

GENERAL SYNOD ELECTIONS 2026 -DIOCESE OF NORWICH



John Hooper – Depwade Deanery and member of Norwich Diocesan Synod.

Retired Chartered Surveyor experienced in working in large organisations including the NHS, HMRC and Local Authority

Lives in Tacolcheston, married with two sons and three grown up grandchildren.

Lay Minister, Churchwarden and Parish Safeguarding Officer

Background

I became a Christian at the age of 16, joined a PCC aged 17 and been involved in Church Life (mainly rural but 5 years small market town) ever since. First encounter with Holy Spirit when faith moved from head to heart, subsequently outside of church involved in mission leading, organising mission events and secular and church youth leading. My main concerns and passions for which I would campaign if elected are (in no particular order of importance because they are all important) as follows.

1. Campaigning and bringing pressure to bear on both the Church Commissioners and Archbishops Council, to direct more money directly to Parish ministry.
2. To campaign and seek to influence that no priest should have charge of more than 5 churches. I believe this is a realistic long-term objective.
3. To press for a significant reduction in Diocesan Office costs. This can be done, as has been done in other large public organisations by creating combining the back-office functions of several diocese into single units e.g estates, HR, finance and safeguarding. For example, why should every diocese need a dedicated Director of Safeguarding (as proposed) with costs in excess of £100k a year when several dioceses could combine. Ensuring that the pain suffered by survivors of abuse is properly recognised with compassion and understanding and support
4. Encourage new and different thinking on the vexed question of sexual orientation. I believe there is confusion between specific actions (whether, marriage, blessing etc) and what inclusivity really means. Matthew 15:18 tells us that it is what comes out of our hearts that defiles us. In a sense we must educate people's hearts.

I believe that the Christian Church in this land is at a pivotal moment. No longer is it realistic to look to those ordained to do what it takes to bring about revival in the church. We need to get the message across that all Christians are missionaries; all have been empowered by Christ to do his work here on earth. The church has a duty to empower, train and encourage all of us in that endeavour. This is one message I support coming from the top down. I am encouraged by the diocesan ministry strategy initiative "Streams" telling our stories of faith. Encouragement is need from the top down and bottom up to fulfil our commission to "Go into all the world" – you know the rest!