

GeneralSynod.news

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General
Synod
.NEWS

February Synod 2022

Day 2

Day 2 Synod Digest

- Discussion on safeguarding
 - Presentation given on the formation of the independent safeguarding board
 - Gavin Drake brought forth an amendment that was thrown out on procedural grounds.
 - General Support for the work of the ISB
- Environmentally friendly adjustments to faculty rules.
 - Marcus Walker's two amendments on reducing the burden on PCCs are defeated.
 - Amendment to allow Arch Deacon's to make calls on emergency boiler replacement falls by just a few votes.
 - Faculty amendments over overwhelmingly supported.
- Challenging slavery and human trafficking
 - Amendment brought forward giving more detail about practical actions to address the issue.
 - Passionate stories about real world cases and where issues persist.
 - An appeal from the Bishop of Bristol to support her challenge to the upcoming border's bil.
- Clergy remunerations
 - Value of the stipend has been steadily falling.
 - Consideration needed for candidate diversity as there may be many examples of people who don't have external support.
 - No plan to reverse cuts to clergy pensions.
- Setting God's People Free
 - Great examples of where lay people are being empowered in their daily worship.
 - Made very clear it is not about cutting clergy but about empowering everybody.
 - Parish church needs to be saved but also transformed. Paper taken note of.

Item 9 Safeguarding

<https://www.generalsynod.news/post/gs-2244-safeguarding-summary>.

Bishop of Huddersfield Jonathan Gibbs, Introduces the presentation on safeguarding. It will then be followed by a time for questions.

Established in 2015 the national safeguarding team was set up to advice expert advice and to implement ISCA recommendations.

Maggie Atkinsons - six recommendations that synod approved of have made significant progress to improve safeguarding across the church.

IICSA has been a key driver of change in the past few years - Bishop of Huddersfield

Learning has become conscious and proactive not passive and reactive.

Abuse ruins people's lives - Bishop of Huddersfield

Past case review takes place to ensure historical cases were managed correctly or if not to ensure key learnings are taken forward.

Maggie Atkinsons - chair of independent safeguarding board addresses the chamber.

Maggie Atkinsons - there is deep sincerity in the church at improving safeguarding at every level.

Maggie Atkinsons - There should be a stronger victim not institution focus.

Maggie Atkinsons - the safeguarding structures are still hard to navigate especially for victims. There is still improvements to be made.

Maggie Atkinsons - safeguarding is still seen as a todo to tick off a list, rather than a culture that touches everything we do.

Pete Spiers, Liverpool - why can't we publish the recommendations from the report?

Paul Waddell, Southwark - A limit of just 12 months support for survivors. They weren't informed and it will run out before the address scheme is in place.

Executive summary will be published in a co-ordinated way.

Interim support scheme is for urgent and immediate need.

There is the possibility of a totally external body for safeguarding. The issue is this allows key stakeholders to abdicate their responsibilities.

Sean Doherty, University's - there is a change in culture from ordinands that safeguarding is core to their vocation.

Penny Allen, Lichfield - has advice been taken from state schools and child services to assist the church with its work?

Ben Sargent, Winchester - a lack of Biblical reflection and discernment on safeguarding. What can be done to develop a theology on abuse and safeguarding.

Speak to your safeguarding officer. You don't have to take it home with you.

Response: Many children know what's going wrong but can't put a name to it. We need to make spaces where children can find a means of safely being listened to them even if they cannot organically express what is happening.

Response: two documents in the works for a theological underpinning to this important work.

Does the safeguarding team have the resources it needs?

Graham Kirk-Spriggs, Norwich - is there a plan for a streamlined process so incumbents can easily find what they need?

Martin Shakespeare - how can safeguarding be updated for the mixed-ecology and 10,000 new churches?

Response: training has been streamlined through the new safeguarding portal.

Response: safeguarding must be part of the practice of the whole of the church - whatever form that takes.

Jack Sheppard, Liverpool - what steps are being taken to publicize the work of the safeguarding team in language accessible to victims.

Graham Hamilton, Exeter - how do we ensure older members who are not confident with technology are not alienated by the digitally native nature of resources or the mission creep of roles.

Response: disclosing abuse is a difficult thing to do and takes courage. Highly trained safeguarding officers are trained well to deal with disclosures.

Response: Modern slavery and domestic abuse are not mission creep.

John Bavington, Leeds - how do we navigate the safer recruitment process for those who do

Peter Barret, Oxford - why is the pilot IISCA initiative going to take two years?

Response: the Church of England is a complex animal.

We have to get it right and take people with us.

Motion

'That this Synod express its disapproval of the Safeguarding report GS2244 for the following reasons:

- a. The report persists in referring to "Vulnerable" persons – a terminology which has been deemed to be derogatory and restrictive to the understanding of its applicability – which was replaced by the term "Adults At Risk of Abuse or Neglect" under the Care Act 2014 in recognition of the dynamic nature of the Risk of Abuse in relation to individuals.
- b. The report makes no reference to the creation of Key Performance Indicators for the operation of the National Safeguarding Team (NST) in order to address the very many real and valid concerns that have been raised about its focus, effectiveness and method of operating. For a Team comprising 26.5 FTE's which includes consultants, the absence of such Key Performance Indicators represents a substantial weakness in the management of a resource which represents a considerable ongoing financial commitment.
- c. It does not provide any detail which would enable the Synod to form a view about the NST's effectiveness in making the Church of England a safe place for its entire worshipping community and for those who work for it in a remunerated or voluntary basis.
- d. The report shows a praiseworthy focus on sexual and spiritual abuse, but it makes no mention of bullying in the Church which is widely acknowledged to be a serious issue within churches, nor does it propose how and how bullying can be addressed.

- e. It demonstrates a piece-meal approach to safeguarding development by the NST rather than the wholesale reform that is needed.
- f. The report does not address the concerns raised in paragraph 8(f) of the first report of the Independent Safeguarding Board, which is attached as an appendix to GS 2244 – concerns that have been raised both privately and publicly with and about the NST by many people over recent years.
- g. Given that the ISB report states in its paragraph 6 that “It [The Board] does not have powers to sanction, direct, regulate, inspect or insist” there is no provision within the safeguarding arrangements for any independent external scrutiny with powers to intervene in cases where negligence, misconduct or performance failures are alleged or identified; nor does it indicate how the NST and the national safeguarding functions of the Church of England can intervene in cases where bishops and dioceses are not following good safeguarding practice or following the codes of practice or guidance.

This Synod therefore call for a full independent assessment of the work and performance reporting of the NST and the myriad national safeguarding bodies of the Church of England; for this evaluation to be published in full; and for a debate on its contents at a future Group of Sessions to enable the Synod to be fully engaged in the decisions about the future direction and shape of the Church of England’s safeguarding work.’

Safeguarding motion being debated by Gavin Drake, Southwell and Nottingham
[#synod](#)

Gavin Drake, Southwell and Nottingham - Atkinson's report is explosive in its criticism of the national church's failures. Why is the new panel's authority only moral.

Gavin Drake, Southwell and Nottingham - the problem is not resources, but how that money is being spent and the effectiveness of the team spending it.

Gavin Drake, Southwell and Nottingham - not alone in thinking that the facts are twisted to protect the church's reputation

Gavin Drake, Southwell and Nottingham - Today is the day not for nice words but for us to act.

Bishop of Huddersfield - safeguarding is about challenge and so is grateful for the Gavin's challenge.

Responsibility for safeguarding lies with Parishes and local churches as independent charitable bodies.

Bishop of Huddersfield - not all bullying is a safeguarding matter and may be better dealt with by other mechanism.

Bishop of Huddersfield - This motion would essentially be a vote of no confidence in the ISB and would be an attack on the work of it before it has begun. This motion is misplaced.

Clive Billenness, Europe - Report is good but things are missing. Focus is on traditional safeguarding, not enough on bullying. Complaints about bullying are dismissed as robust debate, yet mailbox is full of adults who have suffered untold harm.

Where authorities take no action at bullying, it is taken as consent.

The strong do what they want and the weak suffer. This cannot go on.

There must be a zero tolerance approach to bullying.

Kashmir Garton, Worcester - all our churches should be places that are safe to enter and where all can flourish

The independent safeguarding board is in its early stages. This motion does not take account of the fact that safeguarding is a dynamic process.

As the safeguarding train is gathering speed, synod is being asked to put on the breaks.

Simon Butler, Southwark - moves to have motion dismissed.

Gavin Drake - resists Butler's motion. If we don't want to vote then moves that it should be adjourned for further discussion.

Proceed to next business	
Against	The motion was very unlikely to pass. To use procedures to try and have it thrown out is undemocratic and egregious.

In favour 236

Against 75

Absentions 22

Proposal to move to next business is carried.

Item 10 Challenging Slavery and Human Trafficking

<https://www.generalsynod.news/post/summary-of-gs-2246-challenging-slavery-and-human-trafficking-durham>

Alistair Bianchi introduces the item on challenging slavery and human trafficking which originated from Durham Diocese.

Alistair Bianchi - Trafficked young people who arrive here on our shore are not illegal immigrants, they are victims.

Alistair Bianchi - the Borders Bill will make life harder for victims.

Ven Alastair Cutting (Southwark) proposes this.

Alistair Bianchi responds the amendment -

Does the proposed amendment encourage vigilante action?

Bishop of Dover - welcomes the amendment but wants to make sure we take our congregations with us.

Luke Appleton, Exeter - good for a detailed plan that gives the item teeth.

Pete Spears - in a quandary about whether there are unintended consequences to this amendment.

Speaker - We cannot allow our British passion for paperwork to get in the way of helping these children.

Martin, Chichester - Commends synod to consider the good work of the Roman Catholic church who do a lot of work on this issue.

Item 23	
Voted in favour	A sensible set of detailed instructions. Raising an important issue with practical church relevant solutions.

Bishop of London - if we believe that human beings are made in the image of God then there is much for us still to do.

Bishop of London - 1 in 2 victims are too afraid to report abuse, something traffickers exploit.

Bishop of London - The present state of the nationality and borders bill is failing the most vulnerable in our society

Vivienne Faull - Tomorrow in the House of Lords proposals will come that will undermine the current protections of victims of human trafficking.

It can take time for victims to tell the truth as they find their voice. The Borders Bill will inhibit this.

Venessa Pinto - Children Society statistics highlight that child victims often fall through support services to be victims again and again

Venessa Pinto - Victims need support not just to survive but also to thrive.

Matt Beer, Lichfield - let's commend to this synod the work of gospel based ministry walking alongside the Government to bring freedom from captivity all around the world. Slavery and human trafficking is a blight on our individualistic society.

Rachel Mann, Manchester - successful projects have reached and helped hundreds of victims.

Rachel Mann, Manchester - sometimes it's as simple as being kind and welcoming.

Rachel Mann, Manchester - This legislation before parliament threatens the human rights credibility of the UK

Alistair Bianchi, Durham - inspiring to hear about how members of Synod from across the country have already been engaging with this.

Item 10	
Voted in favour	Good proposal on a vital issue that the church is well placed to help address.

Item 500a

<https://www.generalsynod.news/post/summary-of-gs-2245-faculty-jurisdiction-amendment-rules>

Morag Ellis opens proposed legislative changes to faculty legislation. A bold way to tackle the climate crisis or more bureaucracy for Parishes?

Morag Ellis - like for like replacement of boiler will be limited to non-fossil fuel machines.

Responses

Stella Bailey, Coventry - When you have a grade 1 listed church you cannot sneeze without Historic England wanting to know.

Fiona Norris, Salisbury - proud of synod's support of the church moving to net zero.

Fiona Norris, Salisbury - Those who contribute the least to climate change are the most affected by it.

Graham Usher, Norwich - We must put our worthy words into actions.

Ruth Newton, Leeds - our environmental commitments are ambitious and prophetic. It is a gospel imperative.

Ruth Newton, Leeds - there is an anxiety on how smaller struggling churches may cope with these measures. Money may need to be made available.

Morgan Ellis - we want the church to be ahead of the curve on the environment.

Marcus Walker, London - matters such as boilers may seem like small matters, but for many struggling churches they are a matter of whether they can stay open.

Marcus Walker, London - when we leave our struggling churches with nothing but a vague promise for financial help, we risk the very thing we love.

Morag Ellis - those who are working on the rules know only too well the pressures on local churches.

Less than 25 people support the amendment so it lapses.

I would have supported the faculty changes had Marcus Walker's amendments passed. Without those amendments I cannot support the changes.

Pat Hawkins, Litchfield - Chair of Litchfield DAC calls to oppose the amendment.

Tim Ball, St Albans - you have to choose between the thing that is right and the thing that is easy.

Archbishop of York - understand the sentiments behind the amendments.

Tim Goode, Suffolk - Decisions on moving boilers are not binary ones.

Item 503 - motion failed.

Item 504

504 'In the Schedule, in paragraph 5, *leave out* sub-paragraphs (1) and (2) and *insert*—

“(1) In matter A1 in List A (church building etc.), leave out paragraph (7) (replacement of boiler utilising existing fuel supply).

(2) In matter B1 in List B (church building etc.), for the text in the first column (including the text in parentheses) substitute—

“The replacement of a boiler—

- a. whether in the same or substantially the same location,
- b. whether utilising an existing fuel supply or a different fuel supply, and
- c. whether with existing or similar pipe runs.”.

Explanatory statement: this amendment would provide that any proposal to replace a boiler would be included in List B and therefore subject to consultation with the archdeacon. It would not be necessary to seek a petition for any such proposal.

Amendment 504 goes against the spirit of the rules.

Morag Ellis - we must move forward in ways our young people care about. This will improve moral in our churches.

Prudence Daily, Oxford - Boilers break down more in the winter because they are used more and things that are used more break down more.

Arch Deacon of Blackburn supports the amendment

Vote on amendment 504	
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Voted in favour	A very sensible proposal that empowers our archdeacons to make localized decisions.
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Amendment 505 - better provision for broadband equipment that is not cable based.

Fiona Gibson, Hereford - Many rural churches need satellite broadband.

Fiona Gibson, Hereford - Amendment 505 rural proofs the proposals.

Chris Moore, Hereford - people have been complaining about the bad wifi at Synod - imagine living in Hereford!

The faculty rules amendment has been approved and will go through to parliament.

Item 11 Remunerations

<https://www.generalsynod.news/post/summary-of-gs-2247-clergy-remuneration-review-report>

The value of the stipend has not kept up with inflation.

Richard Jackson, Hereford - pensions currently given give a more generous basic pension than available for the general public.

Richard Jackson - A significant increase in stipendry contributions would increase the burden on parishes. Upflits should be targeted to those who need it most

Roger Drivers, Bath and Wells - can we do variable stipends?

Claire Williams, Norwich - aware of Ordinands having to use foodbanks to get by and feed their children. They shouldn't have to choose between heating and eating.

John Spence, Archbishop's Council - we will need to remove unnecessary costs to ensure our clergy are fairly paid.

John Spence, Archbishop's Council - Clergy contribution rate reduction will put over six million pounds back into funding current ministry

Ian Paul, Nottingham - 33% of our stipendiary colleagues are struggling. A staggering statistic.

Archbishop of York - A lot of clergy are okay financially because of household income, not because of stipend.

Jane Palmer, Salisbury - thank you to all those givers who make our ministry possible. Disappointed that the report is not more radical.

Jane Palmer, Salisbury - If we want to be a younger and more diverse church we must recognize that some candidates will not come from a position of privilege.

Julie Dziegiel, Oxford - Are Arch Deacons asking about the financial health of their clergy?

Sean Doherty - Fairness is not a matter of equality in an abstract sense but about addressing need

Andrew Moughtin-Mumby, Southwark - communion of solidarity is about putting yourself in other people's shoes.

Bishop responds to the debate. Variable stipend was not supported by survey of the clergy. The Archbishop's Council is committed to sustain the value of the stipend in the face of some challenging circumstances.

Richard Jackson - Vocation levels not linked with concerns around stipend.

Richard Jackson - Some clergy reported struggling whilst having a household income over £100,000.

Item 12 & 13 Setting God's People Free

<https://www.generalsynod.news/post/gs-2248-gods-people-set-free-summary>

Bishop of Gloucester - introducing a holistic vision of the church. It has focused us on our identity to shine as lights in the world to the glory of God.

Bishop of Gloucester - our baptism should drip from us in every aspect of our life.

Bishop of Gloucester - we are not primarily talking about social action.

Nick Sheperd, SGPF Programme Director - everyday faith emerged to make tangible shifts in the way we live out our faith as called to by the SGPF programme.

Nick Sheperd, SGPF Programme Director - Disciple Enabler Networks co-ordinate action and learning between diocese and christian agencies.

Bishop Rachel - it is about being the church in all places and at all times.

Jamie Harrison, Durham - what does it mean to set God's people free? The original report looked to create two culture shifts.

Jamie Harrison, Durham - How can we be an evangelizing church for everyone?

Jamie Harrison, Durham - How do we empower an empowered church to be missionary disciples?

Jamie Harrison, Durham - this is not about laity being set free from clergy (or indeed the other way around).

Jamie Harrison, Durham - Pope Francis calls for us all to be missionary disciples. How can we be a Jesus shaped church with the five marks of mission.

Zoe Ham, Carlisle - wants to say a big YES to this report. This is what the church must be if it wants to reach the nation for Christ.

Toby Wright, Oxford - Personal discipleship plans took figure of congregation feeling like they could be missionary disciples Mon-Sun from 35% to over 80%.

Toby Wright, Oxford - the strategic needs to be balanced with the individual. We have to help people grow as disciples.

Sue Cavill, Derby - a feeling amongst some people that setting God's people free is actually a plan to divert funds from parishes to central deployment. Concerned to protect Parish churches.

Pete Wilcox, Sheffield - We have to challenge everyone who has been baptised to enter into the full dignity of their baptism.

Claire Lording, Worcester - Proud that there is such an engaged chaplaincy of missionary disciples where she lives.

Gill Frigerio, Coventry - Let's keep our focus on ensuring lay people are resourced and released to live as disciples across the whole of their lives. Lay people are not unpaid labour free of limiting factors. Lay people are not simply rota fodder.

Simon Friend, Exeter - Find it so difficult to imagine bringing those in the workplace to church. All for the Parish, but we must change. All for saving the Parish, but not the Parish as it is, it must be changed.

Question Time Supplementary Day 2

Q22 Prudence Daily - Are zoom calls and letters to parishioners really a substitute to not being able to get to church?

Archbishop responds: a lot of reflection on the past few years. There's never really a substitute to us being together in the same space.

Q23 Stuart Fife - Can it be ensured that facilities will be made available to the new rural fringe group.

Archbishop Council response - yes of course.

Q26 Mr Charles Houston (Hereford) - is the bar set too high for church weddings?

Mark Sheard responds - that may be true in some cases, in others it can create engagement.

Q27 John, Leeds - Can the SDF process for missionary statistics be available more widely.

Mark Sheard is unsure and will investigate.

Q29 The Revd Andrew Cornes (Chichester) - Given the perception vacancies are being left longer, what steps can be taken to research this?

Mark Sheard responds - wishes we did have this data as it would be very helpful.

Q41 Amanda Robbie, Lichfield - who is responsible for putting our representations to the Government.

The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich - Will provide a written answer in full.

Q43 Jayne Ozanne - Why was the budget for such a significant group's budget rejected?

The Bishop of Durham - it was a decision made by the council itself. Synod needs to propose a national youth council if it wants one.

Q44 Simon Butler, Southwark - how do we protect staff and other members from online abuse.

Canon Dr Jamie Harrison responds - an increasing problem. We have a voluntary code. We need to be more thoughtful before we click send.

Q44 Gavin Drake - Many survivors and their supporters feel bullied into silence. What do you say to those people who say they have no other place to turn?

Dr Harrison responds - Drake is right, CDM is being reviewed, we need better systems.

Q47 Simon Talbott, Ely - has consideration been given to starting the review so survivors input can be prioritized.

Q48 Lisa Battye - in quality assurance terms is there no independent quality assurance. Mrs Maureen Cole responds - independent assurance not needed.

Q49 James Blandford-Baker (Ely) - how many meetings of the House of Bishop's have been held?

AoY responds - don't know but can be easily found out.

Q50 Mrs Mary Durlacher (Chelmsford) - how does the multi-church network relate to the network small rural schools are having to adopt?

Q51 Felicity Cook, Ely - What formula will be assigned for assigning places for those with differing theological positions?

AoY: doesn't know what the formula is but it will be intended for full representation of the church.

Q57 Roy Faulkner (Leicester) - Is the Bishop aware that efforts to decarbonize industry could be confused with deindustrialized and that GDP reduction will increase poverty? Bishop of Norwich responds - important we don't offshore our carbon.

Q60 Amanda Robbie - Notes where a complaint has not been found will be kept for over seventy years after a person has died - has this policy ever been tested with the ICO?

Response - The implementation group has not yet reflected or consulted on that.

Q64 Philip Baldwin, London - what are churches doing to tackle HIV stigma

Q66 Peter Bruinvels, Guildford - should more Diocese sign the Armed Forces covenant. Bishop to the Armed Forces respond - Yes!

Q67 Martin Sewell (Rochester) - at what level of the church was the policy decision made that the normal level of accountability not made in the Smyth case?

Bishop of Huddersfield responds - we had a proportionate and compassionate response in this case.

Q70 Mary Talbot (Europe) - very real fear and distress for victims exceeding the new 12 month limit response. Is a safety net being considered.

Response - needs of victims at the heart of these measures.

Q72 Helen King (Oxford) - the black victims of Smyth are every bit as important as the white privileged victims

Q75 The Common Cup can be shared currently and that should be used, not individual cups.