



**The Church of England  
Diocese of Southwell & Nottingham  
General Synod Election 2015**

**A Prospectus for Re-election from Colin Slater  
To the Lay Electors**

*Dear Friends*

***Introduction***

FOR THE PAST 25 years it has been my great privilege to serve on the General Synod of the Church of England as one of the lay representatives of our Diocese.

It is after much prayer and reflection, and with the help of close Christian friends, that I have decided to offer myself for re-election for the period 2015-2020.

If my candidature is to be successful I need to ask you to consider giving me your **first** preference vote when you decide how to vote from among the list of candidates. I believe it is, above all, important that, after times of prayer, you *will* vote. What follows seeks to assure you that, if chosen, I will serve at least as faithfully as I have tried to do since first being elected in 1990.

***Background***

I have been serving God and His Church in this Diocese for over 50 years, whether as a Churchwarden (for 38 years); actively in the structures of the Diocese; on General Synod; or, quite simply, through my daily Christian witness in a varied and busy life. As a Churchwarden at Christ Church, Chilwell, I served under six incumbents and as a member of Bishop's Council I have served under the same number of Diocesan Bishops, from Dennis Wakeling to Paul Williams.

Since moving to live and work in Nottingham in 1959 I have been employed as a journalist with the city's daily newspapers; as head of public relations by Nottinghamshire County Council; as head of marketing by Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club; and as a football commentator by BBC Radio Nottingham. In a varied career I have gained an immense insight into what makes my adopted county "tick" and I have been able to place this not only at the disposal of the Church but of various charities in the voluntary sector. I am a Trustee of Emmanuel House, a day advice centre for homeless people, which also annually operates a winter shelter; also a Trustee of Sporting Hearts and Notts County's Football in the Community scheme; and chairman of Trustees of Springs, Nottingham, a day centre at Brinsley for young people with learning difficulties. Until retirement from office I served for 27 years as a Nottingham magistrate. There was one paragraph in the material issued from our Diocesan office about life on General Synod which I found beautifully under-stated.

*"Any member of the Synod may be invited by the Appointments Committee to serve on a number of permanent or temporary bodies."*

From my experience the truth is that, when accepting such invitations, you can be taking on even heavier responsibilities, and greater demands on one's time, than is the case when attending Synod.

I accepted the Business Committee's invitation to serve as a Synod representative on St John's (Nottingham) College Council which then elected me as its vice-chairman so now I also sit on its Standing Committee. I have been asked to be a member of numerous panels appointing members of staff and, twice, to chair disciplinary hearings.

In addition, by the wish of my Synod colleagues from the Diocese, I have represented us on the Inter-Diocesan Finance Forum, meeting twice a year in London, and on the Queen Victoria Clergy Fund which, through Diocesan Bishops, makes grants available to clergy in financial difficulties. It's also been my pleasure to report on Synod's proceedings to East Bingham Deanery.

### ***Synod Challenges – Past and Present***

As long ago as 2005 I wrote in a previous election prospectus that it was possible to anticipate some of the issues the new Synod would face:

- Should women be consecrated as Bishops in the Church of England?
- How inclusive should our Church be with regard to people of different sexual orientation?
- Can the momentum be retained to transform the Church of England into a mission-shaped Church?

After much prayer and agonising, the first of these was eventually settled in a vote in July, 2014, since when we have seen two appointments of women as Diocesan Bishops and several others as Suffragan Bishops. I have always been open about my support for women bishops and voted accordingly.

The other two remain on the agenda and are likely to occupy much debating time over the next five years. I sense that issues surrounding human sexuality are likely to be more divisive than women bishops and I am grateful to the Archbishops for initiating a series of conversations on the subject. Being conservative and traditionalist by nature I need to do a lot of listening and praying before being finally convinced about how to vote.

The Archbishops took a major initiative in setting up four task groups, each to consider aspects of Church of England life which could usefully be subject to reform and renewal – streamlining is a one-word summary of what's intended.

One group is considering Intentional Evangelism and ought to have a significant impact on whether we are to be a mission-shaped or inward-looking Church. The

Archbishops have warned Synod, and will doubtless renew this call as the task groups' reports come forward, that consideration should be against the background of what it means for all Christians, lay and ordained, to be a community of missionary disciples. Synod received a paper from the Bishop of Sheffield on *Developing Disciples* which framed a number of pertinent questions which any PCC or home group could usefully consider. For example: *What key experiences and opportunities have helped to form you as a disciple? What helps to sustain you in your discipleship?*

### ***Conclusion***

Whatever other issues rise to the top of General Synod's agenda I do not expect the next five years to be dull!

With your support I look forward to playing a full role in the work of the Synod. Thank-you.