



SUPPORTING PAPERS

DIOCESAN SYNOD

ON 18th MAY 2019



**SUPPORTING PAPERS FOR DIOCESAN SYNOD
ON 18TH MAY 2019**

INDEX

PAGES

MEETING OF THE DIOCESAN SYNOD

1-2	Agenda item 3. Bishop George Bell
3	Agenda item 5. Growing Faith
4-5	Agenda item 7. Report from General Synod
6-7	Agenda item 8. Report on the Bishop's Council

MEETING OF THE DIOCESAN SYNOD

AGENDA ITEM 3. BISHOP GEORGE BELL

The allegations, by a woman known by the pseudonym Carol, of child sexual against Bishop George Bell, and the Church of England's decision to settle her civil claim and offer an apology from the Bishop of Chichester, have been the cause of great controversy. Some elements of the process, in particular the care and support for Carol, were undertaken well, but it is quite clear that mistakes were made, for which the Church has quite rightly apologised. A review was commissioned from Lord Carlile of Berriew QC, and a response made by the National Safeguarding Steering Group.

Shortly before Lord Carlile's review was published, a request was made for Synod to have the opportunity to discuss the findings and recommendations of the review, and the assessment of them. That was not possible at the first Synod following publication, as fresh information was disclosed shortly afterwards. That information has now been fully investigated, and added nothing of substance, and it is now possible for Synod to have that discussion.

The key elements of the time line and links to the relevant documents, in particular Lord Carlile's review and the NSSG's response, are set out below. Following some brief presentations at Synod, there will be an opportunity for discussion.

2012 and 2013: Carol made allegations against Bishop Bell by writing to Lambeth Palace, repeating allegations previously made in writing in 1995 to the then Bishop of Chichester. Lambeth Palace made Chichester aware of Carol's letter in April 2013. Support immediately offered to Carol by the Independent Sexual Violence Adviser working with the Diocese of Chichester and initial enquiries made. This support remained throughout whole process. In accordance with the police's reporting guide for Operation Hydrant, contact was arranged with Sussex Police who took a statement from Carol in June 2013.

May 2014 to Sep 2015: Following a letter before action from Carol's solicitor, national core group convened, chaired by the national safeguarding adviser, to decide the church's safeguarding response. It met on several occasions, and following legal advice decided to settle with Carol. The core group also decided to ask the Bishop of Chichester to issue an apology to her, and to make a proactive press release.

22 October 2015: Press release issued:

<https://www.chichester.anglican.org/news/2015/10/22/statement-rt-revd-george-bell-1883-1958/>

28 June 2016: Independent review of the processes of the Core Group announced:

<https://www.chichester.anglican.org/news/2016/06/28/independent-review-handling-george-bell-case/>

22 November 2016: Lord Carlile appointed as the reviewer:

<https://www.chichester.anglican.org/news/2016/11/22/lord-carlile-named-independent-reviewer-george-bell-case/>

15 December 2017: Lord Carlile's review published:

(<https://www.chichester.anglican.org/news/2017/12/15/publication-bishop-george-bell-independent-review/>) The Church accepted all but one of his recommendations, and apologised for mistakes in its processes. The Bishop of Chichester issued an ad clerum in addition to the various statements made:

<https://www.chichester.anglican.org/documents/documentation/wider-ad-clerum-bishop-chichester/>

23 December 2017: New information received from Alison.

31 January 2018: Announcement of new information:

<https://www.chichester.anglican.org/news/2018/01/31/statement-bishop-george-bell-issued-by-national-safeguarding-team/>

January 2018: A second Core Group convened. Taking into account Lord Carlile's recommendations, it decided to appoint a retired detective superintendent to conduct an independent investigation into the new information. It was later decided to appoint an independent lawyer, Timothy Briden, to decide whether the new information was made out on the balance of probabilities, acting on behalf of the Bishop of Chichester to whom the decision-making would otherwise fall.

February 2018: the National Safeguarding Steering Group responded to Lord Carlile's recommendations: <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2018-03/NSSG%20response%20to%20Carlile%20Review%20recommendations.pdf>

2 March 2018: The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser answers questions on the Carlile Report from the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse in writing:

https://www.iicsa.org.uk/key-documents/5007/view/ACE026284_1.pdf

15-16 March 2018: The DSA is cross-examined on the Carlile Report by IICSA:

<https://www.iicsa.org.uk/key-documents/4433/view/15%20March%202018%20Anglican%20Public%20Hearing%20Transcript.pdf> at internal pages 183-194 (pages 46 to 49 of the document) and

<https://www.iicsa.org.uk/key-documents/4492/view/16%20March%202018%20Anglican%20Public%20Hearing%20Transcript.pdf>

24 January 2019: Timothy Briden's decision published

(https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-01/briden_decision_open_final.pdf) and the Bishop of Chichester responded:

<https://www.chichester.anglican.org/news/2016/06/28/independent-review-handling-george-bell-case/>

AGENDA ITEM 5. GROWING FAITH

Growing Faith: Churches, Schools and Households Summary (from General Synod paper GS 2121)

Growing Faith is the vision set by the House of Bishops to ensure a national commitment to achieve a significant culture change within the Church so that every aspect of mission and ministry is seen through the lens of what it means for ministry with children, young people and households. It will flow into the type of relationships encouraged between schools and churches, and how these are developed to resource and support households to grow in faith together.

Growing Faith envisions children, young people and households coming to faith, growing in discipleship and contributing confidently to the Kingdom of God through the community of faith. It is about how, as members of the whole people of God, children and young people are encouraged and how the whole Church is equipped to think intergenerationally.

It brings together work in Education, Evangelism and Discipleship, Ministry, Renewal and Reform and Setting God's People Free (SGPF), seeking to enable the people of God of all ages to live out their faith confidently in homes and schools. In doing so, Growing Faith seeks to maximise effectiveness and enable dioceses and parishes to have ready access to resources for growing faith in churches, schools and households.

Debbie Clinton, Director Renewal & Reform Nigel Genders, Chief Education Officer Dave Male, Director Evangelism & Discipleship February 2019

**Published by the General Synod of the Church of England
© The Archbishops' Council 2019**

For the full paper please see:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-01/GS%202121.pdf>

AGENDA ITEM 7. REPORT FROM GENERAL SYNOD

We met for nearly four days in February in London. The agenda was quite heavy on legislation but that is the primary duty of General Synod! Wednesday began with discussions on the business committee report and future meeting dates. We were then treated to some enthusiastic speeches by the Bishops of the dioceses of Jabalpur in India and Kapsabet in Kenya. They spoke about making children feel a sense of belonging within the Church, helping parents to grow in faith and thus help their children, and finding ways to help all people in their struggles in the world. We heard about the struggles of the Church of North India and how it is targeted by extremist groups, but also how the faith of the Christians helps them to continue with living a life of service to God and his people.

There was then much legislation to get through nearly all of which required an electronic vote. Much of this was final approval on pieces of legislation which have been making their way through the synodical process. It was interesting to find that there was a good deal of opposition to the renewal of the annual fees order. Some of the Synod felt that it would be wonderful to scrap fees altogether particularly for funerals. The order was passed but there was a significant vote against.

A private member's motion on homelessness was well received. The motion aimed to set up a task force on Synod with the goal to work alongside homeless charities and find ways for the church to do even more to help those who are homeless. We heard from members of Synod how important it is to support homeless people in their vulnerable/mentally ill/addicted states who are often unable to cope in normal life.

Following this we had a presentation on a paper 'Living in Love and Faith'. This explored the work being done on human identity, sexuality, gender, friendship, marriage, celibacy and family. This is all grounded in scripture and is an ongoing piece of work.

We then looked at environmental programmes and the ways in which the Church can play its part. The motion looked at ways in which each diocese and parish can step up its work on lowering the carbon footprint, reducing energy on our buildings, and hear what is working to turn Churches into Eco-Churches.

Evangelism was a big topic – we looked at evangelism and discipleship, ministry amongst children and young people and estates evangelism. We also heard about evangelism amongst the Roma, Gypsy and Traveller communities. In all of these debates there was an emphasis on not withdrawing but embracing such areas that tend to be forgotten and sidelined. Bishop Philip North, Bishop of Burnley, is passionate about working on our large estates, working alongside those who live there and in every sense being the Church where there are people. Mark Russell in acknowledging the ongoing work with children and young people urged the Synod that we need to do even more. The Bishop of Chelmsford requested that the Church should lobby for more permanent sites be made available for the Travelling communities and that every diocese appoint a chaplain for Gypsies, Travellers and Roma.

Gambling advertising has recently increased particularly on television; and gambling has increased amongst children. We passed a motion requesting the Government to reduce the

amount of gambling advertising and ask churches to support initiatives which educate children and young people about the risks relating to gambling.

Finally, the Archbishops called an urgent motion entitled 'the State of our Nation'. This was a statement from the CofE to the world saying that all those in governance are held in our prayers especially at this unsettling time for the future of the nation.

Mary Nagel

AGENDA ITEM 8. REPORT ON THE BISHOP'S COUNCIL

Since the last Diocesan Synod the Bishop's Council has met three times, in November, February and April.

The Council acts as the Standing Committee of the Diocesan Synod tasked with a number of responsibilities as laid down in the relevant standing orders. Sitting as the Finance Committee, the members of the Council have other responsibilities with regard to the Diocesan Board of Finance.

At the November meeting the Diocesan Director of Education, Trevor Cristin, gave a comprehensive report on the Church Schools in the Diocese and the Diocesan Education department, pointing out the change in funding affecting smaller schools, most negatively those in rural settings. Much work was being done to broker partnership, to get schools to talk to each other and to emphasise the benefits collaboration would bring: breadth of curriculum and staff development.

Bishop Martin announced that Sara Stonor had kindly agreed to head up a project to develop a new Training Fund. The aim was to get financial support for the increased number of vocations in the diocese which has enormous financial implications; they would look at ways to help with finances and find people who would like to support the future of the church in Sussex if not the Church of England. If anyone has good ideas or wishes to get involved, please email her.

There was a review of the Diocesan Synod and a safeguarding update, and the results of elections to the boards, councils and committees were presented with a look at filling some of the vacancies.

Bishop Martin reported that it had been announced that day that Matthew Chinery, the diocese's outstanding registrar, would leave in April 2019 to serve the Church in Wales. +MC commented that it was a marvellous promotion and the diocese had been served well by him; God had been good at providing his expertise at a time when the diocese most needed it and on countless occasions he had gone more than the extra mile. There would be an opportunity to thank him at the May Synod.

At the February meeting the members of the Bishop's Council were given comprehensive training on the duties of trustees. Key matters covered were:- reporting serious incidents to the Charity Commission; understanding how risk was managed; conflicts of interest, including the need for trustees to consider family members and business associates; the need for a counter fraud policy as well as a complaints policy and for an internal financial controls checklist; and that when looking at the annual accounts, trustees should note the 'Free reserve figure' which showed whether the organisation was solvent or not.

Bishop Richard introduced the next phase of the diocesan strategy would be focussed around four 'mores' based around the signs of the church as one holy, catholic, and apostolic. The first is now 'more open' - a church that more fully embraces everyone, particularly in terms of age, in our communities. The second would be 'more converted to Jesus Christ' which

would be about growth in holiness and growth in bringing others to Jesus Christ. The third would be 'more generous' which is necessary in the current financial situation and which is one of the signs of being more catholic. The fourth would be 'more engaged' which would be a sign of being more apostolic in the communities around us in terms of drawing them in. There would be a consultation exercise through visitations and through a survey monkey to allow as many people as possible to contribute to the conversation, with a view to rolling the next phase of the strategy out at Diocesan Synod.

Trustees were appointed to St Andrew's Bexhill Trust.

The remaining vacancies on boards, councils and committees were discussed and further appointments made, including Revd Martin King as Vice Chair of the House of Clergy and Mrs Sara Stonor as Vice Chair of the House of Laity.

At the April meeting the Diocesan Director of Education, Trevor Cristin gave another comprehensive report on the Church Schools in the Diocese and the Diocesan Education department. One of the highlights in the report was that 92% of our schools are good or outstanding in their SIAMS inspections. This is one of the highest set of outcomes to date and it provides us with a very solid platform to build upon. Next year they aim to focus on strengthening the crucial relationship between parish and school by looking at what they can provide for each other. Bishop Martin thanked him for the impact he has made already in the Diocese as DDE.

There then followed a comprehensive report from the Safeguarding team presented by the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer, Colin Perkins. Simple Quality Protects has had a widespread take up by the Parishes and a system of compliance testing is being put into place.

There was an update on the Visitations and Strategy from Bishop Richard.

We had reports from the Operating committee, the Parsonage and House Committees, the Assets Committee and the Audit Committee. The Diocesan Synod Agenda, the statutory accounts and the red book were discussed. A new sickness absence policy and mobile phone policy were approved, together with amendments to the expenses policy, remuneration policy, annual leave policy and acceptable use and password policies.

**Revd Canon Mark Gilbert
Chair, House of Clergy**

Notes