

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)	JONATHAN WARWICK BESWICK
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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	Compassion, prayer and humility need to be foremost in our engagement with one another: we are dealing with human beings, not issues. We should do our utmost to support the place of marriage in our common life and also to honour the God-given vocation of singleness.

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	Working for the building up of the Kingdom through striving for the highest standards of justice, mercy and integrity in public life, both at home and abroad. The parochial system affords us a wonderful opportunity to do this at every level.

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	Change is needed: clergy need to be encouraged to be confident, rather than diffident, in the ministry to which God is calling them. They need to be formed both in robust habits of prayer and also in the discipline of study, which cannot be done 'on the cheap'. Fuller, real-time engagement with parishes as part of this formation is essential. A greater number of imaginative and risk-taking bishops would be a bonus!