

## JULY 2024 GROUP OF SESSIONS

### Report of the General Synod Business Committee and Guide to the Group of Sessions

#### Key points for the July Group of Sessions.

- Synod will meet from 2.30pm on Friday 5 July and end no later than 1.40pm on Tuesday 9 July in the University of York.
- Questions will be taken in two groups; on Friday from 5.45pm to 7:00pm and on Saturday morning.
- To allow sufficient time, the Business Committee has decided that the **deadline for receipt of questions will be 12:00 noon on Tuesday 25 June**. However, it is always helpful if members submit questions well ahead of the deadline.
- The Business Committee has allocated time for four Diocesan Synod Motions (DSMs) and one Private Members' Motions (PMM) on this agenda. In addition, a further DSM is on the agenda as contingency business.
- The Business Committee has shortened the envelope for the February 2025 group of sessions and would request that members hold from Monday 10 February until Friday 14 February. The actual dates will be agreed when the full extent of business becomes apparent.
- There are currently no plans for Synod to meet in November 2024, but as always members are advised to keep the dates free until formal confirmation.

#### Introduction:

1. The Business Committee is an elected committee of the General Synod. It is charged under Standing Order 4 with settling the agenda for each group of sessions and determining the order in which business is to be taken.
2. The Business Committee decides on the scheduling of business, it does not approve the content of an item and takes no view on the merit of any item.
3. Subject to Standing Order 1, it is also responsible for all matters relating to the sessional arrangements of the Synod (Standing Order 125). This report sets out the business and practicalities for the July 2024 group of sessions and gives an overview of the work of the Committee since its last report to Synod in February 2024.

#### Settling the Agenda for the July 2024 group of sessions

4. When settling the agenda, the Business Committee strives to ensure that there is a balance of subjects, and a mix between items brought by dioceses through Diocesan Synod Motions or individual members through Private Members' Motions and those put forward by the House of Bishops, the Archbishops' Council, its sub-committees or other National Church Institutions (NCIs). It also aims to ensure that there is adequate time available for legislative business and

standing items such as questions and farewells.

5. At this group of sessions, there is a significant number of legislative items. There are nine items of legislative business; this includes one Measure for First Consideration (*National Church Governance Measure*), two Measures for Revision Stage only (*Clergy Conduct Measure and Abuse (Redress) Measure*), two Measures for Revision Stage, Final Drafting and Final Approval (*Chancel Repair (Church Commissioners' Liability) Measure and Church Funds Investment Measure*), and three for Approval (*Legal Officers (Annual Fees) Order 2024, Ecclesiastical Judges, Legal Officers and Others (Fees) Order 2024, Safeguarding Learning and Development Framework and Safeguarding (Clergy Risk Assessment) Regulations*). Further details can be found below.
6. There will be an opportunity for Synod to engage further with Living in Love and Faith. There will be a debate related to an update following the independent reports on different aspects of safeguarding independence.
7. As is usual for July groups of sessions, the 2025 Archbishops' Council Budget and proposals for Apportionment has been allocated time on the agenda and there will be an opportunity for members to engage with the work of the Archbishops' Council and Church Commissioners through a presentation on their Annual Report.
8. Feedback from members indicated that they valued the time allocated to Diocesan Synod Motions and Private Members' Motions at the February 2024 group of sessions, so the Business Committee has allocated time on the agenda to four Diocesan Synod motions and one Private Members' Motion.
9. Drawing on the PMM moved by Sam Wilson in July 2023, members will be invited to consider how Synod can engage with young people and hear their views. This has been scheduled around Tuesday lunchtime to enable some young people to be present at Synod. Synod will also be given a presentation by some young Finnish confirmands on Friday as part of the address from the Ecumenical Guest.
10. There will be an address by an Anglican Communion guest.
11. Building trust within the Church continues to be a focus for Synod and members will be invited to take note of a Report from the Trust Project under the Transforming Effectiveness Programme.

### **Practicalities for the July group of sessions**

12. The group of sessions is being held at the University of York, and accommodation and catering on campus is arranged for all members by the Synod Support Team. The meetings will be held in the Central Hall. Details of how to find your accommodation, dining room and map of the campus will be sent to you by email from Synod Support. Members who have requested a car parking hanger will be able to collect this at the Information Desk.
13. As with previous groups of sessions, we will be providing basic Zoom access to the meeting to those unable to attend in person due to illness or other reasons. The Synod Support Team will contact members regarding this, and will arrange

access to the Zoom call and voting platform. Please ensure you let Synod Support know if you are joining a session by Zoom.

### Evening Sessions

14. In view of the amount of business we have the Business Committee has decided to schedule two evening sessions in July on Sunday and Monday evenings. These sessions have been arranged to allow members to eat in their allocated dining rooms before returning to the Central Hall when business reconvenes.

### Worship

15. As this is a body of the Church of England, worship is integral to the Synod meetings. Each session starts and concludes with worship. Holy Communion is celebrated in the Berrick Saul Building every day except Sunday when members are invited to attend Holy Communion in York Minister that morning. Transport is available for members to travel to the Minister on Sunday morning at a small cost. Tickets are available from the Information Desk in the foyer in the Central Hall during Synod.
16. Worship is arranged on behalf of Synod by the Synod Chaplain, the Revd Dylan Turner. If you have any comments or suggestions on worship, he can be contacted at [synodchaplain@churchofengland.org](mailto:synodchaplain@churchofengland.org).
17. Pastoral support will be available during this group of sessions and further information will be available in the Worship Notice Paper.

### Agenda items for the July group of sessions

18. The following sets out a brief summary of each of the papers being presented at the July group of sessions. It is hoped that members will find this useful, although the Business Committee strongly recommends that all papers be read in full.
  - [Agenda \(GS 2352\)](#): This is the key paper for the group of sessions as it sets out the business for the meeting. This should be read alongside the Order Papers which will be published about an hour before each session starts on the Synod App and website (and available in hard copy in the Central Hall). Please note that the agenda is subject to change during the group of sessions if business necessitates; the Chair of the Business Committee will explain any proposed changes to Synod.
  - [Report of the Business Committee \(GS 2353\)](#): This report will be discussed as one of the first items on the agenda. Members will have the opportunity to comment on the agenda or on the content of the Report during the take note debate.
  - [Wisdom of Trust: Building and Sustaining Trust in the Church of England \(GS 2354\)](#): This work seeks to offer the Church a wisdom of trust, holding a mirror up so all can understand the culture of mistrust that is hampering our mission, coordination and flourishing. The work and culture of General Synod is a

persistent theme in the research findings. This is a work in progress into which the Synod's input will be highly valuable and enable the creation of a final report and recommendations that could come to the next Group of Sessions.

- [Church Funds Investment Measure \(GS 2347 and GS 2347X1\)](#): This Measure enables the trustees of the CBF investment funds (CCLA) to make a scheme of arrangement under which the existing funds that are covered by the Church Funds Investment Measure 1958 can be transferred to a Charity Authorised Investment Fund. The result would be that the funds in question became regulated by the Charity Commission and the Financial Conduct Authority, providing greater assurance to investors. It received First Consideration at the February 2024 group of sessions and there were no submissions to the Revision Committee.
- [Chancel Repair \(Church Commissioners' Liability\) Measure \(GS 2343, GS 2343Y and GS 2343X1\)](#): This Measure is a small discrete piece of work and will detach the Church Commissioners' land-based chancel repair liability from the relevant land and turn it into a free-standing statutory liability. It received First Consideration at the February 2024 group of sessions. There was one submission to the Revision Committee which was out of scope of the Measure.
- [64<sup>th</sup> Report of the Standing Orders Committee \(GS 2355\)](#): There are several proposed amendments to the Standing Orders related to the Crown Nominations Commission for consideration, in addition to amendments to other Standing Orders which will be deemed to be approved unless five members ask for them to be debated.
- [Archbishops' Council Budget 2025 and Proposals for Apportionment 2025 \(GS 2356\)](#): This is a regular item for the July group of sessions, as under its Standing Orders, General Synod must be invited to approve the Archbishops' Council's annual budget and its proposals for the diocesan apportionment. Proposals for the budget and apportionment must be sent to General Synod members by 30 June of the preceding year.
- [Clergy Conduct Measure \(GS 2311A, GS 2311Y and GS 2311X1\)](#): This legislation will set out a new statutory framework and establish the jurisdiction for dealing with cases relating to clergy conduct. The draft Measure provides for the making of Rules setting out the detailed procedures that are to apply to the handling of complaints. The draft Measure received First Consideration at the July 2023 group of sessions and a number of submissions were received by the Revision Committee.
- [Rest Periods for Office Holders \(GS 2357A and GS 2357B\)](#): This is a DSM from Winchester looking to introduce an entitlement to 36 hours of rest within any period of seven days, including an uninterrupted rest period of not less than 24 hours.

- [Living in Love and Faith \(GS 2358\)](#): There will be both a presentation with questions and a debate on work related to LLF. This item will update Synod on progress, highlight areas of agreement and bring forward suggested next steps.
- [Human Dignity of Disabled Children \(GS 2359A and GS 2359B\)](#): This is a DSM from Liverpool encouraging better support for disabled children and reflects the debate which was taking place in the last Parliament on the Criminal Justice Bill which had a similar amendment put forward.
- [National Church Governance Measure \(GS 2360\)](#): This Measure will give effect to the proposals from the Governance Review Group which have been debated by the Synod at recent groups of sessions.
- [Inquiry into Allegations of Abuse within the Soul Survivor Network \(GS 2361A and GS 2361B\)](#): This is a PMM from the Revd Robert Thompson seeking an independent inquiry by King's Counsel into the allegations relating to Soul Survivor.
- [Archbishops' Council Annual Report \(GS 2362\) and Annual Report of the Church Commissioners \(GS 2363\)](#): This is an opportunity for members to engage with the work of the Archbishops' Council and Church Commissioners through a presentation with questions.
- [Safeguarding Independence Update \(GS 2364\)](#): This is an opportunity for Synod to engage with the work of the Response Group which was set up following the February 2024 group of sessions and to hear about future structures and priorities for Church safeguarding before further consideration at the February 2025 group of sessions.
- [Foodbanks and Inadequacies in Social Security \(GS 2351A and GS 2351B\)](#): This is a DSM from Sheffield which addresses the issue of increased use of food banks and the inadequacy of social security provision.
- [Abuse \(Redress\) Measure \(GS 2325A, GS 2325Y and GS 2325X1\)](#): This Measure will enable there to be a consistent approach across the Church to redress following abuse. It received First Consideration at the November 2023 group of sessions. The draft Measure provides for the making of Rules as to how redress is to be sought and provided.
- [Day of Prayer and Action for the Persecuted Church \(GS 2366A and GS 2366B\)](#): This is a DSM from London which builds on the decision taken at the February 2022 group of sessions encouraging the creation of a national day of prayer for the persecuted Church around the world.
- [Hearing and Responding to the Voice of Young People \(GS 2367\)](#): This is an opportunity for Synod to engage with young people and to consider how to engage with children and young people in a systematic way, ensuring that the voice of young people feeds into the work of Synod. It builds on the Private Members' Motion from July 2023.

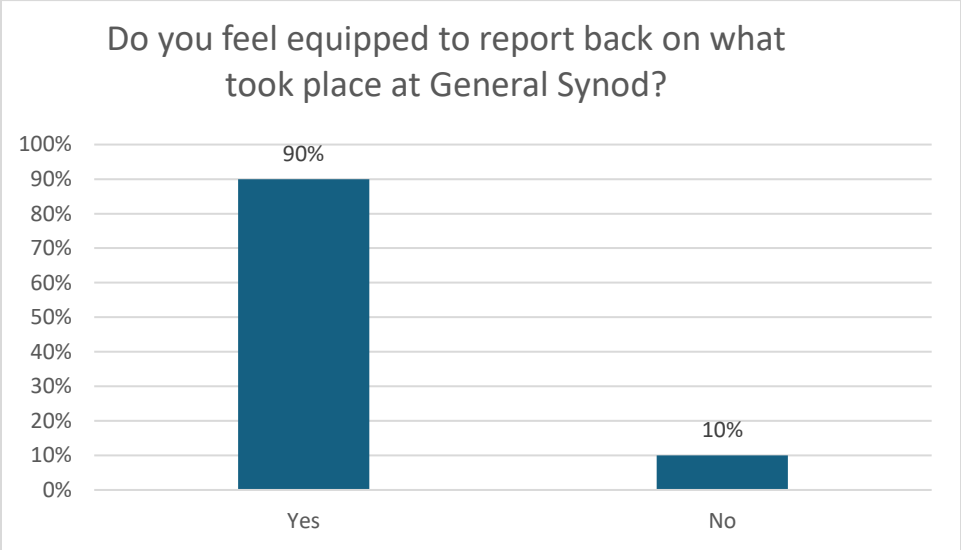
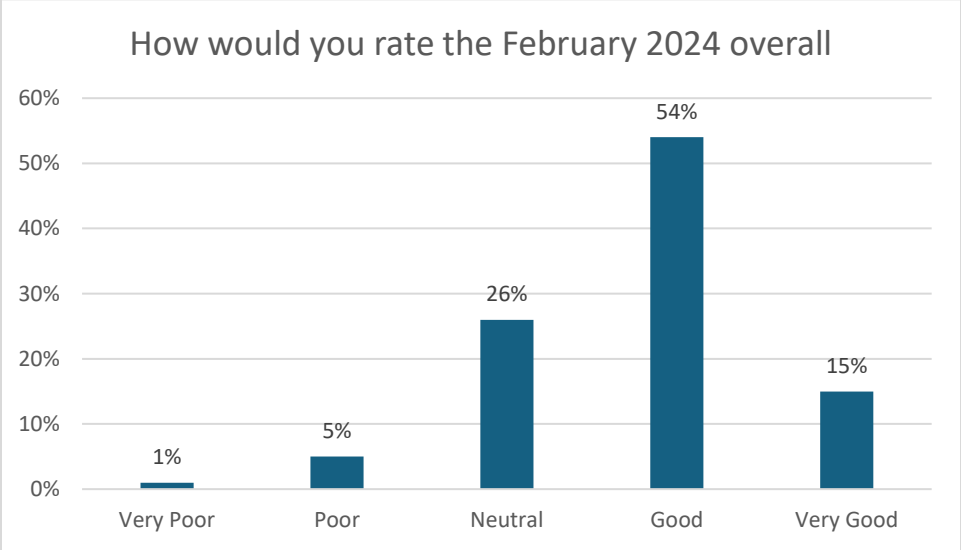
## Deemed and Contingency Business

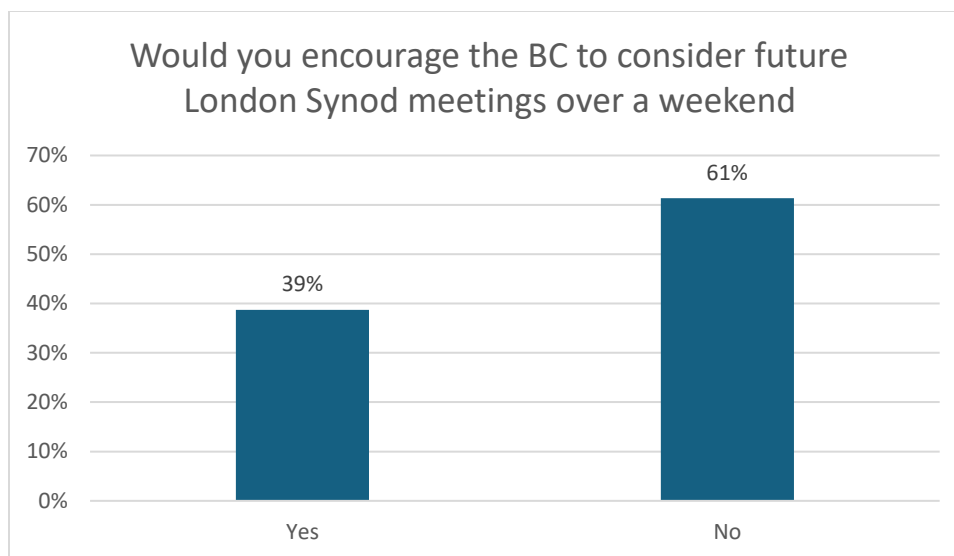
19. There are five items of deemed business (including the Standing Orders referred to above):
- [Legal Officers \(Annual Fees\) Order 2024 \(GS 2367\) and Ecclesiastical Judges, Legal Officers and Others \(Fees\) Order 2024 \(GS 2368\)](#). These are the usual annual fees orders providing for the annual retainers paid to diocesan registrars and for court fees in the ecclesiastical courts.
  - [Safeguarding \(Clergy Risk Assessment\) Regulations \(GS 2369\)](#): These regulations relate to safeguarding risk assessments of clergy under Canon C 30.
  - [Safeguarding Code of Practice Learning and Development Framework \(GS 2370\)](#): This is code of practice sets out the safeguarding Learning and Development Framework and is presented under Section 5A of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016.
  - [Archbishops' Council Audit Committee Annual Report \(GS Misc 1367\)](#): This is the annual report into the work of the Audit Committee of the Archbishops' Council.
20. There is one item of contingency business and this will only be debated if changes to the agenda during the group of sessions means time is available:
- [Add Confirmation Numbers to Statistics for Mission \(GS 2371A and GS 2371B\)](#): This is a DSM from Canterbury seeking to include confirmation numbers on the annual Statistics for Mission online return.

## Work of the Committee

21. The Business Committee has met twice since the February 2023 group of sessions.
22. The post-Synod survey completed by members provided a number of reflections for the Committee to consider and the Business Committee is grateful to everyone who responded. The Business Committee wanted to share some overall results from the feedback as well as the specific suggestions that will be taken forward.
23. There were 190 members that responded to the survey, 20% of the House of Bishops, 39% of the House of Clergy, 47% of the House of Laity and 21% of non-voting members.
24. The Business Committee wanted to share some general responses and has included graphs that demonstrate the overall rating for the February 2024 and how equipped members feel to feed back to their dioceses and parishes on what took place at the February group of sessions.
25. As this was the first weekend Synod in London, the Business Committee also wanted to share the feedback from members on this. A majority of members did not find the weekend helpful (35% found it helpful and 65% did not find it helpful), and a majority (61% of those responding) would prefer not to hold future London groups of sessions over a weekend. However, the Business

Committee would welcome further reflections on this.  
26. The Business Committee will continue to monitor these specific results to measure any changes over time.





27. The Committee has taken forward a number of specific suggestions from Synod members' feedback after the February 2024 group of sessions, including the following:

- The inclusion of more DSMs and PMMS was welcomed, and the Business Committee will take this into account when planning future groups of sessions
- Those on Zoom are not always aware when a counted vote is called, so Synod staff will message those on Zoom to say that the bell has been rung.

28. As usual, the comments related to chairing will be shared with the Synod panel of Chairs.

29. The Business Committee would welcome feedback from members on any aspect of Synod. This can be done formally through the post-Synod feedback questionnaire or more informally by email to [synod@churchofengland.org](mailto:synod@churchofengland.org).

### Accessibility

30. The Business Committee's statement on Accessibility ([GS Misc 1201](#)) was last reviewed in December 2020 but the Committee regularly engages with the Accessible Synod Group to bring improvements to each group of sessions. Feedback from members on how to improve this would be welcomed.

### Synod App

31. Members are encouraged to download the Synod App. This gives you access to all papers, supporting documents and the ability to submit requests to speak and amendments. If you have any issues accessing this, the Synod Support team are always happy to advise.



**Record of Business Done**

32. The transcript from the February 2024 group of sessions is available on the Synod website [here](#).

**Business Committee Policies**

33. The Business Committee has a number of policies covering various aspects of Synod's activities which are reviewed regularly and updated as necessary. These and other guidance may be viewed on the Members' [resources section](#) on the Church of England website.
34. The [Guide to the General Synod](#) and the [Synod Members' Survival Guide](#) may be especially helpful as members prepare for the group of sessions.
35. Synod members are encouraged to be proactive in publicising the work of Synod, and social media is a great platform for this. The hashtag used on X (previously Twitter) is #Synod. There are several social media channels which members have used in the past. However, members are reminded of the importance of being respectful to each other and that social media comments are seen by many both within and outside the Church.
36. Synod business is recorded and livestreamed on the Church of England YouTube channel, and occasionally broadcast on the BBC Parliament Channel as well. Members should consider this when participating in the chamber.

On behalf of the Business Committee,  
Canon Robert Hammond, Chair  
June 2024

## **Membership of the Business Committee June 2024**

### **Chair (elected by General Synod)**

Canon Robert Hammond

### **Elected by the House of Bishops**

The Rt Revd Martin Gorick, Bishop of Dudley

### **Elected by the House of Clergy**

Fr Paul Cartwright (Vice-Chair)

The Ven Mark Ireland

The Revd Jody Stowell

### **Elected by the House of Laity**

Mr Clive Scowen

Mrs Michelle Obende

Mr Nic Tall

### **Appointed by the Archbishops' Council**

Canon Alison Coulter

The Revd Charlotte Cook

The Secretary to the Committee is the Clerk to the Synod, Jenny Jacobs.

## **Forecast of future General Synod business**

This contains potential items that could be taken at the February 2025 group of sessions, it is not an exhaustive list as other items may be added and does not guarantee that an item will be scheduled.

The envelope for the February 2025 group of sessions is Monday 10 to Friday 14 Feb 2025.

### **Business that needs legislation**

- Clergy Conduct Measure – Final Drafting, Final Approval
- Church of England National Services Measure – Revision Stage
- Safeguarding Redress Measure – Final Drafting, Final Approval
- Mission and Pastoral Measure – First Consideration
- Election Rules and Church Representation Rules – For Approval

### **Non-legislative business**

- A Wisdom of Trust Final Report
- Living in Love and Faith
- Safeguarding
- Sports and Wellbeing Ministry
- Appointment of AC members
- Synod Code of Conduct
- Stipends and Clergy Pensions
- Route map to Net Zero Carbon by 2030: update on progress