

Mr Richard Buzzacott

1. What has prompted you to stand for election to General Synod in particular, and in which ways do you think it will challenge your capacity and capabilities?

My experience of being on a PCC, Deanery Synod, Diocesan Synod, Bishop's Council and the various Bishop's Council working parties, gives me an in-depth understanding of the real issues for Parishes in the Diocese. I want to represent these at a national level and be party to getting help for the Parishes within the Diocese.

My capabilities. In my work life I have made presentations to both friendly and hostile meetings, I have been the principal witness to legal Inquires and questioned by leading QCs, and presented at a multi national conference with simultaneous translations.

Speaking at General Synod is well within my comfort Zone.

2. What do you believe the Church of England should prioritise over the next five years to support mission, Christian discipleship and the flourishing of parish and other worshipping communities?

Regarding Mission, there is NOT one size fits all. If you are a small church with a dozen people, mission is very different to a church of 400 people. A large church can do extensive work with all age ranges and social issues, a smaller church cannot.

BUT, common to all, if you can free up Clergy so they are not bogged down by endless administrative tasks, so they are happy and fulfilled, they can have more time to encourage and inspire the Churches they lead, and help their churches grow.

3. What should General Synod do to help the Church become safer, more accountable and more trusted, ensuring that national reforms work effectively in parishes, dioceses, and cathedrals?

I am not sure if this question is about safeguarding. Safeguarding has to put victims and survivors first before the reputation of the institution.

I want to acknowledge that as a Diocese we have a very competent and helpful Safeguarding Team. I think many parishes in the diocese are grateful for their practical help and advice. This is the sort of good practical work that needs to grow.

The safeguarding team needs more resources to give more practical help to parish churches and central church should find resources to help .

4. How should the Church prioritise good intentional investment in mission and growth whilst also resourcing parish ministry in all its forms?

Mission and growth is not some vague thing driven by some Central Strategy, but is about people talking to people. Funding can help facilitate this. The Church of England has traditionally worked within a parish structure and these structures can helpfully be resourced by Central Funding. For growth to be maintained it is important that new believers find a place in a local church, a community, so they have encouragement and support in their Christian walk .

5. General Synod must address issues on which faithful Christians hold deeply differing views. How would you contribute to honest debate, good disagreement and clear decision-making while helping the Church maintain its common life and mission?

If this is about LLF , then the church has not handled this well . This dispute is not about facts, it's about strongly held beliefs.

If you want to resolve such disputes, you must see the argument from the other person's perspective AND see your own argument from their perspective. If you can honestly do this, it is surprising how much of the perceived dispute disappears. THEN you try and find procedures and structures that may hold the church's common life together.

I have used this method of dispute resolution in my secular life and it has worked .