

Synod briefing for Diocesan Secretaries

Introduction

General Synod will be meeting from 10th to 14th February at Church House, Westminster. As with other recent meetings of Synod, there will be hybrid provision for members, so they will be able to join the meeting via Zoom.

This briefing outlines the business for the group of sessions and further details can be found below. There are several items on the February agenda that relate to safeguarding, and significant time has been made available for these items.

There are a large number of legislative items, fourteen in total, and again significant time has been allocated for these.

Synod Business

The General Synod papers were sent out to members on Thursday 22nd January. The details below provide an update on each item. There is one DSM scheduled as contingency business.

[GS 2374 Agenda](#): This is the key paper for the group of sessions as it sets out the business for the meeting. This should be read alongside the Order Papers which will be published about an hour before each session starts on the Synod App and website (and available in hard copy in the Assembly Hall). Please note that the agenda is subject to change during the group of sessions if business necessitates; the Chair of the Business Committee will explain any proposed changes to Synod.

[GS 2375 Report of the Business Committee](#): This report will be discussed as one of the first items on the agenda. Members will have the opportunity to comment on the agenda or on the content of the Report during the take note debate.

[GS 2736 Makin Report](#): This will provide Synod with an update on the work undertaken since the publication of the Makin Report.

[GS 2377 Affirming the Racial Justice Agenda](#): This paper provides important updates on the final report of the Archbishops' Commission for Racial Justice, specifically its 'appeal' to the Church, along with Commission's key findings and recommendations. The report highlights the new governance arrangements for Racial Justice and a possible five-year review of *From Lament To Action* (FLTA).

[GS 2378 Future of Church Safeguarding](#): This item will invite Synod to consider future models for safeguarding in the Church.

[GS 2379 Report of the Crown Nominations Commission](#): This will be a take note debate on a report from the Crown Nominations Commission which updates Synod on matters relating to the CNC so far in this quinquennium, including its membership, appointment processes, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, proposed Standing Order changes and the pipeline to senior appointments.

[GS 2380 Diocesan Finances Review Update](#): This will provide an update on the work relating to Diocesan Finances.

[GS 2381 Sports and Wellbeing Ministry](#): This will provide an update on the National Sports and Wellbeing Project which has been running for the last 4 years with 7 dioceses to see how sports and wellbeing can be integrated into diocesan mission strategies.

[GS 2369 Safeguarding \(Clergy Risk Assessment\) Regulations 2025](#) and [GS 2369X Explanatory Notes](#): These regulations relate to safeguarding risk assessments of clergy under Canon C 30. They had been circulated at the July 2024 group of sessions, and are presented for debate at this group of sessions.

[GS 2382A](#) and [GS 2382B Strategy for Working Class Ministry](#): This will be a debate on the Private Member's Motion from the Revd Alex Frost (Blackburn) calling for a national strategy supporting people from a working-class background into ministry.

[GS 2383 Appointment of one member of the Archbishops' Council](#): This is a formal item to appoint one new member of the Archbishops' Council.

[GS 2311B Clergy Conduct Measure](#), [GS 2311Z Steering Committee Report](#) and [GS 2311X3 Explanatory Notes](#): This will be final stages of the Clergy Conduct Measure which will set out a new statutory framework and establish the jurisdiction for dealing with cases relating to clergy conduct.

[GS 2384 Legal Officers \(Annual Fees\) Order 2025](#): and [GS 2384X Explanatory Notes](#): This is an updated Order following the debate at the July 2024 group of sessions.

[GS 2385 'Growing Younger and More Diverse' – Hearing and Responding to the Voices of Young Adults \(18-25\)](#): This will be a debate on the continuing work taking place to enable the voice of young adults to feed into the life of the national Church.

[GS 2386 Living in Love and Faith](#): This provides an update on the work related to Living in Love and Faith.

[GS 2387 65th Report of the Standing Orders Committee](#): Proposed Changes to the Standing Orders relating to the Crown Nominations Commission

[GS 2360A National Church Governance Measure](#), [GS 2360Y Revision Committee Report](#) and [GS 2360X2 Explanatory Notes](#): This will be the Revision Stage for the National Church Governance Measure which will introduce new governance structures for the national Church.

[GS 2388 Church Representation Rules](#), [GS 2389 House of Bishops Election Rules](#), [GS 2390 House of Clergy Election Rules](#), [GS 2391 House of Laity Election Rules](#), [GS 2392 Single Transferable Vote Regulations](#) and [GS 2388-92 Explanatory Notes](#): This legislation relates to the Election Rules for the Houses of Synod which will need to be in place for the elections to General Synod summer 2026.

[GS 2393 Thy Kingdom Come – Renewing the Call to Prayer and Evangelism](#): This item outlines the journey of 'Thy Kingdom Come' over the last decade, reflecting on its reach, impact and influence in both the UK and across the world and to renew the call for prayer in evangelism and mission within the Church of England and beyond.

[GS 2394 Mission and Pastoral Measure](#) and [GS 2394P Policy paper](#): This will be the First Consideration stage of the revised Mission and Pastoral Measure.

[GS 2395 Mission and Pastoral Regulations](#) and [GS 2394-95 Explanatory Notes](#): This will be the First Consideration stage for the Mission and Pastoral Regulations

[GS 2396A](#) and [GS 2396B Redistribution of Funds](#): This will be a debate on a Diocesan Synod Motion relating to redistribution of financial resources which has been passed by Hereford, Gloucester, Coventry, Bath & Wells, Blackburn, Chichester and Lincoln Diocesan Synods.

[GS 2397 Vacancy in See Committees Regulation](#) and [GS 2397X Explanatory Notes](#): This item will update the Vacancy in See Committee Regulations.

[GS 2398 Pattern of Future Dates 2027-2029](#): This item will set the envelope for Synod meetings in 2027, 2028 and 2029.

[GS 2399 66th Report of the Standing Orders Committee](#): This provides an update on the work of the Standing Orders Committee since the July 2024 group of sessions.

Deemed and Contingency Business

[GS 2372 Safeguarding Code of Practice Managing Allegation and Reporting Allegations](#): These Codes of Practice is circulated under section 5A of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016. This means they are deemed to be approved unless 25 members give notice in writing to the Clerk by 29 January 2025 that they wish the Code to be debated.

[GS 2373 Safeguarding Code of Practice Religious Communities and Acknowledged Communities](#): These Codes of Practice is circulated under section 5A of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016. This means they are deemed to be approved unless 25 members give notice in writing to the Clerk by 29 January that they wish the Code to be debated

[GS 2371A](#) and [GS 2371 Add Confirmation Numbers to Statistics for Mission](#): This is a DSM from Canterbury seeking to include confirmation numbers on the annual Statistics for Mission online return. This will only be taken if time is made available.

GS Misc Papers

As well as the papers that are linked to items to be discussed on the main Agenda, there are a number of GS Misc papers being circulated to members for information:

[GS Misc 1393: Summary of House of Bishops and Delegated Committees](#) and [GS Misc 1394: Report on the AC Activities](#): These papers are the usual update on discussions being held since the last group of sessions in the Archbishops' Council and the House of Bishops.

[GS Misc 1395: Recent Appointments by the Appointments Committee](#): This gives an update on the appointments made by the Appointments Committee.

[GS Misc 1396 Number of times spoken](#): This provides a summary of those who spoke during a debate at the July 2024 group of sessions. It does not include those who asked a question or those who moved motions or amendments.

[GS Misc 1397 National Burial Ground Survey](#): This updates members on steps taken since the motion at the July 2024 group of sessions which raised several specific concerns about the National Burial Grounds Survey (NBGS) and called for a pause pending consultation with the College of Archdeacons.

[GS Misc 1398 Report on the work of the Council for Christian Unity](#): This gives an update on the work of the Council of Christian Unity which has not updated Synod on its work for since the pandemic.

[GS Misc 1399 Central Stipends Authority Report](#): This is the annual report by the Clergy Stipends Authority.

[GS Misc 1400 Dioceses Commission Annual Report](#): This is the annual report into the work of the Dioceses Commission in 2024.

GS Misc 1401 Summary of Decisions for the 2021 – 2026 Quinquennium: This gives a brief overview of progress on each motion taken in this quinquennium

GS Misc 1402 Response to the Scolding Review: This paper is a response to the Scolding Review into Soul Survivor as prepared by the Working Group on behalf of the Archbishops' Council.

GS Misc 1403 Trust and Trustworthiness in the Church of England January 2025 Update: This gives an update on the Trust Task Group with an aim to bring back further details at a future group of sessions.

GS Misc 1404 Ecumenical Day of Prayer and Action for the Persecuted Church: This gives an update following the Diocesan Synod Motion on this issue in July 2024.

GS Misc 1405 Update from the Legislative Committee: This paper sets out the current challenge faced in implementing Synod motions requiring legislative change.

GS Misc 1406 Report from the Faith and Order Commission: This paper provides some theological reflections in response to queries from Synod and House of Bishops relating to Living in Love and Faith

GS Misc 1407 Part Report from the Episcopal Reference Group: This paper gives an update on work undertaken by the Episcopal Reference Group of the Faith and Order Commission on Living in Love and Faith and the doctrine of marriage.

GS Misc 1408 The Use of the Nicene Creed: This paper provides a reminder of the customary place of the Nicene Creed in the liturgy of the Church of England

GS Misc 1409 Local Commemorations: This paper from the Liturgical Commission provides guidance on local additions to the calendar at a local and diocesan level.

Resignations

If a member of the House of Clergy ceases to hold a licence in the diocese, a casual vacancy will arise. In this situation, please can you contact the Registrar, Alexander McGregor, alexander.mcgregor@churchofengland.org, as a citation will need to be prepared for you to fill the vacancy. If a member of the House of Clergy wishes to resign from Synod, they should contact the Registrar directly.

Any members of the House of Laity wishing to resign should contact the Secretary of the House of Laity, Jenny Jacobs, jenny.jacobs@churchofengland.org.

These casual vacancies will be filled using the online election process managed by Civica Election Services and Civica will be able to help you with the process. If you have any issues or questions, please contact the office.