

## ELECTIONS TO GENERAL SYNOD

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### DIOCESE OF NEWCASTLE

Candidate: Sheffield Exham

St. Aidan's, 9 Belmont Gardens, Haydon Bridge, NE47  
6HG

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Dear Elector,

I have been asked to stand for election to the General Synod and I hope, when you have read this, you will consider giving me your first preference vote or, failing that, your second.

#### **What I have done and what I am doing now**

I am commonly known as Sheff. I was a teacher for 38 years in many parts of the UK. I retired in 2009 and came back to Northumberland with my wife Pippa. We first came here in 1976. I keep busy as one of the Chairmen of the Educational Appeal Tribunal for the county. This involves sorting out all sorts of problems, often for very distressed children and their families. I am also District Secretary of the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament (Dioceses of Carlisle, Durham & Newcastle) and an honorary member of the Council General. I regularly attend St. John's Church, Grainger St., Newcastle but I also go to our two local churches in Haydon Bridge where my wife is Church Warden, when they need an organist. I am a member of The Society (under the patronage of St. Wilfrid & St. Hilda) and Forward in Faith. I do a lot of gardening, walking, reading and listening to music.

#### **What is my background?**

I come from a family with close ties to the Church of England. My grandfather was Precentor of Lichfield, my great aunt was a full time lay worker and my father an ecclesiastical lawyer. Until my early twenties I worshipped at Lichfield Cathedral where I was server & steward. I was confirmed in 1962. I obtained a BA in Theology from Bristol University (1971). Pippa and I married in 1974 and moved to W. Yorkshire where I was PCC Secretary and Deanery Synod Rep. as well as acting as

lay Chaplain in the school. I subsequently attended St. Andrew's, Worthing (server & reader) & latterly St. Alban's Abbey.

**What will be important in forthcoming sessions of synod?**

Now that the excitement over women Bishops has died down we need to ensure adherence to the Five Principles, safeguarding traditional standpoints in a united Church. The rise of militant Islam demands discussion as many Christians feel in need of authoritative guidance. Same sex marriage is also bound to be on the agenda. The ongoing discussions on 'Reform & Renewal' will need to be carefully monitored.

**Two areas of personal concern.**

Young people seem to be almost invisible in many of our churches and largely ignorant of Christian teaching. We need to find a variety of new ways to engage with them.

Rural Ministry: Having divided my time between town and country parishes I am deeply concerned for the future of the rural Church. Many parishes feel they are largely ignored when compared with their urban colleagues. This is especially true in the North of England. I intend to provide a voice for traditional Anglicanism and Newcastle Diocese in particular. I hope to enlarge on these issues in a later mailing.

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**Proposer : Pauline Storey (Hexham Deanery)**

**Seconder : Pauline Purves (Newcastle Central Deanery)**