

Karen Silcox General Synod Election Statement - Email: karensilcox19@gmail.com

Proposed by: Kath Charles, Trinity Church Exeter

Seconded by: Juliet Meadowcroft St Michael's Alphington



Why don't you introduce yourself?

My name is Karen Silcox. I am 47 and live in the East of Exeter. I attend Trinity Church with my husband and two older teenage children. Trinity is in an extensive new build housing development. We don't have our own church building but meet in the two primary schools and a community centre located in our parish.

Tell us a bit about your own faith journey and your involvement with church.

I grew up in the Roman Catholic Church, and it was there I first came to faith. I came to Exeter as a student where my faith grew. I joined Trinity Church in 2003. Over the years I have served doing youth work, pastoral care and was on the PCC as church treasurer from 2015 to 2025. I have also served as the church Safeguarding Officer.

And what does your week look like?

It's a real mix. I work providing the financial and governance support for small organisations in a mixture of paid and voluntary roles. I mainly work with Christian charities which includes being a charity trustee for two. My mornings and evenings are spent looking after family and providing support for my aunt who has dementia.

You would like to stand for General Synod? Why is that?

The Church of England is a big part of my life. Alongside my church attendance, my youngest goes to a Church of England Aided School. I love the way Exeter Cathedral brings identity to the city. I now have the opportunity to give something back. Can I be a blessing to my church and my diocese by serving in General Synod? We will find out!

What are the things that are important to you?

- **Telling people about Jesus**

I want to encourage the Church of England to keep sharing the Good News of Jesus. People still need to urgently hear about Jesus and have their lives shaped by Him. I also want to encourage Christians to be whole life disciples, bringing and sharing the good news of Jesus in every part of our lives.

- **Maintaining vibrant local congregations.**

Through my work with churches and charities, I see the many volunteers who give countless hours to keep churches running. Whereas the average age of a charity trustee (think PCC member) is 57^[1], many of the volunteers I work with are in their 70's and 80's. There has been a serious decline in formal volunteering, particularly amongst older people. Increased bureaucracy has been identified as one reason for this decline ^[2].

We need to consider how we can reduce the administrative burden ^[2]. Where, due to statutory reasons, this cannot be reduced, we need to look at what additional paid support can be put in place to reduce the burden.

We should adapt in order to engage younger generations. We need to provide the infrastructure which allows flexible, low commitment volunteering opportunities alongside deeper sustained engagement ^[2].

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Trust in the local church leads to greater financial generosity. Transparency in how funds are used really matters^[3]. I think we must adapt our financial arrangements so the impact of all giving, particularly that giving which goes on Parish Share, can be really felt by the local congregations.

• **Marriage**

I have people close to me in same-sex relationships whom I love dearly. I accept the Church of England's current teaching on marriage and would want it to remain the same. At the same time, we need to find a way for those with different convictions to live and worship together within the Church, united by our shared faith and care of our parishes.

• **Safeguarding**

It's important that the Church of England is a safe place for all, and we ensure our systems are the best they can be. Alongside that, when we discuss safeguarding, I would like some recognition for all the hard work our safeguarding volunteers and staff have put in to maintain this safe environment.

Is there anything else you would like to say?

In my spare time I quite like watching sports, comedy shows and Star Trek. My favourite author is Agatha Christie. When I was younger, I played a lot of badminton and coached at a Junior Badminton Club between 2005 and 2010. I also play the piano.

I hold the following church related / professional memberships:

- Association of Accounting Technicians (Member and Licensed Accountant)
- Association of Charity Independent Examiners (Associate Membership)
- Evangelical Alliance UK (Individual member).
- Association of Church Accountants and Treasurers (Individual Member)
- UK Church Administrators Network (attend local meetings)
- Friends of Exeter Cathedral (member)

If I am elected to General Synod, I am committed to do my best to carry out the role. I want to thank every deanery synod rep and those who organise the elections.

If you have any questions, then please get in touch.

References

1- [Why is the average age of charity trustees so high in the UK? | Insights | UHY Hacker Young](#)

2 - [The volunteering crisis: is the UK running out of volunteers? | Sector Debates | Plinth](#)

3- Stewardship Generosity Report 2026

