



**GENERAL MEETING OF THE  
HEREFORD DIOCESAN BOARD OF FINANCE**

and

**GENERAL MEETING OF THE  
HEREFORD DIOCESAN SYNOD**

**Proclaiming Christ – Growing Disciples**

**Shared Priorities**

- Spiritual & Numerical Growth
- Contributing to the Common Good
- Reimagining Ministry, Prayer & Worship

**Minutes of Meeting Saturday 5 March 2016**

Constituency	Total	Vacant	Attended	Apologies	No Indication	% Attendance*
House of Bishops	2	0	2	0	0	100%
House of Clergy	59	17	27	6	9	64%
House of Laity	66	10	34	13	9	61%
Lay Co-Chairs	13	2	9	1	1	82%
Rural Deans	13	0	8	4	1	62%
Clergy Co-opted	5	4	0	0	1	0%
Lay Co-opted	5	5	0	0	0	All Vacant
Clergy Ex Officio	5	0	2	0	3	40%
Lay Ex Officio	7	0	3	0	4	43%
Bishop's Nominees	10	8	0	0	2	0%
Totals	185	46	85	24	30	61%
Total Places Filled	139	Quorum =	46			* = of filled places

**Opening Worship**

Led by Abbeydore Deanery.

**ITEM 1 – Apologies**

1.1 24 members as indicated above.

**ITEM 2 – Minutes of the Previous Meetings (15 Oct 15)**

2.1 Approved with the following amendment:-  
Amend paragraph 6.1 such that reference to “Article 41(2)” shall read “Article 45(2)”.

**ITEM 3 – Matters Arising**

3.1 None

**ITEM 4 – Presidential Address**

4.1 Text of the address to Synod by Bishop Richard may be found at Annex A.

## ITEM 5 – Christian Aid

- 5.1 Jill Stone, Regional Coordinator for Christian Aid, addressed Synod regarding Christian Aid Week (15 – 21 May 2016)

## ITEM 6 – Diocesan Mission Action Plan (MAP)

- 6.1 Synod was briefed on the Follow! process so far, and how it will develop into a Diocesan Mission Action Plan, following which Synod was invited to work in groups to identify and feedback on greatest needs and opportunities under the headings of the Shared Priorities of:-
- a. Spiritual & Numerical Growth.
  - b. Contributing to the Common Good
  - c. Reimagining Ministry, Prayer & Worship
- 6.2 During the briefing reference was made to a range of events, work and initiatives currently underway or planned which included:-
- a. Lucy Moore, the founder of Messy Church, will be meeting with 50+ Messy Church leaders on 23 April in the Shrewsbury area  
(See <http://www.messychurch.org.uk/event/messy-meet-shrewsbury-area-0> )
  - b. “Good Grief” - a national conference to identify what communities can do to support those who are bereaved - will take place at Leominster Priory on 7 May. For details contact [j.gibbon@hereford.anglican.org](mailto:j.gibbon@hereford.anglican.org)
  - c. “Taking Funerals Seriously” – a day event for clergy, readers and other ministers and parishioners involved in funeral ministry will take place at Craven Arms Community Centre on 16 Jun. For details contact [j.gibbon@hereford.anglican.org](mailto:j.gibbon@hereford.anglican.org)
  - d. “Baptism Matters” – led by Revd Canon Dr Sandra Miller, Head of Projects and Development for the Archbishops’ Council will set out research findings and how baptism ministries in local context can be strengthened. For details contact [j.gibbon@hereford.anglican.org](mailto:j.gibbon@hereford.anglican.org)
  - e. Church Buildings Sacred Spaces – Wendy Coombey (Community Partnership & Funding Officer) and Tim Bridges (Church Building Support Officer), in conjunction with the Diocesan Advisory Committee, are liaising with parishes to support and encourage better use of buildings.
  - f. Education – our 80 Church of England schools and academies educate 13,000 pupils giving 65,000 opportunities per week to reach young people.
  - g. Chaplaincies – both voluntary and paid provide a Christian ministry in hospital, agricultural and industrial settings.
  - h. Some deaneries are thinking about employing workers.
- 6.3 In addition, particular reference was made to Revd Jackie Sewell, the recently appointed School of Ministry Officer, and four areas of work being addressed by the School of Ministry to provide better training for parishes. These four areas are:-
- a. Growing Christians of all Ages – developing skills in all age worship (not just children) and worship at deanery level rather than just in parish or benefice.

- b. One Degree Shifts – looking at activities that individually can make a small difference but, combined, can make a big difference e.g. local primary school prayer labyrinths, Month of Grace lay led worship and Messy Church.
  - c. Greatest Needs – developing forums to share best practice.
  - d. Common Good – taking healing more seriously, supporting credit unions and foodbanks.
- 6.4 On completion of the briefing Synod engaged in group work followed by a plenary session in which Synod members were asked to give feedback on the areas of:-
- a. Signs of God at work among us.
  - b. Opportunities
  - c. Needs.
- 6.5 “Open the Book” and “Messy Church” featured highly in the responses under both Signs of God at work and Opportunities. Other key points were our work in and with school and the increasing variety of Sunday and non-Sunday services offered.
- 6.6 Making better use of our buildings also featured as did food banks, credit unions and the involvement of secular groups in events in churches.
- 6.7 In the area of needs, mention was made of parishes needing greater help with their buildings, the financial pressures in small congregations, the need to be proactive rather than reactive, and improved communication.
- 6.8 Many other specific comments were made and all comments will be used in developing the Diocesan Mission Action Plan that will be presented for approval to the July 16 Synod meeting.

#### **ITEM 7 – Diocesan Structures**

- 7.1 Synod was advised that the current Diocesan Boards and Committee structure emerged from a 2007 “Diocesan Structures Working Party” report to Bishop’s Council which, in essence, added to the existing statutory Boards new Boards for Church & Society and Ministry & Training.
- 7.2 The intended purpose of the two new boards was to provide supervision of the work of the salaried and voluntary Support Ministers in the specific areas of Church & Society and in Ministry & Training.
- 7.3 In practice the Boards never functioned as originally intended and rarely comprised the planned memberships. Additionally, as the line managers of Support Ministers are the Bishops, Archdeacon or other Support Ministers, the intended independent supervision did not take place. Instead the Boards metamorphosed, to a greater or lesser degree, into support groups for the various Support Ministers.
- 7.4 While support groups for Support Ministers carry out a valuable function they do not provide the “... *imaginative vision and policy* ...” envisaged when the new Boards were introduced. Consequently it was suggested to Synod that, as the strategic aims of the diocese develop, oversight and direction of the work of salaried and volunteer staff should be focussed in a single body and that body should be the Bishop’s Council and Standing Committee of Synod. Under such arrangement separate Boards for Church & Society and in Ministry & Training would no longer be required.

- 7.5 Acceptance of the proposal to would mean the major Board/Council/Committee structure of the diocese would revert to statutory bodies as follows:-
- a. The Board of Finance and the Board of Education would retain Executive Committees to manage the day to day functions in those areas of responsibility.
  - b. The Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee and the Diocesan Advisory Committee would continue to carry out their statutory functions.
  - c. The Bishop's Council and Standing Committee of Synod would hold prime responsibility for developing policies and strategies to halt decline and grow the church.

7.6 It was therefore proposed that while support groups for Support Ministers may informally continue, the Boards for Church & Society and Ministry & Training be disbanded.

7.7 Following brief discussion of the proposals Synod was invited to consider the following resolution:-

*"This Synod agrees that the Boards for Church & Society and for Ministry & Training be disbanded and that the Bishop's Council and Standing Committee of the Diocesan Synod should assume overall responsibility for the oversight of diocesan policies and strategies"*

7.8 Put to the vote the resolution was passed:-

**FOR: 84**

**AGAINST: 0**

**ABSTAINED: 1**

#### **ITEM 8 – Amendment to Diocesan Synod Standing Orders**

8.1 Synod received a proposal for amending the membership of the Bishop's Council, as set out below, to strengthen both the Council's capacity to consider resource implications of proposed diocesan policies/strategies and the Board of Finance Executive Committee's understanding of diocesan policies/strategies for which resources are required.

8.2 Synod was invited to debate the proposed amendment to Standing Orders and then invited to consider the following resolution:-

*"This Synod agrees that paragraph 66 of the Diocesan Synod Standing Orders be amended as follows:-*

a. Under "Elected/Appointed Posts" **delete** "Chairman of the Board for Church & Society"; **delete** "Chairman of the Board for Mission & Training"; **insert** "Vice Chairman of the Board of Finance"

b. After sub-paragraph on "Elected Members" **insert**:-

***Bishop's Nominees***

*Up to 3 members nominated by the Bishop for their particular skills or experience."*

8.3 Put to the vote the resolution was passed *nem con*.

#### **ITEM 9 – Parish Offer System**

9.1 Revd Richard Jones and members of the Parish Offer Working Group presented to Synod the outcome of work done by the Group since July 2015 and proposals for the introduction of a Parish Offer System. Key points were:-

- 9.2 The Diocesan Synod unanimously approved a resolution on 15 October "*That the Bishop establishes a working group to bring to the March 2016 Diocesan Synod proposals for the introduction, with effect from 1 January 2017, of an offer based share system.*"
- 9.3 Following the Bishop's original encouragement "*to communicate, challenge, inspire and educate in a way that enables individuals and parishes to engage positively with the new system*", the working group has visited all 13 Deaneries. Much information has also been provided on the Hereford Diocesan website at:-  
[http://www.hereford.anglican.org/churchwork/the\\_diocesan\\_office/fin/parish\\_offer\\_scheme\\_2017/index.aspx](http://www.hereford.anglican.org/churchwork/the_diocesan_office/fin/parish_offer_scheme_2017/index.aspx).
- 9.4 Feedback and questions have focused on the following main areas:
- a. The experience of other dioceses which have moved to an offer system
  - b. How it will work in Hereford Diocese
  - c. The implications if parishes do not provide enough money for the overall ministry of our diocese.
- 9.5 Lessons learnt from other dioceses which have introduced an offer system are overwhelmingly positive. See paper on diocesan website  
[http://www.hereford.anglican.org/Content/ParishOffer2017\\_learnings\\_from\\_other\\_dioceses.pdf](http://www.hereford.anglican.org/Content/ParishOffer2017_learnings_from_other_dioceses.pdf). The benefits are not only financial (increased income) but spiritual: a completely changed atmosphere and understanding about the place of giving in our corporate life as Christians.
- 9.6 The proposal put to Synod was that the Diocese of Hereford will establish a Common Fund into which all parish contributions (presently known as parish share) will be paid.
- 9.7 Every parish will be invited to make a promise by end-June 2016 of its contribution in 2017. This timetable will be reviewed after the first year of operation.
- 9.8 Deaneries will have a crucial role in implementing the proposed scheme. Rural Deans and Lay Co-Chairs, supported by Deanery Treasurers, will have the following responsibilities:
- a. to lead the implementation of the new system in their own deaneries
  - b. to help all benefices and parishes to understand the new system
  - c. to assess promises made by parishes and decide whether or not to challenge them
  - d. to alert senior Diocesan officers if there are problems. Incumbents and other clergy/readers/lay leaders will be responsible for leading their parishes in understanding the proposed scheme and encouraging them to think carefully and prayerfully about their contributions.
- 9.9 If there is a serious gap between the total contributions promised and the budgeted expenditure, DBFX will have to make necessary recommendations to Bishop's Council.
- 9.10 Information - Information packs will be sent to all incumbents and PCC secretaries as soon as possible after Synod's agreement. These will set out the issues for PCCs to consider, including:
- a. an encouragement to reflect on how we should respond to God's generosity to us
  - b. a challenge to think about our vision of our collective mission and ministry as God's people in this diocese
  - c. a simple breakdown of the costs of providing stipendiary clergy across our diocese to help inform that vision and encourage generosity.

- 9.11 Vision – Parishes are already being encouraged to think about how we Proclaim Christ and Grow Disciples, using the Follow! Conversation Resource Cards as a guide. See <http://www.hereford.anglican.org/Content/A4%20conversation%20zigzag.pdf>. The emerging diocesan strategy, the Diocesan Mission Action Plan (MAP), to be brought to Synod in July, will also help to set the context for parishes to understand how their contributions will enable us to achieve our collective goals.
- 9.12 Timeline - Parishes will be invited to offer promises about their contributions for 2017 by the end of June 2016. This is designed to fit into the Diocesan budgetary process, including Synod discussion of a draft budget in July; and to allow time for any iteration with parishes whose promises appear insufficiently generous.
- 9.13 Following the presentation Synod members were invited to discuss the proposals before voting on the following resolution:-
- “This Synod agrees that, with effect from 1 January 2017, the current method of apportioning Parish Share should be replaced by prayerful, freewill parish contributions to a common fund for the provision of ministry throughout the diocese.”*
- 9.14 In discussion the following comments were made by members:-
- a. Agree that there is a problem with giving but the answer is proper stewardship not an offer system. Individual giving is not an offer system. Parishioners need to know what they want the diocese to do and then the resources needed to deliver that requirement.
  - b. Money follows Mission, and MAPping is part of that. If the offer system is introduced before a diocesan plan is formulated that is the wrong way round. Plan first then introduce offer system. MAP before Plan.
  - c. Agree strategy leads to realistic offer but, in reality, the clarity that some people seek is not always available. Plans are often incremental, developing over time as circumstances change.
  - d. With power comes responsibility. An offer system will pass power to the parishes which, in turn, will need to exercise responsibility for resourcing the work of the diocese.
  - e. People need to be challenged e.g. if you were given back your giving to the church would it make a difference to your life.
  - f. While supporting the potential change of culture that an offer system will bring it would be good to understand why similar systems have not been successful in other dioceses.
- 9.15 Prior to Synod meeting Mr C J Whitmey (Hereford) proposed the following amendment to the resolution:-
- DELETE “... for the provision of ministry throughout ...” and INSERT “... to fund the work of ...”
- Such that the resolution would read:-
- “This Synod agrees that, with effect from 1 January 2017, the current method of apportioning Parish Share should be replaced by prayerful, freewill parish contributions to a common fund to fund the work of the diocese.”*
- 9.16 Reason for amendment: The words 'fund' and 'ministry' are normally associated with the provision of stipendiary parochial clergy. It is accepted that 'ministry' can be interpreted as the whole work of the diocese. To avoid any possible misunderstanding in the parishes it is suggested the agenda motion should be amended.

9.17 Synod debated the proposed amendment at para 9.15 which was put to the vote and lost:

**FOR: 12**

**AGAINST: 71**

**ABSTAINED: 2**

9.18 Synod then voted on the resolution set out at para 9.13 above which was passed

**FOR: 74**

**AGAINST: 7**

**ABSTAINED: 4**

#### **ITEM 10 – Dignity at Work Policy**

10.1 Synod was advised that in recognition that some people within the Church of England do not treat others in a manner one would expect from followers of Christ, a “Dignity at Work” policy had been produced by the Archbishops’ Council, aimed at reducing incidents of bullying, harassment or unreasonable behaviour.

10.2 The policy had been reviewed by the Bishop’s Council in Nov 15 and, following comment from several members, had been redrafted to reflect the Hereford context and was now submitted to Synod for preliminary consideration prior to referral to parishes and deaneries.

10.3 The purpose of consulting parishes and deaneries before the policy is finally submitted to the July 2016 Diocesan Synod for approval and adoption was twofold:-

- a. To bring the existence of a policy on bullying and harassment to the attention of both the clergy and the laity.
- b. To ensure both the clergy and the laity have opportunity to influence the form of the final approved version and, thereby, to ensure wide support.

10.4 In general discussion the following points were made:-

- a. Bullying and harassment were often considered to be inflicted on workers by managers which is not always the case.
- b. Sometimes members of congregations can bully or harass clergy or lay leaders.
- c. There is a difference between “authority” and “power”.
- d. Legitimate use of “authority” is acceptable; misuse of “power” can amount to “bullying”

10.5 Synod approved referral of the draft policy to parishes and deaneries for comment.

#### **ITEM 11 – Diocesan Secretary Succession**

11.1 Synod was advised that, as communicated in the Mass Mailing of 22 January, the Diocesan Secretary will be retiring at the end of July 2016. The Diocesan Secretary post had been advertised in the Church Times, the Guardian, various websites and the diocesan site at:-

[http://hereford.anglican.org/churchwork/vacancies\\_in\\_the\\_diocese\\_of\\_hereford/diocesan\\_secretary\\_vacancy.aspx](http://hereford.anglican.org/churchwork/vacancies_in_the_diocese_of_hereford/diocesan_secretary_vacancy.aspx)

11.2 Interviews would take place on 11/12 April with a view to the new Diocesan Secretary being in post by early July.

#### **ITEM 12 – General Synod Report**

12.1 Synod received a report on the February session of the General Synod the contents of which are at Annex B.

**ITEM 13 – Election of DBF Directors**

13.1 DBF members were advised that:-

- a. Members of the Executive Committee of the DBF (DBFX) serve as Directors of the legal company that is the Hereford Diocesan Board of Finance.
- b. The October 2015 meeting of the DBF/Synod was advised that Article 45(2) of the DBF Articles of Association requires that there be a minimum of 8 and no more than 12 elected directors with at least one from each Archdeaconry.
- c. Formal elections to the DBFX, and other appointments, resulted in only 4 elected directors and 4 vacancies, since when the following had offered to serve on the DBFX:-
 

Revd Linda Cronin (Telford Severn Gorge)	Mr Andrew Mence (Ledbury)
Mrs Janet Woodroffe (Condoover)	Mr C W Hunter (Abbeystead)
- d. The DBF Articles of Association provide for the appointment of directors to fill casual vacancies but are silent on the matter of filling vacancies arising from any failure to elect sufficient numbers in the first place.

13.2 Consequently, and noting in particular para 13.1.d above, it was proposed that the individuals listed at paragraph 13.1.c above be elected as members of the DBFX.

13.3 When put to the vote the proposal was passed *nem con*.

**ITEM 14 - Any Other Business**

14.1 As required by the legal office of the Church of England Amending Canon No. 34 was promulgated in the following terms:-

*"I give notice that, at its February 2016 group of sessions, held in London, the General Synod resolved that the Amending Canon No. 34 be made, promulgated and executed."*

*Amending Canon No. 34 makes provision for a range of matters intended to strengthen the Church's position in relation to safeguarding.*

*It introduces a new Canon C30 'Of safeguarding', which will impose a requirement on bishops to appoint diocesan safeguarding advisers (whose functions will be specified in regulations to be made by the House of Bishops) and will confer a new power on bishops to require clergy to undergo a risk assessment (which will again have to be conducted in accordance with regulations made by the House of Bishops).*

**ITEM 15– Dates of Future Meetings**

15.1

Meeting	Date of Meeting	Time	Location	Notes
B Council	Thurs 7 Apr 16	1930	Hereford	
DBFX	Tues 19 Apr 16	1400	Hereford	
B Council	Thurs 9 Jun 16	1900	Hereford	
DBFX	Tues 21 Jun 16	1400	Ludlow	
DBF/Synod	Thurs 7 Jul 16	1900	Ludlow	
DBFX	Tues 26 Jul 16	1400	Hereford	
DBFX	Tues 6 Sep 16	1400	Ludlow	
B Council	Thurs 15 Sep 16	1900	Hereford	Note new date
DBF/Synod	Thurs 20 Oct 16	1900	Ludlow	
DBFX	Tues 8 Nov 16	1400	Hereford	
B Council	Thurs 17 Nov 16	1900	LMC	

Chairman: ..... Date: .....

## Presidential Address to Synod – 5 March 2016

On our agenda today there is a major item on our diocesan MAP; our diocesan strategy; our plan – call it what you will. Now the very use of the word strategy evokes a wide range of reactions. For some, it is something to be avoided in most contexts, most certainly in the church. It smacks of managerialism, jargon, inappropriate business- speak. For others, it's crucial for the success of any enterprise: without a strategy, there's no chance of working out priorities, spending money appropriately and deploying resources to best effect. And all shades of opinion in between.

I strongly believe that we need a diocesan strategy and I'm delighted that we are moving towards a diocesan Mission Action Plan. I want to spend a few minutes now, addressing some of the myths that can surround strategies, in the hope of helping us to put strategy in its right perspective. Myths can be powerful, they can point us to significant truth, but they can be seriously misleading.

Myth 1. That a strategic approach is incompatible with being spiritual. Yes, if everything is worked out in a two-dimensional way with no room to move or breathe, I suppose that could be true. But the saying that we should work as if everything depends on us and pray knowing everything depends on God has something in it. There's nothing incompatible between planning and being open to God being a God of surprises. "If one of you wants to build a tower," says Jesus, "you will first sit down and estimate the cost and see if you have enough money to complete it." He said this in the context of the cost of discipleship.

Myth 2. That forming a strategy for today and tomorrow belittles or ignores what has gone before. There is a danger of feeding that view. I remember hearing a vicar telling his congregation, "We've got to start taking our worship seriously," and the church warden pointing out that people there had been taking their worship seriously for several hundred years.

I have said repeatedly as the 105<sup>th</sup> Bishop of Hereford that nobody who is the 105<sup>th</sup> of anything can reckon he's starting anything new.

We build on all that has gone before with thankfulness for our rich inheritance. And in recent years there has been an enormous amount of praying, thinking, working at how we can faithfully proclaim the gospel afresh in this generation.

It's as if all sorts of ingredients have been gathered in the fridge, all partially prepared and cooked and our task is to assemble them into the sort of meal that can equip us and sustain us for the next part of our journey as a diocese.

Myth 3. That a strategy sorts out exactly where our energy should go and ensures we have a mission focus. No it doesn't; it can help us, but there will still be difficult decisions to take about resources. The strategy does not in itself deliver, any more than having a SatNav guarantees that we'll get to where we want to go. But, it can help significantly.

Myth 4. That a strategy involves "them" trying to tell "us" what to do. No, it's much more interactive than that, or it should be, and extensive listening has been going on around the diocese. But it is the task of those charged with leadership – Synods, Bishop's Council, and even Bishops, having listened and discerned as best they can, to propose how best to apportion our resources in the light of an agreed strategy.

Myth 5. That a strategy for the church makes us inward looking. No! Well, it could, if forming a strategy itself absorbs all the energy, but part of our strategy must surely involve how we are to look outwards, to reach others with the Christian good news and to contribute to the common good.

The sociologist Linda Woodhead has written recently that a church is, for good or ill, an integral part of society. “Its goal is to infuse the culture with Christian truth. Church and society are to dance together, even if they fall out of step now and then. This was always what Christendom was about: not a church that existed for itself, but one that existed for the whole society.”

Above all, I believe our strategy needs to make it crystal clear that we are determined to share our faith with others, that evangelism is not the preserve just of people of a particular type who like that sort of thing.

Let me quote some words from our two Archbishops who wrote this for the recent General Synod debate on evangelism.

*“This urgency-for evangelism-is apparent to us as we look around our families, our neighbourhoods, our places of work and our nation. So many, young and old, rich and poor, live without knowing the love of God in Jesus Christ. It matters that people know nothing of this. It matters because each one of these people matters to God. It matters because there is nothing better for any person than to respond in joy to what God has done for them in Jesus Christ.”*

To sum up: strategy is important; it’s not all-important, but it is important.

There is an urgency in our situation. I heard someone say recently that the whole organisation and structure of the Church of England has developed precisely so that it can resist change. But we either change or we die. However, the need to change is not in itself nearly a good enough reason to change – we will only change if we want to do so.

To agree on a strategy of change can make us more clearly focused, more obviously intentional in what we are doing, and more determined to discern God’s will and to do it.

## General Synod Report – February 2016

### Hereford Diocese at General Synod

The Diocese of Hereford is represented by a number of people at General Synod.

- Bishops – Bishop Richard, by virtue of his office as Diocesan Bishop. Bishop Alistair was one of 5 Suffragan Bishops elected within the Canterbury Province.
- Laity – Dr Martin Elcock, Mrs Wendy Coombey, Mrs Liz Bird, all elected by the laity.
- Clergy – Rev Preb Simon Cawdell, Rev Neil Patterson, Rev Laura Hill, all elected by the clergy.
- Mr Elliot Swattridge represents the Church of England Youth Council.

### Renewal & Reform

The purpose of the Renewal & Reform programme is:

- A flourishing and prayerful community of disciples and evangelists
- Inspiring and connecting with children, young people and young adults
- Leaders equipped for mission where they are called to serve
- Resources, legislation and IT that help dioceses and parishes to be fleet of foot for mission

*(presentation to General Synod in November 2015)*

The programme has areas of focus including: developing discipleship, simplification of legislation, resourcing ministerial education and lay training, resourcing the future and leadership development. The Church of England website has an area dedicated to the Renewal & Reform programme ([www.churchofengland.org](http://www.churchofengland.org)). General Synod will consider various aspects of the programme throughout this quinquennium (5 year term of this Synod 2015-20).

### February Sessions

The agenda and business of GS was varied and included:

- Mission & Pastoral Measure – This is a Measure (legislation) to amend and simplify the ‘Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011’, the ‘Endowments and Glebe Measure 1976’ and the ‘Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986’. It is part of the Renewal and Reform Programme and was presented as a first draft for consideration by Synod, it will now be sent to the Revision Committee before being considered at future sessions of General Synod.
- Evangelism – The whole of Synod broke in to small groups to discuss our own experiences of faith and evangelism. There was a report to Synod from the Evangelism Task Group (GS2015).

- Report from the Joint Study Group of the Church of England & the Church of Scotland - Members voted to approve the Columba Declaration, this is an agreement recognising the ecumenical partnership between the Church of Scotland and the Church of England, and paves the way for future joint working between the two churches. The General Synod also called on the Council for Christian Unity to oversee the implementation of the commitments in the Declaration and to set up a Contact Group to coordinate future work between the two churches, and also to ensure that the Scottish Episcopal Church is invited to appoint a representative to attend meetings of the Contact Group.
- Enabling Measure – as part of the Renewal and Reform programme Synod voted in favour of the Archbishops' Council introducing draft legislation at the July group of sessions to enable the amending or repealing some primary legislation concerning the Church of England by a more rapid and less complex process than is currently possible.
- Leeds Diocesan Synod motion on the impact of sanctions on Benefit Claimants - Synod, welcoming the extensive work already undertaken by the Church of England in partnership with others, voted in favour of a call on Government to initiate a full independent review of the impact and efficacy of the sanctions. Synod also encourages every part of the Church of England to offer practical and pastoral support to those experiencing benefit sanctions, building on the Church's work with food banks, credit unions and debt advice.
- Resourcing Ministerial Education – This debate, forming part of *Renewal and Reform* programme, affirmed plans to create a new framework in which dioceses would receive funding for those entering ministerial education to be used more flexibly. Following Synod's approval, the Ministry Council will carry out further consultation on the proposed funding framework with theological colleges and dioceses - and report back to Synod on the progress as a result of the changes.
- Leeds Diocesan Synod motion on Blood & Organ Donation – following a debate the Synod voted in favour of a motion calling for all parishes to encourage parishioners to donate blood, and to register as organ donors.
- Worcester Diocesan Synod motion on Parochial Fees - the Worcester Diocesan Synod moved two motions requesting that General Synod call on the Archbishops' Council to exercise its powers under the 'Ecclesiastical Fees Measure 1986' so that fees payable to parochial church councils in respect of funerals and weddings should automatically include a fee for providing a vergers and church heating. Synod debated the vergers' fee element first and the motion was lost. The Rev. Preb. Simon Cawdell then requested that Synod move to next business, effectively removing the need for debate and voting regarding heating. There is, therefore, no change regarding the statutory fees payable for Occasional Offices.

#### **To find out more**

You can follow the proceedings of General Synod on the Church of England website, and all papers etc can be downloaded.

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