to do with the church. It could be, "I don't feel safe at home; can you help me?" You are human organisations and they come through your door. It is that we need to work on, and I look forward to doing so.

*The Bishop of Huddersfield (Rt Revd Dr Jonathan Gibbs):* Thank you very much to Maggie for those answers.

With regard to the theology question, thank you for that, Ben. The Faith and Order Commission has published two documents on safeguarding and theology. Building on that, Dr Isabelle Hamley has been involved already in the developing of a paper with survivors on the theology of safeguarding. That is already being used in current training, and Isobel and I are already in correspondence about how to take that work forward. We recognise hugely the importance of that. Theology is our currency of church and it is really important that we integrate both safeguarding and theology, as well as safeguarding and the good practice that we are learning, and that Maggie has been speaking about.

*The Chair:* Thank you. I am just checking Zoom again, but there is no hand up there. We have the opportunity for a few more questions.

*Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford):* I would like to ask Maggie a very simple question. Given what you pointed out, quite rightly, that you are part time and you have one caseworker, and that we need to be patient, do you have the resources you need to do the job that we are asking of you within the timeframe that you think we should be responding?

*Revd Graham Kirk-Spriggs (Norwich):* As a first incumbent, something I found very overwhelming when starting in my post was the safeguarding initiatives and safeguarding policies. I found it very confusing that there were lots of different places to get information from, some of which actually conflicted with one another. Is there a plan to have a sort of streamlined version of this to make it all standard so that it is easy for incumbents to find the information they need to find?

*Mr Martin Shakespeare (Lichfield):* The work that is being done on historic and present safeguarding is very welcome. However, what plans have been made for the future if we shift to a mixed ecology within the church for the DBS vetting and the safeguarding of 10,000 new places of worship?

*Professor Maggie Atkinson:* The only one I can answer is Jayne's. I used to be a local government officer, so I am going to say no, because there never is, is there? I take you back to the fact that we are only talking about Phase 1 at the moment, and our remit in Phase 1 is relatively narrow, we will oversee and feedback on the quality of what is being done in the safeguarding team and we will then advise the Church on what Phase 2 might look like.

I will say what I said in my interview, which is the bit of the map in the middle is all a bit complicated and labyrinthine: NSSG, NSP, NST, us, and then down from there, DSAs, DSOs, parish safeguarding leads and so on. If one of the things that we can do is give advice that helps you to simplify and clarify what the structures need to look like and whether there need to be as many bodies as there are, or whether if you streamline, you will lose certain things or gain others, that is part of our work, and we can do that as three part-timers. And she is not a caseworker; she is a brilliant administrator and she keeps us all on track. Her name is Niamh and she is brilliant, but she is not a caseworker. We do not have any caseworkers.

We will do what we can within our current narrow remit to advise on a widening remit or a different remit or what different structures might need to look like in Phase 2 and onwards. We will not do that in an eerie somewhere and then come out with a brand spanking new policy. We will come out to talk to you and talk to others in the Church about how we should shape things as we go forward.

*Ms Zena Marshall:* Thank you for the question about policy and access to that. We have been in the process of reviewing all our policies, as I said in the presentation. They are now all put on to an e-manual so they are a lot easier to access, and you can go to particular sections. For those people who cannot access via the e-manual, they are all printable as well, which is really helpful. We have also launched a safeguarding training portal so that all of our training materials are accessed in one place. Hopefully, that will ease and navigate you through those different documents.

*The Bishop of Huddersfield (Rt Revd Dr Jonathan Gibbs):* With regard to the mixed economy, it is crucially important that safeguarding is part of the DNA and practice of the



whole of the Church, in whatever form it is expressed. I can assure you that Zena has already been in conversation with Bishop Chris Goldsmith in the Ministry Department, beginning to explore what that is going to look like. Yes, good safeguarding practice has to be embedded in every part of the Church, whatever form that takes.

*The Chair.* I notice there are people standing and we will do them in threes. It depends how we go with timing as to how many more we can take. We are drawing somewhat towards our close.

*Mr Martin Sewell (Rochester):* These are complex plans. Napoleon said that no battle plan survives first contact with the enemy. My question is this, and it overlaps with safeguarding and CDMs. If I am a complainant or respondent, survivor, or whatever, with a serious injustice or a serious procedural problem, where do I go to get it fixed quickly? Where does the buck stop is my question?

*Revd Jack Shepherd (Liverpool):* 4.3 in the document refers to recommendations relating to publicity and awareness of the Safe Spaces service. What steps are being taken to publicise the work more generally of the National Safeguarding Team, in language that is accessible to victims of abuse, and those who are unsure, and perhaps hesitant, about whether they have faced abuse? In this situation, people often feel stuck, not knowing where to go, and when they begin to raise questions about abuse they are met with responses, which I am thankful to Maggie for identifying, that are perceived as defensive and legalistic.

*Revd Graham Hamilton (Exeter):* Having recently been on the online portal to renew my training, I am full of admiration for its simplicity of use as I experienced it. But I know for many older members of our congregation getting online in itself is a challenge. Would the panel feel there is a danger of deterring people from serving in key roles, such as PCC members, where, obviously, safe recruiting is vital, but perhaps there is a sense of mission creep extending beyond the obvious concerns of PCC members into other areas? Our papers this session refer to racism, modern slavery and domestic abuse. Could this mission creep actually be counterproductive in deterring people from serving on PCCs, particularly from older generations?

*The Bishop of Huddersfield (Rt Revd Dr Jonathan Gibbs):* Martin, thank you very much for your question. There are a number of different levels of answers to that. The important thing is that anybody coming forward with a concern or complaint has a clear avenue to do that. That will obviously look different in terms of whether that is at the parish level, the diocesan level or, indeed, the national level.

Part of the issue here is that it is about changing the culture, so that people coming forward feel they are being listened to, and guided through the process. We have also of course at the moment got a review of other policies going on. The Clergy Discipline Measure is under review at the moment. At the diocesan level, each diocese has its complaints procedure, and, in particular, it is important to remember in the structure of

the diocese, each diocese has a diocesan safeguarding advisory panel, or something like it, with an independent chair. That person (he or she) is a really important person to hold the diocese to account. At the national level of course we also have the possibility of complaint through the structures of the National Church Institutions, and, ultimately, also through the President of Tribunals.

I think the question is going to be about simplifying procedures and creating a culture where people can be heard, know they can be heard, and can be helped and guided through the processes.

*Ms Zena Marshall:* Thank you for question. We recognise that disclosing abuse is a really difficult thing to do, and takes great courage, but we do have dedicated parish safeguarding officers and diocesan safeguarding officers, who are highly trained to respond well when a disclosure is made. If people are not able to make that disclosure to somebody in person within their parish, we do have Safe Spaces, the online service I was talking earlier, which is delivered by Victim Support, and is accessible to everybody.

*Professor Maggie Atkinson:* I was once coached by a wonderful Chinese lady who said, “I have come to spit in your soup”. Modern slavery and domestic abuse are not mission creep. If you are a victim of modern slavery, or you have come out of a household where you cannot talk about it but there is domestic abuse going on, and I mean by that including coercive control, verbal, mental and emotional bullying, you need the mission to step into your space.

What the Bishop was just talking about in terms of gradually moving the culture in that direction, and supporting the Church’s bodies and institutions to be able to do it (that is the important bit) is absolutely vital. Absolutely vital. You will have people in some of your parishes and some of your institutions who are sitting in a bubble of misery, and the only light in their lives is when you shine it. It is really really important. I am sorry, I am about to get Barnsley and passionate, so I am going to sit down.

*The Bishop of Huddersfield (Rt Revd Dr Jonathan Gibbs):* Maggie, thank you so much for that response. Just to mention also that the Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults guidance, which was approved by the House of Bishops in December and will be implemented in July, explains what safeguarding is. It helps define what different kinds of abuse are, and when they are an abuse and safeguarding matter and when they are not. That is precisely to give clear guidance of how and when things should be dealt with. That is another side to answering that question, but I am enormously grateful to Maggie for her response.

*The Chair:* I stick to my idea that we can have two more questions, but they must be short, sharp, focused, targeted: one, two. Thank you.

*Revd Canon John Bavington (Leeds):* In our parish and many inner city parishes there are large numbers of folk who have arrived in the UK recently, and who may have lower

language and cultural engagement with the wider society, and yet they are offering for ministries of various kinds, including Sunday school teaching and so on. We have found it quite difficult to navigate the safer recruitment process with them sometimes. Is it possible to give a bit more thought to that work?

*Mr Peter Barrett (Oxford):* I am a Synod newbie and, forgive me, this is a very complex issue, but I thought I heard Bishop Jonathan talk about an initiative to decide whether something should be at a regional or national level taking two years, and I just wondered, given Maggie's comment about speed, if they could explain why that was the case.

*Ms Zena Marshall:* Obviously, safer recruitment is absolutely important in terms of getting this right and ensuring that those people who are dealing with children and vulnerable adults are vetted properly. The new safer recruitment and people management policy had a six month lead-in period, and my team has spent a great deal of time working with dioceses and parishes to ensure that there is a clear understanding, and to help them implement it locally. If there are any specific issues in Leeds, my team is really dedicated and happy to work with you.

*The Bishop of Huddersfield (Rt Revd Dr Jonathan Gibbs):* Thank you for the question about the time lead on the pilot project with regard to IICSA Recommendations 1 and 8 and the two models of the regional model and the national model. The Church of England is a complex animal. We are 42 dioceses and 16,000 parishes. As Maggie hinted earlier on, we cannot just dictate from the centre. It is really important that we take people with us. I understand the frustration about timescales, and I share that frustration, but it is really important that we work together on this and find the right way of doing things, so we do not just rush in and change things that we find six months, a year down the road to be the wrong change. It is frustrating, but it is important, because it is about getting it right, and it is about taking people with us across the Church.

## **ITEM 22**

*The Chair:* I think time constraints mean that we have to draw this question session to a close. We will be now moving on to the following motion. I will do a little bit of explanation while the teams here vacate the platform. My understanding is that the person proposing the following motion, Gavin Drake, is on Zoom.

As I said before, the motion that he is going to propose was announced on the Fourth Notice Paper, so you may have had sight of it there, otherwise you have sight of it on Order Paper II. This is Item 22 on the Agenda. It will operate as if it is a separate debate, a separate Agenda item on its own. If you have already spoken in asking a question in the first half of this safeguarding business, you are entitled to speak again, you have not spent yourself, because we are starting from zero again, as it were, in speakers. I hope that is clear.

The situation will be that Gavin Drake will have up to ten minutes to move his following motion. Then there will be debates with speakers from the floor and speakers from Zoom, as the case may be, in the normal way. We will eventually come to a point where the debate closes in the usual way, with a vote for closure and vote, and all the rest of it, and a response to the debate by Gavin. I hope that is clear. I do not quite know how to describe it otherwise but, in a way, forget that it is a following motion. It is just a motion as of this moment, so let us just deal with it as a familiar framework for us. I am going to invite Gavin Drake to move his following motion and he has up to ten minutes to do that.

*Mr Gavin Drake (Southwell & Nottingham):* I wish to begin by saying thank you to the very many people in the Church of England who take safeguarding seriously. There are examples of good practice and there are good people doing good work, and I want to thank them for that. However, there are problems.

I want to concentrate this speech on one particular aspect of the motion. Much of the legwork towards the setting up of the Independent Safeguarding Board was done by the Revd Canon Dr Malcolm Brown, Director of Mission and Public Affairs. He should be commended for the care, the diligence, the time and the resources he put into that work. In February 2021, a paper by Dr Brown set out detailed recommendations for the creation of the Independent Safeguarding Board. It was considered at an informal meeting of the House of Bishops and the Archbishops' Council and a note provided to the informal meeting of General Synod later that month saying that the Archbishops' Council had approved the proposals in the paper.

What were the proposals? It says in section A, part 4(a), that one of the executive functions of the new ISB would be responding to complaints concerning alleged mishandling or maladministration of cases and procedures. In section B of the paper under the heading "Remit" the paper sets out a number of responsibilities of the ISB. This includes at (c) that it should, "... receive complaints referring to the NST's handling of cases, investigate the complaint with support from the National Church Institutions, and decide the appropriate response;" and (d) "Quality assure national safeguarding practice requirements issued by the House of Bishops under the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016".

The Chair of the new Independent Safeguarding Board, Maggie Atkinson - and I welcome her appointment and was really pleased to hear what she had to say - tells us today in her Report that the ISB is not a reinvestigation body. It does not have powers to sanction, direct, regulate, inspect or insist. Its authority is moral.

If the ISB cannot investigate complaints as envisaged in the paper approved by Archbishops' Council in February 2021, how does it differ from the work of Meg Munn and the Independent Safeguarding Advisory Panel? Perhaps it is the use of that moral authority to bring about change. No. Because if you read the Report by Maggie Atkinson, I think it is explosive in its criticism of the national Church's safeguarding structures and

the written Report of the National Safeguarding Team (GS 2244) is an example of what the ISB criticises.

Let us look at paragraph 8 of the ISB's Report, because this is the meat of what we should be talking about today. Paragraph 8(b) says they are "keenly aware that the Church's past failures, and the associated pain, shame, ongoing confusion, sometimes anger and potentially lifelong trauma of victims and survivors, are too often still present long after the suffering concerned is brought to light ..."

At paragraph 8(f), in particular, there is a whole litany of failures there. "We find it regrettable, and as a result we will focus much of our attention on the fact that in spite of the C of E's explicit and repeated acceptance of IICSA's and many other vital reports, survivors and complainants of all ages routinely approach ISB members with the following, all-too-common, threads ...", and then there is a list.

Maggie Atkinson talked about the review and reform of the hard-to-navigate, overcomplex bodies and boards that should have been considered. She talks about the slow institutionally defensive responses, promises about action that will follow and redress that will be made too often either only partly or simply not delivered, or seriously delayed.

Finally, and this is the problem with the Report that we have from the National Safeguarding Team and Bishop Gibbs, point 6 in that paragraph: "A sense that in the midst of these problems, it is somehow not seen as permissible or seemly to highlight, celebrate or publicise what really strong, positive safeguarding looks like ..." Sorry, I am reading that wrong, but the Report that we have had from the safeguarding team does not address the concerns raised by the ISB.

If the ISB can produce a litany of complaints and use its moral authority but then, when the National Safeguarding Team report to us, it is not addressed how they are going to tackle these concerns then we have a problem. This is not good enough.

The Church's failings in safeguarding are often described as problems of the past. They are not; they are problems of today. An IICSA style inquiry in 20 or 30 years' time, looking back on the way the Church today is handling safeguarding, will be as uncomfortable for the Church then as the IICSA Report is for the Church today, but it will be worse, because in 20 or 30 years' time, people looking back at what we did today will do so knowing that we have been through IICSA. They will be able to read and hear the very positive and pious words on safeguarding. But they are, alas, nice words. Where is the action? Dioceses are where the rubber hits the road, but if the diocese does it wrong, the National Safeguarding Team cannot intervene, the Lead Safeguarding Bishop cannot intervene, the National Safeguarding Steering Group cannot intervene, the National Safeguarding Panel cannot intervene, and now we find the Independent Safeguarding Board cannot intervene; so, who can?

I am not as eloquent or engaging as the brilliant Lord Boateng who addressed us yesterday, so while I cannot steal his approach I can steal his words: "There is no shortage in the Church of England of policy. There is no shortage of good intentions. There is a shortage of delivery". Commenting on the long list of recommendations, he said there were some very important recommendations - most of them you have accepted - but the most concerning thing is the long list of previous recommendations which have not been implemented, promises made that have not been fulfilled. It is chilling, it is wounding, it is a scandal, it has to be addressed and it will require intentionality and resources.

The same can be said about safeguarding, except when it comes to safeguarding resources are not the problem. An answer to the Revd Canon Tim Bull from St Albans in the November group of sessions showed that the national safeguarding spend had gone from £1.086 million and 6.2 full-time equivalent staff in 2016 to £2.354 million and 17.2 full-time equivalent staff in 2020. Paragraph 3.2 of today's GS 2244 shows that this has increased further to 26.5 full-time equivalent staff. Brothers and sisters, the problem is not resources. The problem is how that money is being spent and the accountability, transparency and effectiveness of the team delivering it.

In Question 46 on the Questions Notice Paper, I asked for a list of recommendations from Lessons Learned Reviews and similar to be pushed, together with a note on whether those recommendations have been accepted and, if so, the process towards implementing them. The answer points us to the website on which reports are published but with no clear way of finding out if the recommendations have been accepted. Paragraph 261 of the Bishop Whitsey Review said that, "The Bishop is not a safeguarding professional and he should not have been conducting preliminary inquiries".

The Review's fifth recommendation says that bishops should have no direct involvement in the management of a safeguarding case. I asked the National Safeguarding Team whether that recommendation had been accepted or not after a male bishop interviewed a female victim of sexual abuse in a way which I can only describe as a painful cross-examination. I was there supporting the victim. The response from the National Safeguarding Team was that it would be inappropriate for them to answer this and other similar questions of fact and process.

Reviewing a complaint about the Bishop, the President of Tribunals' delegate dismissed my observations about that meeting saying that it is a matter of fact that I was not present, despite the Bishop's own evidence that I was there, including his own preparation notes for the meeting and his officer's own minutes. Made up facts to support a lack of action. I know I am not alone in finding that facts are twisted to support narratives designed to protect the reputation of Church bodies. Members of Synod, many of you have similar tales of the Church's safeguarding failure to deliver. Whether for complainants or respondents, there are too many horror stories. We have plenty of fine words. What we need is fine actions.

Time and experience and the Report of the ISB have showed us that it is no longer good enough for Synod just to follow on the recommendations of the National Safeguarding Team. We must challenge the advice we have been given by the national safeguarding structures and demand a greater involvement in the direction and oversight of safeguarding in our Church. I urge you to support the motion standing in my name so that we can begin to say enough is enough. Today is the day we stop speaking nice words. Today should be the day that we act.

In conclusion, Chair, as I am on Zoom, can I use this opportunity to ask you as the debate continues to consider at the conclusion of this debate using your powers under Standing Order 24 to have a division of the text because I think some people in the Synod may be happier with the second part calling for the full independent assessment but may be unhappy with the first part. I ask you to consider that and, also, when it comes to voting, under Standing Order 37(2) or (3), may I ask you to consider a counted vote of the Synod, please.

*The Chair:* We will proceed to the debate and then I will make a ruling about the division of text and a counted vote of Synod and so forth when we get to the point of voting. I ask those in the chamber to stand if they wish to contribute to the debate, those on Zoom to raise their yellow hand if they wish to contribute to the debate. I see that Bishop Jonathan is standing. I think it might be reasonable to let him respond first. You have up to five minutes.

*The Bishop of Huddersfield (Rt Revd Jonathan Gibbs):* Safeguarding is something concerning which, rightly, we feel very passionately and are impatient to see change, especially for the sake of victims and survivors. That gives us something of the context for this debate and I am grateful to Gavin for the challenge which he has brought to us all. We hear that in the way he presented his motion.

I do, however, believe that this motion is flawed for a number of reasons. Firstly - and I am referring to the text of the motion now rather than his speech - the Report to Synod, GS 2244, was never intended to give a comprehensive strategic overview but, rather, an update on the current work of the NST and it needs to be read alongside the presentations given to Synod today. Secondly, the motion misunderstands the current role of the NST within the Church of England as well as some issues around safeguarding guidance and practice.

I will try to give very brief responses to each of the motion's specific points. Clause (a) regarding adults at risk. The definition in the Care Act 2014 is a narrower definition which deals only with persons having needs for care and support from the statutory sector. As the Social Care Institute for Excellence pointed out in 2017, it does not cover many people who are at risk of abuse, including homeless people and survivors of domestic abuse. It would not have covered, for instance, some victims of Peter Ball and John Smyth. Clause (b) regarding KPIs. This Report is simply an update on the current work of the NST as provided regularly to Synod. The Archbishops' Council's business plan sets the strategic

objectives of the NST and the Council monitors these regularly. The purpose of today's presentations was to give Synod members an overview of the work of the NST and its governance.

Clause (c) misinterprets the current remit and scope of the NST's work. The NST develops safeguarding training courses, which have been significantly enhanced during the last year. It also deals with a limited amount of casework relating to senior clergy and certain complex cases, for instance, crossing several dioceses. Beyond that, responsibility for safeguarding rests with the dioceses and parishes as separate legally responsible bodies. Under IICSA Recommendations 1 and 8, the NST is currently working with dioceses and cathedrals to put in place professional supervision and quality assurance of diocesan safeguarding teams to ensure consistent good practice across the Church of England.

Clause (d) regarding bullying. The Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults guidance approved in December 2021 describes what is meant by safeguarding and the different forms abuse can take, including bullying. It should be noted that not all bullying is a safeguarding matter and may at times be more appropriately dealt with by other routes.

Clause (e) alleging a piecemeal approach. This is a misunderstanding about the nature of the NST Report, which is simply an update on its current work. The Report needs to be read alongside today's safeguarding presentations which give something more of a strategic overview. The NST has a strategic plan agreed by the Archbishops' Council as well as a detailed operational plan.

Clause (f) regarding the ISB Report. The NST Report does not specifically cover what is in the ISB Report because that was independently produced and we did not receive it until it was ready to be published. The comments in section 8(f) represent a challenging agenda on which we look forward to working very closely with the ISB under Maggie and her colleagues' watchful eye.

Clause (g) regarding the role of the ISB. Maggie Atkinson has already clarified the role of the ISB in her presentation. We are at Phase 1 only and she has given us a plea to give the ISB time to get on with its work. I will not say any more about that here.

With regard to bishops and dioceses, bishops are already under a duty to abide by safeguarding guidance and can be subject to sanction if they do not. Dioceses are independent bodies subject to their own complaints procedures. Synod, this motion would effectively constitute a vote of no confidence in the work of the ISB before it has even started. It would also be received as a highly critical attack on the work of the NST which would undermine and set back the vital work that it is doing on our behalf. Synod, I believe this motion is misplaced and I would urge you to resist it.



*Mr Clive Billenness (Europe):* Chair, members, when Gavin Drake asked me what I thought about GS 2244, I described it as the curate's Gruyere cheese. It is excellent but, sadly, it has got holes in it. I would like to qualify that by saying there is nothing in the Report with which I would disagree but there are things that are missing. This Report focuses on what you might call the traditional approach to safeguarding but almost turns a blind eye to what I think is the next great safeguarding evil, which is bullying. Earlier on, Martin Sewell asked where does the buck stop and Bishop Jonathan has just given us a set of 42 addresses where the buck stops and I am not sure that is really how it should be.

The 2018 Parish Safeguarding Handbook places bullying strongly in the realm of children's behaviour. This is a common fallacy and, where adults are concerned, I have witnessed complaints about bullying being written off as either a local squabble or robust debate, yet since I published a paper summarising the many clinical studies on the physiological and mental harm caused by bullying and I published a YouTube video on the topic, my mailbox has been filled with heart-breaking stories from members of clergy and congregations alike, all normal adults who have fallen foul of bullies who are prepared to use all the classic tactics of the bully, including victim blaming, and have caused untold harm. I cannot tell you the distress it caused me when one of my very dear friends, a member of clergy, told me they considered suicide over the bullying they had suffered at the hands of a small group of parishioners.

That is an extreme example, but many other people have described how bullying has aggravated existing medical conditions, caused them mental distress, reduced their resistance to infection and, in some cases, caused post-traumatic disorder flashes. If a victim of sexual abuse described any of the physical symptoms associated with being targeted by bullies, there would be an immediate response from the safeguarding teams. But if someone has experienced these symptoms as a result of bullying, there is a very high probability it will be dismissed by safeguarding teams as not being a safeguarding matter.

One highly regarded author on bullying, Peter Randall, comments, "Where those in authority take no action against bullying, it is taken as consent", and he warns that, "Bullies can be encouraged by silence and inertia, which sometimes the reinforcement is the approval of an audience of onlookers whose silent approbation is like thunderous applause". In the famous words of Australian General David Hurley, "The standard you walk past is the standard you accept".

I am disappointed by the ISB's narrow remit because I am sure Maggie Atkinson, who like Gavin I would like to warmly welcome, will recall being quoted in the *Family Law Week* in 2011 when she said that, "Appropriate scrutiny arrangements to continue accountability and the transparency of the organisation are necessary".

Right now, the ISB terms of reference do not begin to achieve anything like that and leave a key part of the Church, which is now annually assuming millions of pounds of Church

money, almost entirely unaccountable to the wider community it exists to protect. So, Maggie, roll on your Phase 2 and a wider role as soon as possible. Bullies crave to bend others to their will by overpowering those who are less aggressive than themselves. They exercise an evil strength. Yesterday, Archbishop Justin said the strong do what they will and the weak suffer. This cannot be allowed to happen in our or, indeed, any Church. I am going to close with a storm warning. At some point it will become necessary to initiate a historic cases review of bullying incidents and then we will find that the floodgates will open.

Members of Synod, I greatly respect all the work that the safeguarding people are doing at the moment. We need the holes to be filled and we need to get ahead of this issue and these holes by speaking out now and by raising awareness and creating a clear zero tolerance policy towards bullying, which at present the papers we are seeing does not do. I intend to support this motion.

*The Chair* imposed a speech limit of three minutes

*Mrs Kashmir Garton (Worcester):* I am speaking against this motion and have a declared interest as I am a member of the National Safeguarding Panel and a senior manager in the Probation Service, which is the lead agency for the supervision of people in prison and serving sentences in the community. Our work also includes working with victims and survivors of sexual and violent offences. Safeguarding and protecting the public is, therefore, at the heart of my work and practice.

When I read the IICSA Inquiry Reports, I knew the Church had a huge task ahead of it, not only in changing its procedures but also its culture. I joined the panel because I wanted to ensure the changes being made would be robust and fit for purpose so that all our churches can be places where all who enter feel safe and are able to flourish in the love of Christ. As an independent panel, we regularly review the work of the National Safeguarding Team and I have been impressed at the extent and wide-ranging work that the team are undertaking as set out in GS 2244 and presented today. As an independent panel, we scrutinise and give advice to the Safeguarding Team and the team has always been responsive to our recommendations. At each session of General Synod, an update is provided on the work of the Safeguarding Team so that this Synod can ask questions.

The development of the Independent Safeguarding Board is in its early stages and will provide an opportunity to further clarify and strengthen the independent safeguarding structures in place and we should soon look forward to these future developments.

Synod, Bishop Jonathan has addressed each element in this motion. I believe this motion does not fully acknowledge that safeguarding and the process of embedding safeguarding changes into the life of the Church is a dynamic and continuous process of improvement that everyone in our parishes and dioceses should embrace and, as Maggie said, infuse everything we do. Only by doing so will we see the desired impact and

effectiveness of the safeguarding changes and gain the confidence of survivors, of congregations and the wider public.

*Mr James Cary (Bath & Wells):* I have the honour of representing the House of Laity at the Archbishops' Council - elected under the previous quinquennium I am afraid, so you are stuck with me, I am sorry about that. In turn, I represent the Archbishops' Council on the National Safeguarding and Steering Group, checking where the money is going, and I have seen over the last few years numerous reports of all the workstreams going on to help ensure the safety of children in our churches. After all, our vision and strategy is to double the number of children and young people in our churches and so we need our churches not just to be safe places but wonderful places for children to be welcomed so that they can learn about our saviour Jesus Christ through His Word and worship Him.

To that end, a lot of good safeguarding work is being done at great speed and that speed is necessary because there has been a lot of ground to make up. The Church of England has been shamefully slow in acting to protect children and young people from abuse. The train is leaving the station, however, but very very late. That is why I must ask Synod to reject this following motion which will begin a full independent assessment. As the train is picking up speed, Synod is being asked to hit the brakes and take the train apart to make sure it is running as smoothly as possible.

Could the work being done be better? Yes. Could metrics be improved? Yes. Could we do with more feedback on how this stuff is working out on the ground? Yes, please. Raise them in your dioceses as well as with the National Team who would love to hear from you. But this motion, which helpfully gives us food for thought raises lots of questions, but that is why I think we have to say no to it. Delays to this vital work with a full independent assessment particularly will slow down training and planning and education for the protection of children and young people and vulnerable adults and that is why I have to urge you to vote no to this following motion.

*Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark):* Point of Order. Under the relevant Standing Order, I would like to propose that the Synod do now move to next business.

*The Chair.* Thank you. Before I invite you to make that proposal formally, I do need to give some information to Synod. Simon Butler has moved the procedural motion that the Synod do pass to the next business. If that motion is carried, after he has formally made it, then Item 22 will lapse and it will not be in order to reconsider that question in the same form or in a form which is substantially similar within the remainder of the lifetime of the Synod except with the permission of the Business Committee and the general consent of Synod.

The motion for next business may be debated at the discretion of the Chair and, clearly, I will allow something of that. We have not got a great deal of time. I will call Simon Butler as the mover of the motion for next business to speak to it, followed by the mover of the main motion, who is Gavin Drake, to reply. I will then consider, keeping a firm eye on the

clock, whether to allow any further debate and the speech limit is two minutes to propose the motion for next business.

*Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark):* It has been really good to air these issues in this way, but I want to raise a couple of points, important process questions. When we have debates in General Synod, it is our custom to ensure that they are informed by full background papers, properly prepared, proposed by a member of this Synod, accompanied by a detailed response from the NCIs. Gavin's motion makes a number of important claims which, in order for this Synod to debate and vote on in an informed way, need to be interrogated and responded to by a proper response from the AC - much more than a five minute speech or a three minute speech.

It is unfortunate, therefore, to me that this motion has been brought as a following motion which does not allow either the proposer or the Archbishops' Council to provide the Synod with the essential background information and to vote in an informed way. I note that Gavin has two Private Member's Motions tabled for members to sign which are very similar in content to this one. I think it would be much better, especially with so many new members who are catching up on safeguarding, if members were to sign those in order for these matters to be debated more appropriately and informed. The lengthy list of claims in this motion, and only two of them have been spoken about in this debate already, are not best served by the use of a following motion. We should not be debating serious matters in such an ill-prepared way.

Reason two, beware of the consequences. I understand the passion and concern for justice behind this motion, but if we debate it in such a cursory way it will undermine the confidence of the strong and, in my experience, highly reflective team in the NST who work with us already. My experience is that the NST is the most reflective learning culture in the whole of the Church of England. At the same time, if we continue to vote on issues on the basis of a tacked-on debate, it is going to increasingly send messages to the modestly sized pool of talent that is the community of safeguarding professionals who may want to work with us in the future. Ironically, if we debate this motion in this sort of way, it could inflict harm on our much improved and still improving ability to deal with the whole area of safeguarding in the round. This is the wrong sort of motion in the wrong form of words, too blowsy and too long. We need to debate it in a better way and that is not by this following motion.

*The Chair:* As I explained just now, I will call upon the mover of the main motion, Gavin Drake, to reply.

*Mr Gavin Drake (Southwell & Nottingham):* I wish to resist this procedural motion. Canon Butler is concerned about the lack of background information and the lack of report to accompany the motion. The appropriate procedural motion, I would suggest, would, therefore, be a procedural motion to adjourn the debate to allow such paperwork to be presented for a future debate. I welcome his promotion of my two Private Member's Motions and I too would urge you to sign those on the paperwork.

But safeguarding is a major issue and we have heard in the debate so far that my motion is based on a misunderstanding of the National Safeguarding Team which only has very limited functions. If it has only got very limited functions, why are we spending so much money on it and why are we reliant on the National Safeguarding Team to learn the lessons if we are also being told that, actually, they have no say in the way safeguarding is handled in dioceses where these things really matter? This is a very important issue. As with the debate on racism yesterday, it is time that the Synod said enough is enough and we need to act. I would urge you to resist this motion, please.

*The Chair.* I am not minded to allow further debate on the procedural motion. I think we should proceed simply to vote on the procedural motion.

*Mr Martin Sewell (Rochester):* Point of Order. Gavin asked about the possibility of an adjournment, has that been addressed? Could it be adjourned instead of moving to next business?

*The Chair.* The adjournment has not been formally put. I am advised that the motion for movement to next business is the one that is before Synod and that is the one that has to be put. I apologise for my hesitancy over this. It is unfamiliar territory I think for most of Synod, in fact, so we do our best. We are going to put the motion for next business --

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*Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford):* Point of order. Sorry, can we have clarity, if we agree Simon Butler's proposal, that the Private Member's Motions that Gavin has tabled will still be able to come to this Synod in this quinquennium? My fear from what I have been told is that, because there is so much overlap, we will not be able to debate those Private Member's Motions and I would rather that we put the question, vote the amendment out and then be able to come back at another time.

*The Chair.* I have just been advised that that is not a matter that I can rule on as Chair at this moment. Some people may feel that is not a satisfactory answer, but that is where I am.

*Revd Neil Patterson (Hereford):* Point of order. Did I hear you say, Madam Chair, earlier that the Business Committee could consent to bring a Private Member's Motion? That is what I heard you say. I think you can probably repeat that. Also, may I, and with apologies for my own similar guilt, comment that your skilful and charming chairing would be slightly improved if you were to lower your microphone by four inches.

*The Chair.* I will read the form of words because I think that is by far the safest thing to do in a situation like this. Simon Butler has moved the motion ---

*Mr John Wilson (Lichfield):* Point of order. This, obviously, is a very important vote we are going to take, is it in order to ask for a count of the Synod?

*The Chair.* I have been advised that, yes, that would be possible but that you should not have interrupted me while I was trying to provide information. May I try to provide that information once again.

Simon Butler has moved the procedural motion that the Synod do pass to the next business. This is the bit that was being enquired about, so listen hard. If that motion is carried, Item 22 will lapse and it will not be in order to reconsider that question in the same form or in a form which is substantially similar within the remainder of the lifetime of the Synod, except with the permission of the Business Committee and the general consent of Synod. So I think we now move to ---

*Mr Carl Fender (Lincoln):* Point of order. Mr Butler has moved a motion for next business, has not Mr Drake moved a motion for an adjournment because he asked for that in his reply to Mr Butler?

*The Chair.* He referred to it but he cannot move a motion in his reply. It is not permitted. The business before Synod is this motion that Synod do pass to the next business and I have, now twice, read out the implications of that and so I think we must proceed to vote on that. The question has been put that we do it by a counted vote of Synod. I am perfectly happy to accede to that and so let us proceed in that fashion. Let us have a counted vote of Synod, thank you. This is a counted vote of the whole Synod on the proposal for proceeding to next business. We are voting on the proceed to next business motion.

*The motion was put and carried, 236 voting In favour, 75 against, with 22 recorded abstentions.*

*The Chair.* The proposal to move to next business is carried. Consequently, that is precisely what we will do, moving on to the legal business timed for noon. Thank you very much.

THE CHAIR *Revd Zoe Heming (Lichfield)* took the Chair at 12.01 pm.

## **SPECIAL AGENDA I LEGISLATIVE BUSINESS ITEM 500A**

### **FACULTY JURISDICTION (AMENDMENT) RULES 2022 (GS 2245)**

*The Chair.* Just about good afternoon, Synod. In addition to Order Paper II, members will need the (Amendment) Rules themselves, GS 2245, and the Explanatory Notes, GS 2245X, and also the Notice Paper with the small errata to rectify. First of all, the Dean of Arches and Auditor will move Item 500A, the preliminary motion that the (Amendment) Rules be considered. This will provide members with an opportunity to make general

comments about the Rules and to raise specific points which do not relate to the amendments in the Order Paper.

If the preliminary motion at Item 500A is carried, we will then move to the amendments set out in the Order Paper. Members who wish to comment on an amendment should not do so on Item 500A, but should reserve their comments for the debate on the amendment in question. We have about half an hour before lunch on this item, Synod, and then we will return to continue our work on this item.

I now call the Dean of Arches and Auditor to speak to and move Item 500A, "That the Faculty Jurisdiction (Amendment) Rules 2022 be considered". You may speak for up to ten minutes.

*Rt Worshipful Morag Ellis QC (Dean of the Arches and Auditor):* Thank you very much, Madam Chair, and good morning, members of Synod. I am proposing these new Rules not primarily because my day job is as an environmental lawyer; nor because I am a mother - hope to be a grandmother one day - and want to ensure that my actions leave a better world for those who come after me; nor because I accept what the Archbishop of Canterbury said yesterday in his Presidential Address about the connection between all the peoples of the world and their actions; nor because I never cease to be amazed by the wonder of God's creation and believe that it is our duty as Christians to do our best to care for it; nor because I find it almost too painful to look at films of melting icecaps and oiled sea birds, although all those things are true and relevant.

No, the primary reason why I am bringing these Rules to Synod is because General Synod itself has committed the whole of the Church of England to respond to the climate emergency with practical action. Having spent many months working on these new Rules, I am convinced that they can help all of us to make a difference and that they represent a positive and proportionate step towards implementing the earnest determination of General Synod itself.

Just as a reminder for those who were here and a reference point for those like me who were not, in the February 2020 session, Synod passed the following motion - I am not going to read all of it but selected bits - "That this Synod recognising that the global climate emergency is a crisis for God's creation and a fundamental injustice and, following the call of the Anglican Communion, call upon all parts of the Church of England to work to achieve year-on-year reductions in emissions, request reports on progress from the Environment Working Group and the NCIs every three years" - beginning this year in 2022 - "and call on each diocesan synod to address progress toward net zero emissions every three years".

The Fifth Mark of Mission is to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth and so the action to which Synod has pledged the Church is central to our business of being Christ's hands and feet and ears and eyes in the world - in short, his body.

Turning now specifically to the proposed amending legislation, there are four principles underpinning it, as you will see from the Order Paper. One, to encourage behaviour that will move churches towards net zero carbon. Two, to make the permissions route more straightforward for proposals that are most likely to reduce carbon. Three, to increase the strength of the case needed for a parish that has a proposal that will commit it to producing additional carbon well after 2030 - for example, installing a new oil boiler. And, four, not to put into the Rules matters better dealt with by guidance.

The changes to the Rules, therefore, do the following things. Firstly, they add new matters to the lists of those things which do not require a faculty. Many of these are matters of good environmental housekeeping which are unexciting but important: draughtproofing, pipe insulation, LED lighting. Some are simple, inexpensive but practical measures which are not currently on the permitted lists. Another one is the introduction of certain soft furnishings. Some are perhaps more exciting and they feel more like a project: the installation of electric vehicle charging points and photovoltaic panels. Some are specifically designed to help heat churches with pews in ways that use greener sources of energy efficiently such as under pew electric heaters - in other words, heating people rather than heating rafters.

Another change, the second main point and one which has been requested by parishes, is to bring the installation of broadband equipment out of faculty and into List B, which the archdeacon can approve. The missional and pastoral implications of this have been made clear by the pandemic and there are also carbon neutral advantages in terms of using internet to achieve smart control of church heating and enable remote and mixed mode meetings, thus reducing the need for travel, especially for those who might otherwise need to attend by car, say, an evening PCC meeting.

Thirdly, the Rules reflect the fact that there is no one size fits all when it comes to church buildings and communities. This is also apparent from reading the guidance prepared by the Church Buildings Council to help churches consider options in an informed way to reduce emissions and, incidentally, in many instances, to save money and to make churches more sustainable for the longer term financially.

Fourth, because working towards carbon neutrality can be complex and because the technology is moving very fast, there is, as we know, no one size fits all.

Because of all of that, the proposed amendments ask parishes to have regard to the guidance in formulating proposals which need a faculty or the permission of the archdeacon and to explain in their supporting documents how they have taken it on board. This is a really important part of the proposals because it ensures that parishes are in touch with helpful technical guidance which can and will be kept up-to-date and go through a conscious process of thinking in an informed way about what best suits their church building and their community and helps the Church as a whole to make that Synod Resolution into reality.



Importantly, nothing in the proposed new Rules forces parishes to make changes nor do the Rules rule out doing things which are incompatible with carbon reduction, but they do ask us in our parishes to think hard about what to do for the best in an informed way when we want or need to make changes to our buildings.

Lastly, there are two changes which put into the faculty process matters which are currently permitted. They relate directly to the burning of fossil fuels which we know is the most damaging thing for the environment. Replacement of gas and oil tanks is no longer in the List A works which currently require no consent at all. Oil tanks will require a faculty and gas tanks the consent of the archdeacon. Like-for-like replacement of a boiler will now be limited to non-fossil fuel machines. Then there are some minor tidying up measures concerning consultation and detailed features about bells and lightning conductors - fascinating stuff, but they are not the drivers of what has brought these new Rules to Synod.

I, therefore, commend these important changes to you and, in doing so, I would like to record my thanks to the Net Zero Faculty Working Group, the Rules Committee and the staff of the Legal Office for their hard work and commitment to bring these proposals before you today.

*The Chair.* This item is now open for debate. The speech limit is five minutes but, given the time constraints and our work continuing after lunch, brevity would be encouraged.

*Revd Stella Bailey (Coventry):* I was not here when Synod voted for the net zero goals and, I am not going to lie, when I heard I laughed with disbelief and proclaimed, "As if". I am the vicar of a parish with a Grade I listed building in a conservation area. My churchyard contains the ruins of an Augustinian priory, which is a scheduled monument. You cannot sneeze without Historic England wanting to know. Our church is used most days and around the time Synod was voting for net zero goals we had just commissioned a major project which involved the total overhaul of our heating system with a gas boiler. We now have the warmest church in the diocese, but at least it is a bit more efficient.

But the new technologies were not available in a way that they would have been had an alternative option been feasible. Our church hall is 110 years old and is open and used from 9.00 am until 9.00 pm. It has single skinned walls and a gas boiler. It is in a conservation area. Please do not tell the Amenity societies but, thankfully, it is one of the few buildings in its street which is not listed. I am a governor of a two form entry Church of England primary school set in a building built by the Victorians and we have just finished a three year project to overhaul the heating system. The local authority paid and so the boiler is gas fuelled because it was the cheapest at the point of installation.

I represent a perfect storm of complexities but, today, I wish to support the changes to the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules. These changes create a landscape where we can gain the quick wins in this massive undertaking and ask the relevant questions to focus our conscience where it needs to be, asking our worshipping communities to proactively have

a plan for the future instead of just reacting and changing the weight of our culture around the care for the environment.

I wish to thank the Environment Group and the CBC for its work. Yes, it is inconvenient. Yes, it will create more work for us and more paperwork. We will all struggle to find people who will be able to be up-skilled in their knowledge to be able to bring about projects. But this is where legislation reaches mission. For the emerging generations in our community, this subject matters. They take the call in Scripture for us to care and cultivate the earth seriously because it is the earth that they have inherited after decades of abuse. They are looking to this chamber and seeking authenticity and integrity. The fact that there is even a suggestion of maintaining the status quo of ease for a like-for-like replacement I consider to be a matter of shame. But I do wish to raise one significant concern. Too often in this legislation it says, "For unlisted buildings".

The other hat that I wear is as the Chair of the DAC for the Diocese of Coventry. We have 239 churches. Only 42 are unlisted. If we are able to reach net zero, then we need greater change and for this to not be the only time that we are altering the Faculty Rules.

I speak now to the Amenity societies and to our Government. Our churches are not historic monuments. They are living, breathing communities. They are buildings that tell the stories of each generation as alterations have been made. Let them also be buildings that tell the story for this generation. Work with us to hear the cry of not just this chamber but wider society, so that it is easier for buildings like mine to undergo the necessary changes and to proclaim the Gospel for this generation as we seek to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

*Mrs Fiona Norris (Salisbury):* I am really proud and grateful for the bold leadership of this General Synod in agreeing in February 2020 to work towards a target of net zero carbon emissions by 2030. I thank everyone involved for the work that has gone into translating this into these first practical steps in the amendments to the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules. I work for the relief and development charity Tearfund, and hear countless stories of the devastation that climate change is causing.

In an update towards the end of last year from my colleague, Norman Molina in Honduras, he spoke of experiencing two hurricanes with just a weekend between them. Absolutely unheard of and never could have been contemplated in times past, but four million people affected and 100,000 left in shelters. He spoke of the tragedy of rain becoming a threat where it should be such a blessing. They are traumatised by the sound of it for the fear of what might happen.

They, in Honduras and Central America, are not one of the biggest contributors to climate change yet they are some of the most affected. He said this: "We are brothers and sisters in all this. We belong to a global community. What you decide to do and the decisions the powerful people decide to make has an effect on us. If these decisions are positive, it will be good for us but, if we continue this pattern of exploitation and destruction and going beyond the limits of the planet, maybe you will not feel it but we will feel it". It is a

fundamental injustice, as recognised in February 2020, and our God is a God of justice and throughout the Bible he calls us to stand against injustice.

As Archbishop Justin said yesterday, "Are we our brothers and sisters' keeper?" Yes. Their decline is our judgment. I know there are real fears around costs and the burden of administration on parishes, but I am reminded of the parable of the Good Samaritan. It was costly to him to stop and help. It disrupted his plans. It took him out of his way. It cost him his money. But Jesus shows us through this parable that this is what it looks like to love our neighbours. Are we prepared to be similarly disrupted, to love our global neighbours? I believe that to be a Christ-centred Church, we cannot pass this by and leave it to the next people to come along to deal with because the next people to come along are our younger generations that we long to see in our churches.

As a mum of two teens, I know that they care deeply about the effects of climate change and this was highlighted by research by Youthscape that was published last year and conducted amongst hundreds of Christian teens. Nine out of ten are concerned about the effects of climate change but only one out of ten think the Church is doing enough. For them, it is intimately connected with their faith, with 84% saying they believe Christians should be responding to climate change. They are watching us. Will we practise what we preach? I ask you to approve these changes that will make it easier for us to pursue these net zero targets.

*The Bishop of Norwich (Rt Revd Graham Usher):* Two years ago, at this Synod at this time of the year, we set the prophetic, ambitious target calling on all parts of the Church to become net zero by 2030. That decision was noticed and was praised at COP26 in Glasgow in many conversations and now it is time for us to put those worthy words into actions. COP26 opened my eyes even more to the challenge that we must face now. President Ramkalawan of the Seychelles, an Anglican priest, said, "We are already gasping for survival. Tomorrow is not an option for it will be too late". Synod, we made that 2030 decision with a clear understanding of the climate crisis and the terrible suffering that it is already causing around the world but without a clear plan for how we would achieve it.

I am so grateful for various colleagues in the national Church and Diocesan Environment Officers for all the work that they have been doing to create plans and tools to measure a mission's guidance and webinars and to the Dean of Arches for bringing these amendments to Synod. For me, the life of the local parish church is the hope for the world. Each of our churches is a crucial place for where the living out of faith happens and our parish churches can be exemplars leading the way in communities for sustainable living. Yes, it is going to be an almighty challenge, but so is any aspect of living the Gospel. It is a challenge we need to step into. It was good to hear Stella Bailey just now speaking about the complexity of her situation yet welcoming these changes.

The new Rules open up a range of encouragements, but they also give a nudge to move away from fossil fuel boilers sparking research and discussion and reflection in each of our parishes, because if we put in a new oil or gas burner today we are investing in fossil

fuels for another 25 years. Of course, funding the alternatives is going to be a challenge and we need to plan for that now, looking to grant-making bodies, local councils and others who might support this transition.

These changes, Synod, are not about telling. They are about living, making it easier for PCCs to choose to live in a low carbon future for the health of our planet. Let us be clear, as younger Christians keep on reminding us, a wider ecological awareness and practice is not an option for the ministry of God's Church. It is an imperative for the mission of the Church. As Sir David Attenborough said at COP26: "We are, after all, the greatest problem solvers to have ever existed on earth. If working apart we are a force powerful enough to destabilise our planet, surely working together we are powerful enough to save it". As Lead Bishop for the Environment, I commend this motion to Synod and ask you to resist those amendments that seek to dilute the commitment to net zero that we have made prophetically as a Church.

*The Chair.* Our next speaker has, by my watch, three minutes before our forced adjournment at 12.30. Go ahead.

*Revd Ruth Newton (Leeds):* I am Chair of the General Synod Environment Group. In February 2020, we turned our hand to the plough, committing to something which was ambitious and prophetic. We made that commitment because we recognised that addressing climate change is a Gospel imperative and it is not possible to say that we are being good news to the poor or loving our neighbours without failing to attend to it. This is an area where we as a Church wish to take a lead and we are beginning to do that in the proposals before us. Thank you to all who have been involved in them.

The proposals are, therefore, a cause for celebration. They make it easier to do the right thing. They send a message about what is possible and that DACs are more likely to say yes than no to sustainable projects. This can only encourage parishes to engage imaginatively with the challenge we have set them of making the Church fit for the 21st century. They provide consistency between what we say we want to happen and to actually making it easier to make it happen. However, I am aware that there is some anxiety about how the net zero target will impact on smaller, more vulnerable churches which have already been hard hit by Covid and need a bit of a break. As the parish priest of a village church, which is struggling sometimes, I completely get this and money does need to be made available. But that is not what we are discussing today.

The proposals before us are modest. For the most part, they are permissive. Where it is not, all that is being asked is that consideration is given to the CBC's guidance, that it is read, taken on board and informs parish decision-making and that, before a significant amount of money is spent on replacing a boiler, the pause button is pressed, advice sought in order to prevent a decision which may well be regretted in future. Whilst in the short-term the like-for-like for replacement may make economic sense, as we move forward and transition away from fossil fuels it may well be regretted and those churches which begin the process of transitioning now will be better future proofed.

The burden of a carbon net zero target will almost certainly not fall on our smaller and more vulnerable parishes, but on larger parishes where the church is in daily use and the possibility of making individual cases in individual circumstances is assumed in the provisions before us. Nothing is prohibited. I urge us, therefore, to take this next step and not dilute it in any way. Either we believe this matters and is a priority or we do not. We cannot turn our hand to the plough and then turn back. Therefore, I urge you to support the proposals.

*The Chair.* Synod, this debate is now adjourned and will resume at 1.45. Can I gently remind you all to bring your handsets into the chamber with you ready to deal with this item when we return. Thank you.

THE CHAIR *Revd Zoe Heming (Lichfield)* took the Chair at 1.45 pm.

*The Chair.* Welcome back, Synod. We now resume the debate on Item 500A. Although the next Notice Paper is out, you still need before you the Second Notice Paper for today with the many amendments that we have before us this afternoon on this item. Those wishing to speak to Item 500A, please do indicate.

*The Chair* imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

*Revd Miranda Threlfall-Holmes (Liverpool):* As vicar of an eco church and two churches trying to become eco churches, I was at first really pleased to see this. I really support the spirit of it and the List A and B amendments making all those things so much easier, but I do not think it goes far enough. My heart sank when I read the detail of the legislation because the vast majority of it, clause 2, can basically summarised as, “Here is an extra thing for parishes to do” - fair enough - “and the DAC have the job of criticising it.” There is literally a little delete here as to whether this is or is not adequate.

I have been through the faculty process quite recently. It was quite a bruising experience. The sense in which you are cast as the petitioner asking to be allowed to do things, and then getting back advice, which can be really very critical of what people in churches who are not experts have been doing their best to formulate, is bruising. To simply have the one thing that mentions the DAC in this legislation being to tell a PCC whether or not they have done well enough really rankled and stood out as quite inappropriate.

I do not dispute that net zero guidance should be regarded, but I do not think the role of the DAC should be simply to criticise the paperwork proposed by PCCs. Why can we not specify instead that DACs themselves should have regard to the net zero guidance in formulating their response? Perhaps we could specify that DACs have to help PCCs to meet net zero guidance. Why do we not say that proposals in pursuance of net zero targets will be deemed to have a strong presumption in their favour, with only the most exceptional heritage considerations being allowed to counteract that?

We will not get to net zero in eight years' time with a little bit of fiddling around the edges of Lists A and B. It is great that solar panels can be put on non-listed buildings but, as Stella said, how many non-listed buildings do we have? Why can we not say that it will be presumed that solar panels will be accepted unless you happen to have the most exceptional 15th century roof in England?

I think this should go further and we should pair this with a requirement on those making decisions in the DACs, the chancellors and so on, and heritage organisations making their submissions, for them to have regard to this, and to be much more radical in a presumption for change rather than a presumption against change.

*The Chair:* After our next speaker I will call Paul Ayers on Zoom and then we will be testing the mind of Synod to vote on this item.

*Revd Carol Bates (Southwark):* Never in a million years did I think my maiden speech at General Synod would be on the subject of faculty jurisdiction. At first glance it does not sound or look very exciting. However, how we vote today on this item of legislative business will determine the Church's resolve and commitment to save lives and to save the planet.

In February 2020, many applauded and had renewed hope in the Church of England, and I include people I know who do not share our Christian faith. I include one of my teenage children. People applauded when General Synod voted through a prophetic target to work to achieve year-on-year reductions in emissions and urgently examine what would be required to reach carbon net zero emissions by 2030.

The climate crisis has not become any less urgent. Continued global warming of 2 degrees will result in a death sentence for people in the Pacific, the West Indies and Africa. As Archbishop Justin reminded us yesterday, we need to get out of this autonomy mindset of looking after ourselves, and demonstrate real love for our neighbours, near and far. We live in the prosperous third of the world, and God calls us to use our gifts and privilege to bless and care for others. We are our brothers and sisters' keeper. Work done by the Synod Environment Group and Rules Committee have drawn on the day-to-day experience of diocesan advisory committees, heating advisers, archdeacons, lawyers, Synod members and chancellors, and they have proposed a carefully deliberated and measured set of changes that churches could implement in order to become a carbon net zero church. They have also been consulted on with diocesan advisory committees. It is possible to become a carbon net zero church.

The updating of the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules is the first set of practical decisions which have come back to Synod. It is encouraging to see commitment to our planet translated into action. Quite simply, by updating the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules, the process of being able to adapt our buildings to reduce our carbon footprint is made easier. 84% of church energy use goes towards heating. This is nearly all from fossil fuels which cause climate change. The only way for churches to reach carbon net zero is to decarbonise our

heating. This would mean removing the gas or oil boilers and replacing them with other forms of heating such as heat pumps and using renewable energy. Many churches are reluctant to do this, despite declaring their commitment to the environment.

I speak from my own experience as curate in a church currently in interregnum. We have an old gas boiler and so energy is supplied by fossil fuels. Suggestions to change to a renewable energy supplier are met with the phrase, "We are not allowed to change anything before the new incumbent comes" or "So many companies are going bust, it's best to stick with a reliable stable supplier". "Are we allowed?" is a common question asked by many churches. Synod let us take a lead in committing ourselves to becoming carbon net zero by 2030 by resisting the approval of these amendments.

*The Chair:* Paul Ayers on Zoom and then I will be proposing a motion for closure on this item.

*Ven. Paul Ayers (Leeds):* When we last debated the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules, I was almost a lone voice in opposing the inclusion of boilers in List A, so I am really pleased that it has now come back to be revised. That is for two reasons. The first is if something is on List A nobody else knows what is being done. The removal of it from List A would ensure that PCCs still had advice on efficiency. Even if they ended up still using fossil fuels they would have had advice on efficiency, and not just from installers who may not have the expertise for the kind of heating system suitable for a church. Often the ones who most need advice are the ones who do not know they need advice. Simply replacing a boiler like-for-like might just continue and compound the use of an unsuitable heating system.

The second reason is, as everybody has spoken about, the need for finding alternatives for fossil fuels. As things stand, often this just cannot be done because we do not yet have the technology which is effective or affordable, but at least PCCs will have explored the alternatives fully. I think this should proceed as it is and I would encourage people to not oppose the amendments which follow.

*The Chair:* I now propose a motion for closure on this item.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* May I invite Morag Ellis to come and respond to that debate?

*Rt Worshipful Morag Ellis QC (Dean of the Arches and Auditor):* A gentleman kindly told me over the break that he had had difficulty hearing me when I looked down at my papers so I have moved the microphones. Is that now audible? Good. Also, my thanks to all the speakers in that debate.

Briefly, Stella Bailey hit the nail on the head. This is legislation intended to serve and further mission by speaking to our consciences and helping us to respond meaningfully

by our actions to those who are entitled to look to us to practise what we preach, the communities who Fiona Norris and Bishop Graham told us about; the young people who we want to lead to Christ and encourage in discipleship to become the next generation of Christians in our parishes.

Some questions about heritage. There are legal reasons - how often have you heard that, I apologise - why we cannot extend all of these changes to listed buildings. In a nutshell, because I am very short of time, it is to do with our relationship to state controls and the privileges that that relationship gives us in terms of not being bound by secular listed building legislation, which would be worse for us.

However, I can also say that establishment gives us opportunities to talk to Government about these issues, but we will be so much stronger in going to them if we show that we are taking the first legislative steps that we as the Church are prophetically ahead of the curve.

Funding - as Ruth Newton said, that is not a matter for today, but I would like to inform Synod that Church Buildings Council officers are working hard on this aspect and speaking widely, both inside and outside the Church. Guiding and advising parishes as to the potential sources of funding is something which should be able to be addressed in the guidance. There are undoubtedly opportunities for charitable support in cash and kind, inside and outside the Church. I cannot give more detail on that today, but please be assured that CBC officers and others, including me, are working on it.

The only other point raised before lunch was also raised by Ruth Newton that a "same old" heating system may be a bad thing to hand on to the next generation of church wardens, treasurers and PCCs, not only in terms of climate change but also in terms of increasing fossil fuel prices. Increasing fossil fuel prices is headline news already and these are driven by numerous things, including global insecurities, people stocking up armies in key parts of the world on borders, and by forthcoming secular policy interventions designed to address climate change and to wean us off fossil fuels.

Carol Bates, what a privilege to hear your maiden speech in support of this motion. Thank you very much for that. Thank you for the conversations that you are having with your teenage children and people in your parish who are dealing with the difficult period of interregnum. My husband in curacy had two interregnums to deal with, so I know exactly the sort of thing that you are talking about.

Miranda Threlfall-Holmes, thank you for your support of the spirit. Thank you for your desire to go further. I have answered the point about heritage buildings. With regard to DACs, ideally the situation should be a conversation which takes place before the answer comes back on a bit of paper. There should be no reason why that cannot take place, and I am sure that it can be urged in guidance.



Why not say that DACs should have regard to the guidance, you ask? Well, I would say that is implicit, because if they have got to say whether a proposal is in line with the guidance or not, then they themselves have to engage with that guidance. The same is true of the external bodies. They will find that their representations count for much more with chancellors if they have addressed the guidance. Chancellors will then be able to give them more weight, and, conversely, are likely to give them less weight if not.

The other thing about those other external consultation bodies is that they have been involved in the work thus far and their representatives are supportive of what is being put before Synod today.

Again, I thank everybody for reading the material, for speaking, and I seek leave to move this motion.

*The Chair.* I now put Item 500A to vote by a show of hands.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

## **ITEM 501**

*The Chair.* We come now to the amendments at Item 501 to 505. The 25-member rule applies to each amendment, which means the mover of the amendment will have not more than five minutes to speak to it. Then I will call the Dean to speak for not more than five minutes in reply. If the Dean does not support the amendment, the amendment will lapse and cannot be voted on, unless 25 members indicate that they wish the debate to continue. Those present at Church House can indicate that they wish the debate to continue on an amendment either by standing or raising their hand. Those participating remotely may indicate that they wish the debate to continue by pressing the green tick. I now call Marcus Walker to speak to and move the amendment standing in his name, Item 501. You have up to five minutes.

*Revd Marcus Walker (London):* Like Carol Bates who stood here just before me, when I thought about my maiden speech to General Synod, or corporal Synod as we now are, I was not sure that boilers was a subject that would be top of my list, but I stand here proudly because boilers and faculties and all the little matters which seem so technical (and maybe even boring) are the basic matters of survival or collapse for so many parishes far from Church House, and far from Westminster.

The last Synod committed the Church to become net zero by 2030, an ambitious target, and a noble and worthwhile one; a dream which was left to the team at Church House valiantly to turn into reality and reality finds its flesh in the nitty-gritty of flues, electrical outlets, cable trenches, heat pumps, and even boilers.

I hope to be able to support this Measure and support it wholeheartedly. What I ask the Synod to do is to remove two little concerns, to shift from a Measure that is both carrot and stick to a hearty, healthy and ecologically sound meal of pure carrot. Let us transfer over the archidiaconal system of Lists A and B all of those Measures that will help our churches slide speedily towards net zero. Let us encourage all our churches to read, mark and learn such materials as the team here in Westminster thinks it wise for them to inwardly digest. But - and you know there is a but coming - let us leave out the stick.

You know, and I know the trouble parishes are in. Our questions this session give us some worrying statistics. Some 57% of parishes recorded a deficit last year, to a worrying total of £12 million. Last night in the fringe meeting on the Mission and Pastoral Measure, we were told that hundreds of parishes are unable to fill their PCCs, some even to the point of being inquorate. You know this is unsustainable, Synod. I know this is unsustainable. We have been sent here from across the Church to see how best we can support our churches, each in their own context, to be the Church of England in every corner of the land. Where we make the changes we want to see affordable, we are friends to every parish across the land. When we hit them with unaffordable costs, without anything but vague promises to fund them, we risk the very thing that we love.

Our Church is built on the goodwill of volunteers; volunteers who make the tea, do the flowers, open the churches for weddings, but who also take on the burden of being treasurer, safeguarding officer, or even that most ancient office in England, a churchwarden. So much of the life of a volunteer is now taken up with paperwork and process and so many of our volunteers are voting with their feet; they are quitting.

Members of Synod, please, let us not add to the cost of keeping our Christian presence alive in every community. The faculty process is long and can be expensive. Anyone who has been through this knows this. Much of the time it is frustrating, if necessary, but it is exhausting and debilitating for those who are going through it. We in this body, charged with supporting our parish churches, should not be forcing our scarce volunteers to negotiate with DAC, the quinquennium architects, the statutory bodies, the amenity societies and find all that extra money just in order to stay warm.

Later today we are discussing the document *Setting God's People Free*. I note that at no point in this document do we see the word "volunteer" and yet, of all of God's people, volunteers are the most in need of being set free. Set free from the burdens imposed, I regret, by Synod. We may not be able to lift too many of these today, but we can choose not to add to their load.

I ask you to pass this amendment to send the message back to our parishes that we hear you, that we support you and, in our great quest together towards net zero, we are going to enjoy a healthy diet of carrots and leave the stick safely behind here in Westminster.

*The Chair.* I now invite the Dean to respond. You have not more than five minutes.

*Rt Worshipful Morag Ellis QC (Dean of the Arches and Auditor):* Thank you, Fr Walker. Boilers and pipes and all the rest of it, as you say, are the stuff, the fabric of many of our churches. I would not want anybody in Synod to think that the people who have worked on proposing these changes to the Rules do not experience that, or do not know it. If I can be personal for a moment or two, I have spent all but two of my 59 years living in a village, and I absolutely understand the scenario.

Rule 2, which is what is sought to be left out, is not a stick. What it is designed to do is to assist volunteers, and others within the Church to engage with the guidance which is there to help us all. It is there to explain the fast-moving technology and options, and to offer options which do not, for example, build in being fettered to increasingly expensive (as well as damaging) fossil fuels, and store up problems for the next generations of volunteers. It is there to help and Rule 2 is a procedural requirement to ensure that people engage with that help, that they take advantage of that help.

I spoke earlier about the ideal of how conversations should be held with DACs. The obligation for the DAC to indicate its view of how the proposal relates to guidance is there to advise the chancellor, to ensure that the chancellor, or indeed the archdeacon, can themselves be informed by the collective expertise and experience of the DAC as to how this proposal relates to the net zero carbon objectives. In other words, to understand how it relates to putting into force a decision of Synod of February 2020, which I do not understand Fr Walker to be arguing was a bad thing. Quite the reverse, I think. Rule 2 is not a stick and we do not need to get rid of Rule 2 in order to be eating wholesomely vegetarian carrot soup.

*The Chair:* The Dean has informed staff that she opposes this amendment, which means that in order to have a debate on this amendment, 25 members or more need to indicate they wish it so. It appears that the threshold of 25 is not reached so this amendment lapses.

## **ITEM 503**

*The Chair:* That means we now move to Item 503 and I call Marcus Walker to come and speak to and move. You have up to five minutes.

*Revd Marcus Walker (London):* Members of Synod, my understanding of protocol has somewhat failed me. I thought these motions were being taken together. As such, 502 having fallen, I nonetheless commend to you 503, and heartily encourage those whose hands stayed stoically down, even for the question of whether we wanted to impose the paperwork on our churchwardens, et cetera, now to consider the heavy burden of faculties for the building of boilers.

I think I have said all that I needed to say on this. I hope there can be a debate on whether we should be moving the non-fossil fuel boilers, et cetera, out of the list system, and I

heartily commend there at least to be a debate and hopefully a vote in favour of the amendment.

*The Chair.* I now call the Dean to come and respond.

*Rt Worshipful Morag Ellis QC (Dean of the Arches and Auditor):* Thank you, Fr Walker, for your brevity. I will also attempt to be brief. The thing about moving the boilers into the faculty part of things is not to say to parishes “thou shalt never have another oil or gas boiler”, because, in some circumstances, having worked one’s way through the guidance, sadly, that will be the only option. Over time hopefully that will become less and less the case, but sometimes that will be so. Having done the work of working through the guidance, it will then be a straightforward matter to persuade the chancellor of the necessity for a traditional boiler.

If we are to be serious about all the very moving points which people made in the first debate on 500A, if we are to be serious about all of that, and practise what we preach, we should not be perpetuating a situation which just enables parishes to do the same old/same old with boilers. As was said by the speaker on Zoom at the end of the first part of the debate, the thing about the current situation is that we do not even know whether parishes in those circumstances have had a discussion about whether to do something else. It was Paul Ayers who made that point.

Moving it into faculty enables and ensures that that journey is travelled, hopefully, to an outcome away from fossil fuels, but that is the point about bringing it into faculty and, as I say, there will be some faculties that need to be granted, but, ultimately, that decision should be made by the chancellor having weighed the pros and any cons.

*The Chair.* Given that this amendment is also opposed by the Dean, I will need 25 of you or more to indicate that you wish a debate on this item. If you wish to, please indicate that now. There are exactly 25 members, which means this item will now be open for debate. Those wishing to speak please indicate, either on Zoom or in the chamber.

*The Chair* imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

*Revd Preb. Pat Hawkins (Lichfield):* I declare an interest in that I am the chair of the Lichfield DAC. I am that because as a new incumbent, a long time ago, I accepted the invitation to attend a DAC meeting and to find out what went on, and I realised that at the DAC one has access to an enormous amount of expertise which is not normally within the capacity of a parish priest.

I resist the amendment and I urge you to, for the reasons that the Dean of Arches spelt out. I know the faculty process can be long and confusing, but it is a way of enabling parishes to have really expert advice to negotiate through this very complex process of making our heating systems fit for a carbon neutral future.

If you ask me in my parish about boilers I do not even know how to operate the smart meter in my vicarage. You are much better to talk to the DAC and yes, I do have another vested interest: I am the vicar of a Grade I listed building so I will have to justify this to my PCC.

*Revd Canon Dr Tim Bull (St Albans):* Sometimes in life we have to choose between the thing that is right and the thing that is easy. In the parable of the Good Samaritan the right thing was to stop and help the injured man. The easy thing was to cross the road and walk on the other side.

When it comes to the environment and replacing boilers, the right thing may well be to put in a boiler which does not use fossil fuels but the easy thing is to go with what you have always had in the past. You can of course tilt things and have a nudge and alter the odds, or change the default so that the right thing becomes not necessarily easy, but at least a little bit easier. I believe the original motion makes it slightly easier to think about replacing your boiler with something environmentally friendly. If we accept the amendment, that nudge towards the right thing goes away.

Rather than thinking about carrots and sticks, I would encourage you to think in terms of orange traffic cones; orange traffic cones on the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Jericho which encourage travellers to walk on the side on which the injured man is lying. Of course, you can step over the traffic cones, you walk round them, but if we take the traffic cones away, there is a danger that we pass by on the other side, and do not do the right thing.

I would urge you to resist this amendment and to place nice sustainably sourced orange traffic cones on our environmental journey.

*The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell):* I just wanted to speak very briefly to say, on the one hand, I entirely understand the sentiments behind these amendments, and the earnest desire that I think we all share to make life easier for our parishes, who often feel like they are drowning in red tape and things are difficult. I think we all get that.

But as well as it being the right thing to do, not least because we ourselves as Synod made this commitment, nobody else made it for us, the other thing I want to say is I truly believe that the very best way to support our parishes and to help them to grow is to preach the Gospel and build the Kingdom. I think if we in the Church of England can be seen to be taking a lead in this issue, as many people have said in their speeches, that is going to be a very best way that we will become a younger church, because at last people will see that this Christian faith that we share means something. It is actually being lived out in really really hard painful decisions like what you do when you replace your boiler. No, this is not about carrot and stick. I like the image of the cones. I want to say, actually, this is going to be the way that we grow the parish by showing that the Christian faith makes a difference to the way we live our lives.

*The Chair:* After Tim Goode, I intend to test your mind with a motion for closure on this item.

*Revd Canon Tim Goode (Southwark):* I also urge Synod to resist this amendment of Fr Marcus Walker. I have nine years of experience on the Southwark DAC and I can confirm that these conversations regarding the moving of boilers are not binary conversations but are made on a case-by-case basis, always focused though on seeking the greenest solutions. This amendment may inadvertently create loopholes that will offer encouragement to churches which wish to step back from, or even to avoid the challenge that we as Synod so historically set down in February 2020.

Please avoid what could potentially happen here if we accept this amendment, which would be to chip chip chip away at the 2020 decision. It will seriously dilute and damage the prophetic decision of Synod. This faculty amendment is a clear test of the resolve of Synod that it is serious about becoming carbon net zero by 2030. To accept any amendment that Marcus has put forward would be to betray the challenging decision General Synod took two years ago. Please, please resist.

*Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford):* Point of order. Before testing the mind of Synod on the closure, I wonder whether you might be prepared to hear at least one speech in favour of the amendment.

*The Chair:* I am afraid that is not a point of order, but we have heard you, and in testing the mind of Synod, people get the chance to voice an opinion. I propose a motion for closure of the debate on this item.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* I now put Item 503 to the vote by a show of hands.

*The motion was put and lost on a show of hands.*

## **ITEM 504**

*The Chair:* As Item 503 is not carried, I now call the Ven. Luke Irvine-Capel to move Item 504. You have up to five minutes to speak to and move your amendment.

*Ven. Luke Irvine-Capel (Chichester):* Thank you very much for calling me to speak to this proposed amendment relating to the Faculty Jurisdiction (Amendment) Rules, and thank you to all who have contributed to this debate and who have worked so hard to draft these Rules.

As a parish priest and now as an archdeacon, improbable as that seems, I am more than aware that boiler replacement is something that while we urge planning and preparation, the majority of PCCs face only *in extremis*, namely when the existing boiler fails. This most frequently occurs in winter when the boiler is most in demand. My concern in proposing this amendment is not to diminish or dilute in any way the importance or substance of our carbon zero objective, but to support wardens and PCCs in striving towards this ambition through the List B process, which allows the archdeacon and DAC adviser to interrogate the application, and to challenge parishes to explore all reasonable and environmentally appropriate alternatives; encouraging through advice and guidance behaviour that will move the Church towards net zero carbon. I do not think that would achieve less than a faculty petition.

I have already mentioned that most boiler failures occur in winter. While every DAC and chancellor will, I know, expedite petitions as efficiently as possible, the likelihood is that churches will be cold while the petition makes its way through the process. Of course, it is possible to seek an interim faculty but that costs a faculty fee, paid by PCCs in my own diocese, or by the DBF in others. A List B is without charge.

At a time when energy costs are soaring and parishes face many significant financial pressures, we should be doing what we can to reduce costs and process without compromising the wider objective and intention. Indeed, alongside the national Church prioritising this, at the moment through the Live Lent: Care for God's Creation 40-Day Challenge, the Energy Toolkit, CBC guidance on sustainable church buildings, and more local diocesan work to encourage parishes to be proactive in engaging with their options in this area, each archdeacon could also use the annual visitation as an opportunity for raising the profile of the route map to the net zero objective and help PCCs to be proactive in their planning and preparation as alternative provision and technology develops at pace. Of course, an archdeacon can also ask for a List B application to revert to a faculty petition in specific cases.

My concern is that if this is not addressed the result could be non-compliance with faculty jurisdiction or loss of morale among our parishes, particularly for wardens, at a time when we should be doing all we can to rebuild and recover confidence which will strengthen our capacity for working together to achieve the imaginative and ambitious target that this Synod is rightly committed to.

*The Chair:* I now invite the Dean to reply. You have up to five minutes.

*Rt Worshipful Morag Ellis QC (Dean of the Arches and Auditor):* Thank you, Archdeacon, for your speech. The effect of this amendment would be to perpetuate a situation which puts fossil fuel boilers in a preferential position over all other new forms of heating. That is not replacements but new forms of heating. In other words, what it does is have legislation which perpetuates the same old mentality because fossil fuel boilers would have a perceived easier process, a less paper process to go through than other new green forms of heating. That is one reason why I do not support this amendment. It goes

against the spirit and intention of the Rules which so far today a large number, a majority of Synod, have expressed themselves to be in favour of, either by speeches or by voting.

On the point that often breakdowns occur in winter, there is of course no logical reason why that is necessarily the case, unless the boiler has not been switched on at all and tested over the summer months, and/or unless the boiler is getting very elderly and people perhaps during the summer forget that it is getting elderly and do not engage earlier on with the guidance and the process to go through to choose better options, or at least to make an informed decision that it has got to be an oil boiler and nothing else will do.

Putting in that bit of extra process gives a greater incentive to parishes, assisted by DACs, assisted by diocesan environment officers and assisted by the Church Buildings Council guidance to be planning ahead, and having those conversations perhaps in the summer planning ahead rather than facing the situation of being rushed into a “same old” solution.

Suggestions of non-compliance or loss of morale I would really just like, in lawyer speak, respectfully to adopt what his Grace, the Archbishop of York, said a few moments ago in speaking on one of the other suggested amendments, that moving forward in ways which our young people appreciate, care about and are looking to us with eyes of challenge is the way to improve morale within our churches to ensure our future. Certainly what is being suggested here does not encourage non-compliance, and I am sure the archdeacon does not want to encourage non-compliance either.

This amendment is resisted because it runs counter to the spirit of everything else in these Rules which Synod has so markedly and strongly supported today. I urge you not to support this proposed amendment.

*The Chair:* As the Dean opposes this amendment, please stand or otherwise indicate if you wish there to be a vote on this amendment. As more than 25 members indicate they wish a debate to happen, I now open this item for debate.

*The Chair* imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

*Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford):* I hope Synod will support this amendment. In particular, the Dean of the Arches made a couple of practical points which I would like to challenge. The first is that she said there is no reason why boilers are more likely to break down in the winter. Well, members of Synod, I would like you to consider when your own boiler at home last broke down. The fact is they do tend to break down in the winter because they are used more in the winter and things break down more when they are used more. In particular, the danger is they will break down immediately before Christmas, which is one of the best missional opportunities that the Church has to get people through the door. I do contend that people are going to be put off attending church far more by it being freezing cold than by whether things are in List A or List B.



The other point which I think the Dean of the Arches was making was that this amendment would somehow give preferential treatment to fossil fuel boilers over more ecologically advanced alternatives, but my understanding is that the rest of this Measure would actually make it easier to replace fossil fuel boilers by, for example, heat pumps, so that would not be the case and it would not give fossil fuel boilers preferential treatment.

The fact is for a lot of churches they just need to replace their boiler quickly: it has broken down, it is an emergency, funds are short. Parish churches (particularly rural but many churches) are struggling just to keep the place functioning at all and they just need to replace their boiler. We can make it slightly easier for them to do that, having, as the amendment says, explored with the archdeacon whether an environmentally preferable alternative is possible. If a fossil fuel boiler is going to be the viable alternative, let them get done quickly so they can have a nice warm church in time for Christmas to welcome people through the doors.

*The Chair.* After the next two speakers, I will be testing the mind of Synod for a motion for closure.

*Ven. Mark Ireland (Blackburn):* I am the Archdeacon of Blackburn and I would like to speak in support of Archdeacon Luke's amendment. I yield to absolutely nobody in my commitment to seeking to reduce our carbon footprint both personally and as a church, but I also yield to nobody in my concern for frail elderly church members in dioceses like our own. Boilers break down in the middle winter and if people cannot be at a safe temperature to worship for extended periods, it is not helpful.

The reason I am speaking for this amendment as an archdeacon is it strikes me that you have archdeacons; you might as well use us. The whole concept here is not to give preference to fossil fuel boilers but to move everything into List B, which requires the archdeacon to make a judgment in consultation with the DAC adviser, so we have the opportunity to insist that the parish takes advice on its boilers, but we also have the opportunity, the parish having taken that advice, to speed the process through without the unnecessary delay of going through a faculty process, and the unnecessary expense of doing so. I thought that is partly what you had archdeacons for. I encourage you to use that archdeacons you have, which will be both cheaper and quicker.

*Mr Martin Shakespeare (Lichfield):* There has been much discussion about fossil fuel boilers and I have to declare a conflicting interest. I am actually a PCC secretary for my church, so I have to deal with faculty applications. We have just replaced our boiler for a more modern oil boiler. That is because, along with many other rural churches, it is the most practical option as they are of little power supply and I do not have the choice of being able to dig through a buried-over churchyard full of bodies to put in ground source heat pumps.

What are the choices? We still want to reduce our carbon signature, and one thing that has not been discussed today is the fact that replacing like-with-like does not necessarily

mean using the same fuel. In terms of heating oil, we do not need to use fossil fuel heating oil. We can use vegetable kerosene oil, which has exactly the same properties; however, it reduces the carbon signature completely.

I would support this amendment provided it allows us to actually look at the option of using a greener fuel type in the same type of equipment.

*The Chair.* Synod, in order to test your mind I put before you a motion for closure on the debate on Item 504.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair.* I now put Item 504 to the vote. That is unclear so I now put that to a counted vote.

*Revd Neil Patterson (Hereford):* Point of order. May we see if we have support for a vote by Houses, please?

*The Chair.* Once again, if there are 25 members who stand or otherwise indicate that they also would like a vote by Houses, please indicate that now. No, I think not, so I order a counted vote of the whole Synod on Item 504.

*There voted on Item 504: in favour 142, 145 against, with 12 recorded abstentions.  
The motion was lost.*

## **ITEM 505**

*The Chair.* We now continue on to Item 505. I call the Ven. Fiona Gibson to speak to and move the amendments in her name. You have up to five minutes.

*Ven. Fiona Gibson (Hereford):* As a new archdeacon, the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules Lists A and B have become two of my new best friends: a way of helping parishes and people to achieve what they want to in terms of making relatively small changes to make their buildings fit for purpose for mission and ministry for the 21st century; of helping congregations and communities to fulfil their dual responsibility as stewards of heritage buildings, many of them of national significance; and, as members of a living Church, interpreting timeless truths and offering Gospel hope to a new generation.

I welcome the content of the new Faculty Jurisdiction Rules before us today. The significant clauses with their important focus on environmental matters I support wholeheartedly and, yet, for those of us in rural areas there is still a gap in the provisions. Item 12 on cable trenches - stay with me - would provide for the digging of a cable trench and the installation of cables and the attachment of wiring in the trench to enable, under List B, churches to connect to the internet via cables. Yes, and amen, this is marvellous. But, for we country dwellers, there is one big problem with that: what cables?

Many of our churches are so far from existing cable networks that even that provision, very welcome though it is, would not help us. During the earlier stages of the pandemic, once live streaming from churches was permitted, many of our rural churches just could not get online - not for want of technical knowhow among the clergy and congregations, but for want of a signal. Our people felt isolated at a time when they needed us most and longed to see the inside of their church building even if they still could not enter it themselves at that point.

We want to be able to offer online worship from our churches alongside on-site worship. We want to be able to offer our buildings to our villages as community hubs; as places where, for example, those now working from home more regularly, especially those living alone, could come together during the working day and use our buildings, heated by new green technology, as a work space, have lunch and feel connected, or where we could offer homework clubs.

We want to be able to use online giving technology and to have contactless card readers available for those who visit our historic buildings and wish to contribute to the thousands of pounds of insurance, repairs and maintenance costs we have. We want to have QR codes on cards around the building linking to websites explaining aspects of the heritage and aspects of the Christian faith to the thousands of visitors and pilgrims and children on school visits who come to rural churches across the country every year. The common barrier preventing all that from happening is lack of access to the internet. We cannot all use mobile signals instead either as we are plagued by "not spots". We need wireless satellite broadband.

Thankfully, the technology now exists to enable us to join our town and city brothers and sisters online. There are options that would use a small dish on the exterior of church or church hall buildings to give wireless and broadband services. They can be fitted in ways that would be unobtrusive. We could even, subject to the condition in the amendments regarding diocesan registrar involvement, help others in the villages get online as well, sharing wireless broadband services.

This amendment rural proofs the thoughtful provision in Item 12 of the proposed new List B in the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules, extending List B in a way that would bridge the digital divide and make the internet accessible even to those of us who lead and worship in the small, often hidden but deeply significant rural churches across the land. I move Item 505 standing in my name.

*The Chair:* I invite the Dean to reply. You have up to five minutes.

*Rt Worshipful Morag Ellis QC (Dean of the Arches and Auditor):* This one is very straightforward and quick. I would like to thank Archdeacon Gibson for this proposed amendment and for sending it through in good time for us to consider it, to draft it into the necessary statutory language and gratefully to accept it.

*The Chair:* With that in mind, Item 505 is now open for debate.

*The Chair* imposed a speech of two minutes.

*Revd Chris Moore (Hereford):* I am in the same diocese as the admirable Archdeacon of Ludlow over there who makes very good points. The only point I want to add to this in absolute wholehearted support is I have heard, and I am new here, in the tearooms people complaining that they cannot get onto the wi-fi in Synod. Imagine living in the Diocese of Hereford.

*The Chair:* I now invite the Dean to respond.

*Rt Worshipful Morag Ellis QC (Dean of the Arches and Auditor):* I do not want to.

*The Chair:* And she does not wish to. We now put Item 505 to the vote.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

## **ITEM 500B**

*The Chair:* I now call the Dean to come and move Item 500B, "That the Faculty Jurisdiction (Amendment) Rules 2022 as amended be approved".

*Rt Worshipful Morag Ellis QC (Dean of the Arches and Auditor):* May I just clarify that what this means. "As amended" means with Archdeacon Gibson's amendment and not with any of the other amendments.

Well, I do have some experience of trying to get on to the internet in Hereford and surrounding areas because I quite often work in that part of the world and I can sympathise. I have also spent many holidays in the Outer Hebrides with people trying to contact me for various work things.

The serious point is that I am delighted to move these Rules with the Archdeacon's amendment for all the reasons which those who have spoken in favour of these Rules have expressed and even those who have spoken against the Rules have found things in the Rules, matters of principle, to agree with and praise. It does seem to me that there is a clear common mind of Synod and a clear commitment to take these steps to carry through the Resolution of February 2020. I am delighted that the Rules will leave this process, if approved, in better shape because of the Archdeacon of Ludlow's amendment. I commend them to Synod and move that they be accepted as proposed to be amended.

*The Chair:* Item 500B is now open for debate.

*The Chair* imposed a speech limit of two minutes.

*Mr Clive Scowen (London):* I just have a question which I am hoping the Dean of the Arches might be able to illuminate us on. I have been puzzled reading these Rules why there are provisions relating to installing photovoltaic panels on roofs but not for the type of solar panel that generates hot water and I wonder if that could be explained for us.

*The Chair:* I see no one else indicating that they wish to speak in this debate and so I now call the Dean to respond.

*Rt Worshipful Morag Ellis QC (Dean of the Arches and Auditor):* Thank you very much and, as always, Clive Scowen asks penetrating questions. This one at least is not a penetrating question of law. The answer is that it is right that PV panels will produce electricity but not in a form to heat hot water. Certainly, the expert group advising me and the Rules Committee did not suggest that this was an option to pursue in the current state of the technology. In churches, the need for hot water is less than the need for electricity. I know that is not true of all church buildings.

What I would say, and in no way wanting to make a habit of bringing the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules back to Synod terribly regularly, but as technology improves this I am sure is something that we could keep under review. Indeed, depending on how technology evolved, I do not know but conceivably it might fit within the new wordings anyway assisted by guidance. But thank you for the suggestion.

*The Chair:* I put Item 500B, "That the Faculty Jurisdiction (Amendment) Rules 2022 as amended be approved" to the vote.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* The Faculty Jurisdiction (Amendment) Rules 2022 will now be laid before both Houses of Parliament pursuant to the Statutory Instruments Act 1946. That now concludes this item.

THE CHAIR *Canon Izzy McDonald-Booth (Newcastle)* took the Chair at 3.04 pm.

## **SPECIAL AGENDA IV**

### **DIOCESAN SYNOD MOTION**

#### **ITEM 10**

#### **CHALLENGING SLAVERY AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING (GS 2246A AND GS 2246B)**

*The Chair:* Good afternoon, members of Synod. We come to Item 10, Challenging Slavery and Human Trafficking. For this item of business, you will need GS 2246A, GS 2246B and you will also need the corrected text, which hopefully you will see. The Fourth

Notice Paper and Order Paper III are very slightly wrong and so a corrected text has been handed out. That is for the amendment.

I just wanted to say a few words about how we are going to take this item. I am going to ask Alistair Bianchi as the mover of the main motion to speak. I am then going to move straight to the amendment and we will deal with that item of business and then we will move back to the main motion for debate. I would like to ask Alistair Bianchi to come to the podium. He has ten minutes.

*Mr Alistair Bianchi (Durham):* Good afternoon, Chair. It is my pleasure to bring you this motion on behalf of Durham Diocese Synod, and I hope it is not as tense as the vote on boilers that we have just had. It is important for me to note from the outset that the current conversations around trafficking and immigration have moved on since this motion was first raised in Durham in 2018. Therefore, while the subject of this speech is that of the treatment specifically of trafficked minors, we must acknowledge that the issue deeply affects every age category and applies both to international and domestic trafficking.

Therefore, as Durham Diocese, we particularly welcome the amendments being put forward by Southwark Diocese to strengthen the bid and widen the scope, especially in light of the Nationality and Borders Bill currently being debated in the House of Lords. I also must commend to you the Every Child Protected Against Trafficking who put together the Child Trafficking Report from which comes much of the research and recommendations made here today. In 2018, members of Durham Diocese were involved in a national campaign to support a young man, Steven - not his real name - who had become the victim of trafficking as a child, being forcibly moved from Vietnam to the UK at the age of 12 and put to work on a cannabis farm. After four years of slavery, Steven was rescued. However, he now faced the new risk of being deported back to Vietnam where he faced the strong likelihood of being re-trafficked and now, as a professing Christian, undoubtedly would face persecution.

Steven had since been fostered by Revd David Tomlinson, a vicar in Shildon in Durham Diocese and Bishop Paul became involved in petitioning the Government to have the decision to deport him overturned on the basis that Steven as a minor was a victim of child trafficking and not an illegal immigrant. The petition, which garnered over 100,000 signatures, along with the support of the local MP, was successful and Steven was given leave to remain. As a result of the campaign and Steven sharing some of his story at Durham Diocese Synod, this motion was put forward asking the Government to introduce legislation ensuring trafficked minors were given proper protection as victims of crime. Children should, first and foremost, be treated as children.

This is an issue close to my own heart having been involved in helping in the protection and support and rehabilitation of victims of trafficking in the UK and abroad in Ghana. During my time working at a church in Sheffield, where my wife also managed an anti-trafficking charity, we would regularly connect with young families who were given false promises of legal work only to have their passports removed and forcibly put to work in

the most appalling of environments. While leading a church in Ghana, I was witness to the manipulation and lies sold to young people who were seeking a pathway out of the poverty for themselves and their families. One young man we supported was promised a professional football career in South America, while numerous young girls in our congregation were groomed from a very young age by people with links to trafficking. These young people who arrive on our shores are not illegal immigrants. They are victims and, as such, should have the full weight of the law to support and protect them. While there have been developments in Government policy since this motion was first raised in 2018, there remains a great deal of concern about the outcomes for trafficked children particularly as they transition to adulthood, as exemplified by Steven's case.

Concerns remain about measures in the Nationality and Borders Bill which risk progress made in tackling modern slavery and child protection, meaning more children may be left unprotected and at further risk. Trafficked minors in the asylum system face great difficulty with many left languishing in temporary and unsuitable accommodation. We saw this in the tragic case of Mohammed Munib Majeedi, the five year old Afghan boy who fell to his death from a hotel window in Sheffield where his family were placed whilst seeking asylum. Child victims in the asylum system have faced another year of delays further exacerbated by Covid.

A recent report on the experiences of Albanian children found that Home Office delays increased the risk to children and young people in the UK, particularly in the forms of labour and criminal exploitation. The Report finds that the asylum system itself is a push factor for child exploitation as well as leading to other forms of significant harm such as mental health deterioration and increased risk of suicide. There are considerable concerns that the lack of attention paid specifically to protecting children in the Nationality and Borders Bill could have negative impacts both on the child victims of trafficking and children subject to the immigration system who are at risk of exploitation. This risk can be seen in the Bill's creation of a new slavery or trafficking information notice which would be issued to potential victims of modern slavery claiming asylum, setting out a limited time in which a potential victim must provide information to ensure they do not damage their credibility. This disregards the impact of trauma on the ability of victims, especially children, to recall relevant details.

In addition to this, the proof required for a reasonable grounds decision will likely increase with the Bill, further excluding children from support. There are also additional restrictions that exacerbate existing barriers to potential victims of modern slavery. For example, if a potential victim has served a custodial sentence of over a year, they may be denied access to the National Referral Mechanism and the accompanying support. Another example is with this Bill the Secretary of State could be given new powers to make regulations on how to assess age. Since many child victims are coached by traffickers into giving rehearsed stories, provided with false documents or struggle to engage with the age assessment process due to trauma, this puts minors in a highly vulnerable position. It is necessary that an effective system is in place to ensure trafficked minors

receive support and protection. We must ensure the Government is held to account on this.

With regard to the legislative process, our hope is certainly that agreement on this motion will serve to strengthen the consensus of the Church and support for our Bishops as they work on the Nationality and Borders Bill and other legislation in the House of Lords. In addition to this, we are aware of the need of the Church of England to be engaged meaningfully with issues of modern slavery in a local context. A report published by the *Evening Standard* and *The Independent* along with the Independent Anti-slavery Commissioner stated that churches, in being the eyes and ears of our communities, are absolutely key. Both the Salvation Army and the Clewer Initiative have done outstanding work in raising awareness of these issues in local churches around the UK.

There is no doubt that many of our churches regularly come into contact with trafficked individuals who use our food banks, our youth programmes, Messy Churches and numerous other community initiatives, as well as being members of our congregations. As we answer the call to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of prison to those who are bound, it is vital that our churches are equipped to identify those who are held captive and to call on the Government to support those who are the most vulnerable.

## ITEM 23

*The Chair.* I would now like to ask the Ven. Alastair Cutting if he would speak to his amendments. You have five minutes.

*Ven. Alastair Cutting (Southwark):* Thank you, Chair, and especially thank you to my namesake, Ali Bianchi, and the Durham team for bringing us Steven's story which triggered this important motion and debate. Southwark diocesan colleagues and I were pleased to see the motion and were keen to support it and amplify its core message. Historic slavery remains an issue in many of our buildings and we are grateful for excellent examples across our churches of using monuments from the past as positive learning context for today.

This coming Saturday, a priest in Deptford in my archdeaconry has a group coming to their church to make a point about its slavery connections and I hope they will find it a learning experience for them too. We hardly get into the Book of Genesis before we come across slave owners and their slaves. We are familiar with Isiah's declaration, which Ellie has just read out for us, and Jesus proclaimed releasing to the captors in the Nazareth Manifesto in Luke 4 at the forefront of his public ministry, shaping his interactions, and St Paul and others clearly still living with slavery as an issue. Centuries of slavery followed. I know it is not the whole story, but I am still moved whenever I look at the plaque on Holy Trinity, Clapham, recognising the work of William Wilberforce and the Clapham Sect.

Slavery was abolished in 1833, the blue plaque states, hooray! Sadly, almost 200 years later, we know slavery has not been abolished. It is evident in many countries abroad



and, let us not fool ourselves, it is evident still in this United Kingdom as the story of Steven has reminded us. It is not a metropolitan issue either. It affects places like Yorkshire and Gloucestershire and Dorsetshire. If it is happening in the Archers, it is happening near you, and you and I need to respond. This is not just a refugee or foreign issue either. Almost a quarter of potential slave victims referred in 2018 were UK nationals. In Ambridge, it was farm workers and working conditions. IJM, the Christian charity, International Justice Mission, and one of the largest, says modern slavery goes beyond just bad working conditions. People trapped in slavery face physical, verbal and sexual abuse daily and cannot leave to find other work or protect their families. Some of this is "coercive control", which was the phrase used this morning, or "debt bondage" or "sexual exploitation", "criminal exploitation", "domestic servitude", "child trafficking", "organ harvesting".

It can be county lines or postcode lines, putting pressure on youngsters trafficking drugs and holding weapons such as happens in a deprived estate parish in my archdeaconry where an incredible and much loved Church Army evangelist helps intervene daily in life-changing, practical ways. Slavery is a global pandemic and we have peaks of it across our country now, an estimated 136,000 in the UK at the moment. So what do we do? What might the actions, as Lord Boateng put it yesterday, be? This amendment seeks to address slavery in very practical ways. We want to thank the Government of 2022 for steps that they have taken and ask them to continue to take bold decisions as the Government of 1833 did. Sections (a) and (b) of the full proposal now seek to do this.

Section (c) of the amendment seeks to raise awareness. The Church of England's slavery response, the Clewer Initiative, and IJM and others have excellent resources like the Clewer Carwash app, their Farm Wash app, the Farm Welfare app. In this motion, we want to encourage people to use these sorts of resources.

Some contexts need more than awareness raising though. Section (d) talks more precisely about training. There is an issue about training, about funding and about expectations around ramming yet more modules into already overfull curricular. This motion is not seeking to mandate additional expenses or workloads. It is encouraging those who are involved in training people, particularly those in recognised and authorized ministry to use resources provided by others or even finetune the resources that Clewer and others have. Some links were on the bottom of the sheet. I will not go through them now. They did not get translated. I am sorry about the hiccup with this.

Section (e) recognises that, often, there is a trafficking element around slavery. We are part of a global Church, part of an Anglican Communion across the world and this is Lambeth Conference year and so the motion seeks to make use of the opportunities there. The final section is a reminder that our freedom is in Christ. It is Jesus who sets us free and IJM encourages us to be a prayerful people over this issue because prayer changes things.

Synod, I urge you to wholeheartedly support this friendly, strengthening amendment, adding our support to the voice of the Church in this and in many other places.

*The Chair:* I would now like to ask Ali Bianchi to respond to the proposed amendment.

*Mr Alistair Bianchi (Durham):* Thank you, Alastair. Just to say, we fully welcome and support the proposed amendment and we are very grateful for the work that Alastair has done to put this forward.

*The Chair:* We now open the debate for the amendment only.

*Mrs Nadine Daniel (Liverpool):* I should declare a personal interest. I am a former National Refugee Welcome Officer for the Archbishops' Council and, prior to that, the Anti-Slavery Officer for the Diocese of Liverpool. I think this amendment in general is very good, but I am concerned in particular by paragraph (c) and especially in particular (c)(i). Be in no doubt, Synod, that the people who traffic other people are not nice people. Even at a local level in Borchester, they are not nice.

I am concerned that people, perhaps with a little bit of learning - and it is always a dangerous thing to have a little bit of learning - will go in with a saviour complex to hoick young South Asian men out of nail bars and West African women out of domestic servitude and newly arrived Hong Kongers from the kitchens of Chinese restaurants. That is dangerous. The reason I am no longer the National Refugee Welcome Co-ordinator is we ran out of money because it was a project. I pray that the Racial Justice Commission will not be a project.

The Clewer Trustees fund Clewer, not us, and they do not have the resources to make training available. I have tried to train parishes and deaneries and dioceses and it is hard work. If it is under-resourced, then, best case scenario, the people who you are trying to save will be lost. They will disappear into the system as tens of thousands of them did during lockdown. Worst case scenario, people in your church will get hurt.

*The Bishop of Dover (Rt Revd Rose Hudson-Wilkin):* While I welcome this addition that the Ven. Alastair Cutting has included, I want us generally to be aware that, actually, it is our congregations. This cannot just be left to synods and gatherings of bishops, et cetera. We need to be engaging our congregations with this message because it is our congregations who are voters. It is our congregations who are sending messages to their parliamentarians about those who are not English and those who do not belong. I really want this to be something that becomes embedded in our sermons, in our conversations, in our parishes and not just, as the last speaker said, a project that we engage in.

*Mr Luke Appleton (Exeter):* I would love to think that Boris Johnson waits by the phone just waiting to hear from General Synod about his direction of travel but, unfortunately, I do not think that is the case. This amendment is just a brilliant thing, Alastair, which is really giving some detail and some real teeth to a general principle that I think we all agree

with and so I just wanted to thoroughly commend and hope that we are in favour of the amendment.

*Ven. Pete Spiers (Liverpool):* I am in a genuine quandary about this because, as I understand it, the amendment is removing asking Her Majesty's Government to introduce legislation, et cetera, and the rest of it is all inwardly focused on the Church. If we pass this amendment, my understanding is that we are not going to be aiming anything at the Government and I think that would be a pity. Whilst I, on the one hand, welcome the amendment because it gives fuller information, I regret that, in doing so, we will remove that clause. I would have thought the very fact that we do so much work and are doing so much work, and the Bishops in the Lords speak about that, that gives us the right to speak to Government about that. I am in a real quandary and I am surprised as it seems to be an unintended consequence, but if I have got that wrong and someone can point out how this amendment aims anything at the Government then I would be grateful.

*Mrs Maureen Cole (ex officio):* This is my maiden speech and I was not expecting to speak. I have two stories as an individual, as a Christian in a church. I have a friend who I have known since she was ten. She is now in her twenties. She was trained to be a nurse in Kenya. She had no work from that and somebody tried to groom her by buying her chicken and chips. As a result, she ended up in an Arab country and not doing nursing as promised. I am so grateful that a friend managed to rescue her and it was by God's grace that she was rescued and thank goodness that, in the school and the community she lives in, she is an advocate to help people of her age understand how they can be trafficked.

My other story is I had the privilege when I was diocesan secretary in Derby to spend a day with the Metropolitan Police Modern Slavery Human Trafficking Unit.. They shared stories about how we could observe what was going on in our communities and I was shocked by some of the stories. Actually, I know vicars along the M1 and how often do you see vans outside lorries and that sometimes can - and again I have to be careful - be a stop-off point for actually distributing people who have been trafficked. My awareness has grown by the Clewer Initiative and that experience and also my personal experience and I think we can all have a part to play in driving some of this slavery out that so often we did not know about. I really endorse this motion.

*Mr Robert Perry (Truro):* This is my maiden speech as well, but I will be brief. I want to support this motion, the amendment, and the substantive motion, but I know the first line of paragraph (b) is incomplete. If you look at it, it says, "Ask Her Majesty's Government to update and ensure the proper protection of minors". There are some words missing. Perhaps, I do not know, "legislation to ensure", I do not know. But I think that correction itself needs correcting.

*Revd Alicia Dring (Derby):* I would like to begin by thanking the people for amending the amendment to include in that first paragraph the bit that Pete said was missing. Thank you for the amended amendment because now I can vote for it properly. I am from the

Diocese of Derby and we have a close interest in this issue. Our former diocesan Bishop, Alastair Redfern, was the primary catalyst for the Modern Slavery Act. Following his retirement, he became Chair of Trustees of the Clewer Initiative who seek to continue to campaign and raise awareness across the Church on issues of modern slavery.

This motion and the amendment from the Dioceses of Durham and Southwark builds on all of that work before to highlight the desperate plight of the children struggling with the bureaucracy designed to help them and insufficient resources to make that help a reality across the nation. We can only encourage and support this motion and amendment to facilitate the additional protection and finance needed to care for those who have been abused and exploited. We cannot allow our British passion for paperwork and our indifference to lack of resources to put these children in further danger. Along with the Clewer Initiative, who helped to craft this amendment, and the work of the Children's Society and its President, the present Bishop of Derby, Libby Lane, we must continue to highlight the appalling crimes of slavery, exploitation and human trafficking.

Our congregations are the eyes and ears of our communities. Let us equip them to be vigilant and then together may we continue to pray, to lobby our MPs and local authorities and to keep this issue on the agenda of our PCCs, deanery and diocesan synods so that those who are most vulnerable are not forgotten. Ladies and gentlemen, I urge you to support this motion and amendment.

*The Chair:* After the next speech, I might test the mind of Synod for closure.

*Revd Martin Poole (Chichester):* This is also my maiden speech. I am the diocesan lead on modern slavery and I also chair Together in Sussex and together we have been working with the Roman Catholic Diocese of Arundel and Brighton. In October last year, we commissioned 15 anti-modern slavery ambassadors across the network and we have just begun discussions with Guildford Diocese who also want to set up the same thing. I wanted to just commend Synod to consider that our Roman Catholic brothers and sisters are doing a very good job in this as well and that we should be partnering with them as much as our own dioceses and deaneries because this is a grassroots project.

The anti-modern slavery ambassadors are parish based. They are trained to be able to give information to their locality. I guess if I had a dream for this, it would be that the whole country had a network of anti-modern slavery ambassadors that could serve their local deaneries and their local parishes with training and information and act as a point of contact for this important initiative. I commend this amendment and the whole motion.

*The Chair:* I now wish to test the mind of Synod on whether Item 23 has been sufficiently debated. I, therefore, put the motion for closure on Item 23.

*Revd Graham Hamilton (Exeter):* Point of order. I fully want to support this amendment, but I cannot quite make sense of it, "To ask Her Majesty's Government to update [missing word] legislation to ensure [missing word] that" would make sense of the motion as we

see it, but also answer Pete Speirs's point, what are we asking the Government to do? It is not for me to move an amendment, but I think something needs to be done and I do not know how.

*The Chair:* If you would just give us a moment. So, 23(b), I am going to read out the version that we are putting forward: "Ask Her Majesty's Government to ensure the proper protection of minors who are trafficked and enslaved is enshrined in law, including updating the 2018 Working Together to Safeguard Children Statutory Guidance" et cetera. We are removing one word. I would still like to test the mind of Synod on whether to close Item 23. I, therefore, put the motion.

*Revd Mark Miller (Durham):* Point of order. Could we have a counted vote, please?

*The Chair:* This is a vote on the closure. If 25 people stand, I will take a counted vote.

*Revd Mark Miller (Durham):* Apologies, I may have asked a bit early.

*The Bishop of Durham (Rt Revd Paul Butler):* It was an honest mistake.

*Revd Mark Miller (Durham):* I am new here and I am very obedient to my Bishop. He and I will be speaking later, sorry.

*The Chair:* Thank you. Those in favour of the motion for closure on Item 23, please show, and those against the motion for closure.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* I would now like to take a vote on Item 23.

*Revd Mark Miller (Durham):* I have not even done a maiden speech yet. We are about to take a note on something that we are asking Her Majesty's Government to do. Could we take a counted vote, please.

*The Chair:* We will have a counted vote.

*The motion was put and carried, 301 voting in favour, 2 against, with 3 recorded abstentions.*

## **ITEM 10 (AS AMENDED)**

*The Chair:* We now return to Item 10 (as amended). This item is now open for debate. I would like to call the Bishop of London, Sarah Mullally, and then the Bishop of Bristol. You have five minutes.

*The Bishop of London (Rt Revd & Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE)*: Thank you, Chair, for calling me. Thank you also to the Durham team for bringing this motion and to Alastair Cutting for his amendment. We can, of course, point to the Modern Slavery Act and pride ourselves for setting the international standard on this issue, but if we truly believe that all human beings are made in the image of God and are equally valued in God's sight, there is much for us as a Church and also for the Government to do.

In December 2020, the Domestic Abuse Commissioner Report, *Safe to Share*, found that victims and witnesses with insecure or uncertain immigration status are fearful of reporting crimes to the police. They believe that their information will be shared with the Home Office and they fear disbelief, destitution and deportation. Research shows that for this reason one in two migrant victims do not report abuse. Perpetrators often exploit this insecure status. *Safe to Share* called for a review of data sharing arrangements between the police and the Home Office and proposed an establishment of a firewall.

The Government review's contents, which was published in December 2021, contradicted the findings of *Safe to Share* arguing that data sharing with the agency now known as the Immigration Enforcement is essential to protect the victims. It rejects the possibility of a firewall and proposes instead a Migrant Victim Protocol. Human rights organisations argue that this is not a viable alternative to safe reporting. There is a clear conflict of interest between upholding immigration rules whilst also offering safeguarding to vulnerable victims.

The same issue was raised again during the passage of the Domestic Abuse Bill which received Royal Assent in March 2021. Despite multiple positive measures that the Act introduced, the Government did not provide recognition to the particular difficulties of migrant women in abusive relationships. The loophole has appeared again in the Nationality and Borders Bill, which is why I tabled an amendment last night/early this morning in the House of Lords which sought to ensure that personal details of victims of domestic abuse are processed with the sole aim of allowing victims to seek support and to prevent those details from being shared for immigration control purposes. It again was resisted by the Government.

The present state of the Nationality and Borders Bill legislation is failing the most vulnerable in our society. Meanwhile, churches are working in partnership with statutory and non-statutory agencies to empower survivors of modern day slavery and facilitate freedom. In October 2019, in the Diocese of London we set up a steering group to develop a coherent strategy to improve pastoral responses for victims of modern slavery. We have worked closely with the Church of England's Clewer Initiative and the crisis charity, Hestia, who have partnered with a parish in West London in their work with survivors.

Our Compassionate Communities Team have driven much of this work, offering a training called *Hidden Voices*, facilitated by Clewer, designed to equip churches and communities to respond to modern slavery in a way which is pastoral but is also safe. At All Souls,

Langham Place, the Tamar Project provides holistic support for trafficked women through counselling, workplace visits, medical appointments and English lessons connected to local commissioned services and prayer for individual needs.

Many other churches right across the capital and elsewhere are in the frontline of this work. Modern slavery victims attend food banks, closing banks, night shelters and soup kitchens. Towards the end of 2021, the exhibition, *Art is Freedom*, curated by Hestia, featured work by survivors of modern day slavery. The resilience and the remarkable gifts of the contributors are a powerful reminder to us that at every level of Government, local community and of the Church, we need to step up what we do if we truly are going to care for the most vulnerable in our society. I support this motion and this amendment.

*The Bishop of Bristol (Rt Revd Viv Faulkner)*: I will be brief. Firstly, to thank Bishop Sarah and Bishop Paul who, with some others of us, are working so closely on the Nationality and Borders Bill and to some personal cost. Bishop Sarah and Bishop Paul were up until silly o'clock this morning in the House of Lords and I am grateful for that because it may mean that I do not have to be up until silly o'clock tomorrow. Tomorrow in the House of Lords, proposals will come which will undermine current modern slavery legislation. I, therefore, look to the support of this Synod as I do speak into that debate and offer some proposals for amendment.

The Victims Commissioner, Vera Baird, and the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner, Sara Thornton, are deeply and publicly critical of the latter parts of the Nationality and Borders Bill because of the way it will undermine current legislation. The current proposals fail to understand what being a victim of slavery means. Two examples, and I heard stories which illustrate these examples from victims and survivors just last week. Firstly, under the new legislation as proposed, a victim may lose support if - and Alastair has referred to this in his initial proposal of this amendment - they have been convicted of a criminal offence with a sentence of 12 months or more anywhere or at any time. Just imagine what risk that puts sex workers at who have been trafficked and young people who have been caught up in county lines where they are pushed onto the frontline and are found guilty in court in this country or anywhere else across the globe.

Secondly, the legislation as proposed puts time limits on disclosure. We know from our own work in safeguarding that it takes time for those who are victims and survivors to tell the truth. That is because the truth for them emerges piecemeal and over time as they find their voice. That truth telling is going to be inhibited. As I work tomorrow with colleagues across the road to amend this legislation, and as we continue to lobby Government, and to my friend, Pete Spiers, we do have close contact now with Members of the House of Commons and ministers in the Commons and the Lords working to amend this poor legislation, I ask you to give this motion as amended the strongest possible support so that I can speak with the support of this Synod and of the Church of England and continue the pioneering and courageous work begun by Alastair Redfern and Clewer.

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby):* The amended motion asks for consideration to be given to the Lambeth Conference including something on modern slavery. The programme is already decided and, obviously, with a telepathic grasp of what you were going to do when we were deciding this last year, we do have something in there on it.

*The Chair* imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

*Ms Venessa Pinto (Leicester):* I support this motion and I support the amendment, but I would like to also begin by sharing a story which has deeply impacted me and may also highlight why the motion and the amendment is so important and why, particularly, children and young people who have been victims of slavery and human trafficking require additional protection and robust support, not just from the Government but from the Church.

Mary - not her real name - was trafficked to Britain from West Africa when she was 14, forced to work as a domestic worker and locked up in a house by a relative. When, two years later, she finally escaped and was formally identified as a victim of human trafficking, she was placed in semi-independent accommodation with very little support. There, she befriended a man. In spite of his increasing violence towards her, she became pregnant. She was still only a minor herself. The baby was put on the Child Protection Register from birth because of the ongoing situation of domestic violence. However, Mary received very little support from the authorities and felt she had few options. It was only after receiving support from one of the charity organisations working with trafficked children that Mary felt that she was finally listened to and she was able to build up some confidence in her life and parenting skills.

Mary's story is a true story that was actually shared a few years ago by the international charity Anti-Slavery, but Mary's story is not unique because extensive research from the Children's Society highlights that victims of slavery and human trafficking, particularly minors, fall through the gaps in services and are often left to be victimised again and again. Yes, there is support for children and young people in the UK who have been identified as victims of slavery and human trafficking, but there are still some huge challenges that a minor may face in accessing support.

I personally have heard from children and young people themselves who have been victims of slavery that they need support to thrive and not just to survive and I believe that that is absolutely vital. However, structural barriers often remain at the heart of stopping minors from enjoying their rights following identification because too many are languishing in unsuitable accommodation without adequate mental health support and, in some cases, are facing significant harm. It is absolutely crucial that there is also investment and ongoing robust support for local agencies to protect and provide specialist care and support for minors who have been identified as victims of slavery.



I would like to end by just saying this. It is important that we continue to remind ourselves that Jesus's audaciousness serves as a guidepost for us this season and always, how we too may be voices against oppression, be channels of good news and actively support those young people and children that have been exploited and deliberately silenced. So please do support this motion and amendment.

*Revd Matthew Beer (Lichfield):* I wholeheartedly support this motion thanking Her Majesty's Government for the hard work that they have done in challenging slavery and human trafficking and also the work of the Durham Diocese for raising this incredibly important motion. I would also like to thank you for the work that the Bishops have put into this too.

Please let us commend to this Synod the work of Gospel-centred ministry walking alongside the Government, like that of the International Justice Mission whose painstaking work to bring freedom from captivity those around the world in places that some of us have never even heard of. Slavery and human trafficking is a blight on our post-modern individualistic society where out of sight and out of mind is a real challenge and the reality that each of us face on a daily basis by what clothes we wear, the coffee we drink or the practices that our culture have fallen into.

Of course, we know that sex trafficking is on the up across the world and did not cease with the global pandemic but, in fact, got easier for perpetrators due to the online nature of our Western society. May I plead with this Synod that this is not something we just tick off an agenda but commit our time, prayer, efforts and resources to stamping out slavery and trafficking here and around the world. This is not just happening in far-flung places but happening in our towns and cities where we all serve and minister.

Where I serve in Telford in the West Midlands, human trafficking has been a part of our growing town's history, not only in recent years with the human trafficking brought to us by Operation Chalice, but where real people are carrying the scars and families have been destroyed by trafficking. Very recently, in a conversation with the leaders of the West Mercia Police, we discovered over 120 people are currently being trafficked in our town alone due to county lines and our geographical position. Friends, let us not just ask the Government to introduce this legislation but be part of the solution to end this in our nation and around the globe.

*The Chair:* I am going to take one more speech and then I am going to test the mind of Synod for closure.

*Revd Canon Dr Rachel Mann (Manchester):* Since our project a decade ago began to help those free from slavery, we have assisted between 400 and 500 people. They have been trafficked for labour and for the sex trade. They often come from such countries as Romania, Hungary, the Baltic states and Vietnam, but also it should be noted a few are from within England and Ireland. We assist through conversation classes, providing

clothing, helping with special events and other help we can. We have organised walks and, with the help of the Whitworth Gallery, art classes.

A key point we have discovered is simply being welcoming and being friendly. This is crucial for those who so often are profoundly lacking in self-esteem. I was asked to share those words in this debate by a priest from a parish in Manchester Diocese whose community works both to end slavery and human trafficking whilst being committed to a Jesus Christ-centred and shaped cherishing of all those who have been trafficked. Those stats, 400 to 500 people, should leave none of us to doubt the horrifying pervasiveness of modern slavery. As the Durham motion reminds us, trafficked children are increasingly exploited through county lines' gangs, finding themselves trapped between victimhood and criminalisation.

It will come as no surprise then that I speak in support of the motion before us and I am pleased to hear of the extra substance brought by the amendment. In the light of the Nationality and Borders Bill progressing through Parliament, the UK Government is in serious danger of damaging the good work of the ground-breaking 2015 Modern Slavery Act.

The Nationality and Borders Bill risks making the lives of already traumatised and incredibly vulnerable human beings even worse. Imagine the horror of living with the trauma of having been trafficked and traumatised whilst having one's credibility as a victim further undermined. This legislation before Parliament threatens the human rights credibility of the UK Government and, by implication, our nation. Synod, if we say yes in praise of the 2015 Act, I hope too that, however faintly, our Government hears through us the deep cry for the work of love and justice to be ever more embedded in public policy and law rather than be hollowed out.

God calls us to loosen the bonds of wickedness, to undo the bands of the yoke and to let the oppressed go free and such justice demands can be given legislative form. I fear this nation's current direction of travel risks reinscribing bonds rather than tending wounds, oppressing the vulnerable rather than setting our trafficked siblings free to lead flourishing lives. I commend wholeheartedly, Synod, this motion to you.

*The Chair:* I now wish to test the mind of Synod on whether Item 10 has been sufficiently debated. I, therefore, put the motion for closure on Item 10.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* That is clearly carried. In that case, I would like to ask Ali Bianchi to come and respond to the debate. He has five minutes.

*Mr Alistair Bianchi (Durham):* Thank you so much for your engagement in the debate and for hearing some of the stories and the insights from across the country of what you have been involved in. Particularly picking up on some of what was said about how we embed

this in the local congregations, I think that is key. Thank you, Bishop Rose, for bringing that to our attention and also raising awareness across the board. Martin from Chichester, thank you for that. I think that is absolutely central, that we do not just defer to a legislative process but we actually embed this in our communities to help identify and support victims where we can.

Stories from across the board which are just incredibly inspiring to me, hearing how members of Synod are already engaged in this across the country. Thank you, Venessa, for your story about Mary. Rachel, the work that you are doing in Manchester is fantastic, as well as Maureen, thank you for that. It was really great to hear from Bishop Viv from Bristol talking about the work. This is the urgency of where we are at right now and I hope that we will give the full support of Synod behind the work that our Bishops are doing into the early hours, it seems. We did not realise they did work. That is not fair, that is not true. I would encourage every one of us, please, do give full support to this as it goes through the House of Lords. They need as much support as they can get in this process, particularly, with, yes, the Nationality and Borders Bill going through.

Some coherent strategies, again the need to work in partnership. Clewer, particularly again I would recommend the work that they do. Lovely to hear about IJM as well. I worked very closely with IJM in Ghana and I can say that what they do is phenomenal work right around the world and so I would highly commend that work to you and to look at ways in which we can work alongside those people. Thank you, Nadine, for the warning about work, the challenge of the work and the risks involved and, for sure, to get adequate training for churches and awareness for churches so we do not have people with the best of intentions putting themselves in danger and potentially putting others in danger too.

Again, fantastic to hear that Archbishop Justin has been listening to the Holy Spirit and it is going to be presented at Lambeth Conference and we are really pleased about that. Also, many people spoke about the need to pray as this is an international issue and it comes right to our doorsteps as well and so we desperately need God to turn up in these circumstances and situations, so I would please encourage every one of you to be praying and supportive wherever possible.

*The Chair.* I am minded, given the importance of this issue, to take a counted vote of the Synod using Standing Order 37(2). This is about a counted vote of the whole Synod on Item 10 as amended.

*The motion was put and carried, 331 voting in favour, none against, with no recorded abstentions.*

*The Chair.* Thank you, Synod, for an excellent debate. We now move to Item 11.

THE CHAIR *Ms Debbie Buggs (London)* took the Chair at 4.10 pm.

## **ITEM 11**

## REPORT OF THE REVIEW OF CLERGY REMUNERATION (GS 2247)

*The Chair:* We come to Item 11, Report of the Clergy Remuneration Review. Members will need paper GS 2247 and Third Notice Paper, which is the Financial Memo, and you will need paragraphs 8 to 12 of that. I call on the Bishop of Hereford to speak to this item. He may speak for up to ten minutes.

*The Bishop of Hereford (Rt Revd Richard Jackson):* The Clergy Remuneration Review is a response to a request from the House of Clergy to review the adequacy of the clergy remuneration package. It is the first major review to take place since Generosity and Sacrifice 20 years ago. It was soon clear that we needed to look at appropriateness and affordability as well as adequacy. I do want to pay tribute to other members of the Committee and particularly Patrick Shorrocks and Kevin Norris, the staff here at Church House, for their outstanding support in this process. The Report follows careful consultation with clergy and dioceses and we are very grateful to over 3,700 clergy who responded to a survey. We had hoped that the Report would be debated last July. Unfortunately, that debate was deferred when Synod's Agenda was reduced to enable it to take place online.

One benefit of this delay is that more people have had time to engage with the Report and to give us valuable feedback. We are also aware that many clergy are increasingly anxious about heating their vicarages as a result of the increases in fuel costs. The review is focusing on a long-term approach to clergy remuneration. However, we fully acknowledge the immediate financial concerns of clergy and these will be taken into account when considering future stipend increases. Our work was undertaken during the pandemic, a period when clergy have been at the forefront of innovation and sustaining pastoral care.

As Bishops, on behalf of the whole Church, I want to say thank you to clergy for this dedicated, loving service, sustained in the face of unprecedented challenges. Maintaining morale in the face of these challenges is vital. It is important to support the proportion of clergy who told us that they are facing financial hardship and feeling anxious about their financial wellbeing and retirement income. We hope to reassure them of the Church's commitment to seeking to preserve the value of their remuneration package whilst ensuring that it is affordable. Over the 20 years since Generosity and Sacrifice, the value of the stipend has failed to keep up with inflation, although more generally earnings have also fallen behind outside the Church. Unfortunately, the aspirations of the Generosity and Sacrifice Report have proved to be unrealistic. The global financial crisis of 2008 required further adjustment with changes made to the Clergy Pensions' Scheme in 2008 and 2011 in order to keep it affordable and in the context of changes to the state pension.

We are aware that these changes are a source of anxiety and one of the reasons that prompted the review. Despite all this, the Clergy Survey last year found that most clergy, 62%, reported living comfortably or doing all right. 13% were finding it quite or very

difficult to manage and 25% were just getting by. This suggests that stipends are still at a level that is adequate for the majority but not for all. The review team estimated the overall package of stipend, housing and a non-contributory defined benefit pension scheme is worth around £50,000. This includes a stipend of around £27,000, housing and a pension giving a guaranteed income in retirement. A large proportion of the package consists of not being faced with costs faced by many of their parishioners.

These benefits include payment of water charges, exemption from council tax - for which the DBF is liable - and tax benefits through the heating, lighting and cleaning scheme. We are aware that housing provided for the better performance of duty can be a mixed blessing. The provided house can bring anxieties about housing yourself in retirement. Nevertheless, there was general support for maintaining provided housing whilst enabling some additional flexibility. It is seen as beneficial to their ministry for clergy to live among the communities where they minister. Stipendiary clergy also receive a non-contributory defined benefit pension. Such schemes are becoming increasingly rare in the wider world.

As part of the review, an assessment of the adequacy of the current pension provision was commissioned by pensions specialists, Barnett Waddingham. This concluded that, when combined with the state pension, the pensions currently provided to clergy are more than sufficient for a moderate standard of living in retirement and that very few individuals in the general population achieve this standard of living without significant additional savings from their earnings. While no stipend is likely to be adequate for all, given clergy's diverse range of financial and personal circumstances, our Review Group agreed that as an overall package it is adequate for the majority, although there is a need to focus on how better to support the clergy who told us they are just getting by or are experiencing financial difficulties.

In making recommendations about how the package might be improved for those struggling, affordability was a major consideration. Responses to the Clergy Survey suggested that there was very limited capacity to increase funding for clergy stipends and pensions through giving and increases in parish share. A significant increase in the cost of clergy remuneration would create undue pressure for dioceses and parishes. As it is, dioceses are facing difficult decisions about the numbers of parochial clergy that can be afforded. In this context, it is important not to promise more than we can deliver and focus on targeted additional support for those clergy who are experiencing financial hardship. Uplifts across the board may not always go where they are most needed.

Turning to the recommendations and, in particular, the review's recommendations to help those clergy who are struggling financially, a key recommendation of the review is the commitment on the part of the Church to maintain the overall value of stipends and pensions against inflation in the future.

At the end of last year, the Archbishops' Council formally agreed to adopt a policy that National Minimum Stipend (NMS) will in future, on average, increase in line with inflation

as measured by CPIH. This policy to seek to increase stipends in line with inflation over the medium term, whilst paying regard to affordability concerns, will be subject to three yearly reviews and the need to review this position if persistently high levels of inflation establish themselves. Ultimately, improvements in stipend depend on improvements in giving and improvements in the number of givers. We are aware that there is a need for greater flexibility, especially with provided housing, for example where the parsonage house might not be suitable for the needs of the cleric. We have drafted guidance which we hope will enable greater flexibility, consistency and clarity across a range of circumstances.

The review concluded that having a reliable pension is a necessary consequence of providing a house for the better performance of duties. Many clergy face additional housing costs in retirement at a time when their income is reduced. The review did not recommend any change to the nature of the pension element of the package. We considered a defined benefit pension scheme an appropriate option that was particularly valued by clergy. The review does recommend that some tweaks to the pension scheme would be helpful in relation to ill-health retirement provision and the maximum accrual period. Specifically to help those clergy who are struggling most financially, the review has recommended that guidance be produced on circumstances in which it might be appropriate to make additional payments to clergy on the basis of need and this will be explored and consulted on in due course.

Further, the recommendations include that targeted additional support for those clergy who are experiencing financial hardship, along with greater availability of financial education signposting and support across the Church should be provided. The review recommends a comprehensive communication and engagement strategy to support clergy with financial planning and exploring options to help clergy to get on the housing ladder. We are also in regular communication with the Clergy Support Trust to look at how help is provided for clergy who are experiencing financial hardship. Deaf and disabled clergy reported in the Clergy Survey and through a focus group that they were more likely to face additional costs and financial hardship and the review has made a recommendation to establish a diversity fund for this purpose and to help dioceses make appropriate adjustments not covered by access to work and we want to hold further discussions with deaf and disabled clergy to shape how such a fund might operate.

Taken together, we hope these recommendations, along with others set out in the Report, provide affordable and appropriate measures to help support and enhance clergy wellbeing and I commend this Report and invite Synod to take note.

*The Chair.* This item is now open for debate.

*The Chair* imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

*Revd Roger Driver (Bath & Wells):* Vocational call is part of what being a disciple is and it is really important to us all. I am reminded of a secular example of what vocation might

look like. It may or may not have ever been printed, but here are the words alleged to Ernest Shackleton: "Men wanted for hazardous journey. Small wages. Bitter cold. Long months of complete darkness. Constant danger. Safe return doubtful. Honour and recognition in case of success. Sir Ernest Shackleton". I was grateful for Archbishop Stephen's homily this morning and that little quote from Mark Twain, "It ain't the parts of the Bible that I can't understand that bother me, it's the parts that I do understand".

The chapter before the one we heard this morning is Mark 6, and these are the words, these were Jesus' instruction: "Take nothing for the journey, no staff, no bread, no bag, no money in your belts. Wear sandals but not an extra shirt. Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you leave that town". It is simplicity or is it naivety following a vocational call? Way back, I did an ACM Selection Conference and, perhaps surprisingly for some, the topic of remuneration packages did not appear over those few days. No questions were asked. What it centred on was a discussion and discernment of call.

For me, pre ordination meant low paid work. I left school at 16. I worked in shops. I worked in a takeaway. I worked on a beach hut on Weymouth beach. Coming into ordained ministry at the age of 26 was an uplift for me in income. The realities of ministry as it unfolded for me were then working on an outer estate in Liverpool and in inner city Liverpool. I was the highest paid person in the congregation living in the biggest house. For 23 years, I never claimed full expenses because I knew the Church could not afford it. I know all the arguments saying that you should do it, but it was then the public aspect of doing that but then the private aspect of giving which was confusing. I, indeed, remember when I became an area dean going into supporting interregnums and the treasurer after a few months saying, "Our giving has gone down following the departure of the clergy". That is the giveaway of what was happening.

In Liverpool, support was given for those in UPAs at the time around insurance and money to pay for people to come and stay in the vicarage. I could go on. The realities of the stipend became further apparent when I moved from inner city Liverpool to Bath. My car insurance dropped by two-thirds. My house contents insurance was half. I am now one of the lowest paid people in my congregation and my house blends in with everyone else's. We have already heard, and we can see written down, the appeal to go to charities for support. I am grateful for Bishop Richard's words about targeted approach because I wonder in the approach that the Clergy Support Trust give, is there methodology that may help us? My son was ordained four years ago. I have been ordained 32 years this year. We are both, give or take a few hundred pounds, on the same stipend. In a sense, I think that is witness to a secular world. I wonder if we can do variable stipends. We do have that in our Church but that is related to senior office. That is for another debate.

*Mrs Clare Williams (Norwich):* In response to points made at the end of the Report regarding issues for further consideration by this Synod, I would like to respond briefly to point 2, clergy who are finding it difficult to manage and how to assist with planning for retirement. While I recognise the reason for the angle of this point, I would like to bring to our attention clergy at the other end of the scale. I am concerned particularly for clergy

who are just starting out, perhaps those faithful sisters and brothers in their early 20s who are ready to give their whole working lives to ordained ministry. There is a decreasing number of such candidates in the Church of England and we might begin to wonder if finances are in part a reason for that decline.

For young ordinands, there may be an additional number of pressures: a lack of savings from having worked in a different role prior to ordination, the difficulties getting onto the housing ladder and potentially young children to support. I really hope that this particular aspect of provision can be looked at. I personally am aware of ordinands currently in training who are having to use food banks in order to get by and in some cases to feed their children. Surely, those offering themselves for ministry in this way should not be in the position of having to choose between heating and eating - as, indeed, no one should.

If anything, we might hope to be able to offer an incentive for younger clergy rather than losing them to employment in other areas for a number of years in order that they might be able to build up more financial security. While I am not aware of the percentage of clergy in this position, I recognise that this Report seeks to address the concerns of those most in need. I would ask for consideration to be given to this particular circumstance in which a significant group of people find themselves.

*Canon Dr John Spence (ex officio):* Archbishops' Council, and I am sure all of us, share the aspiration that everyone who works for us, including those with a vocation, are adequately remunerated. To do that, we will need to have an incessant focus on removing unnecessary costs and be increasingly creative in how we drive up generosity, ultimately, of course, through the growth of Christian witnesses. You have heard already that, across 2000-2019, we have not managed to keep pace with inflation. The decline has been gradual but it has still been there.

But in the last two years we have hit a particular problem. When the consultation for 2021 stipends took place in early 2020, we had just gone into lockdown. Dioceses did not know whether they could afford anything and we ended up with a zero recommended increase in the National Minimum Stipend. Last year, we were again in lockdown as we considered stipends for 2022. Again, dioceses were very concerned and we ended up with a 1% recommendation. When that was undertaken in Quarter 2 last year, nobody could have understood the rate of inflation we would now be seeing. Indeed, given that the Governor of the Bank of England has consistently got it wrong, we should not be criticising ourselves for that. But it is there and so we need to do some things.

I am really pleased that over 60% of dioceses have now decided to provide a stipend increase bigger than that 1%. That is always open to dioceses to do and many do it consistently but, of course, not all can afford it. On Monday, in an unprecedented show of solidarity, the Pensions Board announced that, for this year only and in anticipation of their triennial re-evaluation - the results of which cannot be known so there is no commitment for future years - they are reducing the clergy pension contribution rate from 39.9% to 36%, which will put £6 million back into the Church economy. Dioceses will be



able to consider whether they can use any of that to support the stipends of clergy, but also those non-ordained missional staff who work for us.

Thirdly, the Archbishops raised this with us in January, we are considering how we can move finances around to create further support for some sort of hardship fund. I would love to have one to which priests do not need to apply because priests have pride like the rest of us and so I would like to see how we can do that. We met with the Clergy Support Trust Chairman today and I join the Bishop in applauding them for all the work that they do. We do not know what we will be able to do, ladies and gentlemen. I would want you to understand, however, that Archbishops' Council understands, are thinking what we can do and we look forward to providing news on this in due course. But, priests in the room please be clear: those of you who have particular needs and hardship, we will do what we can.

*Revd Dr Ian Paul (Southwell & Nottingham):* I would like to thank Bishop Richard for presenting the Report. I would like to, at the outset, declare a lack of interest - interest in the technical sense. Since I entered ordination training just over 32 years ago, I have only actually been the beneficiary of a stipend and, therefore, of the pension benefits associated with that for three out of those 32 years. I did have a premonition when I entered training that I should not look to the Church to meet all my needs and that premonition has proved to be true. Therefore, I do not have a primary direct interest in this and I think I would also note to my stipendiary colleagues, who are often reluctant to speak about this because it does seem to be self-interested, but my experience is that lay members of our congregations are seriously concerned about this issue.

I would, therefore, like to highlight one paradox in the Report and one injustice that I think needs rectifying. The paradox is that, on several places, Bishop Richard notes that the arrangement for the total remuneration for clergy appears to be "adequate". But that is despite the fact that, over the last 20 years, the stipend and the whole package has not kept pace with inflation. There is a paradox there and I do not think it can be resolved by saying that 20 years ago the stipend was more than adequate. I do not think it was felt to be so. The statistics show that, from self-reporting, fully one-third of stipendiary clergy are either struggling to get by or feel that the package is inadequate. 33% of my stipendiary colleagues are struggling. I think that is a very sobering statistic.

The second thing I would like to point out is an injustice that I think needs to be rectified. We learnt from Question 111 in the Question papers that there was a step change in the pension in 2011, a step reduction. At the time it was claimed that this was in response to Government changes, but it was later admitted that this was a real reduction and rectification could not be afforded. It cost £25 million a year. We know that. The Commissioners made £867 million on their investments and we know that between parishes and dioceses there are £2.5 billion in assets sitting there. The money is there. It might not be in the right place, but it is there and I think it is time that these injustices were rectified.

*The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell):* I just want to speak briefly to build on things that were said by Roger Driver in his excellent opening speech and then John Spence.

When I go into schools, which I do a lot - not so much in the last couple of years for the obvious reasons - and do a kind of a Q&A with children, they often ask, "So, Bishop, Archbishop, what do you do?" And I have several kind of stock answers, one of which is, "I am the vicar for the vicars". I know I fail in many ways to live up to it, but I take that part of episcopal ministry very, very seriously, the pastoral care I offer to the clergy I serve, and I have been privileged to do that in three dioceses. What this survey has found exactly mirrors my experience that, actually, a lot of clergy are okay. They are okay financially because of household income not because of stipend. In fact, some are extremely well-off because of that. But for ten years, when I was a parish priest, we brought up our three boys on the stipend. The Archbishop sitting next to me was bringing up five children on the stipend. I can tell you it is really, really hard – really, really hard.

I really welcome the thing about looking at targeted additional support. It is going to be tricky to work out how to do that, but it seems to me that is the true spirit of stipend which is to give us the money we need and, therefore, I really hope we can explore that because some of our sisters and brothers are really struggling.

The second thing is what John Spence just mentioned in the particular challenge of fuel costs at the moment for that same group of people. Archbishop Justin and I have been in conversation already with John Spence and we are determined to try to make headway on this, which is to find some way of getting some hardship relief to those clergy. Again, we do not quite know how we are going to do it but are determined to try to find a way. I am really grateful for this Report, for the work that has been done and for the direction of travel it indicates.

*Revd Jane Palmer (Salisbury):* I want to begin by acknowledging how uncomfortable it is as a stipendiary priest to publicly reflect on finance. I am well aware that my vocation is only possible because of the generous giving of my brothers and sisters and so I publicly want to say thank you and acknowledge the great deal of generosity there is. But it is that heavy weight of this blessing which has stirred me to speak today because our giving must be spent well. I was disappointed by the Report, although I do recognise all the hard work that has been done. Perhaps I am a little bit naive, but I was expecting to read something more radical - not in terms of finance because for me this is a much bigger issue - about structures. I wish to make an observation that this Remuneration Report cannot be divorced from the wider mission and strategy reviews that are happening and the wider culture change in our Church.

This Report seems to place the onus back on clergy and support trusts in supporting a growing financial need, possibly because it is too hard a job to change our systems, but I think we need to be honest that this task is coming. It feels like this Report is simply trying to postpone the inevitable and ignore the challenges that have been raised by clergy.

Targeted support is kicking the can down the road and makes us clergy who have used that feel different. Realistic and diverse vocations need realistic remuneration. If we want to be a Church which is younger and more diverse and have these represented in our clergy, we have to recognise that some groups of people will not have savings behind them. They will come from poorer backgrounds. They will not come from privilege. They may be single or have additional needs or carers, and the list goes on.

The view that the Report has come to that for most clergy it is working okay, I fear is not the reality and short-sighted. The evidence we were given was 3,700 clergy responded to the review and 25% of clergy are simply getting by. 13% are genuinely struggling. That is 38%. If my maths - or Google's maths to be honest - is correct, that is 1,406 people. They have said that this is not working and we need to acknowledge that 60% who say parish share is not the way of raising this money. So do we take note of this Report? If I am honest, I do not think it is helpful long-term for myself as one of those 38%, or for my fellow clergy or for parishes. It papers over the cracks of the real issues.

I want to urge Synod and the Review Groups and the Archbishops' Council to be bold, to be creative and to not let this review process stop. Your clergy are a people who live sacrificially. We have discerned the cost. We are prepared to live that way, but there are limits. Younger clergy need the promise of full-time equivalent remuneration for many years ahead. Ordinands and those discerning of vocation need confidence in the role God is calling them to.

*The Chair* imposed a speech limit of two minutes.

*Mrs Julie Dziegiel (Oxford):* I wish to speak to the questions asked in section 20 of the Report. I was the treasurer of a large parish for 12 and a half years. I have checked an awful lot of expense claims and I was in the blessed situation of always being able to meet those claims. I had a little bit of generosity. Over that period, I did actually get a feeling, a degree of knowledge for the clergy in my parish, stipendiary and non-stipendiary and curates. I think that if an archdeacon were to enquire of treasurers, make three enquiries I think, one deal with the national guidelines on clergy expenses; two, our failure to meet those; and three, phase them gently - if you have got any concerns, let me know - I think we might find the people who are struggling.

I do wonder if they could be helped by the Church's Mutual Credit Union. When I had a look at the website last night, they do have restructuring loans. There might be a facility there for education where it is necessary for some form of help. I am also now the treasurer for Bucks Clergy Charity and, in that role, I think that the people who need most help are those who are disabled and with long-term illness, but also those with dependents who are disabled and long-term illness and I do not think we should overlook that. I think there should be additional targeted help needed in those circumstances.

*Revd Dr Sean Doherty (Universities & TElS):* I would like to welcome the principle of making additional payments to reflect particular circumstances, but I would gently press

the question of whether that is the right approach rather than the more radical one of variable stipends more generally. Both approaches operate on the same ethical principle, which I think is a biblical one, namely that fairness is not just a matter of equality in absolute terms but about meeting need.

As Canon John Spence and others have alluded to, there can be stigma about applying for additional funds and feeling one has to justify the request. For the reasons of that stigma, the Report, rightly I think, rejects means testing on page 59. Of course, this is something that we do for ordinands. The Report recognises this is intrusive, but it is an intrusion which we sort of do allow at that stage just as they are entering into full-time kind of engagement with the Church. We may want to ask ourselves, if it is not appropriate later on, why we feel it is appropriate at that point?

I am very grateful, therefore, to the previous speaker who drew attention to the financial challenges faced by ordinands. One that I am very concerned about at the moment for my students is the significant financial hardship likely to arise in relation to the rise in energy costs. That is, obviously, going to be something that will affect everybody in this country and beyond potentially. But if I could encourage the various bodies, RACSC, Ministry Council, the Finance Committee and so on, to give some urgent thought to how this might affect the very limited fixed income of maintenance grants in ordination training, I would be very grateful.

*Revd Andrew Moughtin-Mumby (Southwark):* A lot of what I wanted to say has been said and so I am not going to repeat it, but I just wanted to say that this makes me continue to think about what Archbishop Stephen said about the doctrine of Communion. I think the people who have pointed out that just because a majority might think that something is okay does not mean that it is not a problem and if we want to act as one body, we need to pay attention to those who might find themselves more vulnerable. Communion and solidarity is a little bit about putting ourselves in other peoples' shoes.

Put yourself for a moment in the shoes of a vicar who might have a partner who earns a great salary, who has no dependents and who may have a lodger or two. Perhaps the vicar works in a wealthy parish and their church can do lots of things without having to cost it, without having to apply for grants, without having to worry about finances and there is a lovely paid team of people doing various things to aid their mission. Perhaps put yourselves in the shoes of a vicar supporting dependent children on a stipend on their own, applying for grants that they have to spend hours and hours applying for. Perhaps the vicar works in a poor parish and their church also struggles with finances. Everything has to be costed, discussed, grants applied for and maybe there is a fantastic but part-time administrator and no other paid workers. Perhaps that vicar also uses Google to check what it means when the stipend does not go up and inflation does and finds that, with lots of other people who finds themselves in the same situation, it is a bit depressing.

I would love us to think of this as an issue for solidarity. I too recognise lots of work that has gone on in this Report and I am thankful for it, but I think we really do need to pay attention to those who are struggling and I hope we can do that.

*The Chair:* I would like to now put a motion for closure.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* I now call on the Bishop to respond to the debate, please. You have up to five minutes, Bishop.

*The Bishop of Hereford (Rt Revd Richard Jackson):* Just to go through some of those very welcome and helpful points. Roger, thank you for reminding us of the example of Shackleton. I think the variable stipend possibility that you mentioned was not something that was supported within the survey that we did. That was quite a clear finding of the survey. On the Clergy Support Trust, and this probably applies to some of the other points, I think one of the things that we were identifying was the need to target particularly and to make it much easier for that targeting to be done. I appreciate the points that have been made about the difficulty of applying for grants and people's reluctance to do that. One of the things we want to do is ensure that that is an easier process for people to do.

Clare Williams, thank you for reminding us of those who are entering into a long vocation. One of the changes that we wanted to think about with the pension particularly was the accruals rule that would allow people to accumulate pension over a longer period of time.

I just want to restate the commitment of the Archbishops' Council and the wider Church to sustain the level of the stipend even in the midst of what are very difficult and challenging times with regards to inflation at the moment, which is why we took a view of looking at this over a longer period than just reaction year on year. It would appear that vocations have increased quite dramatically over the last few years and we are not hearing generally that concerns about stipend are a major factor in influencing people's vocational decisions. But we keep this all the time under review. This is not a process that is closed. The Committee is always looking at clergy conditions and seeking to address the issues as they arise.

John, thank you for your reflections on the willingness of the Archbishops' Council to make money available for some of these things and also to recommend or to support making money available for a hardship fund. One of the problems, of course, we encounter with that is often running up against HMRC rules about what is a grant and what is a stipend increase. These are things, again, which we are keeping under review, but I am grateful that the Archbishops' Council is seeing this as an issue that they want to address and seek to release funds for.

Ian Paul, two points you make. In a sense, we can only go on a snapshot of where clergy feel they are according to the survey at the moment. Whilst I agree that a significant

number are feeling that things are difficult, nonetheless, it is the case and we state in the Report that the majority feel it is adequate, which is why we have identified there are people who are struggling who we seek to help as best we can.

On the issue of the pension and your mention of it being an injustice, the brutal fact is that has been affordability and were the pension rights to be restored - and that would only be for future pension rights not retrospectively - that would involve a doubling of the pension contribution. The issue you raise about the availability of Church Commissioners' funds was outside our remit, but I would be very happy for you to take that up with them.

The Archbishop of York, thank you for recognising that your role is as a vicar of the vicars and those of us who have brought up children on a stipend alone can echo your responses. But I think, actually, what you say about targeted additional support is in the spirit of the stipend, which is to provide an income that is adequate for all.

Thank you, Jane, for quite rightly reminding us that money must be spent well and a more radical approach which inevitably would imply increasing stipends. Unfortunately, with the Church's current financial situation we are faced with the stark choice of increased stipend would mean less clergy and trying to square that circle is something that is a challenge for all of us to do.

Julie Dziegiel, thank you too for reminding us about the Mutual Credit Union and other ways in which we might support clergy. Sean Doherty, again, variable stipends, not something that were identified in the review as something people wanted and thank you for the reminder about the challenges too for students in training. Andrew, thank you too for your reminders about the fact of solidarity. Interestingly enough, some clergy in our review indicated they had incomes of £100,000 a year in their household income. Some of them said they were struggling, which we found slightly implausible but there we are.

But, at the end here, I just want to say that one of the key elements of the review is a commitment to seek to maintain the value of the stipend as it is against inflation and that will be a challenge for the Church to face over the course of the next few years. I move to take note.

*The Chair:* We now come to a vote on Item 11.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* That concludes Item 11 and we move on to Item 12 shortly.

## **ITEM 12**

**GOD'S PEOPLE SET FREE: LIVING AS MISSIONARY DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST IN THE WHOLE OF LIFE TO BRING TRANSFORMATION TO THE CHURCH AND WORLD (GS 2248)**

THE CHAIR *The Bishop of Derby (Rt Revd Libby Lane)* took the Chair at 4.58 pm.

*The Chair.* Synod, good afternoon. We come to Items 12 and 13. You will need GS 2248 for Item 13 and the take note debate that follows. I have been notified that Adrian Greenwood does not intend to move his following motion included in the Fourth Notice Paper. There is timed business at 6.00 pm and so time does not allow for the debate on Item 13 to be followed by group work. We will move from Item 13 into Questions at 6 o'clock. The Business Committee has determined that there will be a presentation followed by the debate on Item 13. I call on the Bishop of Gloucester to introduce the presentation.

*The Bishop of Gloucester (Rt Revd Rachel Treweek):* It has been a real privilege over these last few years to be the episcopal champion for the *Setting God's People Free* Report. My fellow champion, Dr Jamie Harrison, will move the motion at Item 13 but, before that, there will be a short film and Nick Shepherd will address us. What we are talking about today is what it means for us to be the Church. All our discussions around structures and numbers and activity and finance are only important if they enable us to more boldly join in with God's Kingdom work of transformation and impacts our world.

I believe that *Setting God's People Free* has focused us on our identity as individuals and as the Church, how we own and live our baptismal calling to shine as lights in the world the glory of God and it does, indeed, begin with our hearts. Ordination services begin with these words, "The Church is the body of Christ, the people of God and the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. In baptism, the whole Church is summoned to witness to God's love and to work for the coming of His Kingdom". In those services, we are not only marking and celebrating the calling of people to ordained ministries. Rather, we are marking and celebrating the calling of every unique baptized follower of Christ and what it means for us to be the Church, the body of Christ, with many different parts. This is about who we are. Therefore, a key culture shift we have sought is to recognise that discipleship is not all about the activity connected with the doing of worship. If it involves a rota, it probably is not what we are focusing on.

As we sit here now, how are all the people in our worshipping communities, parish churches, chaplaincies, schools, Fresh Expressions et cetera, of every age living their lives at this exact moment amid both the joy and pain of their lives? Because this is being the Church, or what St Paul calls "ambassadors for Christ". Some people will feel they are living their vocation. Some people will not, as life is restricted by difficult circumstances. All are equal disciples from the youngest to the oldest. This is about people of all backgrounds and all abilities and all ages, the child and the retired adult. Please do not think as well that this is only about faith in the workplace. It is about our baptism dripping from every one of us in the places of our everyday lives. Please let us not speak about children and young people as an add-on.

The vision we call *Growing Faith* is part of this. We gather each week as the people of God to do Church, to give thanks, to be forgiven, to be nourished and blessed and then we are sent back out to nourish the world and be a blessing. We pray may we who share Christ's body live his risen life. How is our gathered worship being led and shaped in order to gather us in from the places of our week and then to send us back out in peace to love and serve the Lord amid all the beauty and the brokenness of the coming week? What do people talk about over coffee or over Zoom? What do people talk about here in the tearoom where we usually identify ourselves more by our dioceses perhaps rather than our everyday lives?

Can I also underline that we are not primarily talking about a shift to social action either. Food banks, the Homeless Project, et cetera, it is all really important but it is only part of that big culture shift to being the Church among all the people and places of our daily lives every day of every week. There is much more I would love to say but time is up and so we are going to move to a short film which is a mere taster of that culture shift towards *Everyday Faith*.

(Video played)

*Dr Nick Shepherd (ex officio)*: You can give a ripple of applause for that. The aspiration of *Setting God's People Free* is that we better enable the whole people of God to live out the good news of Jesus confidently in all of life, Sunday to Saturday. I hope that that video conveyed that this is becoming a firmer reality. As we move to include the same within being a Church of missionary disciples, I want to highlight aspects of work begun in *Setting God's People Free* that will continue within this. Many dioceses now emphasise *Everyday Faith* in discipleship and lay formation.

*Everyday Faith* emerged as we sought tangible ways to express the shifts SGPF calls for. Hereford and Leicester both stake a claim to be its inventors. I will not call for a vote on it. *Everyday Faith* is not a fixed programme. It includes sharing stories of finding and following God in everyday life to inspire each other, encouraging the adoption of a rule or rhythm of life to nurture everyday prayer and more prominently highlighting resources for equipping faith at work, faith at home or faith in our communities.

An ongoing focus on *Everyday Faith* is crucial for a Church of missionary disciples. We recently launched an *Everyday Faith* Portal as a key tool to help support this, an additional tool designed to integrate with diocesan learning resources that helps to connect people with the reflections, prayers and guidance that might inspire and equip their everyday faith as individuals and communities. A success of *Setting God's People Free* has been linking diocesan teams in learning communities. This has helped set clear action plans with peer to peer accountability and facilitated faster sharing of what works and what does not. A tangible example of this is seen in Oxford's highly fruitful personal discipleship plans. These were dreamt up in a learning community session piloted in an archdeaconry and are now a mainstay of the discipleship and spirituality work in that diocese.



Moreover, through the ongoing disciple enablers network we are able to have other dioceses take on and adapt such approaches. Retaining this agile learning is vital as we seek to form and equip a Church of missionary disciples and we will continue to support this innovation and learning in dioceses. In fact, it will be central to the role of our newly formed Vision and Strategy Team at the Archbishops' Council. As Bishop Rachel said earlier, *Setting God's People Free* calls us to better integrate doing Church and being Church. Over the past four years, hundreds of worshipping communities have piloted small shifts that make a big difference towards this. These resources are available now on our Everyday Church section of the Church Support Hub where further ideas will be added along with supporting videos on the Church of England Church Resources YouTube channel.

I really appreciate the chance to report to Synod today as it marks the completion of an initial phase of implementing the recommendations of *Setting God's People Free*. I am incredibly grateful to all those in dioceses, churches and networks who have worked so hard to achieve this. This work though is not finished. It carries on within the Vision and Strategy for the 2020s as we seek to continually fan into flame the everyday faith of every disciple.

*The Bishop of Gloucester (Rt Revd Rachel Treweek):* In a moment, we will come to Item 13. You will see in the Report that the named programme of *Setting God's People Free* has involved, as Nick has said, learning communities, diocesan initiatives programmes, but I hope that in a moment what we will hear is not all about the activity but, rather, about the fruitfulness and the transformational impact of all that in the lives of children, young people and adults as we become more Jesus Christ-centred and Jesus Christ-shaped in daily life so that our communities and our world are encountering Christ and being shaped by the signs of the Kingdom of God. This is not about productivity. It is about being the Church in all places at all times.

## ITEM 13

*The Chair:* We move to Item 13 and I call on Jamie Harrison to speak to that item. He has up to ten minutes.

*Canon Dr Jamie Harrison (Durham):* We are debating, and I am delighted, *Setting God's People Free* five years on. I am looking forward, as Bishop Rachel has already said, to your contributions, how it has come into your experience, what you have learnt and how we are going to take forward into the Church's vision and strategy all that learning. But I suppose the question still remains: how can we make the most of all the opportunities we have? How ordained and lay together can enable each other to live out the good news of Jesus Christ in the whole of life - not just Monday to Saturday but also on Sunday, dare I say, with our focus being, as we have heard, everyday faith lived out in the everyday with joy and courage and, where possible, confidence.

Of course, there has been much debate all the time on this about what does it mean to set God's people free? If we go back to the original Report, GS 2056, it sets out a bold vision about two culture shifts: encouraging and equipping laity to live out their faith with greater confidence, but not just in Church settings; and to encourage and affirm laity and clergy together, to value and celebrate one another's gifts and beings in our different callings and contexts, sharing that common baptism. They were set out in two statements. I am going to quote them from that original Report.

One, that together ordained and lay form and equip lay people to follow Jesus confidently in every sphere of life and in ways that demonstrate the Gospel and so set God's people free to evangelize the nation. Secondly, where laity and clergy are convinced, based on their baptism mutuality, they are equal in worth and status, complementary in gifting and vocation, mutually accountable in discipleship and equal partners in mission, so forming Christian communities that can evangelize the nation. That theme brings me to my first question, how to be an evangelizing church for everyone.

At the end of Matthew's Gospel, Jesus instructs his followers to go out and to be his witnesses, witnessing to life, death and resurrection of Jesus in word and deed, to become, if you like, disciple-making disciples. That too must be our calling as a body of Christ, to be there as the everyday witness to what we know and experience of God's loving purposes. Yet beyond the act of witnessing comes the need, as St Peter might put it, to give an account, to give an account of what we believe and why. *Setting God's People Free* means to witness, yes, perhaps more confidently but also to speak words in season, words that are wise and helpful and careful, but to be an evangelizing Church for everyone. The same culture shift follows the first and is more demanding and, certainly, more far-reaching. It is about building the sorts of relationships, mutuality and trust that transform how we laity and clergy together follow the living Jesus Christ. This can be framed in a new question that has come out of Vision and Strategy: how to be an empowered Church of missionary disciples? Here, the so-called sacred secular divide, on the one hand the sacred and on the other hand the secular, sort of compartmentalises ourselves as partly Church on the one hand and world on the other.

How can we bring those two areas of our lives together, the sacred and the secular? It is about the whole of life, as we have heard, this focus, enabling clergy and laity together to lead, to shape and to be fellow travellers on the road with Christ. In *The Four Loves*, CS Lewis pictures Christian friends walking together side by side as they journey within the love of God. This is not about clergy being set free from laity or, equally, laity being set free from clergy - however much we might think that could be a good idea at times. No, it is about our commonality, our common baptism and how we live our lives commonly together. For many, this will involve becoming more vulnerable and taking risks. As the vision found in the 2019 Report, Ministry for a Christian Presence in Every Community, puts it, "The whole people of God by baptism sharing and bearing Christian presence through worship, witness and service, being the body of Christ in every and any place and context".

In 2013, in the *Joy of the Gospel*, Pope Francis called for a deeper discipleship in every sphere of life, coining the phrase, "Missionary disciples", pointing as he did to the Samaritan woman and to St Paul as exemplars of such missionary discipleship. We are not ashamed in borrowing from the Holy Father, Pope Francis, are we? Then, a third question arises: how to be a Jesus Christ-shaped Church inspired by the Five Marks of Mission. This requires intentionality, directed towards serving God in the whole of life with a focus on those five points: telling, teaching, tending, transforming and treasuring as the Five Marks call us to do and to be. Before us today, this updated Report, GS 2248, has the heading "God's People Set Free: Living as Missionary Disciples of Jesus Christ in the Whole of Life to Bring Transformation to the Church and the World".

Here, we might want to see Church and world actually merged into one whole entity where we, as the transformed people of Jesus Christ of all ages, types, backgrounds and contexts, live out that faith in the everyday. As we move and evolve into the vision and strategy, what we have learnt and continue to learn from the work of *Setting God's People Free* can be embedded in this new life together in the life of the Church and its ministry. We, all of us, hold this responsibility together.

In having this debate, we are reminded of that responsibility to own what *Setting God's People Free* set out to achieve, encouraging others in the vision and its implementation at diocesan and parish levels and, seeing that change of culture becoming embedded in our structures, it becomes the norm.

I very much look forward to contributions from members of Synod as they reflect on their experiences of *Setting God's People Free* over the last five years and, as we look ahead with hope and energy and desire to see the vision and strategy taken forward in every place and in the everyday. I beg to move Item 13 standing in my name.

The Chair: This take note debate is now open.

*The Chair* imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

*Mrs Zoe Ham (Carlisle)*: I want to say a big yes to this Report. More of this, please. Thank you so much to all those who have been involved over many years in this Report and its implementation. Thank you, thank you. This is what the Church must be if we are to grow into maturity and reach our nation for Christ. In our church in Barrow-in-Furness, we have actually just spent the last month thinking about how we can be living for Jesus in our everyday lives on our frontlines, those places where we spend most of our time.

Each Sunday we have had time for people to share encouragements and opportunities they have had and it has been so encouraging. Let me share just a few of those stories. A churchwarden being excited to learn that she does have a frontline. She is so excited to live for Jesus with her friends and family. A man whose gentleness and patience when his car garage messed him around led to the mechanic commenting on it and giving him a discount. Then, two weeks ago, very sadly, there was a stabbing in one of the

secondary schools in Barrow. Praise God, the boy who received multiple stab wounds is recovering well, but a wonderful young lady in our church family called Fiona is the librarian at that school and she has had so many opportunities to show love and comfort to her colleagues and to have great chats with students who have come to her with their questions. Fiona is so encouraged to see how God could use her in that place as she faithfully lives for Jesus.

We need mature Christians in these places. In the wake of the stabbing, Fiona has had countless more opportunities than all the vicars in the town put together, but Fiona would also be the first to acknowledge her immense gratitude to her Church leaders and all they have done in equipping her to live and speak for Jesus in her everyday life. In fact, Fiona and I were just recently discussing the brilliant picture we get in Ephesians 4: our greatest King Jesus has given us gifts, apostles, prophets, evangelists and pastor teachers, to equip his people for the work of ministry. They are not doing the ministry on their own. They equip his people for the work of ministry so that the body of Christ may be built up and become mature. Synod, this is the note of exhortation I want to sound, that we make sure we are investing in our equippers. We must select for ordination those who can equip others.

We must train them to equip well that they might be the best possible gifts to the Church and, then, when they are in post, we must back them in their equipping with finances and freedom to get on with equipping all of God's people for the work of ministry so that, by the grace of our Lord Jesus, as each part does its work, we might grow up into maturity to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Synod, let us take note of this Report but, more than that, let us take hold of it for ourselves and our churches and take it forward into our future Vision and Strategy work as a Synod.

*Revd Canon Toby Wright (Oxford):* In my home Diocese of Oxford, we have trained 500 encouragers for the personal discipleship plans as part of *Everyday Faith*. After them, 100% who had taken part agreed that they had been equipped to develop their gifts. Locally with me, at the start of the process in my own church, somewhat tellingly only 35% said they were supported to live out their faith from Monday to Saturday. Just three months later, after using the personal discipleship plans, this figure moved to 86%. Also across the diocese, 93% are now saying that they know their strengths and gifts from this work. I want to encourage members of Synod that this works. It does not cost anything. Anyone can use it. It is as encouraging to the encouragers as for those coming for the process.

The important dynamic of being called and sent is central to the model. There is a clear need for intentional strategic action. However, this needs to be held intentionally with the local individual personal approach. One to one intentional conversations bring forth fruit and must not be forgotten. We cannot gather and equip people to be sent out without having the time to listen to people's stories and to help them take some simple steps. Every single journey is as exciting, equal and valid as any other and so the strategic needs to be balanced by the individual. This is about doing what ministry should be:

talking about God in our daily lives and helping people grow as disciples. The Spanish painter, Picasso, once apparently said, "Disciples be damned, it is only the masters that matter". At times, I have experienced a Church that felt like it maybe followed Picasso. I commend this Report to the Synod. Thanks to those who prepared the Report and let us ensure we balance the strategic with the individual, that we do not follow Picasso and that we work for the coming of God's Kingdom.

*Mrs Susan Cavill (Derby):* Although we have just been hearing statements about clergy and laity working in partnership, I am concerned that there may be among some people a feeling that *Setting God's People Free* is really a plan to deploy volunteers as free replacements for the clergy and that this is in line with plans to divert funding from individual parishes to more centralised models of Church life. One of the main reasons I stood for Synod was that I am passionate about the place of parishes as centres for mission throughout the country and I am concerned to protect and support parish churches and resources.

But I am also excited by the proposals in *Setting God's People Free* for enabling and equipping those of us who are the laity to follow Jesus confidently in every sphere of life. This enabling, I believe, will help us to share Jesus' love with those around us, attracting them to follow him and in the process, of course, increasing the membership of our churches.

As we understand how we apply our faith in every aspect of our lives, this may mean that we take on new tasks in our churches, but it is equally likely to mean that we are inspired to apply our faith in our professional and personal lives, as we have been hearing, in the home, in hospitals, schools, courts, shops, factories and farms. I hope that we can avoid a polarising either/or attitude that we are either looking at the development of a free labour force for churches so that fewer priests and potentially fewer parish resources are needed, or we are championing our parishes and their priests and, therefore, there is perhaps less need to focus on resourcing the laity. I want to support the parish system and I am also excited by the new invigoration of discipleship promised in *Setting God's People Free*.

*The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Dr Pete Wilcox):* I am encouraged to see the Lights for Christ resource from our diocese highlighted in paragraph 22 of the Report and I would like to make explicit here something which is not explicit there and that is the connection to baptism. In so far as our Lights for Christ resources have been getting traction in the diocese, I think it is because it enables us to challenge everyone who has been baptized across all the traditions of the Church to enter into the full dignity of their baptism. Well, it is that and, at the risk of embarrassing her, the astonishing passion and communication skills of our Lights for Christ enabler, Hannah Sandoval.

At present, I often find myself reminding a congregation how, at the end of a Church of England service of baptism, the priest will almost always, no matter what the Church tradition, present the newly baptized with a lit candle and say, "You have received the

light of Christ, walk in this light all the days of your life", to which the congregation responds, "Shine as a light for Christ in the world to the glory of God, the Father". That baptismal commissioning to shine as a light for Christ in the world is wonderfully clear but also wonderfully general. It is general enough to allow every person to interpret it in relation to their own gifts, stage of life and circumstances, but it is clear enough to challenge everyone to shine actively and out there in the world for Christ.

I fear we have too often allowed the baptized to suppose that if they only attend church on a Sunday and live a basically respectable life in the week, they are satisfying the demands of their baptism. If we are to evangelize our nation again, and if we are to be effective heralds of God's coming Kingdom, we really do need to enable all the baptized by the power of the Holy Spirit to shine as lights for Christ in the world to the glory of God, the Father.

*Revd Claire Lording (Worcester):* Thank you for the excellent presentations which were made. I think all of us would want a six year old Summer James in our congregation. Extending Christian presence and keeping faith at the heart of everyday life is so vital, we all agree with that, and can be shared in so many different ways. In the Diocese of Worcester, we are supported in this by the work of Faith at Work in Worcestershire. They are key to enabling the formation, training and development of workplace chaplaincies. Teams made up of ecumenical volunteers, surely missionary disciples, lay and ordained, who commit to visiting local business, journeying alongside them in times of joy and times of challenge, of which we know there have been many during the last two years, praying for them.

I am proud that there is such a chaplaincy for Pershore where I live. All the time the volunteers are sharing the love of God, a God who is with us wherever we are and, in the midst of all the chatting and accompaniment, there are moments of deep encounter and sharing of faith. Seeds of faith are truly sewn. In trust, we leave it to the Holy Spirit to see how those seeds might grow and faith might spread. It is vital that we continue to be a Church that is committed to resourcing and encouraging these everyday ministries, these everyday workplace chaplaincies, so that *Everyday Faith* will be at the heart of those who already follow Christ and so that this faith in Christ will continue to provide creative opportunities to make a difference in the lives of every single person in our communities. This is letting the light of Christ shine. I encourage Synod to take note of this Report.

*Ms Gill Frigerio (Coventry):* Thank you, Chair, for calling me and well done with my surname. I am a member of the *Setting God's People Free* Advisory Group and I want to say here to Synod and to those involved in taking forward this work in the Vision and Strategy, what I have said there. Let us keep our focus on ensuring lay people are resourced and released to live as disciples across the whole of our lives. I am calling for continued attention to all lay callings. We lay people are not unpaid labour free of limiting factors to cheaply run new worshipping communities.

As Bishop Rachel said, we are not simply rota fodder. We are in fields and factory, shops and offices, clinics and classrooms and these are not easy places to be. Most of us do not have the time or the energy to run a worshipping community on the side. In the Report, there are plentiful examples of people talking about their faith or being open about their faith in their work and leisure context, which is great. I do get though a strong sense that we are expected to be simply tools for evangelism. But we are not just telling and teaching. We are tending. We are transforming. We are treasuring. Work can be a site of great fulfilment and flourishing but also exploitation and struggle. Workplace chaplaincy does not just support individuals; it must speak prophetically to create and ensure good work.

So how can this work in the new vision and strategy for the Church of England resource workers in these challenging Covid and post-Covid times? As we take note here, I am asking how we can really ensure that we value and sustain all our social vocations and keep this perspective in our sights so that all Christians can lead richer lives in Christ.

*Mr Simon Friend (Exeter):* I am a property developer. I know it is hard to think that you can be a Christian and a property developer, but I am a property developer and I have been for 25 years. I spend a lot of my time, therefore, on building sites and meeting blokes - mainly blokes, very rarely women. That is a huge privilege. Often, these sites are extremely stressful environments and it is difficult to have the time and opportunity to show love and Christian love that I would want to do. But, when that does happen, they are incredible encounters and it is a huge privilege to hear about people's lives and struggles and it is a privilege to hear them unpack their stories.

What I find really difficult, and it is hard to say in this chamber, is that I find it so hard to imagine bringing them to church. Their lives are so utterly different and church feels so utterly foreign, I cannot imagine it. It is tragic. I live in a rural parish in Devon. I am all for the parish, but Anecdote to Evidence and Evidence to Action said that we must change. I am all for saving the parish, but not the parish as it is. It must be a completely reinvigorated changed parish and church so that my blokes from the building site can come into church and not think it is utterly weird. I hope and pray that those of us who are out there in the world will begin to feel that we can bring some of these people into a church that often feels so foreign.

*The Chair:* Because of the pressures of our time constraints, after the next speaker I shall be testing the mind of Synod for closure of this debate.

*Canon Karen Czapiewski (Gloucester):* Thank you for the helpful Report. It is really good to emphasise all the many and varied things we do. I just want to provide some more illustration of the impact of *Setting God's People Free*. I also want to make a plea for continuing join-up between all the many varied initiatives and all the many and varied bits of jargon. When *Setting God's People Free* was first published, there was massive excitement tempered by a certain amount of cynicism as people worried that this would

go the way of other Reports. There is no point in cultural and behavioural change though if there is not impact.

Since *Setting God's People Free*, we have had *Thrive*, *Flourish*, *Growing Faith*, *Everyday Faith*, *Missionary Disciples*. I would argue, without wishing to offend, that these are all the same thing. We seek the Lord's Kingdom and we seek to share the good news of the Gospel with all and, if we do it well, as we heard from Zoe Ham and Toby Wright, it works.

Parents at a local school were invited to join their children engaging with part of their curriculum which involved understanding Christianity at the local church. The parents, some of whom had never been to church before, had expected to be hearing from the priest or the schoolteacher, but the children had been set free to have the confidence and ability to be the teachers, explaining what Christianity means. It was amazing and powerful but, beyond that, those parents then went and shared with their parents and with friends in the wider community. That is an extension that people do not have to be present to be reached from gathered church.

It can be easier for young people to talk about being gay or having working class roots than being Christian. But that culture is being eroded. People are going into their sphere of influence, into their frontlines and living out their faith as well as having the confidence to say why they are as they are and it is reaping rewards. A colleague asked how she could be baptized. A young man is exploring how he can serve God. A bereaved neighbour who had never darkened the doors of the church building asked for prayers. A homeless person said "Bless you" and meant it when refused money but given conversation and recognition as a human being. So many people and places have done stuff. There are new ideas and new energy. But *Setting God's People Free* has moved us beyond that, even beyond talking about faith over coffee after church - a minor miracle some might say, a major miracle some might say - people have found newfound confidence in professing and living out their faith in the wider world and in their context.

My plea is that we recognise the join-up between all these initiatives as we seek to become missionary disciples. No one is excluded and, whilst more gathered church is generally a good thing, we must remember that being a disciple is not simply doing more church - and I do love a rota.

*The Chair.* Because of the constraints of our timetable, I will now test the mind of Synod as to whether to bring this item to a close. I put the motion of closure on Item 13 to the Synod.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair.* That is carried and, therefore, I invite Jamie Harrison to respond to the debate. Jamie, you have up to five minutes.



*Canon Dr Jamie Harrison (Durham):* Well, what a rich set of maiden speeches. Great to have so many new to Synod people with their huge experience. Can I just ask those of you who have written speeches or would like to write a speech to please send them into Nick Shepherd, whose details you can find, because he wants to hear what you have carefully prepared. What a great start from Zoe Ham, a big yes. Well, that is a great start to any debate, is it not, coming from Barrow-in-Furness, which I have visited and enjoyed visiting and seeing even there you can get a discount on your car servicing should you spread the Gospel. Great news.

Toby Wright, talking in Oxford about personal discipleship plans; Bishop Pete from Sheffield, Lights for Christ; and Claire Lording from Worcester, Faith at Work in Worcestershire, some examples of particular ways of being the church living out its calling everywhere. Sue Cavill from Derby expressed that concern for some that was this a way of taking resources away from parishes. No, I do not think so. It is about that mutuality where our wonderful parish priests equip the laity to be both working in the church and from the church in their societies, in their families. I think that was also picked up a bit by Simon Friend from Exeter on his building sites, working out how can he bring the Gospel in a particular way to those he meets and welcoming them into some expression of the church, hopefully in the parish where, indeed, an invigorated parish can warmly welcome and transform.

For Gill Frigerio, again the importance of being resourced and released - a joint venture with all the baptized, not least in our chaplaincies. I think I want to thank everyone, particularly to Karen Czapiewski from Gloucester again - as my wonderful co-Bishop in this work, obviously well-trained her - to make everything joined-up on our frontlines giving parents the opportunity to hear from their children the good news of Jesus Christ as we heard so wonderfully on the film. They are set free to explain to those who cannot be present there but will hear through their talking and their living out the faith.

I hope I have covered all the wonderful speeches we have had. It has been a very rich time. Sorry it has been a bit pressed, but that is the way of things and I hope you will very much warmly support the take note motion standing in my name.

*The Chair:* I now put Item 13 to the vote.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* That is carried and that brings this item to an end and we can prepare for our timed business at 6.00.

THE CHAIR *Dean of Southwark (Very Revd Andrew Nunn)* took the Chair at 5.55 pm.

## **ITEM 14**

## QUESTIONS

*The Chair:* Synod, we now move to Item 14 which is our second bite at the Questions. Remember you have to be on your mettle for this because some were taken out of order, or out of numerical order. Not out of order - that would not be right. We are going to start with some more questions to the Archbishops' Council. Before that, may I just remind you that I will be listening closely for questions, so I will be listening out for that question mark at the end of a sentence, and if I do not hear it very rapidly, I will be letting you know. Is that all right?

## ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL

Question 17 is to be answered by Dr John Spence on behalf of the Archbishops' Council.

17. *Revd Marcus Walker (London)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: How many parishes have recorded a deficit in their annual accounts for the financial year 2020-21?

*Canon Dr John Spence (ex officio) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:* 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.

18. *Mr Richard Brown (Chelmsford)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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 (ex officio) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:* 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 Richard Brown:* This is by nature of being a point of order as well as a question.

*The Chair:* Is it a supplementary or a point of order? You need to be clear, please.

*Mr Richard Brown:* I noticed my question in the body of the document we have in front of you. What I did not notice was my question in the index at the top. The index at the top is not the same as where my question is. That is the point of order. I think somebody

needs to adjust that because if it is a permanent record of whatever has happened then it is wrong.

*The Chair:* We will note that.

*Mr Richard Brown:* Could I ask a supplementary to John? The answer ends with this quote “might be deemed using the process set out in Standing Order 51A”. Could somebody explain what Standing Order 51A is and how this would progress this legislation? That is my question.

*Canon Dr John Spence:* Thank you for the supplementary. I am very pleased you gave me a supplementary because otherwise I would have stood up here tonight for nothing because I am finished after this. And well done for giving me a supplementary I do not have a clue how to answer, Richard. We will provide you with a written note, and I will ask it is placed up on the noticeboard to explain how it works.

*The Chair:* Questions 19 to 22 to be answered by the Archbishop of York on behalf of the Archbishops’ Council.

19. *Mr Nic Tall (Bath & Wells)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops’ Council: 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 (Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell)* replied as President of the Archbishops’ Council: 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.

20. *Revd Jacob Madin (York)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops’ Council: 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 (Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell) replied as President of the Archbishops' Council:* Yes, there are. We are seeking to increase the representation of working-class people in leadership roles, building on excellent work including 16 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.

21. *Mrs Debbie McIsaac (Salisbury)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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 (Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell) replied as President of the Archbishops' Council:* 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.

22. *Mrs Debbie McIsaac (Salisbury)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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 (Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell) replied as President of the Archbishops' Council:* 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.

*Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford):* Has any consideration been given to whether such things as Zoom calls and letters sent to parishioners are a substitute for actually being able to attend one's parish church in person?

*The Archbishop of York:* Prudence, thank you. First, like John, thank you for the supplementary otherwise I would have had a wasted journey as well. I cannot answer the question with absolute precision, but to the best of my knowledge there is a lot of work going on in reflecting on the changes that have happened in the church, particularly the rural church but across the whole church, in the past 18 months. My own gut response, and this is just my response, is that there is never really a substitute for us being with each other in the same space, but of course we have learnt so much about how we can be together in other ways. I continue to want to applaud clergy and parishes for their creativity, flexibility and tenacity in maintaining pastoral care and building community in the ways we have all had to learn how to do, but we continue to reflect on that as we learn what it means to live in this hybrid world. Thank you for the question, Prudence.

*The Chair:* Questions 23 to 29 are to be answered by Mark Sheard on behalf of the Archbishops' Council. Mark is joining us on Zoom.

23. *Mr Luke Appleton (Exeter)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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 (ex officio) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:* 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.

*Ven. Stewart Fyfe (Carlisle):* I thank Mark Sheard for his answer and also for his reference in yesterday's answer to the new Rural Interest Group on General Synod and its role in helping to fill gap left by the Rural Affairs Group. Would Mark be willing to use all his efforts to ensure that facilities are made available to that new fringe group on General Synod to encourage the widest possible participation from Synod members?

*Mr Mark Sheard:* Thank you very much for the question. Not having had to have travelled anywhere to join you by Zoom, I am equally delighted to receive a supplementary. Yes of course, I will do that.

24. *Mr Robin Hall (Europe)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: What work has been done to quantify the number of food banks currently provided by the Church of England?

25. *Mr Robin Hall (Europe)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: If the data is available, can you share the number of food banks, broken down by diocese, since 2010?

*Mr Mark Sheard (ex officio) replied on behalf of the Archbishops' Council:* 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.

26. *Mr Charles Houston (Hereford)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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 (ex officio) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:* 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.

*Mr Charles Houston:* I thank the person in Europe for his kind response to my question. As a supplementary question, the Banns are a very enjoyable, pleasurable part of pre-wedding lead-up, but only 25% of weddings take place in church and 3% of the population of churchgoers, so there are quite a lot people who are not regular churchgoers at their local churches. My question is about people who actually get married some distance from home at a wedding venue. I feel the qualifying connection bar is set quite high, for them to appear six times at that church, and I just think it is a wasted opportunity for evangelical opportunities in church but also for church finances.

*The Chair:* Just for the record, can you tell us who you are, please?

*Mr Charles Houston:* I beg your pardon. Nervous rookie Charlie Houston, Hereford, 323.

*Mr Mark Sheard:* Thank you, Charlie. I am not entirely sure what the question is. I think I take out of it that for some people the bar seems to be set too high and we may be discouraging people from having a church wedding. That may be true in some cases. In other cases, anecdotally I know, and I guess we have to work from anecdote here, that the engagement that comes as a result of requiring people to come to church to hear their Banns read creates great evangelistic opportunities. I know of a couple in our own church for whom that was exactly their point of entry.

I also do not think we should underestimate the fact that if we bring them to church, we also have the opportunity to pray for them, and that is in itself an indication of care and love. For myself I would want to continue to encourage this. I think the work done by Sandra Millar and the Life Events team in explaining this is great. I would want to be wary about going down a path which minimises our engagement with couples coming to church and reduces us just to a venue. I think the engagement that comes through the Banns and the preparation is of enormous value, but that is my personal opinion. I guess we both we work off anecdote.

27. *Revd Chris Collins (Leicester)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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 et cetera) and church-run outreach groups (toddler groups, food banks etc) in these statistics?

*Mr Mark Sheard (ex officio)* replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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.

*Revd Canon John Bavington (Leeds):* Mark, given that resource and resourcing churches have a process set up by SDF for collecting and looking at missional statistics which are proving very helpful to many of us, is there a way in which the Archbishops' Council could make that process available more widely to parishes that are not receiving SDF funding for those parishes which would like to explore that way of looking at accounting for their missional statistics?

*Mr Mark Sheard:* Thank you, John, that is really good question. I do not know if that is possible. I will investigate it and if it needs to be piloted, I would love to pilot it with a parish in Bradford, so thank you for the question.

28. *Revd Chris Collins (Leicester)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Regarding Statistics for Mission, for what purpose(s) is the data currently used?

*Mr Mark Sheard (ex officio) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:* 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.

29. *Revd Andrew Cornes (Chichester)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: What has been the average length of parochial vacancies over the last five 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 (ex officio) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:* The requested information is not available within the NCIs.

*Revd Canon Andrew Cornes:* I hope you will allow me first to thank the answerers who yesterday again and again responded to the questions so fully and constructively.

Here is my question. Mark, I understand that statistics about the length of parish vacancies are not available, but given that the perception is that parishes are being left longer without a priest and, at least anecdotally, this often leads to a decline in parish life from which it is hard to recover, what steps could be taken to research the effects of long interregna to help influence diocesan decisions?



*Mr Mark Sheard:* Andrew, thank you very much indeed for the question. I thought it was a fascinating question and it got me thinking. I wish we did have this data because it would be enormously helpful, but I suspect the average data that you refer to in your question may not be as helpful. It may be misleading because I suspect we will probably find that there is no universal answer, and we would find that some parishes have longer vacancies than others. We referenced rural parishes earlier and when we were talking earlier today we were talking about UPA parishes and so on.

I think we do need to be more intelligent, just like the previous supplementary referred to, in our use of data and understanding of data. If we are going to build on what we have learnt in that last debate about setting God's people free, we need to understand what happens when God's people are forcibly set free by a vacancy. I think I have read some research that indicates that at around six to nine months parishes experience some growth, but that tails off quickly.

I think you raise a really interesting question here. It is something I am going to take away and talk more about with our new Vision and Strategy group and how we can build more robust data to help us understand some of this and then how that can be used by the Church as a whole. Thank you for your question.

*The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell):* When I was Bishop of Chelmsford, we did a lot of work with SDF funds with Interim Ministry and I wonder, Mark, whether you would you want to reflect on what further work we are doing (and I should know but I am afraid I do not) because it is a very key way of giving good interventions during vacancies.

*A Speaker:* Point of order. That is asking for an opinion, Chair.

*The Archbishop of York:* I will reword it. Mark, could you tell us what is happening with Interim Ministry?

*Mr Mark Sheard:* No, but I will reflect on it as your first question asked, and we can pick that up separately perhaps in Archbishops' Council. Thank you very much for pointing that out, Archbishop.

*The Chair:* Questions 30 to 40 were answered earlier in the session. Question 41 is to be answered by the Revd Charlotte Cook on behalf of the Archbishops' Council. Charlotte is also joining us by Zoom.

41. *Mrs Amanda Robbie (Lichfield)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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?

*Revd Charlotte Cook (ex officio) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:* Since 1 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 27 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.

*Mrs Amanda Robbie:* Thank you for the information about the move towards Charity Commission registration, or the extension of the exemption for parishes with lower income. I would just like to ask who is responsible for putting the Church of England's representations to the Government prior to the 2031 deadline, and have any discussions on this matter been held to date?

*Revd Charlotte Cook:* Amanda, thank you so much for your question. It is great to see you today. I do not have enough detail to be able to answer you now, but I will make sure that you have a written answer in full.

*The Chair:* Questions 42 to 43 are to be answered by the Bishop of Durham on behalf of the Archbishops' Council - in person.

42. *Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Why has General Synod's Youth Council been abolished and who made the decision to abolish it?

*The Bishop of Durham (Rt Revd Paul Butler) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:* 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".

*Ms Jayne Ozanne:* I am grateful to Bishop Paul for correcting me about the fact that this was a Church of England Youth Council from which Synod benefited. I am sure I am not the only Synod member who laments the loss of these prophetic voices, who courageously spoke truth to us and often turned whole debates. I know that Bishop Paul challenges my use of the word "abolish", but quoting the very intern he mentions, the use

of the word is pretty close to the truth of what happened. I urge Synod members to go to my Twitter profile and read the real story of what happened, which Edward Cox has set out.

It brings me to ask Bishop Paul this: why was the budget request and the plan requested by the person tasked with making the Church of England Youth Council a success refused? Why, given the significant priority of engaging more young people in the life of the Church, was his warning not heeded, his proposals not accepted? It seems all too familiar. We want something for nothing and, like the Racial Justice Commission proposals, needed funding to make things work.

*The Bishop of Durham:* I will have to come back to you with a more detailed answer to that very specific question. However, it was a decision that was made by the Council itself. I do need to make it very clear that if General Synod wants much greater youth representation then it needs to put such a proposal. Many diocesan councils have youth councils. I have one. We have youth members on our Bishop's Council and young people on all our advisory groups now as a new step. We could do exactly the same. I will have to come back to you about the specific question you ask. We could do much more, and we should do much more, and I would be very happy to work with others to look at how we did that.

43. *Dr Janette Allotey (Chester)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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 (Rt Revd Paul Butler)* replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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 28 its recent elections, we would be happy to receive suggestions and formulate proposals for Synod to consider.

*Mr Matt Orr (Bath & Wells):* I appreciate it is somewhat similar, but if we are genuinely serious about seeing younger people back in and engaging with our churches, why was a better alternative to a small council that only previously met twice a year and only provided what appears to be three token members to Synod not, to my knowledge, sought after, to guarantee young yet highly capable active Christian representatives from across

our dioceses in Synod in light of the CEYC disbanding? Why was this not a priority even during a pandemic where we lost further relationships with young people?

*The Bishop of Durham:* It is a perfectly fair question. I hold my hand up. I think this got lost sight of during the pandemic. However, during the pandemic we did develop the whole process of engaging over 250 young people in talking about the vision and strategy. We had for the very first time in November in the history of the Synod young people presenting (I was not able to be here because I had Covid) about the vision and strategy, and we had feedback from them saying how much they valued being involved.

The vision for the 250 is that we grow that further and we find more creative ways of ensuring that children as well as young people's voices get heard by this Synod, and by the Church as a whole.

*The Chair:* Questions 44 to 47 to be answered by Canon Dr Jamie Harrison on behalf of the Archbishops' Council.

44. *Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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 (Durham)* replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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.

*Revd Canon Simon Butler:* Since tabling this question a number of staff have thanked me for tabling it, which leads me to believe that this is a problem that is more real than is apparent by the answer. What expectations does the Archbishops' Council have of members of this Synod about the way they speak about staff online and how we speak about one another, including bishops, online?

*Canon Dr Jamie Harrison:* Thank you, Simon. I do not know whether it is just the pandemic or the world we live in but, increasingly people seem ready to go online in various citospheres and so on to make potentially damaging comments about people and entering into sorts of battlegrounds. I think the word "abuse" is a bit complicated in your question, in that, obviously, there is abuse and there is abuse, and I think the abuse that victims and survivors have been through is perhaps of a different dimension of difficulty, but equally I think we have to accept your question.

From the point of view of all of us as members of Synod we have a responsibility. We have currently a voluntary code which does include the wonderful staff who work with us, and for us, and alongside us. I think we need to be a bit more thoughtful perhaps before we press the “send” button. I do not really use social media. I am not very competent and I choose not to, but many do, helpfully. I think it is just having that sense of awareness, of self-awareness of the damage we can do by sending something off. I think you are probably right that this answer could have been stronger and maybe we need to go away and work at it to make it stronger. I am grateful for the question. I think it has been heard, and I hope the staff will also hear my commitment to take this further.

*The Chair:* Can I check, Gavin Drake, that your hand is up for your question that comes next rather than a supplementary on this one?

*Mr Gavin Drake (Durham):* It is a supplementary on this and also on the two following questions.

*The Chair:* I will take your supplementary on Question 44.

*Mr Gavin Drake:* Thank you, Dr Harrison, for that important reply. You will be aware that many victims, survivors, respondents and their supporters feel bullied into silence by some of the Church’s strictures, including the code of conduct in the Clergy Discipline Measure, with the erroneous threat of a High Court referral for contempt if people speak about their experiences. What would you say to those people who feel that they have no other place to turn to question the responses that they have received from the Church?

*Canon Dr Jamie Harrison:* Thank you, Gavin. Obviously, your question started out in relation to the number of cases and on the surface of them they look worrying, this increased number of cases in Question 45. Of course, in one sense it is an increased --  
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*Mr Gavin Drake:* Apologies, we are on Question 44.

*Canon Dr Jamie Harrison:* Sorry, it is a supplementary to Question 44; I am confused. Let me rewind myself and have a think. You are putting this in relation to victims and survivors not being able to express their feelings; is that what I heard?

*Mr Gavin Drake:* That is right. The question from Canon Butler talked about abuse from survivors, respondents and their supporters. Survivors, respondents and their supporters may be going online because they feel they are not being heard.

*Canon Dr Jamie Harrison:* I think you are right, and, again, with the Clergy Discipline Measure being reviewed I think we need better systems. That will be part of it. There has been a silencing of people, either deliberately or by mistake. There has been a move to legalisation perhaps where it should not be the case. I think your input and some of

your colleagues' input is helpful to point these things out. I do not know that I have got the complete solution, but, again, I am certainly someone who is very concerned.

We have the Safe Spaces option, which might be a way in, and if we look at that I am a trustee of Safe Spaces for the Church of England, along with Bishop Debbie from Winchester, and I think that may be an area where we need to consider whistle-blowing or being able to express concerns is better targeted and better responded to by people who are not directly involved in the system, because I think there is a conflict of interest sometimes in those of us who are engaged in it. I think that is where the Independent Safeguarding Board which we heard about this morning particularly helpful, in giving clarity, advice and a direction of travel so we can begin to address the question you have helpfully raised.

*The Chair:* We have had two supplementaries for that question.

45. *Mr Gavin Drake (Southwell & Nottingham)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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 (Durham)* replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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 eight core groups, five allegations were substantiated which resulted in three CDM applications. In 2021 there were 27 core groups, 12 allegations were unsubstantiated, seven substantiated and eight core groups are ongoing. This resulted in two CDM applications. The introduction of the Safeguarding Casework Managements System will allow better data collection and analysis in the future.

*Mr Gavin Drake:* Could you please confirm whether the CDM complaints mentioned in your answer were initiated by the NST as part of its reviews or whether they were initiated by individuals acting outside of the core group process? Can you also indicate the outcome of those CDM proceedings where an outcome has been reached, please?

*Canon Dr Jamie Harrison:* I do not think, Gavin, I have that information to hand. Obviously, this is a generic response to the question in terms of numbers rather than going into the specifics, and of course I cannot, even if I knew, give you particular details other than what is published on the website. CDM decisions should be published on the website of the diocese, so it is a matter perhaps of trawling through that which we could perhaps try to do.

I think your point is well made about data and the lack of our ability to give you data prior to 2020. Sorry, I half answered the wrong question. Obviously, the numbers are higher

but it may be just this is increased reporting rather than incidents. That is a thing we find in healthcare where people have not come forward. I would hope people are continuing to come forward to deal with particularly historic issues because that is the only way we can learn.

If I can explain, the allegations are made, core groups are formed and the allegations are discussed. Where they are substantiated, they are taken forward either to a CDM or, if not, to a form of retraining, but I am sorry, I cannot give you the detail. Whether we can find the detail, I will ask the team.

46. *Mr Gavin Drake (Southwell & Nottingham)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Will the Archbishops' Council publish a list of all the recommendations made in safeguarding Lessons Learnt Reviews commissioned nationally or by dioceses over the past ten years; and 29 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 (Durham)* replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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 Learnt 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 Learnt Reviews are published on the safeguarding section of the Church of England website.

*Mr Gavin Drake:* Apologies for appearing to monopolise questions. The website page that you refer to lists the full lessons learnt reviews that have been carried out, but it is difficult from that page to actually draw out the recommendations, and find out whether or not they have been accepted. The Bishop Whitsey review says that the bishop is not a safeguarding professional, should not have been conducting inquiries, and goes on to recommend that bishops should have no direct involvement in the management of a safeguarding case. Has that recommendation been accepted by the Church or not?

*Canon Dr Jamie Harrison:* Again I do not have that to hand. I looked up a different case in case you were going to ask about the principle. I looked at the Peter Ball case where very clearly it was stated back in 2017 by both the Archbishop of Canterbury and by the then Safeguarding Bishop Peter Hancock that all of those recommendations were accepted in full.

Where I do agree with you is the problem of mapping. In other words, you see on that particular website page the response of the NST and the Church to the recommendations,

such as for instance in the Gibb Report having a national clergy register. If you look at it, it says in 2018 it was going to be discussed. It has now happened without there being a retrospective comment. I think this is one of the great difficulties of maintaining websites. We all know that when we have databases. I take your point that that could be better, but it would be quite difficult to do. I am not saying it should not be done, but I do think there should be a proper mapping. The Archbishop has given me a note I think. He says it is clear that the bishop should not be the investigator. That is what the Archbishop of Canterbury has just told me. It is in the Rules. Again, if you have comments, can you come back to me on that, please? The key thing is I do accept your comment about what you might call updating and mapping, but, as you know, with complicated websites, sometimes there might be 11 or 12 recommendations, and to monitor them over time is not always easy to keep them up to date.

47. *Revd Canon Simon Talbott (Ely)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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 (Durham)* replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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.

*Revd Canon Simon Talbott:* James, thank you for that quick response. Given that the survivor Matt Ineson has refused in principle to co-operate with the review or permit his data to be disclosed in it, because he and his abuser's families were denied input into the review's terms of reference - the question is coming - has consideration been given to starting over so that the survivor's voice will actually be prioritised?

*Canon Dr Jamie Harrison:* I know you will not expect me to go into details about any individual case. I know you well enough, Simon, that you would not expect me to do that,



but it is an approach you were trying. I think I can only give two statements, if you like. One is that, obviously, Maggie Atkinson, who we heard this morning, has been involved, and it is an example of where the independent board can begin to get traction on the ground and begin to give really good opinions about where we go next. Obviously the past is the past, and I can give you a definite assurance that the review by Jane Humphreys will be published in full, but I cannot, I am afraid, give you any more detail about the specifics of how the process will continue.

*Revd Canon Simon Talbott:* Thank you, that is helpful.

*The Chair:* Question 48 to be answered by Mrs Maureen Cole on behalf of the Archbishops' Council.

48. *Revd Canon Lisa Battye (Manchester)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: 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 (ex officio) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:* 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.

*Revd Canon Lisa Battye:* May I thank Mrs Cole for her very clear response to my question. Thank you very much. Would you clarify after it that in quality assurance terms, given the immense amount of influence that the diocesan registrar has over their bishop, there is no independent form or no arrangement for independent quality assurance?

*Mrs Maureen Cole:* Speaking as an ex-diocesan secretary to the chief exec and having worked closely with bishops, diocesan registrars work very closely with bishops and all the diocese. I think we do have that quality assurance. If we are not happy, there is a code of conduct and we have a legal department to consult. I do not think we need that independent assurance that you are talking about. It is like commissioning any legal representative. We use people other than registrars as well in the life of the diocese. For me that does not seem as appropriate.

## HOUSE OF BISHOPS

*The Chair:* Questions 49 to 89 to the House of Bishops. Questions 49 to 53 to be answered by the Archbishop of York on behalf of the House of Bishops.

49. *Revd Canon James Blandford-Baker (Ely)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 (Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell)* replied as Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 31 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.

*Revd Canon James Blandford-Baker:* May I thank the Archbishop for his response. Given the current enthusiasm for transparency in the Church, in the last five years how many meetings of the House of Bishops have been held, how many of these have been committee meetings under Standing Order 14, and was this very high proportion the actual intention of Standing Order 14?

*The Archbishop of York:* Whether that was the intention of Standing Order 14 I simply do not know, although I am sure it was partly this, which I will go on to explain why. How many meetings I am afraid I do not know but we could easily find that out for you. I will ask the Secretary General if he can get somebody to do that.

I think what I would want to say, however, on the big issue of your question, let me put it this way. I guess most of us have had the experience that somebody writes us a difficult letter that we need to reply to; we write a reply but we do not send it, and the next day we write the reply that we do send, and we are very glad that we did not send the first letter, but somehow you needed to write that first draft in order to get the actual response right. I do not think that is an unusual experience.

In other words, in all walks of life, sometimes the cause of transparency and good communication is served - not obscured - by there being a preliminary stage where things can be said very freely and very openly, but, actually, would not be very helpful if they were published, because they are the first thoughts that need to be shared in an atmosphere where they are not going to come under scrutiny. It is Chatham House Rules, and I think in most walks of life this is fairly common practice, that we need that space where we can talk much more freely much more openly, say stupid things. I am going to be the Home Secretary, by the way, in the new plans that the *Times* was telling us about.

That is a good example. There was a consultative letter with some ideas in it, some of which are silly ideas some, others are not, but if that gets out into the public it gets in the way of good communication, it gets in the way of good decision-making. Most our meetings are in committee and I do not actually know the precise number. We can find that out. I want to say it is to very good purpose in the cause of good communication and good decision-making not to conceal things.

50. *Mrs Mary Durlacher (Chelmsford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 (Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell)* replied as Chair of the House of Bishops: 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.

*Mrs Mary Durlacher:* Thank you, Archbishop, for your very full reply and your recognition that the vision for the 2020s is deeply concerned with finding ways of maintaining the presence of small rural schools. My question relates to a different kind of partnership. How does the multi-church network relate to the network which small rural schools are having to adopt? It is a subject that has not come up much.

*The Archbishop of York:* Mary, how nice to hear from you. I am not sure I completely understand the question. I am probably just being stupid. By multi-church network, do you mean multi-church benefice?

*Mrs Mary Durlacher:* Yes.

*The Archbishop of York:* And the question is how does this relate to schools? It is hard to give a short concise answer. Let me express my great hope, and also what I see on the ground, as I certainly did in Chelmsford where I used to serve and which I now see in York where we have a great many church schools. When I talk about the mixed ecology I mean the whole ecosystem of the Church; therefore, Church and school working together. That is certainly what we hope to promote and encourage and build upon in the

future as one of the ways we maintain our presence and share the love of Christ. Sorry, I am giving long answers. I do apologise.

*The Chair.* Is that it?

*The Archbishop of York.* It is.

*The Chair.* Questions 51 and 52 are going to be taken together.

51. *Dr Felicity Cooke (Ely)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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)?

52. *Revd Mark Wallace (Chelmsford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 (Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell)* replied as Chair of the House of Bishops: 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. 51 and 52

*Dr Felicity Cooke:* Thank you very much for confirming that the Standing Commission is to be established this year. As part of this process, can I ask what formula will be applied in assigning places on the Commission for the proportionate representation of - and I quote here - "those with differing theological positions". That is described in paragraph 6 of Annex 2 of GS 2225 under the heading "Way of working" for the Commission?

*The Archbishop of York:* I am afraid I do not know what the formula is, although, again, I am sure we can try to find out if one has been agreed, but clearly there will be the intention to make sure that all bits of the Church are represented on that Standing Commission.

53. *Mrs Tina Nay (Chichester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 (Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell)* replied as Chair of the House of Bishops: 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.

*The Chair.* Question 54 is to be answered by the Bishop of Gloucester on behalf of the House of Bishops.

54. *Canon Adrian Greenwood (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 (Rt Revd Rachel Treweek)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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.

*Mrs Tina Nay (Chichester):* Just a point of clarification. I thought my question was 69.

*The Chair.* We are doing Question 53 at the moment. We have not got there yet. Hang fire. Adrian Greenwood, your supplementary.

*Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark):* Thank you, Bishop Rachel, for your reply and especially the reference to specific cultural change in the third paragraph. May I take this opportunity to thank you for your role as episcopal champion for *Setting God's People Free* and your engagement with the diocesan lay chairs.

As we move forward, building on the progress so far, as we become a church of missionary disciples, could you say what in particular from GS 2248, which describes the implementation programme, you would like to emphasise and focus on as the ways that will bring lasting fruit for the Kingdom in moving forward into missionary disciples?

*The Bishop of Gloucester.* Thank you, Adrian. I think quite a lot was said in the last item on the Agenda. I guess I just want to build on what I said in that item, which is about equipping and enabling people to live out their faith in everyday life. Things that Nick

Shepherd showed, such as the portal and people signing into those, those are an activity but they are about the impact that we have.

The other thing I would really like to go on stressing is the role of clergy and lay leaders when we gather for worship: what are we doing through those small steps to see that cultural shift, how are we doing on gathered worship. If we all gave some more attention to that so we send one another out at the end of the service and then when we meet again the next week or in the week, how we are having the conversations to ask one another about how we have been living out our faith, supporting one another, as someone said earlier, in the struggles - this is not walking round with big grins on our faces - in the struggles of life as well as the joys.

*The Chair:* Questions 55 to 56 to be answered by the Bishop of Chelmsford on behalf of the House of Bishops.

55. *Revd Andrew Yates (Truro)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 (Rt Revd Guli Francis-Dehqani)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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.

56. *Revd Mark Bennet (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 (Rt Revd Guli Francis-Dehqani)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 three 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.

*The Chair:* Questions 57 to 58 to be answered by the Bishop of Norwich on behalf of the House of Bishops.

57. *Professor Roy Faulkner (Leicester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 (Rt Revd Graham Usher)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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/202011/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 COP 21.

*Professor Roy Faulkner:* My question is relating to the discussion on the decarbonisation and deindustrialisation of our society in relation to the Environmental Group's programme. Is the Bishop of Norwich aware that the efforts to decarbonise industry could be confused with deindustrialising of the whole of society? If that is encouraged by the C of E then reduced GDP resulting from this will lead to far more poverty-related deaths than anything to do with global warming.

*The Bishop of Norwich:* Roy, thank you very much for your question. I was aware of that, not least from the conversation we had last night, but I am always keen to learn more. What I am clear about is that there is a huge risk in reducing industrial activity in the UK and we just offshore carbon. I think we need to be really careful about that, that we do not export our use of carbon to other nations. But thank you.

58. *Revd Marcus Walker (London)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: How many parishes have recorded their Energy Footprint Tool data for 2020, broken down by emissions rating?

*The Bishop of Norwich (Rt Revd Graham Usher)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: The analysis of the 2020 EFT results is available here: [www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-11/EnergyFootprintTool2020.pdf](http://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 m<sup>2</sup>) 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 tCO<sub>2</sub>e). 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.

*The Chair*: Questions 59 to 60 to be answered by the Bishop of Worcester on behalf of the House of Bishops. The Bishop of Bristol is answering on behalf of the Bishop of Worcester. I just read what is written before me.

59. *Mrs Kat Alldread (Derby)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 (Rt Revd Dr John Inge)* replied on behalf Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 Kat Alldread*: Given the statement from the Chair of the Independent Safeguarding Board in GS 2244 that the ISB does not have powers to sanction, direct, regulate, inspect or insist, whereas the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman has the power to investigate complaints, to recommend remedies where complaints are upheld, and award compensation, will Archbishops' Council reconsider its decision to reject this proposal, and also to consult further with survivors now that the limited functions of the ISB have been made public?

*The Bishop of Bristol (Rt Revd Viv Fall)*: Viv Fall, Bishop of Bristol. Not the Bishop of Worcester. I am grateful for the question. It seems to refer to the Archbishops' Council, and I am answering questions particularly about CDM reform, but I am sure I can pass



that back to the Bishop of Worcester, and also relay to him the comments from Maggie Atkinson this morning so he is suitably on his toes.

*Mr Clive Billenness (Diocese of Europe):* Will the Archbishops' Council please publish appropriately anonymised details of the consultation process which was undertaken on this decision to enable Synod members, and potentially the ISB, to determine its reliability as a true guide of survivors' wishes?

*The Bishop of Bristol:* I am afraid I cannot answer that question. I will again pass that on. I am sorry I cannot be more helpful at this point.

60. *Mrs Amanda Robbie (Lichfield)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 (Rt Revd Dr John Inge)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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.

*Mrs Amanda Robbie:* I am sure that quite a few people would have been rather shocked to read in the answer to my question that notes on a clergyperson's blue file that may have come as a result of a complaint that has been dismissed, and where no facts have been found, will be kept for 70 years after the death of that clergyperson. Given that the guidance concerned, which appears in Appendix 1 to the Personal Files Policy Relating to Clergy (approved by the House of Bishops in June 2021), relates to guidance relating to allegations of misconduct which do not result in a formal complaint, and not allegations of misconduct where the complaint had sufficient substance, which is an entirely different set of circumstances, has this policy of retaining things for a very long time ever been

tested with the UK Information Commissioner for compliance with principle (e) in that document?

*The Bishop of Bristol:* Amanda, I am very grateful for the question. As you indicate, there is a blue file guidance policy which is regularly updated, but I do not believe the Implementation Group has reflected on that, nor, I believe, has it consulted either with the Clergy Discipline Commission or the Office of the Information Commissioner, and I hope that it might do so in the future.

*Revd Dr Ian Paul (Southwell & Nottingham):* Given the absolutely extraordinary length of time for which a record will be kept of a complaint for which no action needs to be taken, what guarantees have been put in place against possibly vexatious complaints being made; protecting clergy from that, and protecting them from being prejudiced when they apply for jobs and the contents of those blue files may well be shared with other dioceses? Does the Bishop sense how extraordinary the Synod is thinking the answer is here?

*The Bishop of Bristol:* I am grateful you have raised this question. I think the applause shows how seriously this Synod takes that question. I will refer that back to the Bishop of Worcester so that the Implementation Group, and no doubt others, can consider it further.

*The Chair:* Questions 61 to 62 were answered earlier in the session.

## **HOUSE OF BISHOPS**

Questions 63 to 64 to be answered by the Bishop of Carlisle on behalf of the House of Bishops.

63. *Professor Helen King (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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/documentlibrary/lambeth-conference/1998/section-i-called-to-fullhumanity/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 (Rt Revd James Newcome)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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”.

*Professor Helen King:* Thank you for this very encouraging response, which clearly suggests that cultural context should never be used as the basis for this kind of surgery to be carried out. In view of this opposition to FGM, is the House of Bishops therefore expressing its concerns about the draft Family Values Bill in Ghana, which supports non-consensual surgical intervention on the bodies of children and adults with variant sexual characteristics, an operation which is a form of FGM?

*The Bishop of Carlisle:* Thank you very much indeed for that question and thank you for the initial question. I was wondering where a supplementary might take us. I do not know myself know about that particular detail, but I will certainly consult with my colleagues on what is now called Faith in Public Life, and we will get back to you. Thank you very much.

64. *Mr Philip Baldwin (London)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 (Rt Revd James Newcome)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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.

*Mr Philip Baldwin:* Thank you for your response. A lot has changed since 2004 in terms of HIV prevention, treatment and care, and some UKME people of faith as well as other populations do experience HIV stigma within church settings. Would the Church of England consider commissioning a new report looking at HIV stigma and how this impacts our faith communities?

*The Bishop of Carlisle:* Thank you very much indeed. This is a really important topic. I know that there was a very useful article which was produced in the *Church Times* on 26 November last year (I do not know whether you saw it) by Abigail Frymann Rouch, who herself did quite a lot of research into this whole topic. She refers to various organisations and charities such as Christian Aid, Alongside You, the Blue Sky Trust and so on, and to online resources produced by the Church of Scotland, a series of videos produced in 2017 called "Positive Faith". It is a long article and ends with various practical suggestions. I am again discussing this with colleagues in Faith in Public Life. Whether we have either the resource or anything else to undertake such research, I think is a big question, but I will certainly raise it.

*The Chair:* Question 65 to be answered by the Bishop of Hereford on behalf of the House of Bishops.

65. *Revd Canon John Dunnett (Chelmsford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 (Rt Revd Richard Jackson)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: Of the six diocesan and 13 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.

*The Chair.* Question 66 to be answered by the Bishop to the Armed Forces on behalf of the House of Bishops.

66. *Canon Peter Bruinvels (Guildford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 (Rt Revd Hugh Nelson)* replied on behalf of the House of Bishops: 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.

*Canon Peter Bruinvels:* As the Armed Forces champion for the Church of England, can I say how pleased I am as concerns the way we are asking applicants whether they served, offering guaranteed interviews, offering new jobs through the Career Transition Partnership and being a military-friendly employer, but will he not agree with me that with 2.1 million veterans, 137,000 regulars, 32,000 reservists and 90,000 service children under 18, there is a legal requirement to make all our dioceses aware of the needs of the Armed Forces community which under the Armed Forces Covenant, as I said in my question, and the Armed Forces Act would it be helpful ---

*The Chair:* Peter, sorry, that is a legal question, I am advised by my learned friend here.

*Canon Peter Bruinvels:* It is answered in the question from the Bishop. Would he not agree with me that what we need to do is communicate to all the dioceses these legal requirements, but, more importantly, would it be helpful if more dioceses signed the Armed Forces Covenant as well as Guildford and Lichfield, which certainly have, and Hereford?

*The Bishop to the Armed Forces:* May I thank you for your service both to the Church and to the armed forces. It was good to meet you for the first time today. I look forward to more conversations on this. Yes, there was work done when it was first launched. It looks like that has died down a little, and I look forward to working with you and others to find other ways to resuscitate the Covenant.

*The Chair:* Questions 67 to 74 to be answered by the Bishop of Huddersfield on behalf of the House of Bishops.

67. *Mr Martin Sewell (Rochester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 (Rt Revd Dr Jonathan Gibbs)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 40 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:* In the secular world young vulnerable women, many with lifetimes of abuse in their birth families and with violent cohabitantes, are held fully to account for failing to protect their children often from an unsuitable partner. Can you tell us at what level of the Church was the policy decision made that the normal rule of accountability should not apply to those who were "the best boys, from the best schools"?

*The Bishop of Huddersfield:* Martin, we have rightly been criticised in the past for not having a sufficiently victim and survivor-centred approach, and this decision made by the

NST was part of developing such an approach. I have to ask how can we make comparative judgments about the degree of abuse suffered and its impact on different people. I pick up the wording of your initial question, “no person who can claim victim status, to any degree”. A victim is a victim. We believe, and I endorse and support the decision of my professional colleagues, that this was a proportionate and compassionate response in this case.

68. *Mr Martin Sewell (Rochester)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops’ Council: 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 (Rt Revd Dr Jonathan Gibbs)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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.

*Mr Martin Sewell:* I will respect the written answer that you have given, but perhaps you will allow me to extract a general point from that about the problems of transition from CDM and suspension back into active ministry, because that is not always easy. What does the Church do to ease that transition? I want to refer particularly to one priest who has been refused the return of car keys and the parish passwords by disappointed complainants who are still vexatious towards him. What can be done about those sorts of situations? They may look very small to us but they are very important to him.

*The Bishop of Huddersfield:* I can only answer in terms of the safeguarding context of this. The issue of return to work post suspension is covered in section 4.2 of the managing allegations guidance, and, indeed, new guidance on managing allegations is currently in preparation and consultation will follow over the next few months, and we would value Synod members’ responses.

With regard to the question you have raised there are there are also issues here under the provisions of the Clergy Discipline Measure. We know that the review of that Measure is under way at the moment. PCCs are independent charities. I would have hoped that there could be suitable pastoral advice from the diocese concerned, the senior officers thereof, in the hope of a pastoral resolution of that kind of problem.

69. *Mrs Tina Nay (Chichester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 (Rt Revd Dr Jonathan Gibbs)* replied 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.

*Mrs Tina Nay:* Thank you for this answer, Bishop, but does this mean that the House of Bishops places no priority on monitoring diocesan performance for consistency and fair practice in complaints management?

*The Bishop of Huddersfield:* Thank you for your question. As things stand at the moment, in respect of the operation of the safeguarding guidance, dioceses are independent separate charities. Precisely under IICSA Recommendations 1 to 8, the proposal is to introduce a national scheme of professional supervision and quality assurance of the work done in dioceses. That would be a significant step forward. It would change the relationship between the national Church and the National Safeguarding Team and the way in which safeguard is practised in different dioceses. That is precisely a recommendation coming out of IICSA to ensure consistency of good practice across the Church of England. I very much welcome your question and that is very much the direction of travel which we are following.

70. *Ms Mary Talbot (Europe)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 (Rt Revd Dr Jonathan Gibbs)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: The Redress Scheme will continue to be developed over the course of 2022 with the aim of introducing it as soon as possible.

*Ms Jane Rosam (Rochester):* My question, Bishop, is about the Interim Support Scheme ahead of the National Redress Scheme being up and running. A similar question earlier seemed to have some ambiguity in answer and, as some victims are now about to fall off the cliff of support because of a new 12-month limit, and this is causing very real fear and distress, please may I ask for clarity: is there a safety net being provided?

*The Bishop of Huddersfield:* Thank you very much for your question, Mary, and of course the wellbeing of victims and survivors is at the heart of this and the heart of our concerns.

The Interim Support Scheme (ISS) was set up in September 2020 precisely in response to a very immediate and urgent need, and that remains its principal focus.

The ISS continues to support those in urgent need. Yes indeed, its terms of reference have been published and been tightened, to some extent, over these past months as care and thought has been given as to how do we best given urgent and immediate support. There is indeed in principle a 12-month limit, because that is what it is meant to do, cover urgent and immediate need, but further requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis. We are very concerned about the potential impact on individual survivors and that is very much built into the system of response.

71. *Mrs Kat Alldread (Derby)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: When does the existence and authority of a Safeguarding Case Management Group cease?

*The Bishop of Huddersfield (Rt Revd Dr Jonathan Gibbs)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: "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.

*Mrs Kat Alldread:* Thank you, Bishop, for your response. Given that risk assessment cannot begin until disputed facts have been resolved, that core groups do not resolve facts, and that cases sometimes return to a core group from a President with no clear decision on the facts, does the House of Bishops recognise that this may inevitably leave some respondents out in core group limbo with no route out?

*The Bishop of Huddersfield:* Kat, thank you very much for your question. We are all aware that there are, inevitably, very difficult cases where a clear resolution is not possible. What is important in those cases is that the best possible pastoral way forward for all concerned should be considered. That must be both in respect of the respondent, the person who is under investigation, and those who perhaps have raised concerns. It is difficult to define precisely how those difficult-to-answer questions are resolved, but at the heart of that has to be our pastoral concern for everybody involved, and working through what that looks like on the ground.

72. *Professor Helen King (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 (Rt Revd Dr Jonathan Gibbs)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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.

*Professor Helen King:* Thank you very much for the answer. Having spoken with the Smyth victim Graham, I feel compelled to ask what the status of your personal view is, Bishop Jonathan. Who will make this decision? You say, "In my view..." but this decision seems to be a very important one in terms of showing that the black victims of Smyth are every much as important as the white privileged victims.

*The Bishop of Huddersfield:* Thank you, Helen. This indeed is a crucially important question. I would state it more strongly than it is my view; it is my very firm view that this is precisely what happened, and I will be leaning behind that from my point of view as the Lead Bishop for Safeguarding.

Ultimately, I am quite sure that the request will go to the leaders of the Church in South Africa. The letter went from the Archbishop of Canterbury. I gave the date of March 2021. Our recommendation is that we need all the evidence in front of us. We need to be able to put that over to the Church authorities in South Africa. My anticipation is that at the conclusion of the review that information will be passed to both the Archbishops' Council and to the Archbishops, and I will certainly be recommending the obvious thing is to follow up with a letter from the Archbishop. That will be his Grace's decision, but I have no doubt that we will be seeking to pass over that request with a strong recommendation that an investigation should be undertaken, and a further offer of support from the Church of England to undertake that investigation.

73. *Ms Jane Rosam (Rochester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 (Rt Revd Dr Jonathan Gibbs)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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.

74. *Ms Jane Rosam (Rochester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 (Rt Revd Dr Jonathan Gibbs)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 Chair.* Questions 75 to 77 to be answered by the Bishop of Lichfield.

75. *Revd Jack Shepherd (Liverpool)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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”?

76. *Mrs Mary Durlacher (Chelmsford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 (Rt Revd Dr Michael Ipgrave)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 44 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”.

*Revd Jack Shepherd:* What interest does the House of Bishops have, and what steps are being taken to found out the proportion of churches that are celebrating Communion through the practice of the use of individual cups, particularly as we approach the great Eucharistic feast of Easter?

*The Bishop of Lichfield:* I think I have indicated in my answer that we have no systematic plan to found out that information. We are aware of the importance for Anglicans, and I think the pandemic has demonstrated how much Anglicans are people who love the Eucharist, and how central to our celebration of the Eucharist drinking of the consecrated wine is. There are different ways which are authorized by the House of Bishops. I am also aware some churches are experimenting with the use of individual cups, but we have no particular plan to find out how many.

*The Chair:* I should have said that the Bishop of Lichfield is also taking Question 76 from Mary Durlacher at the same time on this.

*Revd Jack Shepherd:* What advice and reassurance can I give from the House of Bishops to clergy who are concerned about the safety and hygiene of the common cup and intincture and are uneasy in conscience about the practice of Communion of one kind, but despite promises in the last session of Synod and Andrea Atherton’s Grove booklet are worried, in the face of theological ambiguity from the House of Bishops, about how this will be monitored and perhaps policed differently across dioceses?

*The Bishop of Lichfield:* Thank you for mentioning Andrea Atherton and Andrew Goddard’s Grove booklet on individual cups, which is a very lucid and I think very helpful document. It is clear that the House of Bishops as a body and Bishops individually have no interest in the policing of this. I think our behaviour demonstrates that.

*Mrs Mary Durlacher:* Thank you for this answer, Bishop. Two years ago I raised the subject and was the first person to ask about what mitigating measures could be taken to

reassure congregations who were worried about infection from the common chalice. At that stage nobody had died so that shows how long ago it was. As of last week there are 33 million people who are estimated in the UK to have caught the virus.

Reference was made yesterday to why some people keep coming back with the same question again and again, and the suggestion was because the answer was not quite given. Thank you for the easing restrictions, but what would really help congregations to regain confidence is a willingness to allow the experimental, if necessary, use of individual cups. When can we hope to receive that encouragement from the House of Bishops to try it at least?

*The Bishop of Lichfield:* Thank you for the question, Mary. Thank you for your continuing interest in this issue. The House of Bishops did discuss whether or not to go down the synodical route to make the use of individual cups indubitably legal, and after deep reflection decided not to follow that course. The common cup can be shared with lay people in terms of regulations at the moment. That is the decision of the minister in consultation with their local church, and obviously there is a range of issues they want to take into account, including infection levels and the layout of the church building and the number of vulnerable people and so on, and the level of confidence amongst people. I do understand the confidence question and I do understand, and so do my brother and sister Bishops, the importance of sharing in the wine as well as the bread for Anglicans.

*Questions not reached during Synod.*

78. *Dr Simon Eyre (Chichester) asked the Chair of the House of Bishops:* 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 (Rt Revd Dr Martin Warner) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:* The House of Bishops has not considered this matter.

88. *Revd Canon Dr Judith Maltby (Universities & TElS) asked the Chair of the House of Bishops:* 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 (Most Revd & Rt Hon Justin Welby) replied as Chair of the House of Bishops:* 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.

89. *Mr Philip Baldwin (London)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: 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 (Most Revd & Rt Hon Justin Welby)* replied as Chair of the House of Bishops: 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

90. *Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford)* asked the Church Commissioners: 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 (Rt Revd David Walker)* replied as Deputy Chair of the Church Commissioners: 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.

91. *Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford)* asked the Church Commissioners: 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 (Rt Revd David Walker)* replied as Deputy Chair of the Church Commissioners: 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.

92. *Revd Dr Chris Moore (Hereford)* asked the Church Commissioners: 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 (Rt Revd David Walker) replied as Deputy Chair of the Church Commissioners:* 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.

93. *Mr Richard Denno (Liverpool)* asked the Church Commissioners: 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 (Rt Revd David Walker) replied as Deputy Chair of the Church Commissioners:* 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.

94. *Mr Jonathan Baird (Salisbury)* asked the Church Commissioners: 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?

95. *Mr John Brydon (Norwich)* asked the Church Commissioners: 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 (Rt Revd David Walker)* replied as Deputy Chair of the Church Commissioners: With permission, I will answer Mr Baird's and Mr Brydon's Questions together.

The staff numbers and costs requested are as follows:

	<b>2012</b>	<b>2021</b>
<b>Staff costs</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
Lambeth	2.14	2.65
Bishopthorpe	0.74	0.90
Total	2.88	3.55

**Staff numbers (Full-time equivalent in brackets)**

	<b>Dec-12</b>	<b>Dec-21</b>
Lambeth	47 (43.5)	41 (37.7)
Bishopthorpe	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.

96. *Mr John Brydon (Norwich)* asked the Church Commissioners: 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 (Rt Revd David Walker)* replied as Deputy Chair of the Church Commissioners: 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.

97. *Mr Jonathan Baird (Salisbury)* asked the Church Commissioners: 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 and 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 and devastation in the parishes and the Archbishops’ recent and repeated statements in support of the parish?

*The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker)* replied as Deputy Chair of the Church Commissioners: 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.



98. *Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn)* asked the Church Commissioners: 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 (Rt Revd David Walker)* replied as *Deputy Chair of the Church Commissioners*: 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 Archbishops' 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.

99. *Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn)* asked the Church Commissioners: 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 (Rt Revd David Walker)* replied as *Deputy Chair of the Church Commissioners*: 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 11 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.

**Members of the Triennium Funding Working Group**

Rt Revd David Walker - Chair (House of Bishops and Church Commissioners)

Suzanne Avery (Church Commissioners),

Rt Revd Paul Butler (House of Bishops and Archbishops' Council)

Maureen Cole (Archbishops' Council)

Very Revd Stephen Lake (Church Commissioners)

Rt Revd Philip Mounstephen (House of Bishops)

Rt Revd Sarah Mullally (House of Bishops)

Rt Revd Martin Seeley (House of Bishops and Archbishops' Council)

Alan Smith (Archbishops' Council and Church Commissioners)

Canon John Spence (Archbishops' Council)

Third Church Estates Commissioner (Church Commissioners). Initially Dr Eve Poole, then covered by Bishop Viv Faull given the vacancy ahead of the appointment of Revd Canon Flora Winfield.

100. *Dr Cathy Rhodes (Sheffield)* asked the Church Commissioners: 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 (Rt Revd David Walker)* replied as *Deputy Chair of the Church Commissioners*: 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.

101. *Revd Anne Brown (Truro)* asked the Church Commissioners: 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 (ex officio)* replied as *First Church Estates Commissioner*: 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).

102. *Ms Gill Frigiero (Coventry)* asked the Church Commissioners: 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 (ex officio) replied as First Church Estates Commissioner:* 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.

103. *Revd Canon Andy Salmon (Manchester)* asked the Church Commissioners: Will the Church Commissioners follow the advice of the National Investing Bodies who have Exxon on its list of restricted companies and disinvest?

104. *Mr Paul Waddell (Southwark)* asked the Church Commissioners: 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 (ex officio) replied as First Church Estates Commissioner:* 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.

*105. Revd Anne Brown (Truro) asked the Church Commissioners: 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 (ex officio) replied as First Church Estates Commissioner: 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.*

*106. Revd Canon Dr Rachel Mann (Manchester) asked the Church Commissioners: 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 (ex officio) replied as First Church Estates Commissioner: 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.*

107. *Canon Shayne Ardron (Leicester)* asked the Church Commissioners: 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 (ex officio) replied as First Church Estates Commissioner:* 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.

108. *Revd Canon Dr Anderson Jeremiah (Universities & TElS)* asked the Church Commissioners: 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 (ex officio) replied as First Church Estates Commissioner:* 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. 61 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.

109. *Revd Dr Tom Woolford (Blackburn)* asked the Church Commissioners: 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 (ex officio) replied as First Church Estates Commissioner:* 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.

110. *Revd Dr Patrick Richmond (Norwich)* asked the Church Commissioners: 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 (ex officio) replied as First Church Estates Commissioner:* 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.

111. *Revd Dr Patrick Richmond (Norwich)* asked the Church Commissioners: 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 (ex officio) replied as First Church Estates Commissioner:* 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**

112. *Revd Ruth Newton (Leeds)* asked the Chair of the Pensions Board: 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 (ex officio) replied as Chair of the Pensions Board:* 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.

113. *Revd Stella Bailey (Coventry)* asked the Chair of the Pensions Board: 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 (ex officio) replied as Chair of the Pensions Board:* 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 COP 26 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.

114. *Revd Canon Lisa Battye (Manchester)* asked the Chair of the Pensions Board: 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 (ex officio) replied as Chair of the Pensions Board:* 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.

115. *Dr Cathy Rhodes (Sheffield)* asked the Chair of the Pensions Board: 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 (ex officio) replied as Chair of the Pensions Board:* 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

116. *Mr Sam Margrave (Coventry)* asked the Secretary General: 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 replied as the Secretary General:* 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).”

117. *Mrs Rosemary Lyon (Blackburn)* asked the Secretary General: 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 replied as the Secretary General:* 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.

118. *Revd Canon John Dunnnett (Chelmsford)* asked the Secretary General: How many senior NCI posts (bands 1 to 4) have been filled in each of the past five years, and for each year what percentage were advertised externally, and what percentage had a Genuine Occupational Requirement attached?

*Mr William Nye replied as the Secretary General:* 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, five with an OR 2019 - 31 posts filled, six with an OR 2020 – 25 posts filled, 1 with an OR 2021 - 24 posts filled, five with an OR It has not been possible to provide exact information regarding external advertising.

119. *Andrew Presland (Peterborough)* asked the Secretary General: 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 replied as the Secretary General:* 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.

120. *Canon Andrew Presland (Peterborough)* asked the Secretary General: 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 replied as the Secretary General:* 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.

121. *Mr Clive Scowen (London)* asked the Secretary General: 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 replied as the Secretary General:* I am not aware that this has been considered so far.

## **CLERK TO THE SYNOD**

122. *Miss Debbie Buggs (London)* asked the Clerk to the Synod: 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 replied as the Clerk to the Synod:* 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.

123. *Miss Vanessa Pedro-Pinto (Leicester)* asked the Clerk to the Synod: 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 replied as the Clerk to the Synod:* 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.

124/ *Mr Stephen Hogg (Leeds)* asked the Clerk to the Synod: 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 replied as the Clerk to the Synod:* 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 \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://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.

125. *Canon Adrian Greenwood (Southwark)* asked the Clerk to the Synod: (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 replied as the Clerk to the Synod:* 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/library/research-and-factsheets/ethnic-diversity-in-politics-and-public-life/)

126. *Dr Janette Allotey (Chester)* asked the Clerk to the Synod: 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 replied as the Clerk to the Synod:* 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 70 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**

127. *Mrs Rebecca Hunt (Portsmouth)* asked the Chair of the National Society Council: 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 (Rt Revd Paul Butler)* replied as Chair of the National Society Council: 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.

128. *Mr Clive Scowen (London)* asked the Chair of the National Society Council: 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 (Rt Revd Paul Butler)* replied as Chair of the National Society Council: 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 GS 2161 as well as many others.

## **CHURCH BUILDINGS COUNCIL**

129. *Revd Canon Timothy Goode (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the Church Buildings Council: 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?

*Ven. Robert Cooper (Durham)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the Church Buildings Council: 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.

130. *Revd Canon Andrew Dotchin (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich)* asked the Chair of the Church Buildings Council: 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?

*Ven. Robert Cooper (Durham)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the Church Buildings Council: 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 C of E 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.

131. *Revd Canon Dr Tim Bull (St Albans)* asked the Chair of the Church Buildings Council: 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?

*Ven. Robert Cooper (Durham)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the Church Buildings Council: 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](mailto:denise.rowley@churchofengland.org). The Routemap and survey can be found here: [www.churchofengland.org/net-zero-consultation](http://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).

132. *Mr Charles Houston (Hereford)* asked the Chair of the Church Buildings Council: 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?

*Ven. Robert Cooper (Durham) replied on behalf of the Chair of the Church Buildings Council:* This is an interesting topic that we have 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**

133. *Revd Canon Dr Judith Maltby (Universities & TElS)* asked the Chair of the Council for Christian Unity: 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 (Rt Revd Christopher Cockworth) replied on behalf of the Chair of the Council for Christian Unity:* 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**

134. *Mr Paul Ronson (Blackburn)* asked the Chair of the Finance Committee: Please provide an update on parish finances during the pandemic.

*Canon Dr John Spence (ex officio) replied as Chair of the Finance Committee:* 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. 75 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.

135. *Dr Simon Eyre (Chichester)* asked the Chair of the Finance Committee: 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 (ex officio) replied as Chair of the Finance Committee:* 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.

## **REMUNERATION & CONDITIONS OF SERVICE COMMITTEE**

148. *Revd Roger Driver (Bath & Wells)* asked the Chair of the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee: 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 (Rt Revd Richard Jackson) replied as Chair of the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee:* 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.

149. *Revd Roger Driver (Bath & Wells)* asked the Chair of the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee: 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 (Rt Revd Richard Jackson)* replied as Chair of the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee: 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.

150. *Revd Preb. Rosie Austin (Exeter)* asked the Chair of the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee: 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 (Rt Revd Richard Jackson)* replied as Chair of the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee: 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.

*The Chair.* Synod, that brings us to the end of Questions. We now move to Evening Worship, which is going to be led for us by the Ven. Alex Hughes.

## **EVENING WORSHIP**

*Ven. Dr Alex Hughes (Ely)* led the Synod in an act of worship.

### **Full Synod: Third Day Thursday 10 February 2022**

## **OPENING WORSHIP**

Revd Dr Sara Batts Neale led the Synod in an act of worship.

THE CHAIR *Canon Professor Joyce Hill (Leeds)* took the Chair at 10.32 am.

## **ITEM 15**

### **REPORT BY THE GOVERNANCE REVIEW GROUP (GS 2249)**

*The Chair.* Good morning, Synod. We resume the standard Agenda dealing with governance and the Report by the Governance Review Group. For this you will need a number of items. First of all, GS 2249, and it references GS 2239, which is the Report itself that we had in our November papers for that meeting of General Synod. You will need Order Paper IV, which sets out the main motion and the amendments. You may also wish to refer to the Third Notice Paper which deals with the financial implications.

With that amount of business dealt with, I would like to call upon Bishop of Leeds to move the main motion. He has up to 10 minutes.

*The Bishop of Leeds (Rt Revd Nicholas Baines):* I will not need 10 minutes. Before I begin, can I just say how sorry we are that Jacqui Phillips is not here. She has been with us throughout the process and we wish her well and a speedy recovery. We welcome Sir David Lidington, who is Chair of the Project Group going forward, who is here with us, and Mary Chapman, who is also on the Review Group.

Back in November I made a presentation to Synod about the work and the recommendations of the Governance Review Group. At that stage I did not propose a motion but I described the work we had done, the things we had learnt from a multitude of focus groups, governance bodies and individuals, and I outlined the direction of travel

before answering members' questions. This quite deliberate and legitimate presentation followed a fringe meeting aimed at making space for more informal questioning.

I am not going to rehearse here all the detail of the Report. You have all read it. I want to underline a couple of the most important principles of all. First, the Review Group has not attempted to reform the governance of the Church of England. It is about reforming the governance structure of the NCIs. Underneath all the complexity of this subject there is a really simple question: how do we best run those functions which the Church needs at national level? The answers are not easy, or obvious, but that question really is, so, as we debate, let us not lose sight of that.

A related point is what do we actually mean by running things well. The Review Group's recommendations were about rationalisation, simplification and clarification. A number of responses indicate that some people have caught the whiff of centralisation, and I would respectfully suggest that the opposite is true. The ultimate goal is to make clearer who makes decisions, and how. In the end, it is about accountability, which depends on both transparency and accessibility, optimising accountability for the good of the whole.

During the presentation and our fringe meeting in November, and in correspondence we have received since then, you have continued to take this subject seriously, for which we are very grateful. We have received a good deal of gratitude for taking on this complex task. There is general support for our motivation, with some broad recommendations, and some healthy scepticism about some of the detail. What we have not received, not once, is the suggestion that things are fine as they are or that reform is not necessary.

I said in my opening remarks in November that it was not patently obvious to everyone how the polity of the Church of England works. The barely suppressed laughter in the chamber suggested that my observation was right. But please do not attribute any confusion you personally might feel to being a new member of a new Synod. I can assure you that even the most experienced individuals and groups right across the Church structures find the current structure complex, sometimes bewildering, and certainly impossible to describe succinctly to the person in the pew, let alone the person in the street. It is very clear to me the type of reform suggested in GS 2239 is necessary.

At the same time I am confident, and I have said so openly, that the Review Group did not get every detail right first time. If the answers are not all the right ones, then at least the question was. I commend the group for the immense amount and quality of work it did, under huge constraints, for the huge experience and wisdom the members brought and for the creative proposals they drew up, but we know that there is more work to do.

We now enter the next stage, the listening process. We do not ask you today to agree to all the specific proposals and recommendations. What we want is for you to affirm the general principles I have outlined and which were the backbone of the Review Group's Report and then to instruct the existing bodies to engage further with the Church and state on the best ways of achieving this vision of a simpler, clearer, more effective and

more accountable governance structure, before instigating draft legislation which might come before Synod in 2023.

That next stage of the process would be where we would, with your help, work out how to untie some of the knots in the initial proposals. While the motion does not ask you to sign off on all the detail, it does seek Synod's welcome of the Review Group's Report. This is important, because although we will absolutely continue to listen and improve the proposals, we really do need to move forward with agreement as to our goal because, frankly, a package that has been butchered along the way will make the Church no better off. We have made that mistake before. That is why we are here again 25 years later.

I reiterate those opening points. Things are not currently the best they could be, that is an understatement. We need to change them, and we need to change them in ways that increase accountability, transparency, simplicity, clarity and effectiveness. A clear welcome today would be very beneficial to those who take up the baton.

Shortly, I will hand over responsibility for the governance work to the Bishop of Guildford. The group that he will then convene, should you pass this motion today, will be greatly assisted by a proposed Reference Group made up entirely of experienced Synod members, who will have volunteered their expertise (and we are very grateful for that). They being members of the new Synod will be able to see this process through to its conclusion. This gives me confidence that we can avoid the unfortunate fate of a previous attempt at governance reform 25 or so years ago, and we will be in the sweet spot when the authors of the original Report are open to ideas (and we are and we have made that clear all the way through), when critics of the proposals can contribute plausible alternatives; and where we all move forward together around a clear plan, notwithstanding the number of issues that will inevitably need further work and improvement.

As I said in November, there is little advantage to anyone in spotting the gaps without offering improvements and solutions. Although not everyone welcomed that, I make that statement again. Therefore, in that spirit of constructive openness, I and my colleagues eagerly await members' contributions, and I hope to secure your welcome of the Governance Review Group's Report and your invitation to the Archbishops' Council to introduce draft legislation after it and the Church Commissioners have performed the further engagement described as part (b) of the motion before you. I therefore move the motion which stands in my name.

*The Chair:* Thank you. The motion is now open for debate

*The Chair* imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

*Mr Nigel Bacon (Lincoln):* I welcome the studied approach that is summarised in GS 2249, and by the Bishop of Leeds, and for the approach that is proposed in implementing the recommendations that we received back in November from the Governance Review Group. Those recommendations envisage a broad sweep of reform, and there should be

significant benefits in reforming governance and bringing together the currently separate decision-making entities into the proposed Church of England National Services, or CENS. Being able to discuss all aspects of mission and money together at the same time and in the same room, be it real or virtual, is critical, and there are real opportunities here to improve the quality and velocity of decision-making and also its transparency.

The challenge, of course, is the complexity of the web of legislation, stakeholders, organisational structure and committees that will have to be unravelled, rationalised, simplified and reformed. Inevitably, the devil will be in the detail, and it is essential that we get it right if the changes are to be effective and to endure. I ask those who will take on the challenge of taking the recommendations forward to resist any pressure for quick reform and to take the time to work through the details, to examine them carefully, to consult widely, to do the risk analyses and to ask those important questions: what if, what could happen? And by answering those questions honestly that will help us future-proof the changes and so avoid the need to have to repeat the exercise in, say, 10 years' time, recognising that almost always in consolidating organisations there is a tendency to overly centralised power. I think the Bishop of Leeds recognises that danger. It should be resisted. I encourage instead that we use this as an opportunity to increase subsidiarity.

My biggest concern is with the reforms potentially of General Synod. Yes, there is an opportunity to improve our working, but CENS, if not powerful will certainly be more competent and stronger than the existing structure. With that in mind, reform must not be allowed to diminish the role of General Synod, nor allow it to be circumvented. In fact, informing CENS is a more effective structure and is essential to ensure that General Synod is strong enough to be able to hold it to account and to provide constructive challenge and support; the constructive challenge and support it will deserve as a servant organisation that will exist to support God's Church, God's people and, above all, God's mission.

*Revd Canon Andrew Dotchin (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich):* I need to declare an interest in that I am part of the reference panel for the Review Group. I would strongly support acceptance of this Report and encourage Synod to not tinker too much with it now. If you have concerns, please pass them on to the Review Group. This is a work in progress and it will help us be "us" better.

Why I am supporting this is this review will help us remove the working in silos that so often happens within NCIs, and also, because they are set apart and separate institutions, they tend to end up with mission creep and we find duplication along the way. Also, as in academia with the "publish or perish" paradigm, there can be a tendency for workstreams to be self-perpetuating.

This review seeks a balance between elected members and those with skills by widening the net of those most able to serve. I am particularly attracted by the idea that it is not just the House of Bishops who will have to carry all the episcopal weight but extending its pool to the whole College.

I do not know about you, but when I look at an election for anything I look at the profile of the person, and the devil in me does not always look at their skills. I slip into, “I am of Paul, I am of Apollos and I am of Cephas”, and even, because it is me, “I am of Christ”. I tend to vote for people who think like me, and not necessarily vote for people who have the skills. This work will help that not happen, so I would strongly resist my friend Prudence Dailey’s amendment this morning.

The Church House staff are run ragged with the current system and they deserve a better way of working. Finally, this makes our governance simpler, more transparent less wieldy, and, ultimately, less expensive.

*Mrs Clare Williams (Norwich):* Point 8 in the Report talks of an extensive process of listening and engagement. In light of Questions 42 and 43 last night regarding CEYC, I would ask that this process meaningfully engages with the voices of young people.

In Annex 2 of GS 2239 CEYC reps are listed as consultees as part of focus groups. How can we continue to include this representation? While at first glance the topic of governance may seem a most dull and legalistic topic, which is of little relevance to young people, this legislative process will have an effect on the Church into which these young people will grow as leaders. In terms of stakeholders, while I understand that there are formal stakeholders which are integral, I believe that young people must form part of this consultative process.

It is my hope that this process might involve young people who are already actively involved in our church communities, who are already seeking to be part of governance at a local level, and for whom the priority of making Christ known to our nation is already part of their daily life. There are those among us here who work with those young people day in and day out. Please ask us, please use us and please, together, let us really listen to these young people, and starting with this seemingly dull issue, let us makes that a regular part of what we do.

*The Chair:* After the next speaker I am minded to move on to start working our way through the amendments, and then we will return to the main debate after that.

*Revd Christopher Blunt (Chester):* I would really like to be able to wholeheartedly welcome this Report, but there is just a really big nagging doubt, and I am hoping you will be able to clarify it for me. It looks as if there could be a massive shift in decision-making. I hear what you said about it not being about reform of church governance but being about reform of church institution governance, but hidden in the middle of GS 2239, paragraphs 137 and 138, the proposed CENS organisation is described as a “national vision and strategy setting body” in paragraph 137, and in paragraph 138 it is described as “the main Church of England governance body, setting the vision, values and mission strategy of the church nationally and leading on key policy issues. The CENS would determine the strategic allocation of .resources”, and it goes on.

It occurs to me that for Synod to welcome this Report without clarification of that would be like the proverbial turkeys voting for Christmas. We are opening the door to handing over all of the Vision and Strategy stuff to an organisation which has already been described as supposed to be the servant of the Church.

Would it be possible for the proposed governing document of the proposed CENS organisation and, actually, the other organisations as well that are being proposed, to include that it exists to enact the will of Synod? If we can hear that made absolutely explicitly clear here in Synod then I would welcome this Report.

*The Chair:* I should have said at the outset that was a maiden speech. A very useful contribution as a maiden speech, thank you.

I would like to move on to the amendments which you have listed on your Order Paper. There are three. We will take them in order.

## **ITEM 25**

*The Chair:* I invite the Revd Sam Maginnis to move Item 25. Thank you.

*Revd Sam Maginnis (Chelmsford):* I too must declare an interest. Like Andrew Dotchin, I have been invited to be part of the new Reference Group, and I am grateful to the Bishop of Guildford for that.

On that basis, members of Synod, you may be surprised as to why I am bringing two amendments to this motion this morning. I myself am surprised I am bringing two amendments to this motion. When I put my proposal to amend in on Tuesday I put both this amendment and my other amendment in as one item, and, therefore, I would ask you all when you are considering this first amendment to be read in conjunction with my second because what might seem a fine semantic argument about whether we welcome or whether we thank the Governance Review Group for its Report, it has to be considered in conjunction with the need for Synod to receive a further report on the basis of the upcoming engagement exercise. Both of these amendments are based upon a single but important principle: the desire to ensure that Synod has a real opportunity to, and I quote Bishop Nick in GS 2249, “discuss, question and challenge” proposals for fundamental reform of our national structures and how they support our dioceses and parishes.

Members of Synod, the Report of the Governance Review Group (GS 2239) is an important and impressive piece of work and expresses a clear and genuine intention to rationalise and simplify our central church structures, to better enable the mission of God and the spread of the Gospel in our dioceses and parishes. It has much to commend itself. It has much that we should be thankful for. But, members of Synod, we must remember this is only the starting point of a complex process. These reforms go beyond

legislative change and require an entirely new organisational and financial approach to how our central structures operate, and relate to all levels of the Church.

For this reason, I wholeheartedly support the next stage of stakeholder engagement proposed by clause (b) of the current motion, but for exactly the same reason I cannot accept that it is enough to limit this Synod's engagement to legislative review, or to welcome without further consideration the non-legislative reforms which may flow from those discussions. We just cannot predict at this stage where the various strands of this governance review are going to lead, so proper time and proper scrutiny must be given to all of them by this chamber. It would be a weighty task even for a seasoned Synod before we recall that the vast majority of us (myself included) are still getting to grips with synodical process and the scope of the decisions we are called on to make. We only have one shot at this, and we need to get it right. Therefore, Synod must be allowed to hear and debate the outcome of the next consultation stage, and its legal, structural and financial implications, before we approve any detailed changes to the national structures of the Church of England.

I will say more in my second amendment, but I ask you once again, Synod, please do not consider this amendment in isolation. Consider it alongside my further amendment and give this chamber the opportunity to perform its full representative role of our parishes and dioceses in making the mission of God's Church in this land more effective and sustainable for the future.

*The Chair.* The first amendment, Item 25, has been put, and so I invite the Bishop of Leeds to respond.

*The Bishop of Leeds (Rt Revd Nicholas Baines):* Thank you, Sam Maginnis, for this. You do give me a slight problem because you have spoken to two amendments, and what I would want to say is in response to both. I do not think I can do that at this point, so I will need to come back on number 27.

Let me make this point. What is proposed is not limiting the Synod to legislative reform only. That is part of a wider process. I would expect, and the Bishop of Guildford concurs with this, that regular reports will be coming to the Synod anyway as we go forward, but it is in the drafting of legislation, not that that legislation will go through. That is when a lot of the stuff gets flushed out because you have to put into writing what you expect to happen and what the shape will be. It is serious attention to the detail of that that actually flushes out what is possible, what is desirable, and what is not. Personally, I think we ought to do more of it in Synod, get some drafted stuff so that you have got something that you can work on.

This particular amendment wants to change "welcome" to "thank". Obviously, I am going to resist it because I have already asked Synod to welcome the Report as the starting point of a much more open consultation, and I still want to urge that Synod welcomes rather than thanks.



*The Chair:* Synod has heard that has been resisted; therefore it will lapse unless at least 25 people indicate, by standing, or otherwise raising their hand as may be appropriate for them, that they wish to continue with the debate. Do I see 25 signifying? I think we ought to count. It looks as if the answer is yes. There are more than 25. We have people on Zoom who have also indicated and we have taken that into account as well.

Therefore, we continue with debating amendment 25 therefore. It is only amendment 25 that we are debating. We are not debating amendment 27 at this point. We are still on the three-minute speech limit. That is maintained consistently for the time being.

*Mr Clive Scowen (London):* I want warmly to support this amendment. It is right that we should thank those who have done an enormous piece of work, but the fact that we are grateful for that work, and take it seriously, does not mean that we necessarily have to welcome it at this stage. “Welcome” is a very ambiguous word. Those who have been on Synod for a while have come across occasions when we have said something like that, welcome, without dotting every i and crossing every t, and then later we are told, “You’ve already agreed the principle; you can’t go back on that now”, and I do not think we are ready to agree the principle of anything at this stage.

We want to talk more. We want to be engaged. We want to see what other options might be before we get to the stage of where we can actually say, in effect, we want legislation to be prepared in a particular way. So I think “thank” is the right word for where we are at this stage, particularly as a new Synod with a lot of new members and we do want that opportunity.

I am very grateful for the Reference Group. I think that is a really good idea. I am really grateful for the willingness of the Bishop of Guildford to take this on. There is a lot to be thankful for. We have certainly got to engage with this. We cannot just stay as we are. But what we cannot do either is to say something must be done; this is something, therefore this must be done. There are other things which could be put forward as well.

It is a simple point really, but one thing we have got to engage with is this balance between governance and the trusteeship on the one hand and representation on the other, and how you make up bodies which take important policy decisions, and that is a vital principle that has to be engaged with before we get anywhere near legislation.

I would urge Synod to support this amendment and indeed the third amendment when it comes.

*The Chair:* I am inclined to take one more speech on this amendment, bearing in mind that we have got other amendments to work through.

*Mr Luke Appleton (Exeter):* I think that there are lots of concerns within the body of Synod and I would share those concerns that some of these proposals will lead to the side-lining

and marginalising of Synod, or a reduction in terms of the democracy of it. What a wonderful step that this motion would be in addressing that saying that Synod is going to really have teeth, we are not a rubberstamping body --

*The Chair:* I remind you that we are debating Item 25.

*Mr Luke Appleton (Exeter):* The removal of paragraph (a), exactly. That is what I am talking about. I think that amendment would be a really good step to addressing that. I support it.

*The Chair:* Before we close this, in the interests of fairness, is there anyone who wishes to speak against this? Simon Butler is waving furiously from the corner so we will have him.

*Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark):* Sorry, I was not expecting to speak, but I think I need to wearing my hat as Chair of the Archbishops' Council Legislative Reform Committee. This is a relatively new committee which exists, if I can put it this way, partly to deal with the interface between legislation and politics and policy. It is our job on behalf of the Council, as far as I am aware from our terms of reference, to ensure that legislation that comes to this Synod in due course will, in fact, have been properly consulted on and engaged with, and chief among my concerns is that this Synod is properly engaged with.

You can see how we have begun to do that in respect of the Mission and Pastoral Measure, which is the first major piece of legislation we are engaging with in this way under our new terms of reference given by the Council. I think that would help Synod to realise that this is not a binary thing between consultation and riding roughshod over this Synod. It is the sort of process that the Bishop of Leeds has outlined; a genuinely simpler, humbler, bolder approach to the way we conduct our business.

I want to reassure Synod that as I ask you to reject this amendment, your welcome does not mean you will be rubberstamping it, and you can hold me and the Legislative Reform Committee to account to ensure that that does not happen. I ask you to reject that amendment and in due course Sam's second one as well. They are not necessary, I believe.

*The Chair:* I see no one else standing so I propose that we now take Item 25 and put it to the vote. I think for comfort it is wise to do a counted vote of the whole Synod. That should satisfy people, I think.

*A Speaker:* Point of order. Could you please clarify that we are voting in favour of the amendment or against the amendment?

*The Chair:* The amendment is what we are dealing with. If you are in favour of the amendment, you vote yes. If you against the amendment, you vote no. The amendment you are voting on is one that says, "Leave out paragraph (a) and insert - thank the

Governance Review group for its work ...”, et cetera. It is the change of that particular bit of the opening wording that we are voting on at this point.

*Ven. Stewart Fyfe (Carlisle):* Point of order. The Synod app has not been successful in updating the Notice Papers on everybody’s devices. Would it be possible to display Mr Maginnis’ amendments on the screen so we can be clear what we are voting for?

*The Chair:* I do not know the answer to that. William Nye is waving the Order Paper, “It is all on here”. We do not have the staff or the capacity to do it at request at this point, so I am afraid I have to say would you please check with a neighbour, or as soon as you get the chance later on in the day make sure you pick up Order Papers from the information desk. I hope that you can look over someone’s shoulder to see what the wording is.

What we are voting on is that whereas the original motion says, “That this Synod welcomes the Report of the Governance Review Group”, the revised wording that is the subject of the amendment says that you leave that out and instead say, “thank the Governance Review Group for its work in preparing the Report GS 2239 and its Chair for update note GS 2249.”

Basically, we are voting on changing “welcome” to “thank”. I know that sounds a little bit obscure, but that is basically what the amendment is. I have just been notified that we will get Order Papers brought to the chamber for the further amendments.

*A Speaker:* Point of order.

*The Chair:* We have already announced that a vote is underway and we cannot, I have been advised, take further points of order once a vote is already in train. I am going to turn to the Registrar to ask him to do the formal announcement about timings and so on.

*The motion was put and carried, 162 voting in favour, 154 against, with 10 recorded abstentions.*

## **ITEM 26**

*The Chair:* We proceed directly to Item 26, which is an amendment proposed by Prudence Dailey. I invite her to move the amendment Item 26. She has up to five minutes to propose the amendment.

*Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford):* For the avoidance of doubt, the text of my amendment is: “Request that any proposal for the establishment of a Nominations Committee be withdrawn”.

My objection to the proposal for a Nominations Committee is, fundamentally, that it will undermine the democratic processes of this Synod and replace them with something which is profoundly technocratic. We already have a system in which people are appointed to committees in order to bring various skills and experience that are needed, and of course that should continue. But, at the moment, where positions are elected then it is for this Synod to choose to elect anybody who fulfils the technical criteria, the objective criteria for eligibility to stand for that post.

Under this proposal for a Nominations Committee, and I refer to paragraph 199 in GS 2239, it says: "For an elected appointment, the nominations panel should 'sift' those wishing to stand in advance of the election in order to verify that they have the appropriate skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours ..." Particularly note that word "behaviours" because I will be coming back to that. This is not just saying this person needs to be an accountant or this person needs to be a lawyer. This is actually sifting of individuals: is this the right kind of chap or is this the right type of woman that we need for this post?

Aside from the fact that I believe that is against natural justice, I believe that anybody who is eligible to stand for election ought to be put before the Synod. I have a particular concern that those who might be inclined to rock the boat would be excluded. I think we can all think of occasions on which the boat needed to be rocked in this Church and it was resisted by the establishment. Safeguarding is an obvious case in point. I am sure we will be told that that will not happen, but I have to ask you, Synod, would the people who are doing this sifting be human beings or not? Would they be fallible and subject to the temptation to exclude people who might rock the boat, whose behaviours might not be what they want to see on that particular committee? We are told that this pre-election sifting should not be so onerous as to remove democracy. Unfortunately, you cannot make it not so just by saying that it will not be so.

My concern is that this Nominations Committee would be just too powerful. Of course we need some kind of appointments committee to make appointments as we have now, but not this committee, which is going to sift candidates before election before you, members of Synod, even get the chance to cast your votes.

Whilst attempting to promote demographic diversity, such a committee, I am convinced, would risk impeding diversity of thought. I want to ask you, members of Synod, whether you wish to have the ability to elect whomsoever you wish to positions of governance within this Church and, if you do, I would beg you please to support my amendment.

*The Chair:* I call upon the Bishop of Leeds to respond.

*The Bishop of Leeds (Rt Revd Nicholas Baines):* Thank you. That point has been heard, it was heard in November very clearly, but I cheerfully resist the amendment. We are saying two things. The first is, is the Church of England an exception to any other charity that has taken seriously its ability to have people on its board who enable it to fulfil its proper function in charity law? We clearly do not, in simply having elections, guarantee

diversity. Listening to Lord Boateng the other day, if we had got this right I might be sympathetic, but the point is, and I want to resist this on these grounds, the amendment at the moment “requests” that any proposal. The answer to a request might be no, so it is a pointless amendment in terms of its functionality.

The second thing is that this is precisely the sort of issue and detail that is on the table for the work going forward. The question is still on the table. What we were trying to do as a Review Group was answer the question how do we better guarantee the right functionality of this body? I think I said in November I am not going to stand up here and say we have got that right, but the question has not gone away. By leaving this in there, because we have not picked apart any of the other recommendations, and we are not asking you to agree to all the recommendations today, we are saying take this as having addressed the right questions and then as you go forward and, especially, as I said earlier, when you start to draft the words of things, you begin to work out what is viable, what is desirable and what is not. You do not chop off the discussion at the point.

I come back to what I said that the point has been heard, and it is one of the things that needs to be taken forward, but the question has not gone away. As that work proceeds and the Synod engages with it on how best to resolve this issue, then is the opportunity for constructive alternatives to be put in. The objections, which I hear very clearly and which Prudence has articulated, can be brought in, and Synod can take a view on them as we go forward, but I resist the amendment at this stage.

*The Chair:* Since the proposer of the main motion has resisted this amendment, it will not go forward unless 25 people or more indicate by standing or raising their hand that they wish it to continue. If we see 25 people wishing to continue to debate this, we will do so, otherwise it will lapse. We clearly have 25, so we will continue to debate this.

The amendment that has been moved by Prudence Dailey, Item 26 on the Order Paper, is now open for debate.

*The Bishop of Burnley (Rt Revd Philip North):* We cannot clap for Paul Boateng two days ago and support this amendment. It is as simple as that. I would urge Synod very strongly, please, to resist it. There are too many unheard voices in the Church of England. We do not hear the voices of working class people. We do not hear the voices of UKME people. We barely hear the voices of those with disabilities. I could go on and on. These voices are invisible in our Church. Every organisation, political party, company and charity needs to act to ensure these silent voices are heard, and this is a mechanism for doing just that. We cannot clap Paul Boateng two days ago and support this amendment today. Please, I would urge you to resist it strongly.

*Canon Dr Jamie Harrison (Durham):* I thought it might help the Synod to have a bit of historical reflection from us really old stagers who were actually here in 1995 at a very new Synod, and struck onwards in the Turnbull Report *Working as One Body*, which

formed the National Institutions Measure in 1998. Mary was there too. Hello, Mary. I think they were ten of us who were there, including the Bishop of Leeds.

We old stagers have been here before and I am worried about the anxiety in the chamber about this. If you think we started with *Working as One Body* with a very big Report from Michael Turnbull, my Bishop, the Bishop of Durham, there was draft legislation in that Report that we were actually facing in those days. If we come to this and complete it, it will not come into practical outcome until at least January 2024, and quite possibly January 2025. That is the distance we have got to go as Synod. I am resisting on a procedural basis, if you like, intervening at this point on something we can resist later. There is plenty of time to do that from a governance perspective. I am on the project board with others, chaired by Sir David Lidington, as we have heard, and the wonderful Mary Chapman, who is coming back from her work formerly with Synod to do that.

I want to say in those debates in 1995 exactly these issues were raised, particularly one around representation from this Synod. Initially, we started with a certain number of people representing the Synod by election, ex officio, like me, on Archbishops' Council. In time, that was shifted, rightly or wrongly. What this is trying to do is to think about how we build a trustee body which is both representative of this Synod but also, as we have just heard from the Bishop of Burnley, involves others with competency, capability, diversity and so on.

Three quick things. This trustee body has to look and perform correctly. As yet we do not know what that will look like. It takes time to think that through. A Nominations Committee is one option but, as you heard from the Bishop of Leeds, it is not the only option. I do not like this slowing down issue. I am going back to James Cary's view of the train yesterday. The train is leaving the station. It is just getting going. This amendment wants to disconnect one of those carriages, put it into a siding, and say that is never going to come back. I think the next amendment also risks that by slowing everything down and saying we cannot even look at draft legislation until who knows when. At least with draft legislation, and I note the word "draft", we can actually look at it and say, "We like that, we don't like that, we want to amend that." That is what we are here for as a legislative body.

I want to say yes, I hear the problems, I hear the issues, Prudence quite correctly brings them to us, but I think she is bringing them too soon. I want to see the thing fleshed out much more so we can have a really good and in-depth conversation. It is great we have the Reference Group. We have already heard two of those speakers already, and that is really helpful. I would ask you at this stage to let the train take up a bit of speed, to not have disconnected carriages and to not be too restrictive. Thank you.

*The Chair:* Debbie Buggs, and then - I do not know what she is going to say, of course - but I will probably be minded to propose a motion for closure on this item, bearing in mind the pressures of time. We will see.

*Miss Debbie Buggs (London):* I support this amendment. Of course we can clap for Paul Boateng and support this amendment. Prudence has highlighted that it is behaviours that are one of the filtering mechanisms. What do we mean by behaviours? Do we want the middle-class behaviours that make this such a, let's face it, exclusive gathering? Or do we want different behaviours that we find slightly uncomfortable? Well, a Nominations Committee, as Prudence says, will I think lead to making the appointments process blander, more bureaucratic, more technocratic, we want a variety of voices, we believe in democracy, let's just let democracy do its job rather than have it manipulated by a filtering body.

*The Chair:* As I indicated, I now wish to test the mind on whether Item 26 has been sufficiently debated. I understand that phrase is difficult, because we could debate for a long, long time, but in terms of the practicalities of the framework we are operating with, in terms of pressures of time and so on, I am going to test the mind of Synod on whether Item 26 has been sufficiently debated, and I therefore put the motion for closure on Item 26.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* So, therefore, we can proceed to a vote.

*Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford):* Point of order.

*The Chair:* Point of order. Prudence, we have already closed the vote, so you cannot raise a point of order. The item has closed.

*Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford):* Well perhaps, Madam Chair, if I tell you what I was going to say and then you can tell me if it was in order. I was going to ask if we could have a vote of the whole Synod on my amendment.

*The Chair:* I am perfectly happy to do that, we can have a vote of the whole Synod on the amendment, that is fine. Let us do that, we will have an electronic vote of the whole Synod. So, it will be a counted vote of the whole Synod on Item 26, we are voting on Item 26, that is the amendment which requests that any proposal for the establishment of a Nominations Committee be withdrawn. That is the amendment that we are voting on.

Before I read out the results, and without prejudice to whatever the result may be, because I have not actually looked at the figures myself yet, I have got them covered up. I have been asked to remind you, to remind all of us, that it is the practice of this Synod not to clap after votes are announced. We did so last time, we should not do so from now on we remind ourselves. I am now going to uncover it - I feel a bit like a wizard here - I am going to uncover it and tell you the result.

*There voted on Item 26: in favour 124, 199 against with 24 recorded abstentions.  
The motion was lost.*

*The Chair:* No clapping - if you wished to - but do not. We now move on to the amendment, Item 27, and I call upon the Reverend Sam Maginnis to move Item 27. He has five minutes; subsequent speeches still remain at three.

## **ITEM 27**

*Revd Sam Maginnis (Chelmsford):* Thank you for calling me to make this second amendment, thank you also, members of Synod, for carrying my first amendment, which as I said, has to be taken in conjunction with this further amendment. I am not going to be complacent but I think we now have the mood of the chamber, that we all agree that these matters are fundamental to the future mission and ministry of the Church of England, and that Synod needs to be given its full and proper function in discussing, questioning and challenging whatever proposals are eventually put forward, and not just in legislation.

As I said, the implications of this Governance Review work cover so many other matters, structural, organisational, financial and how our future central church structures relate to the Church of England, and indeed to this nation at all levels.

Bishop Nick and other voices said earlier that Synod will be given engagement throughout this process. Give us proper engagement, allow us to perform our full function as the representative voice of our parishes and dioceses, as we have been elected here by the faithful throughout the Church of England. By the time we get to legislative Measures it will be too late. We just cannot predict at this stage where the various strands of the Governance Review are going to lead us, and as I said, members of Synod, two-thirds of us, almost, are new to this role, are new to this responsibility.

And, therefore, we must properly scrutinise all of these matters, these proposals, before we approve any detailed changes to our national structures. It is not enough to put the progress of this work into a GS Misc paper, it is not enough for us to discuss them through presentations and group work, we need to be given a voice, the voice of those who have elected us to represent them at the national level.

So, as we have already thanked the Governance Review Group for its work, and bringing the initial proposals to this Synod, and as we encourage the new Project Board and the Reference Group to go out and perform their listening exercises and to refine some proposals for us, let us therefore ensure that this Synod plays its proper role in the process, to await and debate a report on the outcomes of that wider engagement, so that our collective voice and wisdom from all our parishes, all our communities, with all of our backgrounds and all of our experience, can be brought to bear on this process and help develop real and lasting structures that keep the rumour of God alive and the life-changing power of Christ's Gospel throughout this land. Synod, please support this amendment.



*The Chair:* I call upon the Bishop of Leeds to respond.

*The Bishop of Leeds (Rt Revd Nicholas Baines):* Guess what? I strongly resist this amendment, because many of the assumptions underlying what Sam Maginnis has said I think are flawed. For example, he makes a statement “this is vital to the future”, well, of course it is, that is why we have done the report and why we have brought it to the Synod. The whole thing is vital to the future, and the question is about process.

Now, what the group has said is that the process is one that needs to start and it is as you get into that process that the proper debates happen. Why is there an assumption there that - how was it put - that the Synod would not be fully involved in the process? The whole point is that Synod is fully involved in all the different elements. That it is too late when you get to the legislative stage? No, it is the drafting of legislation that forces the issues and flushes out the contradictions and the gaps.

One of the real challenges of this governance work is how do you join up the different bits when you solve one problem that then creates a problem somewhere else? Now, you can discuss that forever, but at some point you have got to look at texts, and that is where the Synod comes into its own, because the Synod is able, at every stage of this, to look at what is being proposed and then do what a single group cannot do, and say, “But hang on a minute, if you do that, what happens here?” And then the group goes away and does some work on what that looks like.

So, it seems to me that this amendment is saying let’s just push it down the road a bit, when we know we have got to get some momentum and engagement with these issues. They are not going away. Was it yesterday that Meg Munn referred to the time it takes for the Church to do things is like building a cathedral? Well, this is not assuming that this has got to be rushed through, it is about getting the process right in a timely way. I feel sometimes it is like when you have a building project - whatever the architect and the builders tell you, double the cost and triple the time. That will have to be flushed out as you go along, but we need to get the train moving.

So, I resist the amendment and leave it to the Synod to consider its view.

*The Chair:* We have heard that the proposer of the main motion has resisted this amendment. It would therefore lapse unless 25 or more people indicate that they wish the debate to continue, so, I invite Synod to respond accordingly. If there are 25 people who indicate by standing, raising their hand, whatever. We have got 25 clearly, so we will continue to debate this issue. I call upon Marcus Walker and after Marcus Walker, Bishop Helen-Ann Hartley for a maiden speech.

*Revd Marcus Walker (London):* Members of Synod, this Report has so much that is good about it, and, as I am sure you know, this is a part of the whole Emerging Church process, which different task forces have been set about considering over the last few years. The Report itself sort of sits at the centre of this, but so many of the other elements of it are

matters which have not been brought to the Synod and are matters which this Synod has not even had sight of.

One of these was the Ely Report on bishops, which is mentioned at least twice in the report and upon which the future of our episcopally-led and Synodically-governed Church rests. This Report, of course, was leaked to the *Times* on Monday, and courtesy of the *Times* I have a copy of it here. A number of the interesting points - and there are so many more interesting points than a Brexit Bishop - would change the entire shape of the church. Bishops having a five or seven-year time limit, dioceses being merged into supergroups, with only eight or 12 having diocesan powers, and everybody else being an area bishop, the whole ecclesiology of our Church would change if this Report, which is only a consultation, is accepted.

So many of the other elements of the Emerging Church have not yet reported, and yet this central element of it is based upon them. We should see all of it. We as a Synod should be able to see the whole way in which the future of our Church is being mapped out and decide accordingly.

The analogy was made earlier of the train leaving the station, this is true, and in a slightly worrying way, because we have not been told what the destination station is. And the trouble with the analogy of a train is it suggests that other people do know where it is, and yet we have not been told. I am not actually sure that is true. I think this consultation document will wind up being changed, amended, maybe thrown out, maybe fully endorsed. I do not know, you do not know, the College of Bishops does not know, it has not decided yet. We should not be deciding on the core element, particularly as it rests on so many others, until we have sight of the whole.

So I would like to support this amendment and invite the reporting group to go back and to look at everything and then to allow us full sight of the end goal and an actual timetable with the final destination written in it before we get to legislation.

*The Bishop of Ripon (Rt Revd Dr Helen-Ann Hartley):* Members of Synod, we do not need another Governance Report. We need to work with the one we have got, and crack on. If I had to describe the current governance structures of the National Institutions that enable the Church of England to engage in God's mission, it would be like convening a meeting here in Church House; you can just about find the entrance, but I would not give attendees instructions on how to find the actual meeting room.

Rather like an Escape Room scenario, attendees would be given 45 minutes to complete the task of locating the meeting room. At various points attendees would be given a series of clues, glimpses of how the Church's governance functions currently, indicating the whereabouts of their final destination, which would suggest that there are overlapping possibilities. There would be a few dead ends along the way, a stint of walking around in circles, and rumours about a mysterious sixth floor where only the brave venture, and opportunities for getting into a lift but emerging in a completely unexpected area of the

building or another building altogether. Solve all the clues and a warm welcome awaits in the meeting room, that is if the eschaton has not arrived first.

Our governance should be about enabling God's mission rather than hindering it. At this stage in the process one of the enabling factors is this Synod. We are being asked today to show our support for the direction of travel, anticipating that aspects of this support in the future will speak to and involve the Synod's functions. However, this Synod can also cause death by a thousand amendments. Please, let it not be that. It is only right and proper that we take seriously the treasure that has been entrusted to us in order that we may both enable God's Kingdom to grow and ensure that God's Church is entrusted to generations that will follow.

In all of this, God goes before us, even into the legislative detail and small print. Members of Synod, let us not pass over this opportunity. I urge you to support the motion presented before us in its fullness and reject this amendment.

*Mrs Alison Coulter (Winchester):* Synod, as a member of the new Governance Review Board I want to assure you of our commitment to listen to you. I, like you, am elected, and I know and value the importance of democracy. I and my fellow members of the Governance Review Board value you, our colleagues, on the General Synod. Synod will be given time to shape the future. You will be given time to attend small group discussions, so that we all understand together, to shape our thinking, to listen to one another. We will give you proper engagement, Sam.

Synod's role is to write this legislation, it will not be too late because you will be doing it, it will not be done through group work or take note debates either. It will be done through the painstaking work of legislation that those of us who have been on Synod for a while know and understand and we look forward to involving you, our newer colleagues, in. Yes, you will have the opportunity to bring your collective voice and wisdom, and I do not feel it is entirely fair, at this stage, before we have even had a chance to start our work as the Governance Review Board, to stop us.

Friends, change is difficult, but if we want our Church to be fit for the future, better able to serve our people and parishes, then we need to be a bit braver and to look at what best governance structures are. We have heard that what we have now is not working that well. Why are we so afraid to look at how to change it?

Marcus, we do not know the destination, but that is because it is for all of us Synod, together, to decide where that is. Please, Synod, resist this amendment.

*The Chair:* Kate Wharton, and then after that I would like to take one contribution from Zoom. We have not had a contribution from Zoom so far. I will call Esther Prior to follow Kate Wharton, and then I will be considering the possibility of a closure motion.

*Revd Kate Wharton (Liverpool):* Synod, I also would urge you to resist this amendment. Like Alison, I am a member of the newly formed Governance Review Board and I am looking forward to that work going forward.

Bishop Nick reminded us that the process must start if things are to change. Perhaps we are not trying to build a cathedral, but a consensus. I wonder whether we can learn from our excellent group work earlier today and allow the conversation to begin? I will confess to you that the word I used in our Slido poll earlier, about how I sometimes see those other people was “distrustful”. Perhaps there is a question here of trust and accountability/ We are not called to be distrustful, but to interrogate, to discuss and to discern through a process.

Perhaps the difference here is between a train journey with a timetable and a destination fixed in advance and the arriving together into a new place where none of us have been before, where a map must be drawn. Some of us will walk ahead and draw the unknown roads, some of us will walk along them, and then, as we go, we will find the way together. Synod, I support this motion and ask you to resist this amendment.

*The Chair:* Esther, I invite you to speak, thank you. You still have the three-minute time allowance, and then I will see where we stand with a possible motion for closure on this item.

*Revd Esther Prior (Guildford):* Sorry, I was slow to put my hand down, because Alison spoke for me. I just want to say please do not support the amendment.

*The Chair:* I wish to test the mind of Synod on whether Item 27 has been sufficiently debated and therefore I put the motion for closure on Item 27.

*Mrs Mary Durlacher (Chelmsford):* Point of order.

*The Chair:* I cannot see who has made a point of order. It is Mary, right.

*Mrs Mary Durlacher (Chelmsford):* Chair, we have heard a lot of speeches opposing the amendment, we have not had an opportunity to hear many in favour. In the interests of democracy, please could you revise that.

*The Chair:* I am happy to ask for another one. We have heard a speech in favour of the amendment, but we certainly can hear if there is someone who opposes it. I will take one more if someone wishes to.

*Revd Daniel Valentine (Manchester):* Thank you, Madam Chair, for calling me for this, my maiden speech. I am new to Synod but a cradle Anglican and much of my faith was learned at Sunday School. I and many others will remember the song “The wise man built his house upon the rock, the foolish man built his house upon the sand and the rain came tumbling down”. Well, Synod, it has rained.

There have been allegations of abuse, there are concerns over clergy wellbeing, there is a financial crisis and we have lived through a pandemic. And how clear it is that much of our house has been built upon the sand; the shifting sand of a lack of accountability, a lack of transparency, abuses of power and a failure of proper checks and balances. Good governance is a first order issue. It is about how we make good decisions, it is about where we place our priorities, it is about how we spend our money and how we hold ourselves accountable to others and to the mission of God.

As a new member of Synod, I was pleased to be asked to be on the Reference Group for this Governance Review because of the particular skills I have as a lawyer practising in this area. I am clear our system is broken and I want to be part of fixing it. I was surprised, however, to discover at the first meeting of that Reference Group that the proposal was to move straight to drafting legislation. I was even more surprised to learn that that legislation would be steered through this Synod by a Project Group with only one ordained voice on it, and that voice being the voice of a Bishop.

We have debated many important issues this week: slavery, racial justice and safeguarding. They will pale into insignificance if we do not get this right. We need proper time to debate the principle of this, not just whether there should be a colon or a semicolon. I invite you to support this amendment.

*The Chair:* I now wish to return to testing the mind of Synod on whether Item 27 has been sufficiently debated, and I therefore put the motion for closure on Item 27

*Mr Sam Margrave (Coventry):* Point of order.

*The Chair:* It would be helpful if you could go to the podium, please. I know it is tedious, but it is much better.

*Mr Sam Margrave (Coventry):* I am good at tedious. Madam Chair, if it might be with your indulgence, if we could have a vote of the whole House of Synod, so that we can record the intention of members, so that people out there know what our views are.

*The Chair:* Thank you. That was my intention, but we have not got there yet, so you do not know what is in my mind, until I know whether you are prepared to allow me to move to that. So, may I put the motion for closure on this amendment?

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* We proceed to a vote, and I am glad to be supported and prompted by Sam, but what I was going to say I will say now, we have had close votes, it has not been easy, we will go for a counted vote on this as we have done on the previous ones. So we will have a counted vote of the whole Synod. This is a counted vote of the whole Synod on Item 27, we are on the third amendment here.

*There voted on Item 27: in favour 150, 185 against with 16 recorded abstentions.  
The motion was lost.*

*The Chair:* We now return to the main debate. We have very little time, obviously, but I would like to allow, perhaps, two speeches on the main debate before I invite the Bishop of Leeds to sum up. I will reduce the speech limit to two minutes if there is anyone who wishes to speak on the main motion.

*The Bishop of Coventry (Rt Revd Dr Christopher Cocksworth):* I simply want to encourage the Project Group in the theological character of their work. This next stage is not about - as the Report states - simply nuts and bolts. The Project Group and Synod itself will be engaged in what the Bishop of Leeds referred to, in the style of Richard Hooker, as ecclesiastical polity. Hooker believed in the divine calling of the Church, he rooted his theology in the Church's ecclesiology in the great doctrines of God, of the incarnation of the spirit active in the world, of the election of a people to enact the purposes of God.

And so ecclesiastical polity for Hooker was the form, the shape, the structure, the Church took in a given place and time in order to order its life and make its decisions, to enable it to serve more fully God's purposes. Polity makes ecclesiology concrete and practical, and it thereby does nothing less than mediate God's redemption to the world. Hooker knew that polity does not just drop out of heaven as a blueprint for all times and places, it needs to be contextualised to present conditions, so he gladly drew on what he could discern of God's work in the world through the ordering of other institutions and bodies.

And so the Project Group should feel confident in doing so as well, filtering the wisdom of the world through the ecclesiological integrity which the Report sets as one of the criteria for the work ahead. Among the several areas requiring careful theological attention is calibrating rightly the interdependence and mutuality of which the Report speaks, speaking specifically about the relationship between the local manifestation of the Church and the diocese and the national Church.

There is much more I would like to say, but I commend the theological work that is to be done.

*The Chair:* One more two-minute speech before I think we have to be looking at closure, because there is another item of business, or there are two small items of business - important though they are - before lunch.

*Mr Joseph Diwakar (ex officio):* I am two and a half years, halfway through my time on the Archbishops' Council now, which has been fun, but at points has been a frustrating and frustrated experience: a feeling of policy, or the execution of policy, falling into the cracks between different NCIs, trustees getting the feeling that decisions are made

elsewhere and then rushed to the Council to be rubberstamped, or even of trustees being ignored or shouted at when objections or protests are raised.

The real alarming point comes when, as I discovered as a member of the Governance Review Group, all the other statutory bodies and governance bodies seem to feel the same way too. So, reform is necessary. I think this Report goes some way to improving some of this, so do take note.

I want to say two words about participation and how to populate any new board and committees. We appreciate that governance has to be representative of the Church, without being amateurish, and adequately skilled and competent to govern without becoming detached and technocratic. That is the balance, technocracy, skill and representation.

Most of the feedback that I have received, however, in consultation and in conversation, has not been that our governance bodies are incompetent or insufficiently skilled, you get a bit of that, there are areas where that rears its head. Far more powerful has been the feedback that our governance is detached, is unrepresentative, is remote from parishes, is remote from people at the coalface of Christian ministry.

So, as this moves from paper to concrete proposal, I think it is important that the Project Board and the Review Group, which I am also on, restates its commitment to clarifying and protecting the vital role that participation and representation play in the make-up of boards and committees. That means, I think, elections.

*The Chair:* I am afraid that your time has come to an end. At this point I would like to test the mind of Synod on closure of this item of business, and then I could return to the Bishop of Leeds and we could then proceed to the final vote on this item. Actually, I see no one standing, so I can proceed to invite the Bishop of Leeds to respond to the debate. You have up to five minutes to do that.

*The Bishop of Leeds (Rt Revd Nicholas Baines):* Thank you, I will be brief.

*The Chair:* I am sorry, there was a hand raised on Zoom. I beg your pardon. That still leaves me, then, in the position of asking if Synod is prepared to vote for closure.

*The motion was put and carried by a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* There will be closure on this item and consequently I turn to the Bishop of Leeds.

*The Bishop of Leeds (Rt Revd Nicholas Baines):* I am not going to respond to every contribution, but I do want to say this: I am grateful that when I stick my little card into the machine it says “Welcome Baines”. I am just sorry that at the end it does not say “Thank you Baines”, just to make the whole thing complete.

Just to respond to some of the important points made in this debate, and one clarification to Marcus Walker; actually, the Governance Review preceded all the Emerging Church stuff. As I said in November, it came out of the Church Buildings Council Review, which just showed up how un-joined up the whole thing is and there are casualties, human casualties, ministry casualties as well when that happens, so it preceded, although it has been drawn in sometimes in documents into the Emerging Church work.

I want to thank the Governance Review Group and the Synod for the seriousness with which this has been addressed since November and again today. The points that have been made have been noted. I heard that governance is a first order issue. I think we have to interpret that, David Valentine, because some people have a very limited view of what first order issue means, but, to endorse what the Bishop of Coventry said, the ecclesiastical polity is essential and the theological input to this is vital, and we did do some theological work as we came to this point. I do note, though, that Richard Hooker gets quoted in support of any argument in any circumstance in relation to any polity, so slightly dodgy on that one.

Clare Williams, the CEYC, I am sorry that you think this is a dull issue, it obviously gets the juices flowing for lots of people, but I can tell you that the Project Group intends, if they have not done so already, to have a member of the CEYC on Reference Group, and I hope that they will provide a conduit to those voices.

What we have identified is that there are silos in the Church's governance, and what happens when you have silos is that the powermongers play within the cracks. That is the problem we have, because if you do not have coherence and consistency, it is the people who know how to play the game who play within the cracks. And that is what this is intended to get beyond. As the process goes forward, we need to see how we can best do that, and my guess is, if it is a good process, that will develop and evolve as we go through it. But we have to have our feet held to the fire, as Paul Boateng said, if we are doing to do it, otherwise we will still be here in five years' time saying what a terrible problem we have and we have not done anything about it.

I just want to say one more thing. The Project Group will be setting out as its first job how to set out the process, and Synod and others will be involved. And if you do not like the process, pitch in. If you have views on elements of it and you want to help set their agenda, write in. That is the job of the Synod, not just to do it when we are meeting in session.

But the bit I want to add - I am a bit sensitive as to how I put this - governance review has a big impact on staff at Church House, who we heard earlier are run ragged by the current incoherence. We need to bear them in mind and in our prayers, because they face uncertainty. It is another reason why we need to get moving on it. So do the Church Commissioners. Policy, particularly in investment, is impacted by the certainty that can



be given about the polity and governance of the institution. So that adds weight to what we are doing.

Let me thank all those who have contributed. All points are noted. This is the beginning of a conversation and a process. I am delighted that I can now be released to the sixth floor and the Bishop of Guildford will be taking on the Reference Group and Sir David Lidington the Project Group. I commend this motion to the Synod.

*The Chair:* We proceed to a vote on this motion and I propose that in the light of the fact that we have done all our voting electronically so far that we do an electronic counted vote of the whole Synod in the same way for the same motion.

*Mrs Emma Joy Gregory (Bath & Wells):* Point of order.

*The Chair:* It does not need supporting, the Chair can make the ruling and I have just made it.

*Mrs Emma Joy Gregory (Bath & Wells):* Point of order. Do I not have the right to ask for a vote by Houses at this point?

*The Chair:* You may. We are just checking the Rules. In principle you may, but the process for that switch I am about to be advised upon. It is possible to do that, but we need 25 members to support that, to stand or otherwise raise their hands, for us to have a counted vote by Houses. Yes, we have that, so we will do a counted vote, which is what I was expecting us to do anyway, but it will be done by Houses and not as a count of the whole Synod. So this is a counted vote of the Synod by Houses on Item 15, as amended, because we did actually amend the first phrase.

I am told that I have the discretion to dispense with the bell. It is very exciting, I have never dispensed with the bell before, so I am going to do just that. We will simply proceed to the vote and the Registrar will give us the timings.

The vote on Item 15: In the House of Bishops, those in 30, against none, with no recorded abstentions. In the House of Clergy, 126 in favour, 18 against, with 5 recorded abstentions. And in the House of Laity, 110 in favour, 53 against, with 6 recorded abstentions. The motion was carried in all three Houses.

*The Chair:* The motion is therefore carried because it has been carried in all three Houses. Thank you, that concludes this item of business. There are two small but important items of business to be completed before lunch, so please do remain in the chamber for those.

THE CHAIR. *The Bishop of Derby (Rt Revd Libby Lane)* took the Chair at 12.22 pm.

## **EXTENSION OF SITTING**

*The Chair:* Synod, in order that we may conclude the items of business set for before lunch, I need to seek the consent of Synod to extend this sitting by up to 15 minutes if we need it, and I hope we will not, but if we do I need to seek your consent to do that. May I have indication by show of hands or green ticks that if we need to use an extra 15 minutes we can do so.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* Thank you Synod, you have given that consent should we need to use that extra time.

## **ITEM 16**

### **APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIR OF THE APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE (GS 2250)**

*The Chair:* So we come to Item 16. As we come to that I just need to point out that on the Fourth Notice Paper, our Archbishops have been swapped over, in fact it will be the Archbishop of York who will move Item 16 and the Archbishop of Canterbury who will move Item 17. Members will need for Item 16 GS 2250. I invite the Archbishop of York to speak to Item 16. You have up to ten minutes, but I hope you will not need them all.

*The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell):* Friends, you will have read GS 2250, so you will know what we are doing, as such I am missing out my first couple of paragraphs.

As seasoned members of Synod will be aware, Pete Spiers has been a massively valued member of Synod, member of the Panel of Chairs, who has guided us at times through very challenging debates, and has always shown good humour, fairness, impartiality but neither any fear in challenging when necessary.

These characteristics have also been put to use during his time as a central member of the Crown Nominations Commission. One of the key characteristics for those of us serving on the CNC - I include myself - is that ability to leave your preconceived ideas at the door and collectively seek to discern what is God saying to us. Why are these characteristics so important in this appointment in this appointment? Because we are a wonderfully broad Church, but in order to serve the whole nation, we need to get broader and we need to ensure that every part of our Church flourishes.

One of the ways we will do this is to appoint the very best people to the various roles that the Appointments Committee is responsible for so that we can be a Church that looks like the communities it serves, represents the different interests of the Church, doing the kind of things Paul Boateng was pleading with us to do the other day, and it is the Chair of this Committee who particularly holds this responsibility for us. Therefore. we need someone

with vision, determination, fairness and somebody who has got those gifts of discernment. And in this way, we will start to become the younger and more diverse church that we long to be.

Archbishop Justin and I have consulted widely, particularly obviously with members of the Appointments Committee, and we simply believe that Pete Spiers is the right person for the job. He is passionate to see the flourishing of God's Church in all its fullness and we have confidence that Pete will draw the very best out of the Committee and help us to be the very best that we can be.

Synod, I wholeheartedly endorse the motion standing in my name. I look forward to any debate that may take place, but will not be disappointed if it does not.

*The Chair:* Members may now speak to this item if they wish. From the outset, any contribution will be limited to three minutes. I do not see anybody standing. Do we see anybody indicating online? In which case we can move to the vote on Item 16.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* Our congratulations to Pete on his appointment. Colleagues, I will allow that that was applause of congratulation to Pete on his appointment rather than a response to the vote.

## **ITEM 17**

### **APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIR OF THE DIOCESES COMMISSION**

#### **(GS 2251)**

*The Chair:* We now move to Item 17 and I ask the Archbishop of Canterbury to speak to and move that item.

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby):* Dear friends, the Chairs of the Dioceses Commission are appointed by both Archbishops, and it is a pleasure and a privilege to recommend to the Synod that Dame Caroline Spelman be reappointed as listed at Item 17 on your Agenda.

The Synod approved the appointment of Dame Caroline originally at its meeting of 24 April 2021 for a time-limited period up to 30 April 2022. Both Archbishop Stephen and I would like to seek the approval of Synod to confirm her in post for the next session. Dame Caroline will be known to many of you as a distinguished parliamentarian as Secretary of State and lately as a Second Church Estates Commissioner, an office she relinquished after standing down as a Member of Parliament.

Her almost unique set of talents and experience includes the last major local government reorganisation, which will prove invaluable to the Church and the Dioceses Commission

as it seeks to discern a way forward. Dame Caroline's political skills, love and commitment to the Church of England, and to the Gospel, make her ideally suited to this role.

She has already started a round of regional meetings with Bishops and diocesan secretaries. The Commission has considered the approval of eight suffragan sees, and is working closely with the Bishop of St Edmundsbury and the Transforming Effectiveness Simpler Services team to promote best practices to the dioceses regarding improving working together arrangements. I do hope this will meet with enthusiastic approval.

I would like to thank Dame Caroline most warmly for agreeing to be nominated. She is the right person, I believe, at the right time, to help us with the many questions we face and which have been alluded to already this morning.

Therefore, Synod, Archbishop Stephen and I wish formally to propose that Dame Caroline Spelman be reappointed as Chair of the Diocese Commission.

*The Chair:* This item is now open to members to speak to. From the outset the speech limit is limited to three minutes. I call, therefore, on Paul Benfield followed by Joyce Jones.

*Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn):* I wish to support this motion. I should declare an interest as I am Vice-Chair of the Dioceses Commission. When Professor Michael Clarke resigned as Chair due to ill health in 2018 it fell to me to take over as acting Chair, and so it was with relief that I learned of the appointment of Dame Caroline as Chair last April. She has picked up the baton with considerable skill and dexterity.

It is not always understood, even in Lambeth Palace and Church House, that the Dioceses Commission is not a committee of this Synod, nor a committee of the Archbishops' Council. It is an independent statutory body with a statutory constitution and statutory functions. As such, it is subject to judicial review in the High Court. I am confident that under Dame Caroline's leadership the Commission will conduct its business in a manner which will not lead to an appearance in court. I support this motion.

*Revd Canon Joyce Jones (Leeds):* I would like to warmly welcome the appointment of Dame Caroline Spelman as Chair of the Commission. I know Synod appreciated her input as Second Estates Commissioner and it is good to have her back. However, I note the Commission has a busy agenda for the next few years. I would like to ask whether that includes the amalgamation of diocese, and, if so, will the lessons, both positive and negative, learned from the creation of the Diocese of Leeds, be taken into account?

*Mr Stephen Hogg (Leeds):* If I may pick up the Archbishop of Canterbury's words, I enthusiastically support the appointment of Dame Caroline. I am aware of the Commission's current heavy workload and I think we are all aware there is a lot of stuff going on, reviews, things that are leaked to the *Times*, governance, and many of these may lead to more demands on the work of the Dioceses Commission.

It strikes me the Commission could be overwhelmed with demands and I wonder what plans are in place to cope with that peak requirement, both of members and of staff, and I would look for some assurance that Dame Caroline and the Commission will be properly supported and resourced.

*The Chair:* I see no one else indicating a wish to speak, and so I ask the Archbishop to respond.

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby):* Thank you very, very much for those comments. How long have I got, Chair?

*The Chair:* Up to five minutes. Please do not use them all.

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby):* It is just you did not say, otherwise I could go on forever. I am very grateful for the comments. I simply wanted to start by - and I hope I speak on behalf of the Synod and I hope the Chair will allow us to indicate agreement with this if we indicate - saying how much we would like to thank Fr Paul Benfield for his long service on the Commission and as Vice-Chair.

He certainly took it over suddenly and in difficult times and handled it very well indeed. We are immensely grateful and I can assure the Synod that if I ever - speaking from Lambeth Palace, I cannot possibly speak for Church House - had any doubts that the Dioceses Commission was totally independent, they were put firmly away when Paul was acting Chair. So, that point is taken.

Joyce, thank you very much for your question. It is an independent body, as we have been reminded, and therefore it will pursue the agenda that it chooses to pursue and I cannot give you an assurance on behalf of an independent body. However, we will, from Lambeth Palace and I am sure Church House, very nervously, cautiously and without in any way seeking to undermine its independence, tentatively seek to put into its mind the possibility that it might eventually look at some of the possible papers that might come to it from sources other than those published in the *Times*. I trust that the Bishop of Ely is approving of my comments. Yes, he is. Good. So, they will do what they like, and we will do what we must, to quote my speech the other day.

Finally, thank you very much for the question about resourcing, it is an extremely valid one. Staffing is, however, a matter for the Secretary General, William Nye, and Central Support, and we will do all we can to make sure that they are adequately resourced. I beg to move.

*The Chair:* Thank you, were therefore we now put Item 17 to the vote, which I intend to do by a show of hands in the chamber, green ticks by those who are joining us online.

*The motion was put and carried by a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* Thank you, that item is passed. We congratulate Dame Caroline on her reappointment. This item is now closed and we are adjourned for lunch.

THE CHAIR *The Bishop of Dover (Rt Revd Rose Hudson-Wilkin)* took the Chair at 1.45 pm.

## **SPECIAL AGENDA IV DIOCESAN SYNOD MOTIONS**

### **ITEM 18**

### **PERSECUTED CHURCH IN THE WORLD (GS 2252A AND GS 2252B)**

*The Chair:* Welcome back, Synod. Please be seated. We come now to Item 18 on our Agenda. Members, you will need GS 2252A and GS 2252B. As there is a financial implication, you will also need the Third Notice Paper. In a moment, I am going to be calling on the mover of the main motion to address us and on this occasion we have two people, Penny Allen and Damian Feeney. You have up to ten minutes - together not each. Would you like to begin.

*Mrs Penny Allen (Lichfield):* Good afternoon, everyone, those in the chamber and those online. As you will see from this motion, it has been lying in wait for a considerable time - ever since 2017. Much has changed for us all in that time but, sadly, not in this issue of persecution which is a growing problem. We want to pay a full tribute to our lay member of Wolverhampton deanery, Phil Dooley, who brought this from his deanery forward for diocesan attention. It should have encouraged everyone everywhere to think deeply and passionately about the persecution of fellow Christians and, indeed, it is hoped that linked dioceses and future links may be considered.

Phil has written the summary himself so that you may see the considerations given in our diocesan synod and we are indebted to the Business Committee for bringing this forward today and for the advice given by Jenny Jacobs and Charles Read, the International Affairs Adviser at Lambeth Palace, and the MPA. Bishop Michael has written the introduction to develop and update the motion and we are grateful that his knowledge on this issue has expanded ours. Members will remember the debate on Freedom of Religion and Belief in April last year and the ecumenical and inter-faith dimensions which are important as we move forward. We are sure that dioceses with links in troubled areas are already praying for their fellow Christians and for those of other faiths who experience persecution.

There is no excuse for abuse, threats and violence and we recognise it is the responsibility of Government as well as organisations and individuals to acknowledge and deal with this. In fact, the attention of our own Government has been drawn to this issue at an All-

Party Parliamentary Group on 19 January when the annual World Watch List was published by Open Doors. There will be an international summit conference in London on 5 and 6 July when persecution will be debated. We are invited to pray for the conference, for the delegates and for the outcomes.

Further information can be found on the website [endthepersecution.uk](http://endthepersecution.uk) where there are two toolkits, one for places of worship and one for schools and communities. Through the churches and schools, it is hoped to find young champions and were pleased to have had this information from the Prime Minister's Deputy Special Adviser for Freedom of Religion or Belief, David Burrowes. You may have already seen the Open Doors' website and the World Watch List where countries are highlighted where persecution takes place in order that people may know and accept the reality of the situation in each country. It is very sobering to learn that now 360 million Christians - that is one in seven around the world - face persecution and 5,100 churches and church buildings were attacked. It is even more frightening to learn that 5,898 people were killed and 3,829 were abducted - and we know this is men, women and children.

Covid-19 has exacerbated the situation in surveillance of people and denial of aid. It will not be a surprise to learn that Afghanistan, even before the withdrawal of troops, North Korea, Somalia, Libya and Yemen topped the list. We all understand human rights and we know our own responsibilities as Christians. Why discuss this now? Well, for years we have watched the Archbishop of Canterbury travelling the world's trouble spots, offering prayer, sympathy and solidarity to those whose past contained many challenges and whose futures are uncertain. This coming together brings hope to the lost, the hurt and the bereaved. Those of us who have been able to travel or work in the world may have had our own experiences in other countries. We have seen the hurt and the anger.

The Lambeth Conference will bring together the senior clergy of countries and offers an opportunity to explore ways to pray and help. We hope this heightens awareness and that the publicity makes those in governments conscious of their own neglect of their own citizens. We all know that the world is becoming more restless and more tense post-Covid and we hope and pray for all those who suffer for their faith. Our colleague, Fr Damian Feeney, will now offer a short theological reflection.

*Revd Damian Feeney (Lichfield):* Thank you, Penny, and, thank you, Chair, for allowing this tag team approach. The persecution of Christians should not surprise us. Jesus reiterates to his followers that it is inevitable and, indeed, in the Beatitudes, a blessing. The texts referencing persecution are well-known but easily skipped over. We must repent of the part Christians have played in the persecution of others and, indeed, of one another. In this country, flagrant persecution is rare, but this Synod has heard the testimonies of those who have witnessed this persecution at first-hand. We do not have to travel far to find accounts of persecution. The recent murder of pastor William Siraj; the wounding of the Revd Patrick Naeem in Peshawar in Pakistan just a few days ago; a Vietnamese Dominican priest, Fr Joseph Tran Ngoc Thanh, stabbed to death while hearing confessions.

These are not isolated incidents nor are they restricted to the ordained. The situation of Christian women is doubly difficult in many parts of the world. Persecuted because of belief. Persecuted also because of gender. In the first letter of John, we read, "For whoever does not love their brother and sister whom they have seen cannot love God whom they have not seen". In other words, we have an ethical imperative to love all people without condition. Ten months ago, the Bishop of Leeds rightly reminded us that we cannot separate out persecution of Christians from that visited upon other groups and traditions.

Vulnerable groups in places like China, Myanmar, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan are persecuted because they demonstrate non-conformity to the state, an independence problematic to the nations where they live. Uighur and Rohingya Muslims in China and Myanmar, non-believers in Saudi Arabia, Christians in Pakistan and Turkey. To the Christian, persecution against any is anathema and the principle of viewing all this through a human rights lens is vital. It is too easy amidst pressing concerns to view all this in the abstract and we hope that we can enable testimonies from the floor of Synod to be heard this afternoon. We pray that today a spark which ignited an individual conscience can blaze into a fire of prayer, advocacy and practical concern for our sisters and brothers for whom danger and vulnerability are the daily reality carried for allegiance to Jesus Christ.

We are dealing here with the lives of fellow humans. The least we can do is to try to understand what happens to people who live in this shadow. We believe this motion to be timely in raising the consciousness of Church, Communion and Lambeth Conference. We encourage you today to redouble your systematic prayer for persecutors as much as persecuted and we pray that today's debate will widen the consciousness of Synod and the wider Church this afternoon.

*Mrs Penny Allen (Lichfield):* I formally move the diocesan motion for debate and it may help members to know and understand that the very helpful Alastair Cutting has an amendment to this resolution which we warmly welcome.

*The Chair:* This motion is now open for debate. As you have just heard, there is an amendment. I am going to be calling approximately three speakers initially and then we will be going to the mover of the amendment.

*The Bishop of Southwark (Rt Revd Christopher Chessun):* I welcome this debate. Chair, freedom of religious belief is well set out in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including the freedom to worship, to adopt, to change, promote or renounce a religious belief and raise one's children in one's faith. That such rights are so little observed in much of the world is a standing offence.

I want to commend strong advocacy for its furtherance, not only to our own Government but also with our ecumenical and inter-faith partners. But our full and proper commitment



to freedom of religious belief generally does not obviate the strength of our concern and recognition of the growing menace of the persecution of Christians, as has already been stated. This year, of course, we focus on St Luke's Gospel in the Lectionary, including from next Sunday Luke 6:22, "Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you, revile and defame you on the account of the son of man".

These Beatitudes and woes emphasise a reversal that the Kingdom brings. Those marginalized and under heel are favoured of God and those with the power and choice to persecute them seek to put themselves beyond God's will, thus we lament for those who suffer but acknowledge the identity they demonstrate with Christ. That has been so right back to antiquity. Our ancient practice of pilgrimage was born first to the place of Christ's suffering and then spread to those of martyrs and other special witness. I have, Chair, the privilege to be Co-Chair of the Anglican Oriental Orthodox Regional Forum and some three years ago my fellow Chairman and good friend to us all, Archbishop Angaelos, took a group of us on pilgrimage to Egypt during which he visited sites both of ancient devotion but also of very recent tragic, horrific martyrdom.

The trials faced by Copts, Syrian Orthodox and Armenians are longstanding, are sometimes horrific and they continue to this very day. The territory of Tur Abdin on the Turkish border with Syria once held a thriving Syrian Orthodox community. It is still there present and resilient, but the deaths of many thousands during World War I in what the Syriac community call "the sword" has left them prone to persecution which continues. Minorities under pressure become small minorities and small minorities can do little to protect themselves. The number factor does have to be factored in.

Our response, Chair, has to be that ancient one of looking unflinchingly at the suffering of our brothers and sisters. It has to be joining in prayer for and fellowship with those who find themselves on the receiving end of someone's hate. The Bishop of Truro's Report on Christian Persecution commissioned by the Foreign Secretary is a powerful resource. It would, indeed, be good if the Lambeth Conference could address this matter, although that is not strictly within our remit to ask for and is somewhat late in the planning for it. My diocese in Southwark has such a resource for churches' used during Thy Kingdom Come. This main motion, brothers and sisters, is worthy of our support and I particularly support the amendment in the name of the Archdeacon of Lewisham and Greenwich.

*Mr Stephen Boyall (Blackburn):* I would like to urge Synod to vote for this motion to be a great encouragement to the persecuted Christians around the world. But, not only that, I urge Synod members to encourage those in our churches to engage with organisations like Open Doors and to take the opportunities that they offer to encourage our persecuted brothers and sisters. We did this in a kids' group of seven to ten years olds I help lead in my church. We are going through 1 Thessalonians as a church and having done a section of chapters 2:17 to 3:10, and we saw how the persecuted church there in Thessaloniki were to have faith, hope and love, how they were Paul's glory and joy. This is what 19 and 20 say: "For what is our hope, our joy or the Crown in which we will glory in the

presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes, is it not you? Indeed, you are our glory and joy".

So as a craft, we designed and wrote cards to a boy from Nigeria whose dad was killed for being a Christian when he was two. He is now 11. Can you imagine growing up trusting Jesus when your dad was killed for trusting Jesus? Amazing, is it not? What faith. Praise God. We wrote telling him just how much joy he has brought us as we hear of him still trusting Jesus. We wrote to encourage him to keep on in his faith, hope and love in the Lord Jesus. Let us encourage, let us pray, let us seek to point our brothers and sisters to Jesus, to let them know of the inspiration they are as they cling on to Jesus in the daily struggles of persecution. I trust and pray that our cards we sent did, indeed, bring encouragement for this boy to keep on running the race with perseverance, with faith, love and hope.

*The Chair.* Archbishop Angaelos, who is in the Zoom room. After that, I am going to be calling on Alastair Cutting to speak to and move his amendment.

*Archbishop Angaelos (Ecumenical Representatives):* In our tradition we start everything with thanksgiving, even our funeral services and yes, even the persecution. So, today, I want to start by giving thanks to this chamber for today's discussion and debate and also that of last year and many other times when this has been at the forefront. I also want to give thanks to my brothers, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, for their constant advocacy both in the House of Lords and in the public square and also my brothers, the Bishops of Coventry, Southwark and Leeds for all they have done, as well as so many other friends in the chamber.

Of course, this is something that is dear to our hearts, all of us, and it touches us all. When we look at the body of Christ as a body, we realise that the suffering is never anywhere else except within ourselves. So, yes, we have a responsibility to speak here in this chamber, to speak to Her Majesty's Government, to speak to policymakers and to speak to the world about what has happened.

I am delighted that this motion was actually supposed to be looked at in 2017 and has been delayed, because this is the work of God in the fullness of time for a moment such as this, a year in which our nation will host not only the Lambeth Conference but also an international conference, a Ministerial on Freedom of Religion or Belief. It is a prime time for us to be able to bring this to the forefront and to speak. We are heavily involved with the Ministerial and, my dear friend and brother, Bishop Philip, the Bishop of Truro, and I are already co-hosting an event at that time as we have done in the past. Of course, today comes with a stark reminder of these violations.

Earlier today, I was attending online the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches and asked them to pause for a moment's silence to recognise the passing, the death of our dear brother, Abune Antonius, the Patriarch of Eritrea, who himself was the victim of so much persecution and inequality over the past year, having been imprisoned

unjustly for about 13 years and for much of that time deprived of any kind of medical assistance. Situations such as this for members of clergy and, more so, lay people is happening all the time. This is a time for collaboration.

I am so thankful for the work of our friends at Open Doors, as well as for many other NGOs that we work closely with through our own organisation of (inaudible). Because this is a time for us to pool our resources. This is a time for us to witness together, a time for us to raise our collective voice. This is not just a theological or theoretical conversation here. People are dying every day for no other reason but for living, witnessing and proclaiming their faith. This, of course, is within the lens of freedom of religion or belief because, as Christians, what we must do is look at the right of every individual as the image and likeness of God to be that person who is respected for the human dignity he or she carries. We, of course, as Christians, as we are reminded, will always bear the cross of persecution but we must never accept it for others.

It is up to us to be strong and courageous and valiant, but it is up to us to be those who are advocates following in the footsteps of the chief advocate who spoke for all. Once again, I thank you all for this time. I thank you for the spirit. I thank you for your fellowship and I ask that this year, as a start and as we continue, we raise this issue of our sisters and brothers around the world. Therefore, I do very much support this motion.

*The Chair:* Alastair Cutting is going to speak to and move his amendment. You have up to five minutes.

*Ven. Alastair Cutting (Southwark):* Thank you, Chair, and, thank you, Penny, Damian and the Lichfield team, for bringing this important motion to Synod with the stories and the strong introduction about the persecuted church and reminding us of the one in seven persecuted Christians globally. In bringing this amendment forward, I am spotlighting a number of points that are already mentioned in the background papers and featuring them, along with some others, and bringing them into the main motion.

In England, holding the Christian faith is not likely to attract much persecution as faith is not a minority issue but in some places it is and, as has already been mentioned, the Church is indeed under severe persecution. For most of my childhood, I lived in a country where Christianity was a relatively minor concern. I do not think that I ever felt under threat in our years in India and I do not ever remember seeing anything directly myself, although in 1999 an Australian missionary and his two young sons were murdered in a faith incident.

The UK Freedom of Religion or Belief Forum is the UK branch of gathering of civil society organisations which come together to advance the cause of freedom of religion and belief and the UK branch has some 85 member organisations. Our Southwark diocesan rep for the UK FoRB Forum, as it is sometimes called, is the Revd Sue Thomas, one of our assistant priests. Your diocese or other organisations may consider wanting to link up with them, as clause (b) in the amendment suggests - or at least what will be if it comes

in. Sue has put some of her wisdom into a booklet that formed part of Southwark's Thy Kingdom Come.

*Everyday Faith - Hidden Church* is the little booklet that she produced. It contains some excellent ways of helping us to consider the issues of holding and having faith where being identified as a Christian could be seriously personally risky. I was particularly struck by Sue's dissembled cross, a couple of twigs tied with a string, one that could easily come apart quickly, lest it was found on your person and you might be identified as a Christian in ISIS invaded Syria. Just imagine if that was us. I expect that many of us are, indeed, carrying or wearing a cross and if that could be a fatal identification about you in the wrong place - and just like that a room full of Bishops each look at their own pectoral crosses. Our booklet is available and others are too, but if you wanted to try something out this one is linked to in section (c).

The End the Persecution website has been set up by the All-Party Parliamentary Group for International Freedom of Religion and Belief and the Prime Minister's special envoy for that, Fiona Bruce, has written a letter encouraging individuals and groups - that is us - to move on from just raising awareness to action. The End the Persecution's site flags the International Ministerial gathering in July of this year that has been mentioned a couple of times already. It actively encourages schools and groups from places of worship to pray and engage in the run-up to this conference. Do check out their excellent toolkits for places of worship and schools. They are mentioned in clause (d).

One of our clergy met with her MP for ten minutes, something that is encouraged in the End the Persecution website toolkit. This meeting with the MP on one occasion to talk about these issues resulted in two debates in Parliament. Not a bad outcome for a ten minute meeting - see more about this in clause (e).

The Bishop of Truro led the independent review of persecuted Christians for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. He was invited to do that. It is amazing that they asked one of our Bishops to do so. There is a link in clause (f). More than that, the 22 recommendations from that Report were fully accepted by the Government. With the Lambeth Conference coming up, there is a request that persecution of Christian Church be considered. Maybe the Holy Spirit and the Archbishops might be moved once more on that one. Finally, these clauses flow out of the spirit and the heart of this motion. I trust you will wholeheartedly support this amendment, supporting Christians persecuted across the world.

*The Chair:* I now call on Penny to formally respond to the amendment.

*Mrs Penny Allen (Lichfield):* We would want to warmly thank Alastair, who has fleshed out for you and offered resources and websites for you. We are very grateful to him because it has enabled an update about the Ministerial Conference to come to you all and we are very grateful as well for the resources from the Revd Sue Thomas. We are hoping that you will swallow this amendment whole.

*The Chair:* Is there anyone wishing to speak directly to the amendment?

*The Chair* imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

*Canon Peter Adams (St Albans):* I very much welcome and thank both the bringer from the Lichfield Diocese for the original motion and the amendment. I really want to back this motion. However, I just want to add a caveat that I believe the amendment helps us with. It is vital that we be well-resourced in information in order that we can be good advocates for a persecuted church. For a period of about ten years, I was privileged to go regularly on business to China. Early on in that time, I was introduced by a colleague to senior leaders in the official church in China.

Over those ten years, I much enjoyed many times with church leaders across the nation. I was astounded early on to find myself sitting, eating with official church leaders and members, leaders of the underground church, because this was not what I heard through many advocacy groups back home. They presented black and white/good and bad. But, actually, the reality was very different. It was very nuanced and, being a good voice for the Church in China, I found I had to be a nuanced voice.

I welcome this amendment because it brings information and understanding to the voice that we will bring. It is vital we do that in order that we do not enhance the problems. I add a caveat to my own caveat in that the Church in China, since I was regularly there, has changed significantly. The things I experienced then are not possible now. Things change. But the wisdom I bring from that experience is we need to be informed by what is happening on the ground not just by advocacy groups who often find themselves seeking to present things quite simplistically. Let us be attentive to what the reality is and, just as we heard this morning as we looked at difference and so on, let us listen to the issues and seek to understand and then be an informed voice.

*The Bishop of Lichfield (Rt Revd Dr Michael Ipgrave):* On behalf of the Lichfield diocesan team, heartfelt thanks to my good friend, the Archdeacon of Lewisham and Greenwich, who has a particular charism for offering helpful and friendly amendments to Synod motions. I think that this amendment does significantly strengthen our motion. I want to pay particular attention to what will be paragraph (b), which sets it in a wider inter-faith or inter-religious setting and I think does that in two ways. First of all, by referring to the global violations of freedom of religion or belief. We are clear that our own motion has a particular genesis and concern about the persecution of Christians which has a compelling spiritual and theological urgency for us. But it is absolutely right to insist that that concern is set within the indivisibility of religious freedom. Other faith communities around the world also experience persecution and we need to stand in solidarity with them.

But, secondly, the multi-faith reality not only maps out the challenge we face; it can also be part of the response. Paragraph (b) refers to "work with Christian and other groups".

This country has a rich and flourishing inter-faith world with good relations between Christians and Muslims, Jews, Hindus, Sikhs and other religious communities, both at local and national level. Those good relations and friendship and trust can be a powerful resource for us to bring into situations of religious persecution. I can think of many examples, places where Christians and Muslims have together visited Pakistan, Christians and Hindus have visited India, bringing encouragement to beleaguered Christians there.

I also have the honour of chairing the Council of Christians and Jews, which a few years ago organised a month of reflection and prayer amongst UK Jewish communities focusing on the persecution of Christians in the Middle East. That had the title, "If not now, when". From the words of Rabbi Hillel, from the Ethics of the Fathers, "If I am not for myself, who will be for me? If I am only for myself, what am I? If not now, when?" Synod, those are wise words to bear in mind as I urge you to support this amendment.

*Revd Esther Prior (Guildford):* I am really grateful for this amendment. Like many of us, I have been trying to listen out to what the spirit might be saying to the Church for such a time as this. It seems to me that, whether it is from the Archbishop of Canterbury's reflections about the strong and the weak in his Presidential Address, whether it is Lord Boateng's piercing words about racism, our conversation about safeguarding, modern slavery and human trafficking, whether it is the difficult conversation about clergy under financial strain, the group work that we did this morning on difference, the spirit of God is reawakening our hearts for the marginalised, the least of these and at the heart of this, this afternoon raising our eyes to see, to put at the centre if you will, the persecuted church.

I just want to simply say this. Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear what the spirit of God is saying to the Church and so I move, if I can dare to say, in obedience that we overwhelmingly support this amendment and the whole motion.

*The Chair:* The spirit is indeed moving. I think this is a good point now to go to vote on this amendment which is Item 28.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* We come now to debating the main motion as amended by Item 28.

*Mr Gabriel Chui (Liverpool):* I wish us to affirm this motion for the persecuted church in the world. In particular, I want to praise the imagination to ask dioceses to offer real support. I want to tell you about H. His own father put a blade against the neck of his apostate son. I want to tell you about B, who has radio silence from his own family members back in Iraq forced to flee without papers and so now he is, essentially, stateless. I want to tell you about A, whose own daughter was kidnapped by the Revolutionary Guard of Iran. She was unspeakably abused because A now follows Jesus

and had to flee Iran. These are just three stories of real people with real trauma and raw suffering, and that is just within the Farsi and Sorani language communities in my church.

Back in October last year, our Farsi language congregation listened to God from 2 Thessalonians. The heart of Paul's message to these persecuted Thessalonians is found in chapter 2 verse 15, which says, "So, then, brothers and sisters, stand firm and hold fast to the teachings we passed onto you, whether by word of mouth or by letter". We must pray, yes, but as we offer diocesan level support we must make sure that front and centre of what we do is to help our persecuted brothers and sisters hold on, to hold on to the Gospel that brings life and joy in its fullness. It is this Gospel that H, B and A once openly shared back in Iraq and Iran. My friends here at Synod, I urge you to support this motion.

*Ms Sarah Tupling (Deaf Anglicans Together):* I am also speaking today as part of the Derby Diocese. A real thank you to Lichfield and those bringing this motion. It is a really important one. I just wanted to add a little bit about what is happening in Derby. In the Derby Diocese, we are an active member of the Derbyshire Churches Link with the Church of North India, the CNI, and that link goes way back to 1977. Our 45 year friendship has been sustained through ongoing prayer, regular visits, financial support - some of that through the Bishop's Harvest Appeal.

Also, in recent years we have had a school linking programme and that has involved 25 different schools throughout the Derby region and those of us in Derbyshire are continuing in our support. Like Penny and others have mentioned and the two bringing this motion today, we are really concerned about the growing opposition that our brothers and sisters, particularly in North India where we have the link, are facing, the real challenges they face every day, and we absolutely stand united with them and we are ready to support in any way that we can. Stephen Boyall, thank you for your words of encouragement also. In the Derby Diocese and also in Blackburn, there is so much support from everyone and so I wholeheartedly support this motion.

*The Chair:* The Bishop of Truro followed by Vaughan Roberts for a maiden speech. You have up to three minutes.

*The Bishop of Truro (Rt Revd Philip Mounstephen):* I am very grateful for this motion being selected for debate today. It is not that long since our previous debate on this subject, but the situation for Christian and other faith minorities the world over has only deteriorated in the intervening period. Witness the disastrous fall of Afghanistan to the Taliban, now making it the most dangerous country on earth to be a Christian. Witness too, as Fr Damian mentioned, the outrageous murder of Pastor William Siraj returning home after Sunday service at All Saints Church, Peshawar on 30 January. The wholesale denial of freedom of religion or belief in today's world is a great evil.

When I undertook the review for the then FCO back in 2019, I did not come to the topic ignorant of it but I was, nonetheless, shocked by the scale, scope and severity of what

we found. That people should be targeted simply because they believe different things and organise their lives accordingly is a monstrous evil. That 83% of the world's population have that freedom curtailed is unacceptable. That 80% of religiously motivated discrimination is directed against Christians is intolerable. That this situation is steadily getting worse is simply unacceptable and we cannot pass by on the other side. This is a profoundly moral issue which demands our attention.

If you lift the stone of persecution and look underneath, you find some deeply unpleasant things. You find authoritarian, totalitarian regimes, intolerant of dissent and of minorities. You find aggressive, militant nationalism that insists on uniformity. You find religious zealotry and fundamentalism in many different forms that often manifests itself in violence. And you find all these things on the rise. If we care about these issues, we should certainly care about the persecution of Christians and about freedom of religion or belief more generally. It is steadily getting worse.

China and India, the world's two most populous countries, were barely on the radar a decade ago. According to Pew Research, India is now the worst country in the world for societal violence against religious minorities. The Chinese Communist Party has cracked down hard on churches and is, of course, guilty of the most atrocious genocidal action towards Uighur Muslims in Xinjiang Province. The best way to address this is to advocate for freedom of religion or belief for everybody. That was the deliberate approach I took in framing the recommendations of my Review. We must not "other" Christians and expose them to greater risk by making them out to be stooges of the West, but there is a moral imperative too. We must never limit our understanding of who our neighbour is.

So, yes, let us call on the Government to ensure that all the recommendations of my Review are implemented in full, not as a tick-box exercise, but so that rhetoric matches reality and that the UK takes full advantage of the upcoming Ministerial to champion this issue. Can I just say, however, that in this FoRB space, many people say, "Parliament and MPs get it, why doesn't the Church?" Now is our time to respond.

*Revd Canon Vaughan Roberts (Oxford):* It is time we woke up. There are desperate needs around the world. We certainly need to engage in advocacy and prayer but I would also very strongly commend partnership. As I have engaged with the huge privilege of ministering in places where there has been significant persecution, I have always gained far more than I have given.

One of the privileges of my life was to be a speaker and a delegate at the Third Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization in Cape Town in 2010: 198 countries represented, 10,000 delegates, sadly none from China. They made it to the airport. They were forbidden to travel. Their passports were taken away for ten days. We were split up into Bible study groups, representatives of different continents around the world. Each day was a different focus. On the day when we focused on the Middle East, I began a prayer, "Lord, please remove the persecution from our brethren in the Middle East". And, as I prayed eloquently, a faithful brother from the Middle East gzumped my prayer, "No,



Lord", he said, and then he took over, "Lord, we notice that in the West where there is little persecution, the Church has gone soft, has compromised. There is a lack of joy and love for the Lord Jesus. And if a removal of persecution meant that for us, please Lord, do not take it away". I was deeply challenged.

Since then, I have continued to pray for the persecuted church and I have prayed that the Lord would remove that persecution. But, in remembering the persecuted church, I prayed for myself that I would learn from their moving example and in my very different setting to take up my cross and follow the Lord Jesus whatever the cost. There is much for us all to be gained by closer partnership and friendship with our brothers and sisters in the persecuted church. I warmly commend and support this motion.

*The Chair* imposed a speech limit of two minutes.

*The Bishop of Chelmsford (Rt Revd Guli Francis-Dehqani)*: I wanted to just offer a few personal reflections on my own personal experience. My early faith was nurtured in the small Persian Church in Iran and the impact of the 1979 Islamic Revolution on that community and personally on my family have continued to shape my faith and the nature of my ministry. I want to endorse this motion and encourage dioceses to offer support and form links, where possible. But I also want to say that we must remember that, for some parts of the Communion, there are particular sensitivities that mean that links with churches in the West can be unhelpful and even dangerous and such contact can reinforce views that Christianity is a foreign sect and the Church an agent of the West. Wisdom is needed in forming links and speaking out on behalf of others, but it is always possible to pray and the power of prayer is real. I have learnt that from my own experience.

I wanted too to say a word about the complexity for people who find themselves in this country after the experience of persecution; the complexity around identity, finding a place of belonging, having been regarded by many as betrayers of their national identity. This is particularly true for those who are converts from Islam where national, cultural and social identity are so firmly bound up with religious identity. It can be a lifetime experience in unpacking this and people need support in discovering who they are in safe settings and helpful resources to help in deepening discipleship.

Finally, I want to hold up a mirror for ourselves and say, if we truly respect our brothers and sisters, should we be asking if there is anything we too can learn about our context now in the Church of England? We who are gripped by fear about the future, who are worried about declining numbers and dwindling resources, who are desperately devising strategies to buck the trend and reverse statistics, should we instead listen to the whisper of the persecuted church, which is a call not so much to build on the future but to be faithful now? The tragedy for the Church in Iran is not that it is small and vulnerable, but the miracle is that it survives. While it breathes, it speaks of the fragile love of Christ who calls us too not to be fearful but to dwell faithfully and joyfully in the present.

*The Chair:* After our next speaker, I will be looking for a motion for closure.

*Mrs Caroline Herbert (Norwich):* Bishop Guli has just spoken of the power of prayer and I wanted to highlight the very start of this motion which I welcome warmly, the whole motion, the amendment, but the start of clause (a) that says, "The Church of England not only pray for the persecuted church". I have to confess when I first read that I thought: oh, that is all right, the Church of England, that is big, that is them out there. Then, I thought, no, it is each one of us as individuals.

I hope, Synod, if we vote for this motion it means that each of us is committing to pray for our brothers and sisters who are persecuted for their faith around the world, each of us in our individual private prayers and, when we have opportunities to lead the intersessions in our churches or in Bible study groups, that we will be bringing the needs of our brothers and sisters before God because the power of prayer is powerful. I wonder as well whether there will be an opportunity for the Synod itself to do that perhaps after the vote, whether someone perhaps from the platform might be able to lead us in such a prayer so we can actually put into action what we vote for.

*The Chair:* The spirit is indeed moving because we are going to be doing that. I now wish to test the mind of Synod on whether Item 18, as amended by Item 28, has been sufficiently debated. I, therefore, put the motion for closure on Item 18, as amended by Item 28.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* That is clearly carried. I am going to now invite Penny to be very brief within your five minutes, but if you can take less that would be great.

*Mrs Penny Allen (Lichfield):* Thank you so much to everyone who has responded during this debate. It has been heart-warming to hear your concerns and your love for others and I want to thank all of those who have spoken. The Bishop of Southwark for his recommendation for the resources for clergy and laity. To Steven for mentioning the faith, hope and love required in a tragic circumstance. It was lovely to see Archbishop Angaelos on Zoom. God bless the technology that has allowed us to do that and to hear him speak about collaboration and the image and likeness of God in everyone.

Alastair, we are enormously grateful to you for everything you have done to assist us with this motion and to draw it to everyone's attention and the resources you brought forward as well. To Peter Adams for your recommendations for the amendments and so on. To Gabriel Chui, thank you for the stories. They will stay in our memory. Thank you, Sarah, very much for everything that you had to say about Derby. That is an inspiration to us all to take that away and think with our dioceses.

To the Bishop of Truro, thank you for what you said about authoritarian and intolerance and zealotry and fundamentalism and the moral imperative. To Vaughan for your

conference reflections. To Bishop Guli, thank you very much again for highlighting personally what this has cost for people who have come here with these experiences. To Caroline, a reminder to pray. Thank you, Chair, for saying we are going to do that now. Thank you everyone again very warmly from the Diocese of Lichfield.

*The Chair.* I now put Item 18, as amended by Item 28, to the vote.

*A Speaker.* Point of order. We have been reminded that individual support matters for our persecuted brothers and sisters. Can I suggest that we do this vote by numbers in electronic form and can I suggest that, as we do that, that we do that with an attitude of prayerfulness.

*The Chair.* Are you asking for a vote by Houses or are you asking for a whole of the whole Synod electronically? Yes, that has my approval. This is a counted vote of the whole Synod on Item 18, as amended by Item 28.

*The motion was put and carried, 329 voting in favour, none against, with no recorded abstentions.*

*The Chair.* Let us be still for a moment. If time allowed, I would be singing kumbaya, someone is crying, Lord, but time does not allow for that so we will be real. Heavenly Father, you are the source of all goodness, generosity and love. We thank you for opening the hearts of many to those who are fleeing for their lives. Disturb us, O Lord, that we may open our arms and welcome and reach out our hands in support. We pray that the desperate may find new hope and that lives torn apart may be restored. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, your son, our Lord, who fled persecution at his birth and, at his last, triumphed over death. Amen.

THE CHAIR *Very Revd Andrew Nunn (Dean of Southwark)* took the Chair at 3.13 pm.

## **ITEM 19**

### **SEE OF CANTERBURY: MEMBERSHIP OF THE CROWN NOMINATIONS COMMISSION (GS 2253)**

*The Chair.* Synod, we now move to Item 19, the See of Canterbury Membership of the Crown Nominations Commission. Members will need GS 2253 for this item. You will also need the Third Notice Paper, the Financial Memo, and I point you towards, particularly, paragraphs 17 to 18 in that memo. I am going to invite the Bishop of Chester, who is moving this motion on behalf of the Bishop of Worcester, to speak to Item 19. Bishop, you have up to ten minutes.

*The Bishop of Chester (Rt Revd Mark Tanner):* As you have just heard, I am not the Bishop of Worcester who has tested positive with Covid and dropped me in the deep end.

We do wish him a speedy recovery and I am told that get well cards can be sent to the Lord Bishop and his wife in Worcester. Ironically, of course, it means the Canadian born Bishop of the Province of York is asking this Synod to participate in a consultation regarding possible changes to the Canterbury Crown Nominations Commission.

Synod, the debate that follows matters. It is literally of global significance and it cuts to the very heart of who we are as Christ's people in the Anglican Communion in the 21st century. Our words matter and so does the tone in which they are offered. What lies before us today is a consultation. It is a conversation not a decision. Indeed, the only decision that you are being asked to make today is whether you will enrich and engage this debate, listening, speaking and praying. The Report before you is not final and it is bound to be imperfect, but it comes to us now because Synod's voice matters and any change that is finally proposed would require an amendment of our Standing Orders.

That though will be a decision for another day. Today is about conversation and consultation. It is about our Communion. As we debate, the eyes of that Communion will rightly be upon us and my hope is that the best characteristics of this august body will shine through our debate. Seven years ago, Canterbury Diocesan Synod asked for changes to be made to the membership of the Canterbury Crown Nominations Commission as it does not properly reflect the role of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Currently, six local members and six national members work together. Their synod asked for the number of local members to be reduced and more voices from the Communion to be present. In order to strengthen the role of the Diocese in choosing the Bishop of Dover, who basically acts as their diocesan worship, the Archbishop agrees that the Bishop of Dover would be chosen through a CNC process provided only that the Archbishop was voting in the majority. This is the way the current Bishop was chosen.

The Archbishops' Council has sought wisdom and advice from various people, including colleagues in the Anglican Communion office, and on 15 January launched the public consultation, of which this debate is part, shaped as per the Diocese's request and providing for five voices from the Communion. The proposal acknowledges the Archbishop's role in our Communion as first among equals, or *primus inter pares*. This role takes upwards of 25% of the Archbishop's time and he notes that this is a consistent and steadily increasing time. The Communion is already involved in the discernment of any new Archbishop of Canterbury. Our Standing Orders require that a primate from outside the Church of England must be a member of the CNC. But this is not currently a well-struck balance.

There would, of course, be other ways of addressing this imbalance. Some suggest that the consultation is starting in the wrong place, that we should begin with a review of the role of the Archbishop in the Anglican Communion, although here, Synod, we need to remember that we, as one part of that Communion, could request such a review but we may not impose it. Let me illustrate this by noting one suggestion that has been made and tested, namely that of a revolving Presidency of some kind. This suggestion has

been raised twice, I believe, during Archbishop Justin's tenure and not supported by the vast majority of primates.

In 2017, the Anglican Communion Task Group, chaired by the Archbishop of Armagh, suggested in a draft report to the primates that we recognise that Canterbury summons to Lambeth, Canterbury presides over the Anglican Consultative Council, Canterbury chairs the primates' meeting and Canterbury appoints the members of dialogues. Although Canterbury does not hold any juridical authority over other provinces, the Archbishop of Canterbury is *primus inter pares*. We, therefore, have ecclesiological difficulty with any who say the Archbishop of Canterbury is an option in the leadership of the Anglican Communion.

For any who say this, we wish to be clear that we believe that they have moved outside the Anglican family and not by Canterbury's choice. This recommendation was accepted by the primates. Synod, we could not unilaterally impose that idea. It is not our right and it certainly is not in our gift. We are not here to instruct the Communion on its polity. Of course, the Communion's view may change in time and, if it does, we will need to adjust our processes again but, as with everything, in our Communion, it will be done through a process of reception and consensus. Meanwhile, this consultation is a symbol and a sign of who we are in Christ in Communion standing together as heralds of a coming Kingdom. Our sisters and brothers across the Communion matter greatly to us. We value our fellowship with them and we understand it as fundamentally theological even ontological. It is no mere historical accident.

Friends, I want to ask you, please, to avoid four things in the coming debate. Firstly, do not think this is only about democracy, although we love the trappings of democracy. We want our view expressed and the will of the people appears paramount. But we who follow Christ aspire to a higher goal than this. We seek through all of our debates, our discussions, our prayers, even our arguments, to discern the mind of Christ and follow it.

An African member of the Crown Nominations Commission does not give Africa a vote or embody all Africans any more than I am speaking now on behalf of all Northerners or, indeed, all Canadians. Engaging such a sister or brother is a statement of intent. It is an embodiment of our fellowship. It is a visible expression of our global identity, our fellowship and our shared missional task with all the redeemed of every language, place and time.

Secondly, please do not fear that this proposal allows Communion representatives to block a nomination or elect a member of the British Parliament, for our Archbishops sit in the Lords. The maths simply do not allow this. Of course, there is already a Communion voice in this process. This question is not about politics. It is about faith and identity.

Thirdly, please do not fear any conspiracies in the timing of this as I do not believe there are any. The primates meet and the Anglican Consultative Council Standing Committee meet in the spring and they will discuss this matter. If we are able to vote on a final

proposal at the July Synod, it could be reported to the Lambeth Conference later that month and I believe it would be received as good news.

Some have speculated about whether the timing is an indication that the current incumbent is looking to retire after the Lambeth Conference. Whilst it is not for me to speak for my most reverend friend, it is publicly documented that he wishes to continue for a few years yet - in his words, "All things being equal".

Finally, friends, please do not forget that the world is watching us - maybe not logged into YouTube or scrolling our Twitter feed, but this will be reported. Churches around the Communion are listening; our brothers and sisters observing our corporate body language as well as hearing our fine arguments. What message do we want to give to them?

Our sisters and brothers look to the Archbishop of Canterbury. Members, proctors and Bishops of the Southern Province, your primate is a focus of unity for all of us in the Anglican Communion. Even if you disagree, please do so with kindness, humility and by attending to the way your voice will be heard in Melanesia, Mumbai, Moscow, Montreal, Macclesfield and Mozambique. Never forget, my friends, that the average Anglican - by which I mean the modal or median Anglican, for there is no place for meanness in our conversation, if you will forgive my mathematical humour - is a woman under 40 in sub-Saharan Africa living on less than £3 a day, facing persecution for her faith, as we have just been hearing.

Friends, in conclusion and summary, this debate is an opportunity for us to listen and understand each other's views on the proposed changes. Please express those views fully and freely and then remember that the motion before you simply asks that you take note of this Report. Not agree or disagree, just take note, and afterwards please respond in writing. I beg to move the motion standing in the name of my Right Reverend friend, the Bishop of Worcester.

*The Chair:* This item is now open for debate.

*The Bishop of Ripon (Rt Revd Dr Helen-Ann Hartley):* Members of Synod, I was elected Bishop of Waikato in the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia in 2013 and served in that role for four years before returning to ministry in the Church of England. Amidst the rich, cultural and ethnic diversity of the Anglican Church in the Pacific, intentionally worked and held by its unique structures, there was immense respect for the See of Canterbury and for the Church of England as a whole. This familial relationship was not without its complexities and in many ways bore the scars and shame of colonialism.

However, I vividly remember Archbishop Justin's visit to Auckland in 2014, the welcome and hospitality offered with deep respect and joyful celebration. In his sermon, preached in Holy Sepulchre Māori Anglican Church in Auckland, the Archbishop said, "Christians

are called by God to serve, to transform. The pattern of our action is set by the figure on the cross". This action is demanding and costly and asks us of at times to be radical. By radical, I take that to refer to roots; that is to say, seeking the fullest visible expression of our lived unity as the body of Christ and this will, and indeed ought, to involve consultation towards changing how the CNC for Canterbury is constituted.

I have been dismayed by some of the responses to the consultation process, particularly the use of the word "foreign". When we "other" our sisters and brothers in Christ, we are not honouring God in whose image we are created. If we reject this consultation, what are we saying about our relationships with the wider Communion? What will our sisters and brothers in Christ say about us? Whilst a Bishop in Aotearoa, I learnt much from working closely with Māori. One of their sayings has remained with me, "*Nāku te rourou nāu te rourou ka ora ai te iwi*": with your basket and my basket, the people will live. Members of Synod, please take note of this Report and support the consultation process set out therein.

*Ven. Luke Miller (London):* I hope very much that we will take note of this Report as we look to how the President of our Convocation is determined and discerned. I think a little history may help us to understand why we should look into it in the way that is proposed. My kitchen has a noble place in the history of the mission of the Church because my predecessor as Rector of St Andrew-by-the-Wardrobe in the City of London allowed what was then his study to be used for the first meetings of the Church Mission Society. It was from there that the young missionaries were sent out with their trunks, 18 inches wide, 18 inches deep and 6 and a half feet long. The average life expectancy was about 18 months. The trunks were coffins.

In that 19th century period, what was then called foreign mission was left to the private enterprise of the Mission Societies because the state refused to get involved. The Church of England was left, therefore, in a conundrum. It was not immediately clear that appointing bishops to serve outside England was legally possible or financially affordable. Synod, nothing much changes about the constraints we face. But that they were theologically necessary was championed by Edward Pewsey and Edward Coleridge.

Pewsey asserted that our natural state after Adam's fall was alienation from God and disunion amongst ourselves and that the way that God has given us to restore peace to his people on earth and binding us together is the golden succession of bishops which leads us back to the apostles and to Christ himself, which is why we end up with this debate this afternoon because Pewsey's arguments were heeded and a network of what were, first of all, termed missionary bishops was established.

These sees in other lands swiftly developed local synodal structures, partly to facilitate discernment and election of local bishops, some of whom served also in lands which were not under the Crown. It was through these structures that the golden chain was maintained and Pewsey's vision and assertion of Episcopal Catholicism was given reality. But how were these bishops to relate to Canterbury? Well, as the Archbishop to be first

amongst equals, there is always the danger that a local church will go off on one. Walking together means that we go perhaps a little bit more slowly but that we go together. These proposals help us to continue to walk together.

On the other side of the Anglican Via Media is the concern about centralisation. The suggestion of the involvement of the wider Anglican Communion, in some way at least, precisely addresses the engagement of the local church in the Anglican polity. To explore together carefully, prayerfully and reflectively how we should engage in this process in our own day and in the many contexts of a now global Anglican Communion is not wrong, but an exercise and a potentially extraordinarily fruitful exercise in Anglican ecclesiology which is much to be welcomed. I hope at least that the members of the Lower House of the Convocation of Canterbury along with the rest of the members of this General Synod will heartily welcome the exploration which is now proposed.

*Revd Mae Christie (Southwark):* This is my maiden speech. I know that this is going to shock you all, but I became a British citizen about one month ago and I am not originally from the Diocese of Southwark. I would like to think that I am a daughter of the Anglican Communion. I was born and raised in the Deep South of the United States of America, baptized in St Francis Episcopal Church in Denham Springs, Louisiana.

As I grew up in the Episcopal Church, we had a prayerful relationship to the Anglican Communion. In fact, nearly every episcopal church I have ever attended over the course of my life prayed for the Archbishop of Canterbury and the worldwide Anglican Communion every single Sunday. We probably never spoke much about the Archbishop of Canterbury but felt it important and right that we would pray for him and connect us to our larger story. I understand why, particularly in this time when we are reflecting on the impacts of colonialism, institutional racism and representation, we might rethink the way the Archbishop is selected. But I am afraid that this proposal might have the opposite effect to what is intended.

*Primus inter pares* - sorry, I have very bad Latin - first among equals should really guide us in this moment. Throughout the Anglican Communion, bishops and primates are selected by election not appointment, as far as I am aware, and I have voted for one. Their episcopal ministries are informed by the context from which they come, by praying for their flocks, by tending to their churches and being guided by the way the spirit is moving in their own land.

We all recognise the unique position of our Archbishop of Canterbury as the first among equals, but I think we all know how tenuous that position is and it relies on the consent of the whole body of the Communion. That consent really is based on that last part. The fact that he or she, God willing one day, is an equal. Equal because our Archbishop should, in the first instance, share the same task as the rest: to be a bishop for his or her province.



The Archbishop of Canterbury is, at heart, the Bishop of the Church in England and that reality should, hopefully and helpfully, inform his or her worldwide ministry. Just as each of us come from a context and bring our wisdom, I hope, to that larger discussion, so the Archbishop of Canterbury starts first at home. Let us be clear, in no other part of the Communion would they welcome people from outside of their province being so heavily involved in the selection of their bishops. I doubt that they expect the same from us, although perhaps I am wrong. I worry that this proposal may feel more colonial rather than less as it may appear to elevate the role of the Archbishop internationally.

I have looked over the original motion from the 2015 meeting of the Canterbury Diocesan Synod and the minutes surrounding it and it is worth noting that from what I could see it did not come from the body of that Synod but, instead, from the Archbishops' Council in the diocese. It proposed an arrangement regarding the Bishop of Dover as well as a reduction of the number of Canterbury representatives on the CNC.

There was no mention of such an increase in the representation of the Anglican Communion, which is notable. This has been added in the intervening seven years. While I think it might be sensible to somewhat decrease the Canterbury representation, perhaps they should have some further consultation on the new aspects of this proposal. The consultation helpfully lays out the proportion of global, national and diocesan work conducted by our Archbishop but, just as every priest and lay person organises our ministries differently, perhaps we should not enshrine this arrangement in that role through this process.

The next Archbishop might approach things similarly or maybe they would do it differently. Instead, if we are concerned about representation, perhaps we should look closer to home. There are global majority heritage Anglicans here and their voices should be heard. What about the people in the *Setting God's People Free* video yesterday whose socioeconomic backgrounds mean they are often not included in these conversations?

And at a time when it is becoming less safe to be LGBTQ+ in various parts of the Anglican Communion, where is their voice? In short, I welcome a discussion on how we should be selecting our next Archbishop of Canterbury, but the person we pray God is calling us to next should be *primus inter pares*, first among equals. For that to be true, he or she must start out as the Archbishop of the Church of, and indeed in, England. Thank you very much for thinking through this process and I pray that we can come to a good decision in the end.

*The Chair* imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

*Ms Christina Baron (Bath & Wells)*: I have the great privilege of being the first lay person to speak in this debate. I am asking you, perhaps from an unduly secular point of view, as somebody who has done a lot of appointing in my time, to reject this as premature. The job of the Archbishop of Canterbury has actually changed a lot in the last hundred years. A hundred years ago, nobody expected this Archbishop of Canterbury to spend

25, 30, 40 per cent of his time whizzing around the Anglican Communion because he could not jump on an aeroplane and be back in a week. The job has changed and perhaps it is right that the way we nominate a new Archbishop of Canterbury should change as well.

I have had a lot of experience of interviewing people who wanted to be judges and let me tell you that the first thing you do, if you are interviewing for a senior position, is you look at a job description. You think what do we want this person to do, what do we need this person to do? You do not set up an interview panel first. This is a premature proposal.

It would be a very good thing to have a wider consultation about the role of the Archbishop of Canterbury, which I think is becoming almost humanly impossible because the burden is so great. I think we should have a consultation about that and, of course, it should be a consultation that stretches across the Anglican Communion. But we do not close the option by setting up the interview panel before we have done that. We are told that we are just taking note of this, but it is a funny thing to be taking note before we have had that widespread consultation about what the Archbishop of Canterbury should be asked to do.

So, please, Synod, reject this. However well meaning, reject it. Let us have a really wide consultation on the role of the Archbishop of Canterbury and then we can discuss how we find who God is calling next time.

*Mr David Kemp (Canterbury):* I want to draw your attention to the original motion from Canterbury in 2015 which started this whole matter. It actually started with a plea from the Diocese of Canterbury for a change in the CNC process for appointing the Bishop of Dover.

Why you may ask? Well, let me give you a little bit of history on Canterbury's journey. My father was a parish priest in the diocese and when he died I found a small piece of paper that turned out to be a handwritten letter dated 1964 from Archbishop Ramsey, inviting my father to take up a post in the diocese. The Archbishop was clearly literally hands-on in running his diocese.

Some 25 years later, in 1990, I found myself as the new diocesan secretary at my first senior staff meeting. We sat at a long table with Archbishop Runcie at one end and the Bishop of Dover, Richard Third, at the other. The rest of us sat at the sides and it was like being a spectator at Wimbledon - fascinating, but we were never sure exactly when decisions were made.

When Archbishop Runcie and Bishop Third retired we asked that in future it should be clear that the Bishop of Dover should be the de facto bishop of the diocese and, with the generosity of Archbishop Carey, so it was. This allowed the diocese to become a place to which the Archbishop could return to relax and recreate and keep in touch with the grass roots on Sundays.

The Bishop of Dover was still the personal appointment of the Archbishop, no matter how much informal consultation and conversation took place before that decision. Over 30 years, three Bishops of Dover were appointed by Archbishops. Finally, Archbishop Welby decided that the present Bishop of Dover should be appointed using a process as close as possible to an official CNC procedure, but this was still a personal decision by the Archbishop. Future Archbishops might think differently.

The first part of this original motion is a plea for the final piece to be put into the jigsaw of making the Bishop of Dover as near as possible equivalent to a diocesan bishop. After a biblical delay of seven years we asked again for the appropriate changes to Standing Orders to be brought before the Synod for discussion and decision to make the CNC process applicable to the Bishop of Dover. Thank you.

*Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford): Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose* - the more things change the more they stay the same. I fear, Chair, it is so for the outcome of these proposals, which is why I strongly resist them for three reasons. First, because we need a primate for all England. We need an Archbishop whose primary purpose is to serve the people of England - all of us, not just the chosen few. Whether we like it or not, one significant reason why we have been so hamstrung on any progress on matters of sexuality and gender identity is because our Archbishop has always had to have an eye to the Lambeth Conference, and to the wider Anglican Communion. We have seen Scotland, and Wales, and Canada, and New Zealand, and Australia and Brazil and the United States all making major strides to serve all the people of God in their countries, while we in England remain stuck in a quagmire. It is now nearly five years since we voted out the Bishops' paper on same-sex relationships. Five years of waiting. Five years when couples who long to have their relationships recognised and blessed by their church, having their lives put on hold. And please note there are many in their latter years who cannot afford to wait.

Secondly, I believe that what we really need is not a rearrangement of deckchairs but a whole new boat for the Anglican Communion. We are frequently, and rightly, reminded of the sins of colonialism; the pain it has caused and the legacy it leaves. I fear that the Church of England has played a significant part in this story, often motivated by the very best of reasons of wanting to spread the good news of Christ, but often doing so in a way that totally disregarded local customs and beliefs. We have exported many concepts and ideas, not all good, as Prime Minister Theresa May herself acknowledged when she highlighted how our homophobic views and teaching had been exported.

The Communion of course needs a focus of unity but does it really need to always be the Archbishop of Canterbury? Surely it is this that needs reviewing by the Communion itself.

Thirdly, and I recognise the sensitivity of this point but it is a critical point which we rarely mention, dare I say that many in our Communion are not so much in communion with the Archbishop of Canterbury but rather with Her Majesty the Queen as Defender of the Faith

and Supreme Governor of the Church of England. Her Majesty is dearly loved across the world, and rightly so; however, sadly, she will not always be with us. Although, of course, I pray that her reign will be long and that we will all join to celebrate this, her Platinum Jubilee Year, things will undoubtedly change. The question is: will that change mean that things stay the same or not. *Qui vivra verra* - the future will tell.

*Revd Jake Madin (York):* I hope we will take note of this Report. I support this motion in its broad aims. I think it is wonderful that we belong to this family of church as we call the Anglican Communion. I nearly fell off my chair when I read that when the last Archbishop was appointed there was only one member representing the Communion and that was the Archbishop of Wales. That appears so unrepresentative of the majority of Anglicans who look to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

In the spirit of this debate today being partly about consultation I want to comment on a couple of the details of those proposals which perhaps need thinking about a bit more. The first one is to do with the numbers. I understand that the CNC has to have a two-thirds majority in order to elect an Archbishop. Under the new proposals there would be 17 voting members, I believe, which means that coming to a two-thirds majority is going to be very difficult. Seventeen does not break into thirds. I wonder if that could be re-thought. I do not think 17 is an ideal number for that group.

The second issue is where these representatives from the Communion will be chosen from. We are told in the proposal they will be based on geography, which looks good on paper but it is not actually a good way of representing where the majority of Anglicans in the world live. Most Anglicans in the world live in Africa, and there are far more of them than there are in Europe or in America, and so it seems a little skewed to only have one voting member from Africa, but also one from Europe and one from the Americas. I wonder again if there is a way of altering the proposals a little bit to take account of this.

*Revd Canon David Bruce Bryant-Scott (Diocese in Europe):* Ευχαριστώ, κύριε Πρόεδρε. Το όνομά μου είναι Bruce Bryant-Scott. Εκατόν δεκατρία. Επισκοπή στην Ευρώπη. For those of you who are not speaking Greek, thank you, Chair. My name is Bruce Bryant-Scott, 113, Diocese in Europe. I am happy to take note of this paper, but I disagree with it strongly. As you may tell from my accent, I am not from this country. I was born and raised in Canada, and up until three years ago I had served some 30 years in the Anglican Church of Canada. Now, much to my own amazement, I am here on the floor of the General Synod of the Church of England. I never would have expected that.

We have already heard about where this motion came from and it seems to be very unclear. The motion that came from the synod of the Diocese of Canterbury was primarily about the Bishop of Dover. There is perhaps a little bit of embarrassment that they were so prominent in the selection of the Archbishop of Canterbury, which unquestionably is the national position. I am not sure where the proposal for having more representation for the Anglican Communion came from. Indeed, if it were up to me, there would be no representation from the Anglican Communion at all.

Are we trying to solve a problem that does not really exist? I think if this proposal were put to my colleagues in the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada, on which I served for 15 years, it would be resoundingly defeated. That is because it would be seen as profoundly colonial and there would be a great suspicion that this was an attempt to reinscribe aspects of the Anglican Covenant by stealth. Yes, the Archbishop of Canterbury is *primus inter pares*, and, yes, there is no huge desire to change that, but that is because none of us in the wider Anglican Communion can come up with a good alternative. It is kind of like Canada, which had gained independence through the Statute of Westminster in 1931, being unable to amend its own constitution because none of the 10 provinces and federal Government could agree how to do it. It was not until 1981 that we finally came along with a Bill for the Westminster Parliament to try to come up with an amending formula, and various other things.

It seems weird to me as a non-UK citizen, although a member of this Church of England, to tell people in the Church of England that this really needs to be a decision made by English people. Since the Reformation, "The Bishop of Rome hath no jurisdiction in this realm". I wonder why we are considering inviting people such as my friend, the Primate of Canada, or the Archbishop of Abuja in Nigeria or the Archbishop of Cape Town or the Archbishop of Ghana, who I believe may be with us, to have any role in this.

*Mr Alan Smith (ex officio):* I also sit on the Archbishops' Council and when this came there it was one of the most exciting things I have seen because it is a part of the Anglican Church's healing. It is amazing to hear the stories from Canada. What was fascinating is when I got the job most of the congratulations came from Barbados. And there is no reason why that should be.

I was interested to hear of people going back to Archbishop Ramsey. I will go back to my great great-grandfather, who used to build Anglican churches but was born as a slave. When you look at Barbados today, he is one of five people who have a gravestone; five people out of 387,000 people brought out of Africa and taken to Barbados. He has a gravestone because, you know what, the Anglican Church back then did not bury people of African descent.

Even if we go back to Lord Boateng's talk this week, he talked about a society for the propagation of the Gospel. The Lord has a sense of humour. I actually grew up on that piece of land. My father was a headmaster there. If we unpick it, that was a remarkable thing because that was the Anglican Church owning a plantation where people were pieces of property where they used to live for about three years. You know what is the funny thing about that: when we set it up as an Anglican church we called it "an experiment in Anglican altruism on a Barbadian plantation".

Here we are today and we are talking about giving 25% of the vote to 75% of our community, and having a general and genuine debate about that. We have spent the last couple of days talking about racism and racial justice. We have talked about the

persecuted church. We have to have this debate or else we are not a church. Even if we think about it, that is what we are talking about.

When I was first asked to come on the Commission someone said, “Are you an Anglican?” I said, “Yeah”. They said, “Are you Church of England?” I did not realise I had to be washed in the blood of Jesus again. That is what this is about. Are we brothers and sisters in a global community? At the end of the day all we are talking about is whether we will give 25% of the vote to 75% of the people.

*Canon Dr Jamie Harrison (Durham):* Just a process point. I am sorry to bring up Standing Order 105(7). This is in relation to if you did not take note or move to next business, “no further discussion of the report is in order during the lifetime of that Synod [five years]”, and “the business of the Synod is to proceed as though the report had not been brought before the Synod”.

We could bring a different report but that would take significant work and time, I think. Even if we are not happy with it, and I can quite hear why people are not, it may still be sensible to take note and go back and sort it out through the legislative process under the Standing Orders process. I note for the Synod that there is a risk in not taking note, but, equally, you are perfectly free not to take note.

*The Chair:* After the next two speakers, I will be testing the mind of Synod about closing this debate.

*Miss Jane Patterson (Sheffield):* Now is a good time to consider this issue because there is no vacancy. I declare an interest: I was elected in 2012 and again in 2017 to serve on the CNC to represent the national Church. How might we apply some of the principles of Professor O'Donovan's review “Discerning in Obedience” here? He said that no one of us can discern the end from the beginning.

I support the principle of a rethink of the composition of the Canterbury CNC, but suggest there is much work to be done on the specific details. At each CNC the chair asks members if the needs of both national Church and the particular diocese have been considered. For the See of Canterbury that question could be modified to include the needs of the Anglican Communion also.

A key question also revolves the degree of both similarity and difference between the See of Canterbury and other English sees. It might be appropriate for equal representation of diocese, national Church and the Communion. I am not a fan of expanding committees, but this simple, humble and bold proposal would send a signal to the worldwide Anglican Church that we mean action. There is, of course, plenty of detail to prayerfully consider, debate and agree.

In summary, let us take note, respond to the consultation and begin the conversation in detail, so that under our sovereign God, and to his glory, future Archbishops of Canterbury

are chosen in a manner that reflects the needs of the Church in Kent, in England and across the world at that time.

*Mr Martin Sewell (Rochester):* Point of order. I come to this without any agenda and trying to learn from what happened earlier in our Synod. We have heard that if we do not pass this it would lapse and that would be problematic. What would happen if we adjourned this? Would we still be able to discuss it without having turned it down?

*The Chair:* I will just talk to somebody next to me.

*Mr Martin Sewell (Rochester):* I am trying to be helpful.

*The Chair:* If there is a motion for adjournment, I am told it could be adjourned until the next meeting of the Synod, but that would depend obviously on the work of the Business Committee as well.

*Mr Martin Sewell (Rochester):* Hopefully it would be prioritised.

*The Chair:* You may say that. Gavin Drake, who is on the Zoom platform, and then I will be looking to close this debate.

*Mr Gavin Drake (Southwell & Nottingham):* For those playing Synod bingo I had not intended to speak in this debate. I do so because in my day job I am the Communications Director for the Anglican Communion. I will be abstaining in this vote. As a matter of principle, I will not be voting on anything that directly affects the Anglican Communion, as I believe there is a conflict, but I do want to encourage others to vote for this, and to do so enthusiastically.

I just want to correct some of the misunderstandings of the Anglican Communion which have come out of the debate, not just in this chamber but elsewhere since these proposals were outlined and the consultation launched. I want to do that with three stories. We recently lost the Arch, Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu. He told the story of back in 1984, at the height of the troubles in South Africa, when he was threatened with death. It was understood that the South African authorities at the time wanted to assassinate him, and there were a few very high-profile funerals at which it was thought he may not survive. The then Archbishop of Canterbury asked the then Bishop of Lichfield, the great Bishop Keith Sutton, to travel to South Africa to stand alongside Desmond Tutu as the personal representative of the Archbishop of Canterbury. It was televised around the world. It was televised not because it was another Anglican Bishop. It was televised because he was the personal representative of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Desmond Tutu said, "I am small, but when I stood next to Keith Sutton I was tall because I was standing alongside the entire Anglican Communion".

We may not like the colonial past of our history, but it is a matter of fact that England carries with it a power that other areas do not, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, whoever

it is, in his travels (or later on, her travels) carries weight and kudos that other bishops do not. A former Bishop of Kuching on the north-west corner of Borneo, Bolly Lapok, told me to stop apologising and that he wished the Church of England would stop apologising for colonialism. He said, “If it wasn’t for colonialism, we’d still be head hunters”. There are some good things about colonialism as well as bad things.

Some concern has been expressed about the Communion having different views on sexuality and different views on women in the Episcopate and so on. We are talking about the Bishop of Dover. The present Bishop of Dover before she was a bishop presided at a Holy Communion service at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross in Lusaka.

*The Chair:* Thank you, Gavin. Sorry about that. Synod, I am now going to test your mind as to whether we have had a good debate on this motion.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* That is clearly carried. I therefore invite the Bishop of Chester to respond to the debate. Bishop, you have up to five minutes to do so.

*The Bishop of Chester (Rt Revd Mark Tanner):* Thank you, Synod. I have been profoundly moved by that debate, and I want to assure you that your voice has been heard. I have been particularly touched by the reminder that we here in England are prayed for around the Communion, and I suspect the Archbishop has been touched by that as well. I have also been touched by the number of languages used - Māori, French, Latin, Greek. As we have discussed the *primus inter pares*, I was going to make a joke earlier about whether the Archbishop could be female referring to the *prima inter pares* but I thought nobody likes a smart aleck who is speaking Latin, so I did not.

Bishop Hallinan reminds us of the danger of “othering” others. Luke Miller talked about episcopal Catholicism, which is such a vital feature of our Communion. Mae, thank you for your profoundly moving maiden speech. With respect, I do disagree with you because I think that listening is important, but we need to heed your warnings because we do not want to have the opposite effect from the one that we are setting out for.

Christina, I have to say we already have an interview panel set up for the Archbishop of Canterbury, not currently with people in it, but of course the process is already there. We have no choice about that. The question is who is part of it.

David, thank you for your reminder of what has gone on in Canterbury. Jayne, I join with you in celebrating Her Majesty’s Platinum Jubilee and celebrating both of the Archbishops we have serving England.

Jake, thank you for expressing your shock, which I suspect speaks for many, on the unrepresentative nature of the Canterbury CNC.



Bruce, my fellow Canuck (even though I do not speak with the accent), I loved your take: “I’m happy to take note but I disagree strongly”. Synod, if you do disagree strongly, this is the voice from Canada you should hear. Take note and then contribute to the debate, that is what this is for, but take note of this Report in order that we do not “other” or silence others, and that their voice might be heard.

Alan, I think your wording that this is part of the Anglican Church’s healing is profound. Jamie, thank you for your warning about what happens if we do not take note today. Jane, I agree with you that this is a good time to consider the issues. Gavin, thank you for your words from around the Communion.

Synod, whichever way you vote in a few minutes, in three hours’ time I shall go out for dinner with my daughter. She is a beautiful lady in her early 20s. It is interesting parenting people in their 20s. It is kind of easy to do when they are far away because you send them texts and tell them how much you love them and you agree to meet up for special events, but on those occasions when we are all together, we suddenly find we all like doing different things but we want to do some things together. What do we do? Well, the Tanner family has a secret. We try to listen to each other, to take note of the wishes of the others in order that we might be family together as we all have our different grown-up interests and concerns.

Friends, it is easy to do communion at a distance, to send one another texts, or agree on special events, but we are called to be a community of adults (and indeed children but to speak like adults) following Christ; to learn what it is to listen, to respect, to honour, and that is what we will do with this consultation if you allow it to continue, Synod, by taking note today.

I commend this to you with all my heart and ask that you take note of this Report in order that consultation might happen and that it might be brought back to you at some future Synod.

*Revd Mae Christie (Southwark):* Point of order. With great thanks to my colleague Martin Sewell - and I do not know how to do this but I am going to try - I would like to move that we adjourn this motion.

*The Chair:* Sorry, Mae, we closed the debate so you cannot now adjourn it. We go to a decision now, but thank you. It is always worth trying, Synod.

*Revd Canon Dr Judith Maltby (Universities & TElS):* Point of order. Could I call for a vote by Houses, please?

*The Chair:* I need to see 25 people indicating that they would like to have a vote by Houses. That is clearly over 25. We are now going to move to a vote on Item 19 “that the Synod do take note of this Report”, and this will be a counted vote by Houses.

The vote on Item 19 : In the House of Bishops, those in favour 26, against none, with one recorded abstention. In the House of Clergy, 102 in favour, 27 against, with 13 recorded abstentions. And in the House of Laity, 112 in favour, 43 against, with 12 recorded abstentions. The motion was carried in all three Houses.

*The Chair:* Thank you, Synod. We now move to the next item of business.

THE CHAIR *Miss Debbie Buggs (London)* took the Chair at 4.12 pm.

## **ITEM 20 FAREWELLS**

*The Chair:* We are now at Item 20, the Farewells. I call on the Archbishop of Canterbury, please.

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby):* Today we are saying farewell to Tim Dakin, who retired as Bishop of Winchester on 7 February.

It is well known that the past years have not been easy and have been filled with much pain and distress, for the diocese, and for Tim and Sally. There have been developments in the diocese as it has addressed the challenges of church growth and social engagement in our secular context. Today it is therefore right that we say farewell to Tim and thank him for his contribution to mission and ministry in the Church of England and the Anglican Communion over very many years.

Wherever Tim has served he has been clear about focusing on what he believed were the priorities and aiming to respond to what he understood God was calling him to do. Tim is someone who has loved God's worldwide Church and has always drawn our attention to world Christianity and reminded us that the Church is a global community.

Prior to being Bishop of Winchester, Tim led CMS and was a member of the Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on Mission and Evangelism and the Church of England's Board of Mission and Public Affairs and its Partnership for World Mission. Before that he did important work with the Church Army as Principal of Carlile College, Kenya, where he was also a member of the Provincial Synod and the Provincial Board of Theological Education.

As well as being Bishop of Winchester, Tim also contributed extensively in the further and higher education world, and was part of the team that put together the strategy on education for the Church of England. He was a part of the group of Bishops who worked on *Living in Love and Faith*. He has been a member of the Faith and Order Commission and a significant contributor to much of the thinking on that body, especially on missional ecclesiology. As an episcopal member of the Advisory Council for Religious

Communities, Tim also supported the work on the new Canons which gave renewed recognition to the place of religious communities in the life of the Church.

Sally has supported Tim throughout his ministry and has also exercised ministry as a priest herself. In Winchester she was spirituality adviser, enabling others in their own spirituality and supporting the Spiritual Directors Network.

And so we pray for Tim and Sally as they now settle into life in Plymouth. This last season has been painful for Tim, for Sally, for many others, but, as we say farewell, I am reminded of God's promise in Lamentations 3:22-23 that, "The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness".

Synod will, I know, want to express our thanks to Tim and to pray for Tim and Sally as they move to a new morning in their discipleship, in the knowledge that our faithful God calls each of us, calls Tim, calls Sally, into the future that God has for us.

*The Chair.* I now invite the Archbishop of York to speak.

*The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell):* It is my sad but joyful honour to, on your behalf, say farewell to our dear brother in Christ, Paul, Bishop of Liverpool. And Kate, it is good to see you there with him and possibly other members of his family. You are very, very welcome.

Some years ago when Bishop Paul was the Church of England's national officer for evangelism, I attended a talk he was giving on the subject of how we might share our faith with those outside the Christian community. These were still the days of overhead projectors, and the first slide Paul produced was a cartoon. A slightly timid looking man was opening his front door and looking out to see who it was who had knocked. On the doorstep are two ducks. They are addressing the man. Underneath the caption read, "Excuse us for bothering you this evening, sir, but have you ever thought about becoming a duck?"

It was a wonderful way of illustrating the gap, or we might even say the gulf, between those of us who are embedded in the Christian culture and those who are not, and just how absurdly and extravagantly weird it feels to be invited from one culture and one set of values into another. But this cartoon which I have always remembered, for me, also expresses all that is good and arresting and challenging - and often provocatively uncomfortable - about the witness and the joyful ministry of the "just about to retire" Bishop of Liverpool Paul Bayes.

Paul is passionate to share the Gospel with those who do not know it; passionate for the Church to understand just how it feels to not know and understand Christian language and Christian culture, and Paul has a great heart for those who are excluded,

marginalised and left behind by the Church where our ways not only seem alien, but sometimes deliberately excluding.

Throughout his ministry, Paul has been a champion for the Gospel - and I have no idea what is showing on the screen behind me - a champion for the rights and dignity of those who sometimes find themselves left outside.

In particular, it is no secret that Paul has been a great advocate for championing LGBTI+ voices. We have seen that and received that ministry here on the floor of Synod, in the House of Bishops, in the Diocese of Liverpool and in the public square.

Paul, you know that this has not always made you popular, yet that has never deterred you from speaking with passion, conviction and determination, often at personal cost. Always, your passion is shot through with a gentleness of spirit and with kindness, for we know that you care for every part of the Church and long for our unity as well as our greater inclusion.

Your desire to reach out across traditions and to work for unity and inclusion is wonderfully demonstrated here this afternoon by our friends from the Anglican Communion (in the balcony) who are representing what is known as the “Triangle of Hope” initiative between the Diocese of Liverpool, the Diocese of Kumasi in Ghana and the Diocese of Virginia in the USA.

This initiative remembers the horrors and treatment of slaves, in each of the dioceses, viewing this period with great pain and penitence before God, whilst standing together to fight the blight of modern slavery and human trafficking as we have discussed in this Synod. Synod, would you join me in welcoming the delegation from the Diocese of Virginia and the delegation from the Diocese of Kumasi. Sisters and brothers, if you had been here for the last half hour we could have used a bit of your wisdom on our last debate, but, there we are, it is too late now. Particularly, we welcome Bishop Oscar Amoah.

Like me, Paul was ordained young, aged 25. He served his curacy in Newcastle Diocese, then went to be ecumenical university chaplain here in London. He moved to High Wycombe, once the chair-making capital of the world, I am told. During his time in High Wycombe, rather than simply rearrange the chairs, Paul got stuck in to the challenges and opportunities of multi-parish benefice ministry. From there, he went to Winchester, before, as I have said, becoming the national mission and evangelism adviser. It was in this role that Paul was instrumental in focusing the Church’s attention on evangelism in new ways and staff in the NCIs still remember Paul with great affection, not least him dressing up as Father Christmas each year, although I do not think we have a photo of that.

On becoming Bishop of Hertford in St Albans Diocese, colleagues speak very warmly of your pastoral ministry as well as your ministry as a communicator. Your communication

skills have recently, but only very briefly, been put to use in the House of Lords, where it must be some record for the shortest tenure of a Bishop for some time.

One of your colleagues has written this about you, Paul, and I think we need to hear these words. “Bishop Paul has always shared his episcopae ... We are always colleagues and friends. He has enabled us to walk alongside him, encouraging answers and solutions ... We work with him, not for him”.

Paul, in your inaugural sermon in Liverpool Cathedral in 2014, you spoke about the call of the Gospel using the image of not a chair but a table: a table that is set where there is a place for everyone. This caught the imagination of the diocese and is still talked about today. Everyone is welcome. Everyone has a place. In fact, you were so determined to include everyone, and especially the underdog and the excluded, that when as Bishop of Liverpool you were asked the dreaded question, which football team do you support, are you “red” or “blue”, you replied, “Ormskirk West End!”

So as this particular chapter ends, we wish you and Kate and your family, who have given you such support in ministry, a really happy retirement.

I am not going to make any comment on the “stonking” beard (a word you often used) which until recently was on display and you will have seen in some of the photos, but, Paul, I hope you know the high regard with which you are held by the Church you have served so well.

We thank you for giving the best years of your life in the service of the Gospel and, especially in these latter years, to the fantastic Diocese of Liverpool. Thank you for your friendship, your wisdom, your kindness; for your prophetic voice in the life of our Church. You move on now with our richest blessing and our heartfelt thanks.

*The Chair.* That concludes Item 20. We now move to the prorogation.

## **ITEM 21**

### **PROROGATION**

*The Archbishop of Canterbury prorogued the Synod and dismissed it with a blessing.*