

## governance

THE General Synod has invited the Archbishops' Council to introduce legislation to simplify — and clarify — the governance structures of the national church institutions (NCIs).

Moving the motion, **the Bishop of Leeds**, the Rt Revd Nick Baines, who chairs the review group, reminded the Synod that it had not attempted to reform the governance of the Church of England, but the governance structure of the NCIs.

"Underneath all the complexity of this subject, there is a really simple question," he said. "How do we best run those functions which the Church needs at national level?" He added: "What do we actually mean by 'running things well'?"

The recommendations were about rationalisation, simplification, and clarification, the Bishop explained. Responses to the review suggested that some people had "caught the whiff of centralisation. I respectfully suggest that the opposite is true. The ultimate goal is to make clearer who makes decisions and how. In the end, it's about accountability, which depends on both transparency and accessibility."

Nobody suggested that reform was unnecessary, Bishop Baines said; nor had the group got every detail right. "We know that there is more work to do." The Synod was not being asked to agree to all the proposals and recommendations. "What we want is for you to affirm the general principles, . . . 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."

There was a need to move forward. "Frankly, a package that has been butchered along the way will make the Church no better off, and we've made that mistake before. This is why we are . . . here 25 years later."

He would be handing over the chair to **the Bishop of Guildford**, the Rt Revd Andrew Watson, who would be assisted by a reference group of experienced Synod members.

**Nigel Bacon** (Lincoln) said that 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 [CENS]. Being able to discuss all aspects of mission and money together at the same time and in the same room . . . is critical, and there are real opportunities here to improve the quality and velocity of decision-making and also its transparency." But "The devil will be in the detail, and it's essential that we get it right if the changes are to be effective."

He urged those taking on the challenge to "resist any pressure for quick reform", recognising that "almost always in consolidating organisations there is a tendency to overlay centralised power." The Church must instead "increase subsidiarity". His biggest concern was



The General Synod chamber in Church House, Westminster, during the Wednesday-morning eucharist

# Synod 'gets train moving' on plans for institutional reform

with potential reforms of the Synod, whose role must not be diminished or circumvented, especially in holding the new CENS to account.

**Canon Andrew Dotchin** (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich), who is on the reference panel, supported the motion. The review would help to remove silo working in the NCIs, he said. "They tend to end up with mission creep, and we find duplication along the way." As an elector, he tended to vote "for people who think like me, not necessarily those who have the skills. This work will help that not happen." Staff at Church House were "run ragged with the system, and they deserve a better way of working", he said.

**Clare Williams** (Norwich) urged that the process of listening should engage meaningfully "with the voices of young people. . . This legislative process will have an effect on the Church into which these young people will grow as leaders."

**The Revd Christopher Blunt** (Chester) expressed a "really big nagging doubt" about the "massive shift in decision-making" hidden in the report, including the prospect that "the CENS would determine the strategic allocation of resources." He continued: "Without clarification of that, we would be like the proverbial turkeys voting for Christmas." The wording should state that the CENS existed "to enact the will of Synod".

An amendment that thanked the group for its work rather than welcomed it was moved by **the Revd Sam Maginnis** (Chelmsford). "This is only the starting point of a complex process," he said. The reforms would require "an entirely new organisational and financial approach to how our central structures operate". This could not be "welcomed" without considering non-legislative reforms, including debating the outcome of the consultation stage and its implications.

Bishop Baines opposed the amendment, because the Synod was not being limited to legislative engagement. In drafting legislation, "a lot of the stuff gets fleshed out. . . that actually flushes out what is possible, what is desirable".

**Clive Scowen** (London) supported the amendment. "Welcome" is a very ambiguous word," he said. On previous occasions when proposals had been welcomed, he said, "Later, we are told: 'You have already agreed the principle; you cannot go back on that now.' I don't think we are ready to agree the principle of anything at this stage." **Luke Appleton** (Exeter) was also concerned that some of the proposals would lead to "the sidelining or marginalisation of Synod".

The chair of the Archbishops' Council's relatively new legislative-reform committee, **Canon Simon Butler** (Southwark), said: "Our job is

to ensure that legislation that comes to this Synod will have been properly consulted on and engaged with, and chief among my concerns is that that this Synod is properly engaged with." Welcoming the report "does not mean you are rubber-stamping it", he said.

The amendment was carried narrowly by 162 to 154, with ten recorded abstentions.

A further amendment, requesting that any proposal for establishing a Nominations Committee be withdrawn, was moved by **Prudence Dailey** (Oxford). Such a proposal would "undermine the democratic processes of the Synod and replace them with something that was profoundly technocratic", she said. Currently, the review suggested that a nominations panel "should 'sift' those wishing to stand in advance of the election" to verify their skills, knowledge, experience and behaviour.

This, she argued, was "against natural justice"; and "anybody who stands for election ought to be put before the Synod." Her particular concern was that those who "might be inclined to rock the boat" would be excluded, which, she argued, would impede diversity and action.

Responding, Bishop Baines argued that diversity was not being achieved under the current system. His main point, however, was that

the Synod was not being asked to agree to all the report's recommendations. "When you start to draft the words of things, you begin to work out what is viable, desirable, and what isn't. You don't chop off the discussion at this point."

**The Bishop of Burnley**, the Rt Revd Philip North (Northern Suffragans), told the Synod: "There are too many unheard voices in the C of E. We don't hear the voices of working-class people, of UKME people. We barely hear the voices of those with disabilities. . . Every organisation — political parties, companies, charities — needs to act to ensure that these silenced are heard, and this is a mechanism for doing just that."

**Dr Jamie Harrison** (Durham) recalled being on the Synod that had looked at the 1995 Turnbull report, which had created the current structure of the NCIs. He was "worried about the anxiety of the chamber on this", given that any proposals would not be implemented until January 2024 or later. Concerns were being brought too soon: "Let the train take up a bit of speed."

Supporting the amendment, **Debbie Buggs** (London) asked: "Do we want the middle-class behaviours that make this such a middle-class gathering?" She feared that the

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recommendation would lead to making the appointments process “bland, more bureaucratic, more technocratic”.

The amendment was lost by 124 to 119, with 24 recorded abstentions.

Another amendment was moved by Mr Maginnis which, instead of inviting the Archbishops' Council to introduce legislation for consideration, would invite the Council to “bring forward a further report and proposals for consideration”.

Bishop Baines again resisted the amendment: many of the assumptions outlined were flawed, he said. “Why is there an assumption here that the Synod wouldn't be fully involved in the process? The whole point is that the Synod is fully involved. . . It's the drafting of legislation that forces the issues and fleshes out . . . the gaps.” He said: “We need to get the train moving.”

Supporting the amendment, the **Revd Marcus Walker** (London) said that the report was part of the Emerging Church process, of which many other elements had not been brought before the Synod: for example, the leaked report on reforming the episcopate (News, 11 February). “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 train analogy suggested that some people knew where it was going; the Synod did not, he said.

The **Bishop of Ripon**, Dr Helen-Ann Hartley (Northern Suffragans), resisted the amendment. “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 function.” The Synod could “cause death by a thousand amendments. Please let it not be that.”

A member of the new governance review board, **Alison Coulter** (Winchester), assured the Synod that its part was “to write this legislation. It will not be too late, because you will be doing it.”

Another member, **Canon Kate Wharton** (Liverpool), said: “The process must start if things are to change. Perhaps there is a question here of trust and accountability. We are not called to be distrustful, but to interrogate, discuss, and to discern through a process.”

The **Revd Daniel Valentine** (Manchester), a former lawyer and a member of the reference group, said: “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.”

The amendment was lost on a show of hands.

Returning to the debate on the motion, as amended, the **Bishop of Coventry**, Dr Christopher Cocksworth, reminded the Synod of the “theological character” of the work. The group would be engaged in, in the tradition of Richard Hooker, “ecclesiastical polity. . . Hooker knew that polity doesn't 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 . . . 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 of the work ahead.”

**Joseph Diwakar**, who is halfway through his term of office on the Archbishops' Council, said that it had 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 rubber-stamped; or even of trustees' being ignored or shouted out when objections or protests are raised”.

He agreed that there needed to be a balance between representation and expertise. The most powerful feedback had been that “our governance is detached, is unrepresentative, is remote from parishes, is remote from people at the coalface of Christian ministry.”

Responding to the debate, Bishop Baines said: “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 what this is intended to get beyond.”

The governance review had a big impact on staff at Church House. “They face uncertainty. . . So do the Church Commissioners. This is the beginning of a conversation and process.”

The motion, as amended, was carried in a vote by Houses: Bishops 30 nem. con.; Clergy 126-18, with five recorded abstentions; Laity 110-53, with six recorded abstentions. It read:

*That this Synod:*

(a) thank the Governance Review Group for its work in preparing the report GS 2239 and its Chair for update note GS 2249;

(b) invite the Archbishops' Council and the Church Commissioners to engage with stakeholders in the Church and State on the report's recommendations; and

(c) invite the Archbishops' Council, in the light of the outcome of that engagement, to introduce legislation for consideration by this Synod to give effect to proposals that involve legislative change.

# Lambeth and dioceses to address oppression

## persecuted Church

THE General Synod has asked the dioceses to “offer support to link dioceses where the Church is facing persecution” as well as pray for them, and has asked that the Lambeth Conference address the issue.

Introducing the debate, **Penny Allen** and the **Revd Damian Feeney** (both Lichfield) said that the statistics demonstrated the extent of abuse, torture, and violence that governments had a duty to address. Mrs Allen hoped that the forthcoming national conference would “heighten awareness”.

Fr Feeney said that the Church must repent of the part that it had played in the persecution of others. “We have an ethical imperative to love all people without condition,” he said. “To the Christian, persecution against any is anathema.”

The **Bishop of Southwark**, the Rt Revd Christopher Chessun, spoke of the emphasis on the marginalised in Luke 6.22, which, he said, made it clear that those under heel were favoured of God. He recalled a pilgrimage to Egypt with Coptic Archbishop Angaelos to sites of the martyrdom of Syrian Copts and Armenian Orthodox, describing the memory as “horrific to this day”. “Small minorities can do little to protect themselves,” he said. “Our responsibility must be to look unflinchingly at their suffering.”

**Stephen Boyall** (Blackburn) urged dioceses to engage with organisations such as Open Doors. He spoke of his work with seven- to ten-year olds, who had corresponded with children globally and learned much about their suffering. “Can you imagine growing up trusting Jesus when your dad was killed for Jesus?” he asked.

**Archbishop Angaelos** (Orthodox Churches) thanked the two Archbishops and the Bishops of Coventry, Southwark, Leeds, and others for their constant advocacy. “This is something dear to our hearts and touches us all.” He was delighted with the motion — “the work of God in the fullness of time” — and the prospect of the July conference.

He spoke of the death that day of the Eritrean Patriarch, Abune Antonios, after 15 years under house arrest, as “a stark reminder of new violations”. He said: “This is the time for collaboration . . . for all of us to pool our resources and raise our collective voices. This is not just a theological conversation. People are dying every day.”

The **Archdeacon of Lewisham and Greenwich**, the Ven. Alistair Cutting (Southwark), spoke to his amendment, which added six further clauses to paragraph (a), listing sources of information, resources, and actions to enable schools and places of worship to engage with the issues. The amendments, he said, “flow out of the spirit and heart of this motion”. Mrs Allen thanked the Archdeacon for fleshing out the motion, and urged the Synod to “swallow it whole”.

**Peter Adams** (St Albans)

welcomed the motion and the amendment: “It's vital that we be well-researched so that we can be good advocates.”

The **Bishop of Lichfield**, Dr Michael Ipgrave, found the amendment helpful and friendly. The genesis of the persecution of Christians was of “spiritual urgency for us, but set in the indivisibility of religious faith. It maps out the challenges we face, but also know to be part of the response.”

The **Revd Esther Prior** (Guildford), via Zoom, said: “It seems to me that the Spirit of God is re-awakening our hearts for the marginalised . . . raising our eyes to see the persecuted Church.”

The amendment was carried. **Gabriel Chui** (Liverpool), who is a member of a Farsi-language congregation, said that case studies from



The Archdeacon of Lewisham and Greenwich, the Ven. Alistair Cutting

that community were “stories of real people with real suffering; the [thrust] front and centre is to enable our persecuted brothers and sisters to hold on.”

Using sign language, **Sarah Tupling** (Deaf Anglicans Together) spoke of the link in Derby diocese with the Church of North India. “We are really concerned about growing oppression, the real challenges they face every day. We stand united with them, ready to support them in any way we can,” she said.

The **Bishop of Truro**, the Rt Revd Philip Mounstephen, said that Afghanistan was now the most dangerous place in the world to be a Christian. “The denial of freedom of religious belief is a great evil,” he said. “It is a profoundly moral issue which demands our attention.”

Aggressive militant nationalism that insisted on uniformity was one of many things on the rise, he said. “The best way is to advocate freedom of religious and belief for everybody. We must never limit our understanding of who our neighbour is.”

In a maiden speech, **Canon Vaughan Roberts** (Oxford) said: “It is time we woke up to the deep need, and I would strongly commend partnership.”

The **Bishop of Chelmsford**, the Rt Revd Guli Francis-Dehqani, brought personal reflections from the small Church of Iran, where her faith had been nurtured. She endorsed the encouragement of links, but warned dioceses to remember that situations

in some parts of the Communion could be dangerous, particularly in places where the Church was seen as an agent of the West.

She also acknowledged the complexity for people who had come to the UK, especially converts from Islam, of finding a place of belonging, “a need to discover who they are in safe settings”. She asked: “If we truly respect our brothers and sisters, what can we learn about our present situation in the Church of England? Should we listen to the whisper of the persecuted Church to be faithful now — not to be fearful, but dwell faithfully and joyfully in the present?”

**Caroline Herbert** (Norwich) spoke of the power of prayer. She hoped that “each one of us as individuals is committed to pray, and, when we have opportunity, to lead intercessions and Bible-study groups.” Might there be an opportunity for Synod to do this after the vote, she asked.

The **Bishop of Dover**, the Rt Revd Rose Hudson-Wilkin (Canterbury), who was chairing the session, assured Mrs Herbert that such prayer was planned.

The motion was carried by 329, nem. con., in a counted vote of the whole Synod.

It read:

*That this Synod request that:*

(a) the Church of England not only pray for the persecuted church, but that its dioceses offer support to link dioceses where the church is facing persecution,

(b) organisations and dioceses consider joining the UK Freedom of Religion or Belief Forum to work with Christian and other groups in addressing the persecution of Christians and the global violation of Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB),

(c) churches consider using resources such as the practical *Everyday Faith — Hidden Church during the Thy Kingdom Come novena between Ascension and Pentecost, 26 May-6 June*,

(d) in the run up to the International Ministerial to Advance Freedom of Religion or Belief (The Ministerial FoRB) Conference 5-6 July 2022 individuals and groups consider hosting information events, prayer groups and fringe events using the *Toolkits for Places of Worship and Schools and Communities on the End The Persecution website*,

(e) churches and individuals contact their MPs in advance of The Ministerial FoRB, asking them to raise awareness of the persecuted church, and other FoRB violations, suggesting some of the actions in the FoRB Toolkit,

(f) that Her Majesty's Government implement in full the previously accepted 22 recommendations in the *Bishop of Truro's Independent Review for the Foreign Secretary of FCO Support for Persecuted Christians*, published in July 2019, by the third anniversary of the report in July 2022, as indicated within the report, and

(g) the next Lambeth Conference address the issue of the persecution of Christians.



The Bishop of Leeds, the Rt Revd Nick Baines, who chairs the review group

# Boateng: Revisit unfulfilled promises

## racial justice

THE General Synod heard a presentation on racial justice from **Lord Boateng**, who chairs the Archbishops' Commission on Racism. He was introduced on Tuesday afternoon by **the Archbishop of York**, who said: "This is a critical issue for the life of our Church nation and world."

Lord Boateng was born in Hackney and brought up on the Gold Coast, now Ghana, where he was christened, aged three. "When the priest said: 'We deliver this child up and to you, OI Christ,' at that moment, I jumped out of my parents' grasp and ran off. . . I spent most of my life running from Jesus Christ. At this stage of my life, I have stopped, which is why I accepted this position."

While preparing to speak to the Synod, he had been advised to answer the question: "Why are you here?" The Commission were here, he said, not simply because they were asked to be, nor for their range of titles and experience, nor for their mandate to report back and disband within three years. "We are here as followers of Jesus Christ," he said. "We are here to go on a journey with you, to be with you on the journey as we seek justice — in this instance, racial justice. . ."

"You have already been on it for some time. It is not easy; it is not comfortable; at times it is very uncomfortable. I don't 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 don't like having to do it. But we have to do it, because it is part and parcel of our reality that never goes away."

Repeating comments made upon his appointment, Lord Boateng said, to general applause: "All of us are diminished by racism. We have to talk about those things that cause hurt, not just to each other, but to him [Christ]. Racism is a gaping wound in the body of Christ. Every time we succumb to it, we hurt him."

He challenged the Synod: "When we are worried — and we should be worried — by empty pews, . . . about our failures in mission and 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?"

Indicating first the platform, then the floor of the chamber in Church House, Westminster, he said: "Parliament looks better in terms of diversity than you do: people of every race and every background. That hasn't just happened."

He could remember being the only black junior minister in the government and becoming the UK's first black Cabinet minister when he was appointed Chief Secretary to the Treasury in 2002. "And I am not that old," he said. "That required intentionality, the will to make a difference, and the willingness to do what it took to bring about change. There is no shortage in the C of E of policy and good intention. There is a shortage of delivery."

Lord Boateng paid tribute to the Archbishops' Anti-Racism Taskforce and their report, *From Lament to Action*, published last year. The Commission, he explained, was charged with implementing their

recommendations, most of which had already been accepted by the Synod.

"The most chilling thing about this report, the most concerning thing about this report, are the appendices: the long list of previous recommendations," he said, holding them up in front of the Synod, "which have not been implemented. Promises made which 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 require resources; it will require that the Church Commissioners and triennium party step up to the plate; but, above all, it will require each and every one of you to embrace it, to see that in every parish and every diocese there is a strategy. We have to have a strategy: love not as a sentiment, but as a strong strategy. It is that strategic love that changes things."

The Commission had already begun this work in positive meetings with the national church institutions (NCIs) and other bodies, and would continue by travelling to dioceses around England over the coming months to spark conversation and ensure grass-roots change. He invited the Synod to meet its members.

He concluded: "There is hurt; you see that hurt in debates around monuments to slavers in churches and in cathedrals. . . We are part and members and worshippers in churches which have themselves benefited from the horrors of the slave trade. That is the reality. . . They had 'Society' burnt on their skin. But there is a balm in Gilead. . . That is why I and your commission are here."

His presentation received a prolonged standing ovation from the Synod.

Responding, Archbishop Cottrell said that the Synod was "deeply in your debt, convicted by your words, and determined to be different". Introducing a motion to take note of a progress report on racial justice in the Church, he said: "I want to say that doctrine matters."

He referred to historic documents that had challenged a state theology that sought to justify oppressive racism. "Doctrinal fidelity and theological precision are not luxuries; they shape the way we live in a Christ-centred 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 mattered, too, he said. "Sometimes, the Church's opposition to racism 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."

The report before the Synod identified 47 actions for systemic change across the Church — including the establishment of a "properly resourced racial-justice unit" — of which 35 had already progressed with the NCIs. The others needed more thinking, he said. The still-functioning Committee for Minority-Ethnic Anglican Concerns (CMEAC) would be taking this forward.

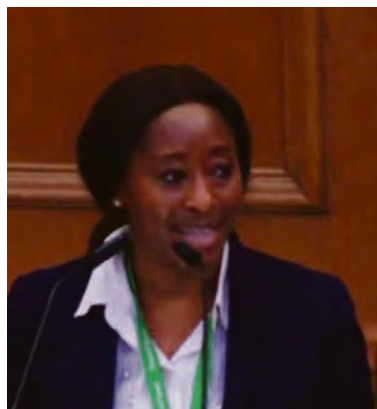
In the coming months, it would publish a diocese-by-diocese report on the work done on anti-racism, racial justice, belonging, inclusion, and diversity, "and hopefully a project to commission a collection of



Lord Boateng, who chairs the Archbishops' Commission on Racism



Anna De Castro (Sheffield)



Busola Sodeinde (London)



The Dean of Manchester, the Very Revd Rogers Govender

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: A theology for racial justice in the Church of England* would be published with SCM Press later this year.

"Much is happening, but there is so much that still needs to be done," he said. "All is far from well. But I think all we can do today is clearly demonstrate our determination to

put in place a national strategy that will support the work of racial justice and enable our dioceses and parishes to be involved and build capacity. . . The work of racial justice is the work of the gospel."

Beginning an hour-long debate, **the Revd Sonia Barron** (Lincoln), a former adviser to CMEAC, said that "years of inaction" and the "less than positive response" to two of the key recommendations of the Taskforce, including the lack of funding for racial-justice officers, had left her with the question: "Can I continue to trust this Church when trust has been broken so many times?" The Church had hugely underinvested in the work of racial justice because of a lack of will, she said.

**The Bishop of London**, the Rt Revd Sarah Mullally, thanked the contributors to *From Lament for Action*, which had challenged her and the diocese of London as it developed its vision for 2030. This included the need to respond to and root out systematic racism that "purposefully and unintentionally privileges certain groups while it marginalises others". She agreed with Ms Barron that the challenge would require intentionality, resilience, persistence, patience, and co-operation.

**The Revd Andrew Moughtin-Mumby** (Southwark) referred to his motion carried by the Synod in February 2020, which had called on the Church to lament and apologise for the racism experienced by the *Windrush* generation. He commended Lord Boateng's energy and urgency on the issue. "We have explicit and implicit discrimination, and it is a wound in the body of Christ." He urged members to stand up for others.

**Busola Sodeinde** (London), who, last year, was the first black woman to be appointed as a Church Commissioner, asked for diverse leadership to support the work of the Commission. "I ask that we may strip away pride and suspicion so that we may seek peace and justice." In her interview for the position, seeing the First Church Estates Commissioner, Alan Smith, on the panel had eased her nerves, she said. She encouraged the Synod that change was "now and here". She was positive about the impact the Synod could have.

**The Bishop of Burnley**, the Rt Revd Philip North (Northern Suffragans), had been interviewing candidates for a post recently, one of whom was of South-Asian heritage and who "zoomed us out from our tired binaries and tedious theological

infighting, and it was fresh and thrilling, and that is the opportunity this process invites: for the C of E to be re-evangelised by this energy of global Christianity." This required funding to poorer dioceses, because 65 per cent of BAME communities lived in 25 per cent of the poorest parishes, he said. "If we don't do that, this debate is hollow."

**The Dean of Manchester**, the Very Revd Rogers Govender (Northern Deans), said of Lord Boateng's comparison of the diversity of the Synod and Parliament: "That is a very worrying observation. We ought to be setting the pace and example to the nation, not the other way around. . . It shows how much catching up we have to do." He thanked the Taskforce and Commission for addressing "this scourge in public life. . . Together, we can do so much more."

**Anna De Castro** (Sheffield) said that, as she was married to a black African and had two mixed-heritage daughters, this was a pertinent issue for her. She called for "beautiful diversity to be reflected in flesh and blood" in congregations and leadership at all levels. She, too, hoped that sufficient funds would be introduced to adopt the roadmap set out by the Taskforce, as well as investment in grass-roots change, "in churches that refuse to bend their white-British norm culture in an area that is predominantly not white British".

**Prebendary Amatu Christian-Iwuagwu** (London), a member of the diocese's racial-justice priority group, was disappointed that it was not a full house on the floor of the chamber. "If we are serious to move from lament to action, there needs to be serious culture change."

"Lament to action means action," **the Archbishop of Canterbury** said. "We have to change the way we do appointments. . . It means that you can't say, I want someone like me; I want someone with my theology rather than someone who I am not quite sure about. I have sat through so many occasions where people have said: 'They are wonderful, but not here and not now.' That's got to change. Why not here? Why not now?"

Representing the standing committee of the House of Laity, **Clive Scowen** (London) said that proposals were being brought forward to gather UKME nominations and select five candidates for co-option. He commended that model to the Lower Houses of the Convocations.

**Rosemary Wilson** (Southwark) had not intended to make this topic her maiden speech, she said, but had been moved and inspired by Lord Boateng's address. Racism was a continuing experience in this country, she said, and, therefore, so was the process of lament.

**John Spence** (Archbishops' Council) said that this issue was "too important to hold up against cuts. . . We will find the money," he said. As it was for safeguarding, so it would be for racial justice.

Concluding, Archbishop Cottrell denied that the Archbishops' Council had rejected outright the Taskforce's recommendation of racial-justice officers: more work was needed to ensure that this was the right way forward.

The Synod voted by a show of hands (and green ticks on Zoom) to take note of the report.



Alistair Bianchi (Durham) moves the motion



Canon Rachel Mann (Manchester)



The Bishop of Dover, the Rt Revd Hudson-Wilson



The Bishop of Bristol, the Rt Revd Vivienne Faull

# Resolution calls for child protection

## slavery and trafficking

A MOTION on slavery, asking the Government to ensure the proper protection of trafficked and enslaved minors, was carried unanimously by the General Synod on the Wednesday afternoon.

The motion had originated in Durham diocesan synod in 2018. Introducing the debate, **Alistair Bianchi** (Durham) noted that the current conversations about trafficking had moved on since then. "While the subject of this speech is trafficked minors, we must acknowledge that the issue deeply affects every age category and applies to international and domestic trafficking."

He therefore welcomed amendments from Southwark diocese to widen the scope, especially in light of the Nationality and Borders Bill currently being debated in the House of Lords. Much of the research and recommendations had come from the report *Every Child Protected Against Trafficking*, which he commended.

In 2018, Durham diocese had supported Stephen (not his real name), who had been trafficked to the UK from Vietnam, aged 12, and put to work on a cannabis farm for four years before his rescue. Stephen had faced the new risk of being deported back to Vietnam, where

there was a strong chance of his being re-trafficked and facing persecution as a Christian convert. He had been sheltered by a vicar in the diocese, and the Bishop had petitioned the Government to have his deportation overturned. Stephen had been given leave to remain. "Children should, first and foremost, be treated as children," said Mr Bianchi, who had been involved in rehabilitating trafficking victims in the UK and in Ghana.

In Sheffield, he and his wife had connected with families whose passports had been removed and who had been forced into servitude. In Ghana, he had witnessed the "manipulation and lies sold to young people" who had been "seeking a pathway out of poverty for themselves and their families". Boys were promised glittering sporting careers, and girls were groomed from a very young age by people with trafficking links, he said. "These people who arrive on our shores are not illegal immigrants; they are victims of trafficking and, as such, should have the full weight of the law to protect them."

Concerns remained for these individuals, particularly as they transferred into adulthood. Minors were left in unsuitable accommodation, and the pandemic had increase Home Office delays; the asylum system was a push-point for trafficking, he said.

As it stood, the Nationality and Borders Bill put minors in a "highly vulnerable position". "We must ensure the Government is held to account on this." He hoped that his motion would strengthen the consensus of the Church and support the work of the Bishops on the Bill.

The Church needed to be engaged in issues of modern slavery at the grass-roots, he said. The Salvation Army and Clewer Initiative had already done good work to raise awareness.

"It is vital that our churches are equipped to identify those who are captive and to call on the Government to support those who are most vulnerable."

Moving his amendment, **the Archdeacon of Lewisham and Greenwich**, the Ven. Alastair Cutting (Southwark), said that his colleagues were keen to amplify the core message of the motion. There were many slave references in scripture, and he noted a plaque in Holy Trinity, Clapham, which said that slavery had been abolished in 1853. "Sadly, we know that, 200 years later, slavery has not been abolished."

It was evident abroad, in the UK, and in both urban and rural settings, he said. Slavery was not just poor working conditions, but a multitude

of abuses, including sexual abuse, county lines, coercive control, and organ-harvesting, to name a few. "Slavery is a global pandemic and we have peaks of it across our country now," he said: "an estimated 136,000 victims in the UK."

His amendment asked the Government to continue to take "bold decisions" in this area, raise awareness by using existing resources, and introduce training.

**Nadine Daniel** (Liverpool), a former national refugee-welcome officer for the Archbishops' Council and anti-slavery officer for Liverpool diocese, warned that it was "dangerous" for people with only "a little bit of learning" on the subject to go in with a saviour complex.

**The Bishop of Dover**, the Rt Revd Rose Hudson-Wilson (Canterbury), welcomed the addition, but wanted the Synod to be aware that this issue could not be left to bishops and synods; congregations had to be engaged, because they were the voters. It had to be embedded in conversations and sermons and within parishes.

**Luke Appleton** (Exeter) welcomed the detail of the amendment.

**The Archdeacon of Knowsley and Sefton**, the Ven. Pete Spiers (Liverpool), was concerned that the amendment removed the request for government legislation. "That would be a pity."

**Maureen Cole** (Archbishops' Council) said that a friend of hers who had originally planned to train to be a nurse in Kenya had been groomed as a child by someone who bought her chicken and chips. As a result, her friend had ended up in an Arab country. "It was by God's grace she was rescued," and was now teaching young people about the signs and dangers of modern slavery.

"We can all have a part to play to drive slavery out that we were not aware of."

**Alicia Dring** (Derby) said that the diocese of Derby had a close interest in this issue, owing to the work of the former Bishop of Derby, Dr Alistair Redfern, who had been instrumental both in the Modern Slavery Act and in nurturing the Clewer Initiative. "We cannot allow our British passion for paperwork and our indifference to lack of resources to put these children in further danger." This started with equipping congregations to be vigilant and keeping the issue on the agenda.

**The Revd Martin Poole** (Chichester), who is the diocesan lead on modern slavery, said that he had been working with the RC diocese to commission 15 anti-modern-slavery ambassadors across the network. They were parish-based and equipped to give information in

their locality and acted as a point of contact on the issue.

The amendment was carried by a counted vote: 301-2, with three recorded abstentions.

In the debate on the amended motion, **the Bishop of London**, the Rt Revd Sarah Mullally, said that there was much still to be done. Research suggested that migrant victims and witnesses with insecure asylum status were less likely to disclose slavery and abuse, because they feared deportation by the Home Office — a fact that perpetrators exploited.

**The Bishop of Bristol**, the Rt Revd Vivienne Faull, thanked Bishop Mullally and the Bishop of Durham, the Rt Paul Butler, for "being up at silly o'clock" in the Lords to debate the Nationality and Borders Bill. As it stood, it would undermine current anti-slavery legislation, she warned. Currently, the victim who had been convicted of a criminal offence with a prison sentence of 12 months or more anywhere or at any time might lose support. "Imagine what risk that puts sex workers [at] who have been trafficked, and young people caught up in county lines," she said.

The Bill also set time-limits on disclosure. The Church knew from its safeguarding work how long it took for survivors to tell the truth: this was "piecemeal and over time", as people found their voice.

**The Archbishop of Canterbury** confirmed that the Lambeth Conference would include a section on modern slavery.

Children and young people required additional protection and robust support, **Vanessa Pinto** (Leicester) said. She spoke of Mary (not her real name), who, aged 14, had been trafficked to Britain from West Africa and forced into domestic work by a relative. She had escaped two years later, and, having been identified as a modern-slavery victim, had been placed in a semi-independent accommodation "with little support".

She had befriended a man who was violent towards her and became pregnant. "She was still a minor." Mary was finally listened to by a charity working with trafficked children, Ms Pinto said.

**The Revd Matthew Beer** (Lichfield) said: "Slavery is a blight on our post-modern and individualistic society, where 'out of sight, out of mind' is a real challenge." He urged the Synod to commit time, prayer, effort, and resources to the challenge.

In the past decade, **Canon Rachel Mann** (Manchester) said, Manchester diocese had assisted 400-500 people who had been trafficked from England, Ireland, and overseas.

These statistics should "leave none of us to doubt the horrifying pervasiveness of modern slavery". She supported the motion and extra substance of the amendment.

The motion was carried by 331, nem. con.:

*That this Synod:*

(a) acknowledge the leading role that Her Majesty's Government has played internationally in challenging slavery; and

(b) 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 in accordance with the request from the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner, and to implement the other findings of her Annual Report in particular around effective access to support, accommodation, work and education for victims of modern slavery;

c. encourage all dioceses, deaneries, and parishes in the Church of England to raise awareness of modern slavery in our communities in the UK and internationally, working with the resources from partners such as the Church of England's Clewer Initiative and others, helping individuals and congregations to address this evil by:

i. seeking to identify potential victims of modern slavery in the community, and

ii. offering services to victims and survivors,

iii. supporting organisations which already provide services to help people leaving exploitation and/or with preventative work;

d. encourages dioceses, safeguarding leads, and training institutions and organisations in using resources like these within existing training, especially where individuals hold roles in authorised ministry, embedding understanding of modern slavery and equipping them with ways to respond;

e. ask that the issues of challenging human trafficking and modern slavery are raised at the global gathering of bishops of the Anglican Communion at the 2022 Lambeth Conference, and that the conference consider the international Church's role in tackling injustice and violence around the world and address the factors which create vulnerability to exploitation; and

f. call on all individuals to pray regularly for victims and survivors of modern slavery and for those organisations working to help and support them both in the UK and overseas, that we may come closer to fulfilling Jesus' injunction to "proclaim release to the captives."

## appointments

**THE Archbishop of York** moved "that the appointment of the *Venerable Pete Spiers* as Chair of the Appointments Committee be approved". **Archdeacon Spiers**, **Archbishop Cottrell** said, was "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 where necessary."

The Synod carried the motion.

**The Archbishop of Canterbury** moved "that the appointment of *Dame Caroline Spelman* as Chair of the Diocesan Commission be approved". This was a reappointment, after she had been appointed in April 2021 for a time-limited period. **Archbishop Welby** thanked the **Revd Paul Benfield** (Blackburn), vice-chair of the Diocesan Commission, who had served in an interim capacity before *Dame Caroline's* appointment.

The motion was carried.

## clergy remuneration

## Hereford: More givers, more pay

THE General Synod took note of a report on clergy remuneration. A review had been carried out between January 2020 and June 2021 (News, 25 June 2021) and had been due to come to the Synod last July, but had been postponed in the interests of a slimmer online agenda.

In his opening address on the Wednesday, **the Bishop of Hereford**, the Rt Revd Richard Jackson, who chairs the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee, said that the review had looked at appropriateness and affordability as well as adequacy.

The postponement, he said, had given people more time to engage with the review, and to take into account the increasing anxiety, as a result of a rise in fuel costs, about heating parsonages. The report focused on the long-term approach, he said; but the immediate financial concerns of clergy would be taken into account.

Bishop Jackson thanked clergy for their “dedicated, loving service, sustained in the face of unprecedented challenges” during the pandemic. “Maintaining morale in the face of these challenges is vital,” he said. “It is important to support the proportion of clergy who told us that they are facing financial hardship and feeling anxious about their financial well-being and retirement income.”

The value of the stipend had failed to keep up with inflation, he acknowledged, and the aspirations of the *Generosity and Sacrifice* report of 2002 had proved to be unrealistic. The global financial crisis of 2008 had required further adjustment, with changes made to the clergy pension scheme in 2008 and 2011 to keep it affordable.

“We are aware that these changes are a source of anxiety, and one of the reasons that prompted the review.”

Figures from the 2021 survey found that 62 per cent of clergy reported “living comfortably” or “doing all right”; 13 per cent were finding it “quite or very difficult to manage”; and 25 per cent were “just getting by” — suggesting, the Bishop said, that stipends were still at a level adequate for most.

The review team had estimated the overall package of stipend, housing, and a non-contributory defined-benefit pension scheme as being worth in the region of £50,000, including a stipend of around £27,000, housing, and a pension giving a guaranteed income in retirement. A large proportion of the package included “not being faced with costs faced by many par-

ishioners”, such as water charges and council tax.

Tied accommodation “could be a mixed blessing”, Bishop Jackson said, but there had been general support for keeping it, albeit with some additional flexibility. “It is seen as beneficial to their ministry for clergy to live among the communities where they minister.”

The review also found that the non-contributory defined-benefit pension scheme for stipendiary clergy was “becoming increasingly rare in the wider world”. Commissioned pensions specialists had assessed that, when combined with the state pension, this more than sufficed for a “moderate” standard of living in retirement.

A significant increase in the cost of clergy remuneration would create undue pressure on dioceses and parishes, the Bishop said. “In this context, it is important not to promise more than we can deliver, and [instead] 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.”

A key recommendation was the commitment of the Church to maintain the overall value of stipends and pensions against inflation in the future, although “ultimately, improvements in stipend depend on improvements in giving and improvements in the number of givers.”

It was hoped that guidance on housing would enable greater flexibility, consistency, and clarity in cases, for example, where the vicarage might not be suitable. The review concluded that having a reliable pension was a necessary consequence of providing a house for



The Revd Andrew Moughtin-Mumby called for “solidarity” with others



The Revd Jane Palmer (Salisbury) had expected something “more radical”

the better performance of duties.

It had 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”. The recommendations included greater and better availability of financial education, signposting, and support across the Church. “We are also in regular communication with the Clergy Support Trust.”

The review had also recommended the establishment of a diversity fund to support deaf and disabled clergy to meet additional costs.

**John Spence**, who chairs the Archbishops’ Council’s finance committee, acknowledged the particular challenge of fuel-price increases and emphasised that the Council was willing to make money available from a hardship fund.

**The Revd Dr Ian Paul** (Southwell & Nottingham) said that stipendiary colleagues had been reluctant to

speaking about these matters, and lay members had long been concerned. He saw a paradox in regarding remuneration as “adequate” despite its not keeping pace with inflation, and found the figure of one third of the clergy struggling to get by to be a “sobering statistic”.

**The Archbishop of York** said that he took very seriously the pastoral care of the clergy whom he served. Some were managing well only because of household income, not stipend income, he said.

“For ten years as a parish priest, we brought up three boys on the stipend. I am telling you, it’s really, really hard. And so I welcome looking at targeted additional support. That is the true spirit of stipend, to give us the money we need.” He was “grateful for the report and the direction of travel it indicates”.

**The Revd Jane Palmer** (Salisbury) recognised that her position as a stipendiary priest was “only possible through the generous giving of my

brothers and sisters. Our giving must be spent well.” She had expected to read something more radical about structures in the review.

“The report can’t be divorced from the wider strategy reviews,” she said. “This report seems to push 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. . . It feels like kicking the can down the road.” Realistic and diverse vocations need “realistic remuneration”, she said. “This is papering over the cracks of the real issues.”

**Julie Dziegiel** (Oxford), via Zoom, said that she had experience as a treasurer of a large parish, which had given her a degree of knowledge about the clergy. She suggested that archdeacons talk to treasurers about the national guidelines on expenses, how they were to be met, and how to identify people who were struggling.

**The Revd Dr Sean Doherty** (Universities and TElS) said that fairness was not a matter of equality, but of needs, and spoke of the stigma of applying for hardship funding. If means-testing was not appropriate for ordinands, why was it appropriate later?

Solidarity was “about putting ourselves in others’ shoes”, **the Revd Andrew Moughtin-Mumby** (Southwark) said. One vicar might have a partner who earned a large salary, had no dependants, and no worries about finance; another could be supporting dependent children on a stipend, or could be living in a poor parish.

The take-note vote was carried by a show of hands (and green ticks on Zoom).

## Hybrid meetings and future dates

## Synod business

THE General Synod’s first piece of business was to revive the temporary Standing Orders that had permitted hybrid working, enabling members to participate via Zoom.

It followed the **Archbishop of Canterbury**’s introduction of the new Prolocutors of the Lower Houses of the Convocations — **the Archdeacon of London**, the Ven. Luke Miller (London) for Canterbury, and **Canon Kate Wharton** (Liverpool) for York — and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the House of Laity, **Dr Jamie Harrison** (Durham) and **Alison Coulter** (Winchester) respectively.

**Geoffrey Tattersall** (Manchester) reminded the Synod of the need to add a further date, 7 August 2023, to their diaries on the revived Standing Orders. **Peter Bruinvels** (Guildford) asked for hybrid working to be made a permanent facility.

In a maiden speech, **Fiona MacMillan** (London) said that permanent hybrid working would open up the Synod to disabled people. **Canon Valerie Plumb** (Oxford), via Zoom, agreed.

The Synod voted in favour.

The chair of the Business Committee, **Robert Hammond** (Chelms-

ford), said that much of the feedback had been about Questions, with disquiet about the lack of time given to them, and, for some, the manner used. Some questioning had been “a little aggressive, hostile, and unpleasant in tone”, he said.

**Canon Andrew Cornes** (Chichester) argued that holding power to account should be done in a spirit of kindness and generous enquiry; but he pressed for answers that were “full” and “honest”.

**Vivienne Goddard** (Blackburn) was concerned about the personal expense involved in setting up systems to participate remotely.

In a maiden speech, **Gillian Verschoye** (Salisbury) said that the agenda was “deeply disappointing”. She hoped that future timetables would include issues of cutting bureaucracy.

**Sam Margrave** (Coventry) wanted the implications of the rising cost of clergy living to be put on the agenda as emergency business.

**Gavin Drake** (Southwell & Nottingham), via Zoom, was unhappy about the format of presentations, take-note debates, and group work in lieu of full debate: there were 13 diocesan motions waiting in the wings. A panel discussion on the Clergy Discipline Measure had been “relegated to a fringe meeting”.

**Emma Gregory** (Bath & Wells) was pleased that the extended time for Questions would maximise the chance to hear from more Synod members.

**Adrian Greenwood** (Southwark) urged the Business Committee to review the size of the Synod. As a legislative body, it needed enough expertise to achieve that purpose.

**Canon Tim Goode** (Southwark) asked the committee to consider making hybrid working permanent.

**The Revd Julian Hollywell** (Derby) thought that what was perceived as disrespect was often frustration. **Canon Simon Butler** (Southwark) reminded Synod that it was open to the chair to intervene to avoid “waffle”. **Martin Sewell** (Rochester) wondered whether there could be a provision that an answer could be ruled out of order.

Mr Bruinvels said that, compared with the House of Commons, Synod members were spoiled by seeing answers to questions early.

**The Archdeacon of Liverpool**, the Ven. Pete Spiers (Liverpool), asked whether thought had been given to training in how to ask a question.

**The Bishop of Leeds**, the Rt Revd Nick Baines, noted Mr Drake’s plea that presentations not be used in place of debate, but argued: “It’s intelligent and respectful to Synod that we brought the governance report for first consideration.”



John Spence, who chairs the finance committee, spoke about fuel prices

# Rules changed to pursue net-zero goal

## faculty jurisdiction

AFTER a two-hour debate and several fallen amendments, the General Synod approved changes to the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules. This was despite warnings about the impact on parish finances and the workload of volunteers.

The amended rules were moved by **the Dean of the Arches**, the Rt Worshipful Morag Ellis QC, an environmental lawyer by profession. She said that the changes were brought to the General Synod primarily because the 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 the Church’s achieving net zero.”

The rules were underlined by four principles: to move churches towards net zero; to make the permissions route more straightforward for carbon-reducing proposals; to help parishes with proposals that would produce additional carbon well after 2030; and to exclude matters of guidance from the rules. Matters that did not require a faculty would be included.

“There is no ‘one size fits all,’” Ms Ellis said. “In many instances, it would be possible to both reduce emissions and to save money.” By asking parishes to have regard to new net-zero guidance from the Church Buildings Council, the rules would ensure that parishes were “in touch with helpful technical guidance.”

She assured the Synod: “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, about what to do for the best in an informed way when we want or need to make changes to our buildings.”

Replacing gas and oil tanks was no longer in the list of works that did not require a faculty or the approval of an archdeacon.

**The Revd Stella Bailey** (Coventry), the vicar of a parish with a Grade I listed building and an Augustinian priory in its churchyard, said that the new rules were “inconvenient”, and would create more work. Yet, “this is where legislation reaches mission. For the emerging generations in our community, this subject matters. . . They are looking to this chamber and seeking authenticity and integrity.” She called for the changes to go further, to include listed buildings; and, in a plea to the Government and amenities societies, said: “Work with us to hear the cry of not just this chamber, but wider society.”

**Fiona Norris** (Salisbury), a Tearfund employee, quoted from a colleague affected by climate change in Honduras: “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.” She cited polling by Youthscape that suggested that only one in ten young people thought that the Church was doing enough on climate change.

“Will we practise what we preach?”

**The Bishop of Norwich**, the Rt Revd Graham Usher, the lead bishop on the environment, said that the “prophetic and ambitious target” to reach net zero by 2030 would be “an almighty challenge, but so is any aspect of living the gospel. It’s a challenge we need to step into.” He warned: “If we put in a new oil or gas burner today, we are investing in fossil fuels for another 25 years.”

**Canon Ruth Newton** (Leeds), who chairs the Synod environment group, was aware of anxiety about the impact of the target on “smaller, more vulnerable churches, which have already been hit hard by Covid and need a bit of a break”. Money must be made available, she said. But the burden of the target would “almost certainly not fall on our smaller and more vulnerable churches, but on larger parishes where the church is in daily use”.

Many of the new rules could be summarised as “Here’s an extra thing for parishes to do,” **the Revd Dr Miranda Threlfall-Holmes** (Liverpool) said. Going through the faculty process was “quite a bruising experience”, and the part played by the DAC should not “simply be to criticise the paperwork of PCCs. Why can’t we specify instead that DACs themselves should have regard to the guidance?”

**The Revd Carol Bates** (Southwark) warned that continued global warming of two degrees would “result in a death sentence for people in the Pacific, the West Indies, and Africa.” She noted that 84 per cent of church energy use went towards heating. “The only way for churches to reach carbon net zero is to decarbonise our heating.”

**The Archdeacon of Leeds**, the Ven. Paul Ayers (Leeds), said that, if something was on List A (not requiring a faculty or consultation with an archdeacon), then “nobody else knows what’s being done.” The removal of replacing fossil-fuel boilers from this list would mean “PCCs at least get advice.”

**The Revd Marcus Walker** (London) moved his first amendment, which would remove the requirement to have due regard to the net-zero guidance. This would turn the rules into “an ecologically sound meal of pure carrot” (as opposed to “stick”). Parishes were under huge financial strain, he said. “When we hit them with unaffordable costs, without anything but vague promises to fund them, we risk the very thing we love.” Volunteers were leaving as a result.

Ms Ellis denied that the rules contained such a stick, but were designed “to assist volunteers and others . . . to engage with the guidance which is there to help us all”.

The threshold of 25 standing to debate the amendment was not reached, and it was lost. Fr Walker moved his second amendment, concerning the replacement of fossil-fuel boilers. Ms Ellis said that the rules were not telling parishes, “Thou shalt never have another oil or gas boiler” because, “in some circumstances, sadly that will be the only option.” She continued, however: “We should not be perpetuating a situation which just enables parishes to do the same-old with boilers.”

**Prebendary Pat Hawkins** (Lichfield), who chairs the Lichfield DAC,



The Dean of the Arches, the Rt Worshipful Morag Ellis QC

said that the faculty process enabled parishes “to have real expert advice to negotiate through this very complex process of making our heating systems fit for a carbon neutral future”.

**The Archbishop of York** understood the sentiments behind the amendments seeking to make life easier for parishes, but said: “If we in the Church of England can be seen to be taking a lead in this issue . . . that is going to be the 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.”

**Canon Tim Goode** (Southwark), who had been on the Southwark DAC for nine years, urged the Synod to resist the amendment, which, he said, “may inadvertently create loopholes that will offer encouragement to churches that wish to either step back from or avoid the challenge that we as a Synod set down in 2020”.

The amendment was lost.

A further amendment was moved by **the Archdeacon of Chichester**, the Ven. Luke Irvine-Capel (Chichester). It sought to ensure that proposals to replace a boiler could be considered by an archdeacon rather than be subject to the faculty process. Most PCCs faced this matter “only in extremis, namely, when the existing boiler fails. This most frequently occurs in winter when the boiler is most in demand.” He explained: “My concern is that if this is not addressed, the result could be non-compliance with faculty jurisdiction or a loss of morale among our parishes.”

In support of the amendment, **Prudence Dailey** (Oxford) spoke of the risk that a boiler broke down just

before Christmas, “which is one of the best missional opportunities the Church has to get people through the door”.

**The Archdeacon of Blackburn**, the Ven. Mark Ireland (Blackburn), agreed. “Boilers break down in the middle of winter, and if people cannot be at a safe temperature to worship for extended periods, it’s not helpful.”

The amendment fell narrowly, by 142 to 145 with 12 recorded abstentions.

Finally, **the Archdeacon of Ludlow**, the Ven. Fiona Gibson (Hereford), moved an amendment proposing that the list of matters that could be approved by an archdeacon include the installation on the exterior of a church building of equipment for receiving and transmitting wireless broadband services. During the pandemic, many rural churches could not get online for want of a signal, she reported. “Our people felt isolated at a time when they needed us most.” The amendment would “rural-proof” the new rules.

The amendment and then the amended rules were carried by an overwhelming majority.

## Global issues considered in debate about voting members

### Canterbury CNC

POSSIBLE changes to the composition of the Crown Nominations Commission (CNC) for recommending names for the next Archbishop of Canterbury were debated by the General Synod on the Thursday afternoon when it took note of a report.

The report said: “It is important to recognise that many of the national Church responsibilities of the Archbishop are closely bound in with Communion responsibilities, as is his public voice. Current issues of global concern — the environmental crisis, migration, health related matters (HIV, Covid etc) — call for a Communion-wide response and engagement, which is demanding in terms of time and resources.”

But the report also recalled the background of “colonial history” and commented: “The Church of England and the Communion cannot escape asking why a British cleric should always be *primus inter pares* [first among equals].”

The Commission presently has 16 voting members: nine representatives of the national interests of the Church of England; six representatives of the diocese of Canterbury; and one for the Anglican Communion, which, in 2012, was the then Archbishop of Wales, Dr Barry Morgan.

The proposal in the consultation paper is to reduce Canterbury diocesan representation from six to three. The Archbishops’ Council suggests a nine representatives of the Church of England’s national interests; three of the diocese of Canter-

bury; and five from the Communion.

Introducing the debate, **the Bishop of Chester**, the Rt Revd Mark Tanner (in place of the **Bishop of Worcester**, Dr John Inge, who had tested positive for Covid), described the matter as cutting “to the heart of who we are. Words matter. . . So does the tone in which they are offered. It is a consultation, not a decision . . . a consultation about ‘our’ Communion.”

In 2015, he said, Canterbury diocese had asked for more voices from the Communion to be present. Other ways of addressing the imbalance had been suggested, including a revolving presidency.

“Canterbury does not hold juridical authority over a province, but is *primus inter pares*. We are not here to instruct the Communion on its polity. Everything must be done through a process of reception and consensus. Our sisters and brothers across the Communion matter to us.”

He continued: “Don’t think this is only about democracy. Don’t fear that this proposal allows Communion representatives to block an appointment: this is not about politics, but fairness. Don’t fear any conspiracies in the timing of it . . . [The present Archbishop] has publicly documented his wish to continue ‘for a good time yet’.”

The world was watching, he said. “Our brothers and sisters are observing our common body-language and words,” and the debate was “an opportunity to listen and understand each other’s voices”.

**The Bishop of Ripon**, Dr Helen-Ann Hartley (Leeds), said that when she had been the Bishop of Waikato, in the Province of Aotearoa, New

Zealand and Polynesia, she had experienced “immense respect for the see of Canterbury and the Church of England”, while acknowledging that it was “not without complexity, and in many ways bore the scars and scorn of colonialism”. She had been dismayed by some of the responses to the consultation so far, she said, particularly the use of the word “foreign”. She asked: “If we reject this consultation . . . what will our sisters and brothers in Christ say about us?”

**The Archdeacon of London**, the Ven. Luke Miller (London), recalled a period in the 19th century, before Pusey, when “foreign mission” was left to private enterprises and missionary societies, and when bishops were not appointed outside of England. “These proposals help us to walk together . . . to explore together how we should engage in our own Church and in the context of the global Communion.”

**The Revd Mae Christie** (Southwark), who had recently become a British citizen, having been born and brought up in the United States, said that the Episcopal Church in the US had a prayerful relationship with the Anglican Communion. “We all prayed every Sunday for the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Anglican Communion . . . connected him to our local story.”

The new proposals might have the opposite effect of what was intended, she continued: *primus inter pares* should be a guide, but this was an appointment and not an election “determined by the context they came from. We all know how tenu-

*Continued opposite*

# Critical motion follows ISB report

## safeguarding

THE General Synod was taken through a critical report from the chair of the new Independent Safeguarding Board (ISB), **Maggie Atkinson**, on Wednesday, which sets out, in her view, how far the Church must travel to prevent further safeguarding failures and to promote a safer culture (News, 11 February).

The report came to the Synod as part of an update presented jointly by the **Bishop of Huddersfield**, Dr Jonathan Gibbs, the lead bishop for safeguarding, and the chair of the National Safeguarding Team (NST), **Zena Marshall**.

Synod members had many questions for both the NST and the ISB.

*Continued from previous page*

ous that position is, requiring consent of all the Communion. The Archbishop of Canterbury is, at heart, a bishop of the Church of England: he starts first at home. . . I worry this proposal may appear more rather than less colonial."

**Christina Baron** (Bath & Wells) urged the Synod to reject the motion. A century ago, no one had expected the Archbishop of Canterbury to spend between 25 and 40 per cent of his time in the Communion. It was, therefore, right that the nomination process should change. "It would be a good thing to have wider consultation about the role, but don't close the options by setting up an interview panel first," she urged. "Taking note before a widespread consultation about what the Archbishop of Canterbury should be asked to do" would be premature.

**David Kemp** (Canterbury) said that the original motion in 2015 had been a plea for a change in the CNC for appointing the Bishop of Dover. He recalled a practical letter from Archbishop Ramsey to his own father, a clergyman, as an example of "an Archbishop [who was] hands-on in running his diocese" at a time "when we were sure exactly where decisions were made". The Bishop of Dover was still an appointment of the Archbishop. He suggested: "Make the Bishop of Dover as near as possible to a diocesan bishop."

**Jayne Ozanne** (Oxford) also resisted the motion. "We need a Primate for all England — all of us," she said. One reason for being "hamstrung" on matters such as sexual identity was that "our own Archbishop has had to have an eye to the Anglican Communion. Others have made strides; we remain in a quagmire." She suggested that what was needed was "a whole new boat, not a rearrangement of deckchairs". There were also sensitivities to be acknowledged, she said. Many in the Communion might be in communion not so much with the Archbishop of Canterbury as with the Queen.

**The Revd Jake Madin** (York) supported the broad aims of the consultation, but pointed out that a two-thirds majority was difficult to achieve from a membership of 17; the figure needed rethinking. He also reflected on where these representatives would be chosen from: "based on geography" was not representative of where most lived.

**Canon Bruce Bryant-Scott** (Eur-

Dr Gibbs and Ms Marshall defended the NST's progress and reiterated that safeguarding must be in the DNA of the whole Church. Ms Atkinson said that the ISB "would go to the barricades" to prevent the "arm's-length board" that some favoured and which would "allow you to abdicate your responsibilities. We will need a really rigorous conversation with all of you."

There were questions about how to pool good practice; how to listen to children; and whether there was any theological reflection on abuse. Ms Atkinson complimented the work being done with ordinands as "a culture alive to proactive engagement. . . an A-plus".

**Martin Sewell** (Rochester) asked: "If I am a complainant or respondent, where do I go to get it fixed

ope) declared himself Canadian-born and raised. The original proposal seemed to be mainly about the Bishop of Dover, he said; consequently: "Are we trying to solve a problem that doesn't exist? Is it profoundly colonial? The Archbishop of Canterbury is *primus inter pares*, but that's because none of us can come up with a viable alternative." Should it, he asked, be a case of "a non-UK citizen telling the C of E it must be a decision made by English people"?

**The First Church Estates Commissioner**, Alan Smith, told the Synod about his upbringing in Barbados. His great-great-grandfather had been born a slave, but had built Anglican churches, and thus was one of only five people in Barbados to have a gravestone there, because Anglicans did not bury people of African descent. "The Lord has a sense of humour," he said.

The Anglican Church had been there, "owning plantations where people were pieces of property. Here are we today, talking about giving 25 per cent of the vote to 75 per cent of our community." The question was not, "Are you an Anglican? Are you Church of England?" but "Are we brothers and sisters in the global community?"

**Dr Jamie Harrison** (Durham) reminded the Synod that the risk of not voting to take note would mean that the business would lapse.

**Jane Patterson** (Sheffield) suggested that this was a good time for the consultation, because there was no vacancy. She supported the principle of rethinking the composition of the CNC, but wanted details. Questions could be included about the needs of the Communion, of the see of Canterbury, and other English sees, to ensure equal representation of diocese, national Church, and Communion.

**Gavin Drake** (Southwell & Nottingham) declared an interest as communications director for the Anglican Communion; therefore, he would be abstaining from the vote. "We may not like the colonial part of our history. . . but the Archbishop of Canterbury carries weight and kudos that other bishops don't," he said.

The take-note motion was carried in a vote by Houses: Bishops 26, nem. con., with one recorded abstention; Clergy 102-27, with 13 recorded abstentions; Laity 112-43, with 12 recorded abstentions.

The consultation is open until 31 March.

quickly? Where does the buck stop?"

**The Revd Graham Hamilton** (Exeter) was worried about mission creep: "You need permission to step into your space. . ." Ms Atkinson responded, to loud applause: "You will all have people in some of your parishes sitting in a bubble of misery." Dr Gibbs reiterated: "The Church of England is a complex animal — we can't just dictate from the centre. . . We must find a right way of doing things and taking people with us across the Church."

**Gavin Drake** (Southwell & Nottingham) then proposed a following motion that both asked the Synod to express its disapproval of the paper and called for a full and independent assessment of the work and performance of the NST and the "myriad safeguarding bodies of the Church of England".

He alleged seven failings: the use of the term "vulnerable" persons instead of "adults at risk of abuse or neglect"; the lack of reference to the creation of key performance indicators; lack of detail to enable the Synod to form a view about its effectiveness; the absence of any mention of bullying in the Church, "widely acknowledged to be a serious issue within churches"; a piecemeal approach rather than "the wholesale reform that is needed"; failure to address the concerns of the ISB's first report; and the lack of provision for any independent external scrutiny.

Mr Drake described the ISB

report as "explosive". "It is no longer good enough for Synod just to follow the advice of the NST."

Lively debate followed. Dr Gibbs defended the work of the NST and declared the motion flawed. The NST report to Synod had never been intended to give a strategic overview: it was an update.

He suggested there was misunderstanding and misinterpretation in Mr Drake's motion, and told the Synod that a vote in favour would "effectively constitute a vote of no confidence in NST before it had started. I believe it is misplaced. I would urge you to resist it."

Some members were in favour. **Clive Billenness** (Europe) suggested that the report "almost turns a blind eye to bullying", and said that his mailbox was full of "heart-breaking stories" of bullying that had caused untold harm.

**Kashmir Garton** (Worcester), a member of the National Safeguarding Panel and of the Probation Service, had been impressed by the wide-ranging work that the NST had so far undertaken. It was a "process of embedding, a dynamic and continuous process of improvement".

**James Cary** (Bath & Wells) said that this train "was leaving the station very late. Synod is being asked to hit the brake and take the train apart. Yes, room for improvement. . . But this motion, no; it will slow down the planning."

**Canon Simon Butler** (Southwark) asked the Synod to move to next



The Bishop, of Huddersfield, Dr Jonathan Gibbs, in charge of safeguarding

business. This was a following motion, he said, and the Synod had not the background briefing papers that would have made interrogation and a detailed response possible.

The chair, **Professor Joyce Hill** (Leeds), advised the Synod that, if it moved to next business, the motion would lapse and could not be reconsidered in the same or similar form in the life of the Synod. Mr Drake asked that the debate might instead be adjourned. Safeguarding was a major issue, he said, "and if the NST has limited function, why are we spending so much money on it?"

More points of order followed. Standing Orders prevented Mr Drake's request for adjournment being made within a reply. Professor Hill permitted the requested counted vote. The Synod voted by 236 to 75, with 22 recorded abstentions, to move to next business.

## Welby: God calls us to act together

### presidential address

*Excerpts from Archbishop Welby's address:*

A KEY lesson of Covid has been unequivocally that the illusion of individualism and atomisation is just that: it's 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. . .

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 as a world are the challenges of the tension between individualism and community. Global inter-generational 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. . .

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. . .

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. . .

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. . .

A society that forgets about God, that loses the sense that it needs God . . . that no longer desires God . . . 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 in relationship with others.

And without the Church, without that community of faith, as the salt and light of that society, that society loses its way. Without God it cannot maintain a determining objective except power.

Jacques Maritain, the Roman Catholic philosopher, wrote [in *Christianity and Democracy*] 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?

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.

It's 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.

## lay discipleship

## Equipping-for-evangelism update

THE laity are now more confident in expressing their faith, and there is “strong evidence” of a change in culture, according to a progress report on the implementation of recommendations made five years ago.

In a debate in the General Synod on Wednesday afternoon, members told stories of encouragement by initiatives from around the country before voting overwhelmingly to take note of the report.

Introducing the progress report, **the Bishop of Gloucester**, the Rt Revd Rachel Treweek, said that the implementation of the Setting God’s People Free initiative, commissioned by the Archbishops’ Council and presented to the Synod in February 2017, had helped the whole Church to focus on its identity. Every baptised Christian was a unique follower of Christ, irrespective of their background, ability, or age, she said: “It is about who we are.” Nor was it simply about greater social action.

After a short film telling stories of what faith meant to a handful of

Christians in different contexts around the country, **Dr Nick Shepherd**, the project director spoke. The aim of Setting God’s People Free was better enabling the whole people of God to live out their faith, he said; and this was becoming “a firmer reality”.

Equipping the laity remained a continuing priority for a Church of missionary disciples, he said. He referred to three outcomes of the project which would continue. “Everyday Faith” was an accessible digital portal to equip and encourage Christians; the “Discipleship Enablers Network” was about co-ordinated action and learning between dioceses and Christian networks, and sharing good practice; and “Everyday Church” was a resource of tools and tips, demonstrating “small shifts that make a big difference”.

He emphasised that, while the first phase of the project was com-



Zoe Ham (Carlisle)

plete (News, 12 July 2019), the work would carry on as part of Vision and Strategy for the 2020s.

Opening the debate, **Dr Jamie Harrison** (Durham) said that the original report had set out a bold vision. “The question remains how we make the most of all the opportunities

we have, how ordained and lay together enable each other to live out the good news of Jesus Christ in the whole of life,” he said. It was about the laity and clergy “valuing and celebrating” each other’s callings.

He quoted Pope Francis, who in 2013 had called for a deeper discipleship in every sphere of life, and coined the term “missionary disciples”. The Church of England wasn’t afraid of borrowing that phrase from the Pope, he said. The progress report should remind the Church of its shared responsibility to own the vision, to encourage others, and to continue the embedding of culture change.

“I want to say a big yes to this report. More please,” **Zoe Ham** (Carlisle) said. She wanted to thank those behind the project for their work. She told the Synod of her experience in her own church in Barrow-in-Furness. When a teenage boy had been stabbed, the school librarian, a member of her congregation, had been able to share her faith with colleagues and students. “Fiona is so encouraged to see how God could use her in that place as she faithfully lives for Jesus,” she said. “We need mature Christians in these places.” She appealed to the Synod to “take hold” of the report and build its vision into future strategy.

**Canon Toby Wright** (Oxford), referred to the work in the diocese of Oxford on personal discipleship plans, cited in the report as an example of good practice. Five hundred “encouragers” had been trained, Canon Wright said; they all agreed afterwards that they had been equipped to develop their gifts. In his own church, the number of people who felt equipped to live out their faith Monday to Saturday had moved from 35 per cent to 86 per cent three months after using the personal-discipleship plans.

“I want to encourage members of Synod: this works,” he said. “It doesn’t cost anything. Anyone can use it. And 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.” He appealed for a balance between the strategic and the personal, one-to-one approach.

**Sue Cavill** (Derby) sounded a note of caution that equipping the laity should not be a means of deploying volunteers as free replacements for the clergy, or diverting funding from the parishes. “But I’m also excited about the proposals for Setting God’s People Free, enabling and equipping those of us who are the laity to follow Jesus confidently in every sphere of life,” she said.

**The Bishop of Sheffield**, Dr Pete Wilcox, was encouraged by the reference to the “Lights for Christ” resource from his diocese. He wanted to make explicit the connection to baptism. The resource

made it possible to challenge all those who had been baptised to enter into “the full dignity” of their baptism, he said.

“I fear we’ve too often allowed the baptised 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 evangelise our nation again and if we are to be effective heralds of God’s coming Kingdom, we really do need to enable all the baptised by the power of the Holy Spirit to shine as lights for Christ in the world to the glory of God the Father.”

**The Revd Claire Lording** (Worcester), in a maiden speech, expressed her enthusiasm for the project. She told the Synod about the Faith at Work in Worcestershire initiative, an ecumenical group of workplace chaplains whose job it was to share the love of God in their communities. It was encouraging to see the seeds of faith grow and spread as a result of conversations. “It is vital that we continue to be a Church that is committed to resourcing and encouraging these everyday ministries,” she said.

**Gill Frigerio** (Coventry), a member of the Setting God’s People Free advisory group, emphasised that the laity were not “unpaid labour” or “rota fodder”. “We are in fields and factories, shops and offices, clinics and classrooms.” These were not easy places to be, she said. “I’m 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.”

**Simon Friend** (Exeter) said that as a property developer he spent a lot of time on building sites, and it was a “huge privilege” to talk to workers there. He found it hard, however, to imagine bringing any of them to church. The church would have to change, he said, “so my blokes can come in and not feel utterly weird”.

**Karen Czapiewski** (Gloucester) wanted to make a plea for continued joined-up thinking. A vast array of initiatives all had a common aim. “We seek to share the good news of God’s love with all and if we do it well . . . it works.” She told a story about parents from a school in the area coming to church with their children. The parents had expected to hear from the clergy or teachers. “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”, she said, and had led to the parents’ talking to their own parents and friends about faith.

“So many people and places that have done stuff. There are new ideas, new energy . . . People have found new-found confidence in expressing and living out their faith in the world and their context.”

## Pandemic remains a focus

## questions

ONE early question in the Q&A sessions came from **Rebecca Hunt** (Portsmouth), who asked what steps had been taken to ask the Government to end the policy of allowing women to take pills at home to induce an early abortion. The temporary provision brought in during the pandemic to reduce unnecessary travel and risk of infection was due to expire on 24 March, but the Government had not ruled out an extension.

The written answer from the chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council, **Mark Sheard** (Archbishops’ Council), stated that one in 17 women using the pills at home were being admitted to hospital with medical complications. **The Bishop of Carlisle**, the Rt Revd James Newcome, had also written to the Health Secretary to ask for the provision to be ended.

The statistics in the written answers to Synod members showed its present state of health. Taking random examples, figures showed that 78 per cent of churches were running foodbanks — the equivalent in 2011 had been 33 per cent; 17 dioceses had a designated chaplain for Gypsy, Traveller, and Roma communities.

More than half (57 per cent) of parishes recorded a deficit in 2020-21; there were 4501 single-parish benefices and 2151 multi-parish benefices, the largest containing 29 parishes; and at the end of 2019, the total of unrestricted funds held by dioceses was £798 million, £184 million of which was held in cash.

**Andrew Orange** (Winchester), wanted precise figures on the parishes being served by an incumbent priest or priest-in-charge. The answer given was 6200 benefices with at least one ordained cleric, and 4940 benefices with at least one cleric whose post was described as incumbent or incumbent-status.

**Canon Andy Salmon** (Manchester) asked how much of the Strategic Development Fund grants in the past five years had supported mission in

the most deprived communities. The figure was £19 million (42 per cent).

Climate questions were also raised. The carbon footprint of the average large urban church was noted as 15 times the average small rural church; 31 per cent of churches had recorded their energy footprint tool data for 2020, of which 3600 (23 per cent) had completed a response with usable data; seven per cent of churches had reached the target of net zero carbon.

Introduction of the use of individual cups at the eucharist was on many minds. Questions and answers exposed a multitude of ambiguities and a variety of practices.

The disbanding of the Rural Affairs Council, “made on the basis of the staffing requirement and the group’s effectiveness”, troubled members. **Debbie McIsaac** (Salisbury) asked the Archbishops’ Council how the C of E could be “for all people in all places” in areas where there was little or no public transport, poor connectivity and infrastructure, and where the norm is large multi-parish benefices with a single incumbent?”

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York acknowledged that its presence needed to change to reflect the rural context. **The Bishop of Manchester**, Dr David Walker, later reiterated that the introduction of a new Synod rural group would enable “new policies and proposals to be scrutinised from a rural perspective”.

Why had the C of E Youth Council been abolished, and who had made the decision, asked **Jayne Ozanne** (Oxford). It had not been abolished, **the Bishop of Durham**, the Rt Revd Paul Butler said; numbers were no longer viable, and the decision had been taken to disband.

**The Archbishop of York** said that the House of Bishops had met 49 times in the past year, not all of these meetings, he acknowledged, under Standing Orders. He defended the value of “first thoughts” and the freedom for bishops to speak under Chatham House rules when necessary.

The John Smyth case was on members’ minds, principally the lack of progress in supplying the Arch-

bishop of Cape Town with the information needed to investigate abuse during Smyth’s time in South Africa. **Helen King** (Oxford) was persistent and direct: “Who will make the decision?” she asked, and declared black children to be every bit as valuable as “white privileged victims”. **The Bishop of Huddersfield**, Dr Jonathan Gibbs (Northern Suffragans), answered unequivocally that “a victim is a victim.” **Canon Simon Talbott** (Ely) wanted an update on progress, and deplored the lack of accountability for “the best boys in the best schools”.

**The Revd Zoe Heming** (Lichfield) wanted to know what mechanisms were in place to ensure that material such as healthcare data was not held in the “blue file” beyond ordination.

## farewells

**BIDDING farewell to the retiring Bishop of Winchester, Dr Tim Dakin, the Archbishop of Canterbury said: “It is well known that the past years have not been easy and have been filled with much pain and distress”. Archbishop Welby thanked Dr Dakin for his contribution to church growth and social engagement and to mission and ministry in the Church of England and Anglican Communion over “very many” years.**

**The Archbishop of York said farewell to the Bishop of Liverpool, the Rt Revd Paul Bayes, and his wife, Kate, who were in the gallery. Pictures from Bishop Bayes’s ministry, including cartoons, were displayed. “Paul is passionate to share the Gospel with those who do not know it,” he said.**

**Bishop Bayes had a “great heart” for those who were excluded, marginalised, and left behind by the Church, Archbishop Cottrell said. He had been a champion for the rights and dignities of LGBT+ people, and the Church had seen and received that ministry in the Synod, the House of Bishops, Liverpool diocese, and the public square. The Synod stood to applaud.**

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