

Motion from Southampton Deanery Synod

Note from the Diocesan Secretary

Introduction:

1. We are pleased to share the motion and attached paper from Southampton Deanery Synod for discussion and debate. We are always delighted to receive motions from our Deaneries for discussion at Diocesan Synod – helping to ensure the issues and ideas local parishes and benefices are grappling with can be considered by our wider diocesan family.
2. The motion and proposals speak for themselves. This note therefore simply seeks to offer some context and legal background to help inform the debate.

Church Commissioners Funding:

3. Given the subject of the motion, we felt it might be useful to direct Diocesan Synod members to the following page on the Church of England Website:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/about/leadership-and-governance/church-commissioners>

4. In particular we would encourage members to take a few minutes to read the following Fact Sheets half-way down the page to gain an understanding of how and what the Commissioners currently fund.



Legal Context:

5. Our Diocesan Registrar has offered the following thoughts on the motion from a legal perspective:

The duty to maintain Church buildings usually falls on the Parochial Church Council (PCC) of the benefice in which the building is located. Parish churches are

vested in the incumbent of the benefice, but the duty to maintain them falls on the PCC. Church halls and licensed churches / chapels are often vested in the Diocesan Board of Finance as custodian trustee, but continue to be managed and maintained by the PCC.

This motion does not specify how the Church Commissions should use their resources to maintain church buildings in good order. Depending on the proposed mechanism, legislation might be necessary to enable this kind of support.

Process & Next Steps:

6. As this is a formal motion, Diocesan Synod will be asked to vote on this at the meeting. Under our standing orders, members have the right to propose amendments, and we ask that these are submitted at least 7 days in advance.
 7. If Diocesan Synod were to pass this motion, the next step would be for us to write officially to the Trustees of the Church Commissioners requesting them to consider this request.
 8. It should be noted that the Church Commissioners are a separate independent Charity and are therefore not subject to decisions of Synodical Structures or indeed the Archbishops' Council.
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