

- Where does the Archbishop's Council fit in?

The members of the new Synod will elect from among themselves those who, with the Bishops and Archdeacons, will form the Archbishop's Council. This is also the Board of Directors of the York Diocesan Board of Finance, a charitable company responsible for managing the Diocesan Common Fund and our investments, maintaining parsonage houses and many other duties.

Candidates are therefore invited who can contribute experience and skills to the wide range required by the Council. The retiring members of Council are aware that it would be strengthened if new members could bring greater diversity to its membership and/or knowledge and experience particularly in fields such as the administration of charitable trusts, in human resources, and in the development and management of property and other investments.

- Is there anything else that I should be aware of?

From January 2010 those people who are elected to the Diocesan Synod will also be members (but not trustees or directors) of the Diocesan Board of Finance. In practice this means that they will be responsible for appointing the Directors (who in future will be the members of the Archbishop's Council), holding them accountable for their actions.

Members' names and addresses will be held on the company register and, in the unlikely event that the diocese were ever to become insolvent, would have a liability to contribute £1 towards the costs of winding the company up.

Members occupy a pivotal role not only in taking decisions but also ensuring good quality communication throughout the Diocese. Practically this means that members' responsibilities also include:

- Keeping Deanery Synods informed of diocesan policies, discussions and decisions.
- Keeping informed through Deanery Synods of opinions and events in parishes.
- Discussing matters raised by Deanery Synods and Parochial Church Councils.

For their period of office, members of Diocesan Synod are also ex officio members of their Deanery Synod and PCC, which implies a further commitment of time above and beyond the meetings of Diocesan Synod itself.

For further information, please speak to a current Diocesan Synod member, your Rural Dean or contact Shirley Davies or Kim Phillips at Diocesan Office.



Could I be a member of York Diocesan Synod?

To meet in Synod is to meet together 'on the way' of our shared life of discipleship. Since the earliest times, members of the Church have met to discuss their Christian life together and to resolve how best to live in mutual love and understanding. As the Church grew, so each congregation chose representatives to send to synods, and this tradition continues today in the Church of England.

The York Diocesan Synod is the representative governing body of York Diocese. Through it members of the Church of England in York work together to take forward the mission and ministry of the Church. Bishops, priests and lay people meet together to discuss the issues facing the Church and to make decisions about our common future.



The Diocesan Synod should reflect the rich diversity of our congregations. To this end, every deanery in the Diocese is asked, every three years, to elect new members of the Diocesan Synod.

This year is an election year. **All members of the churches in York Diocese are invited to consider standing for election to Diocesan Synod, to take forward our life together in Christ.**



Diocesan Synod 2009 Elections Timetable

- 8 May: Issue of Nomination Forms
- 5 June: Closing Date for Return of Nomination Forms
- 12 June: Issue of Voting Papers
- 3 July: Closing Date for Return of Voting Papers
- By 10 July: Results declared

What is the Diocesan Synod?

The Synod is the body of representatives of the clergy and lay people in the Diocese, which meets together with the bishops, archdeacons and other senior post holders in the Diocese to discuss matters of concern to York Diocese, and to make provision for those things that require some form of action or statement. The Archbishop consults the Synod about matters when it is appropriate to do so. The Synod also has a role in representing the views of the York Diocese to the General Synod and wider national Church, particularly when asked to do so by the General Synod or Archbishops' Council. The Synod receives the accounts of the Diocesan Board of Finance, and approves the total amount of Common Fund to be collected each year.

It is important that the Synod reflects the range of views and opinions present in our churches, and that it goes about its business prayerfully and faithfully. However, the Diocesan Synod may not make any statement on the doctrine of the Church – this is one of the roles of the General Synod.

- **Who elects to the Diocesan Synod?**

Each deanery elects a certain number of people to the Diocesan Synod in proportion to its size. The clergy representatives for each deanery are elected by the clerical members of the deanery synod (except co-opted members), i.e. clerical electors, and the lay representatives for each deanery by the lay representatives of the deanery synod (except co-opted members), i.e. lay electors.



- **How does the Diocesan Synod work?**

The Diocesan Synod is made up of three Houses – that is, three sets of members: the bishops, the other clergy members, and the laity (i.e. the non-clergy members). These are referred to as the House of Bishops, the House of Clergy, and the House of Laity. When it is appropriate to do so these Houses meet separately, for instance, when a matter before the Diocesan Synod affects the clergy and laity in different ways. However, normally the Diocesan Synod meets together as a whole. Meetings are usually held three times a year, in the current triennium this has been for two Saturday mornings and one mid-week evening meeting.

At these meetings presentations are made on matters of concern to the Synod and, if appropriate, debates held and motions voted on. A motion is a statement that, if a majority of the members at a meeting of Synod vote in favour of it, will be taken as indicating the view of the Synod at that time.

- **Who can be elected?**

Any ordained person who is a member of a deanery synod can stand to be elected to the House of Clergy of the Diocesan Synod by the House of Clergy of the deanery synod.

Any lay person who is taking communion (at least three times in the last year), is confirmed, is at least sixteen years old and whose name is entered on the electoral roll of a parish in a deanery can stand to be elected to the House of Laity of the Diocesan Synod by the House of Laity of the deanery synod. Certain other people may also be qualified: this is set out in the notes at the end of the Lay Nomination Form.



- **Who should stand for election?**

Anybody who qualifies to be elected and who feels they have a role to play in representing the views of their deanery and the churches in their area should consider standing for election. All persons who have a contribution to make and would like to do so should complete a nomination form (these will be issued to deanery synod members by 8 May 2009) and return it to the Presiding Officer.

The Diocesan Synod should reflect the rich diversity of the congregations across the diocese, and so we would therefore encourage you to consider any groups that you feel may be under represented (considering for example age, gender, ethnic origin etc) and to support those who may not normally consider putting themselves forward to be part of our governing bodies. In doing so we would hope to encourage fresh ideas which will engage others who may be currently under represented in our diocesan family and structures.

Within meetings, the Synod benefits from having as members those people who consider issues prayerfully, listen to others attentively, are willing to speak clearly and succinctly and are able to make decisions for the good of the Diocese as a whole. Tact and a sense of humour also help!