

## 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](mailto:jrees@wslaw.co.uk) and copied to [sleader@wslaw.co.uk](mailto: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**

<b>Name of Candidate</b> (please enter name in full)	<b>Karen Gorham</b>
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## Questions and Replies

<b>Question:</b>	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?
<b>Reply:</b> 120 word limit applies	General Synod will need to receive a report on the diocesan Conversations before each of its members engages in a similar exercise themselves. It will then depend, probably on the House of Bishops, what comes before Synod. I think the church sometime

	<p>will have to agree on whether it accepts same-sex marriage (and changes its definition of marriage between one man and one woman), or acknowledges it as civic marriage. I would then like to see an approach which enables different opinions regarding same-sex relationships to exist within the church (similar to when the church agreed the remarriage of divorcees), so parishes and clergy choose to formally bless all civil marriages or only those between one man and one woman.</p>
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<p><b>Question:</b></p>	<p>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?</p>
<p><b>Reply:</b> 120 word limit applies</p>	<p>The Anglican Communion has strong worldwide structures, which already enable good direct response to social/international need. In this country the church is acknowledged as having a key strategic part to play in communication, charity work, volunteering. Organisations such as the Mother's Union are strong players in the areas of relief work, empowerment, resistance, distribution of aid, as are organisations supported by the church such as Christian Aid, Tear Fund, Cafod, World Vision, US etc. Bishops can use their position to influence foreign policy and Church's their voice to encourage advocacy, gospel values and transparency in the public arena and amongst world leaders. Important of all we should never forget the power of prayer.</p>

<p><b>Question:</b></p>	<p>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?</p>
<p><b>Reply:</b> 120 word limit applies</p>	<p>Ministry must become more flexible and involve the whole people of God, lay and ordained. Some selection and training should be locally designed and delivered to serve the needs of the local church, other training will need to remain nationally validated and provided. We need to encourage the leadership of younger people, those who have time in retirement and the importance of all followers of Christ being disciples with gifts to give in service. The people of God need to be released to be the people of God in a new way to make a difference to the world, and that will involve simplification, local authorisation, and appropriate training.</p>