



**Dr. Sam Robinson.  
Diocese of Exeter.  
Churchwarden, PCC member, and  
thurifer/server at St. Michael & All  
Angels, Great Torrington in the  
Barnstaple Archdeaconry.  
I am a former member of Devon  
County Council and a current  
member of Torrridge District Council  
and of Bideford Town Council.  
I am a member of the National  
Trust, RBL, RAFA, AFAM,  
Woodlands Trust, and the Freedom  
Association.**

My wife Eithne (a PCC member, Sidesman, and Rural Deanery and Diocesan Synod member) and I live in the beautiful and ancient coastal village of Appledore on the Northern Devon coast. We have two grown-up children and four grandchildren. I was born in a coastal village on the north coast of County Donegal (about twenty miles from the birthplace of St. Columba). My family's Anglican roots go very deep, and I was baptised and confirmed in the Church of Ireland.

I trained as a light engineering technician and later became a teacher. I hold a BA in History, Political Economy and Philosophy (NUI); an M Ed. in Education Management (TCD); and a Ph D for an international study of and pedagogical underpinning for Technological Education in the Secondary Curriculum (UCD).

In the course of my career in education I have taught a range of subjects, been Dean of Discipline, Upper Sixth Boarding Housemaster and Headmaster in State and Independent Schools in both England and Ireland.

So what can I bring to General Synod and how do I see my task there, were I to be elected?

- A lifetime of unfailing loyalty to and gratitude for our Anglican Communion. I am privileged to serve my parish and its church in a United Benefice that is a microcosm of what is best in the Church of England – where a broad spectrum of styles of worship and ecclesiology pertain;
- As someone who has lived and worked in rural areas and in inner cities I have a clear understanding of the many and varied challenges that confront our people in these days of uneven prosperity and a widening gap between rich and poor. Add to this the growing sense of despair and loss of hope among people who lose their faith. This is the vineyard in which our church must toil, and to which task the General Synod must give a lead;
- Most of my working life I have been involved in the nurturing, guidance and care of young people of ages ranging from Junior school to Sixth Form, very

often acting *in loco parentis*. One uniting aspect of the schools in which I served, from inner city comprehensive to ancient independent institution, has been the impact that troubled home life can have on the young people. In the same way, I see a great need today for our family which is the Church of England to work towards reconciliation and unity in diversity;

- As a district, town and county councillor in an electoral division that includes deprived urban areas with low wage rates and rural areas with high proportions of the elderly, I am conscious of how so many are marginalized, and I can see that the church today is faced with a like task to when, in the nineteenth century, it became the main focus and beacon of hope for those whom society would disregard. That is the destination towards which the General Synod should now be striving - to lead the advocacy for those without a voice;
- We often hear people bemoan the loss of young people to our Church. In our church schools we have what should be a rich resource of invigoration for our congregations, yet all too often this natural link between school and church is tenuous or non-existent. I would wish to assist with the task of reversing this trend, and will bring some experience in so doing. I would look to the General Synod to prioritising this task;
- During my time as county councillor I served as a member of the Standing Advisory Council For Religious Education (SACRE). This multi-faith advisory council has the oversight of Religious Education in primary and secondary schools throughout the Devon County Council area. As well as this, the advisory council has an involvement in fostering community cohesion and it also plays a leading role in the annual programme for schools that culminates in the arranging of events and speakers to mark Holocaust Memorial Day.
- I have a reputation for speaking up forcefully for those things I hold dear; my years of serving my community at local government level will serve me in good stead in this.

I wish to thank my proposer Councillor Mrs Christine Channon and Mrs Christine Foster who has seconded me, and I thank you the reader for having taken the time to consider this letter. I ask that you will give me your FIRST preference vote, or, failing that, your SECOND!

Pray for all candidates for General Synod.