

Questions to Candidates

On previous occasions, those entitled to vote in the General Synod election have been able to engage candidates face-to-face at hustings. However, during recent elections, the number of candidates and electors attending these events has diminished dramatically. At the same time, electronic media make it much easier to raise questions through email, websites, Twitter, Facebook and in other ways.

We have encouraged voters to pose questions which can be put to candidates collectively. The questions set out below are generic in nature, but based on those I have received.

If you would like to engage in this question and answer process, please enter your replies in the space provided after each question. I reserve the right to remove any response which might reasonably be considered offensive or prejudicial (though I do not expect that I shall need to do so).

A word limit has been set for your replies of **120 words per question**. Additional words will be cut from the final submission but you could, of course, give a shorter answer and invite anyone who wishes to discuss further with you to send supplementary comments to your email address (remembering, of course, to give it!).

Please return your completed form to jrees@wslaw.co.uk and copied to sleader@wslaw.co.uk, by **9.00 am on Monday 28 September 2015**. Your submissions will be posted on the Diocesan website, with your Election Address and Video Presentation/photograph, on Wednesday 30 September at 5.00 pm.

Canon John Rees
Presiding Officer for General Synod Election
September 2015

Name of Candidate (please enter name in full)	Sir Tony Baldry
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Questions and Replies

Question:	Given there are such strongly held differing views on the issue of human sexuality in our Church, how do you think the Church of England should approach the issue in the next five years?
Reply: 120 word limit applies	In parliament, I opposed the Same Sex Marriage Bill because Marriage is a union between one man and one woman, a position maintained in Canon Law. I would support two changes to existing arrangements: Clergy should be able, if they consider it

	appropriate to bless in church, the commitment of a Civil Partnership – not with a special liturgy, but with a simple Blessing. In this way, no member of the Clergy would be required to do anything against their own conscience. Secondly Clergy at present are able in accordance with the law of the land to enter into Civil Partnerships but they are enjoined to be celibate. I do not consider that to be a sustainable position.
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Question:	What role, if any, do you think the Church of England and its partner churches in the Anglican Communion might play in response to the world’s current needs?
Reply: 120 word limit applies	<p>On issues as diverse as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tackling Pay Day Lenders • supporting food banks; • taking action on Climate Change; • seeking to champion persecuted minorities and refugees <p>the Church has shown that it can be a champion for the weak and a catalyst for change. As I have seen with my own eyes, in countries such as South Sudan, it is the Church that is giving hope and leadership to millions caught up in civil conflict and in countries such as Pakistan it is the support of the Church here that helps give much-needed protection to otherwise vulnerable Christians and others.</p>

Question:	Do you think the ministry of the Church of England might need to change in the coming years, and, if so, what changes would you support in the selection and training of its lay and ordained leadership?
Reply: 120 word limit applies	<p>Whilst I was a Church Commissioner, I fully endorsed the Church Commissioners making extra funds available to support the training and leadership of Bishops, Clergy and Laity. To help recruit new Ordinands, and to do everything possible to help churches and congregations grow. If you have any questions for me as a candidate on any matter, please get in touch. My email address is tonybaldry@gmail.com and my mobile is 07798 840 570..</p> <p>“The grass withereth, flower fadeth, but the Word of our God shall stand forever”.</p>