

Anita Phillips

Candidate for General Synod

Member of the Archdeaconry Synod of France

Proposed by Kate du Toit (Member Archdeaconry of France)

Seconded by Rosemary Ulyett (Secretary Archdeaconry of France)



My background and experience

I am married with two sons and have been a permanent French resident, living in Carcassonne, France for seven years.

I am an accountant, and previously worked in the UK specialising in charity finance. During the course of my professional life, I have worked with a range of Church of England bodies, including national charities, cathedrals and theological colleges, parishes and guild churches.

I am a former member of General Synod for Canterbury diocese, being particularly focussed there on supporting women's ordained ministry and lay ministry more widely.

Having moved around several dioceses in my career, I have been a member of a several PCCs, deanery, and diocesan synods in Peterborough and Canterbury dioceses.

I am a former Treasurer of the Friends of Cathedral Music and an enthusiastic supporter of church music and music education.

I am currently a member of the Chaplaincy of Midi Pyrenees and Aude, sitting on the Finance Committee and Chaplaincy Council and training as a worship leader. I am also a member of the Archdeaconry Synod of France.

As an Archdeaconry Synod member, my focus has been on finance and good governance and supporting the development of lay ministry.

Our local worship community in the Aude is small and rural. I have recently been involved in relocating our worship centre to a new church in a better location to meet the needs of the Aude francophone community.

My priorities if elected to General Synod

An inclusive church

Church should be for everyone, regardless of gender or sexuality. As General Synod continues to consider the right way forward in response to Living in Love and Faith, it is important that all feel valued and welcome. I believe if we, as a synod, debate respectfully and prayerfully, we should be able to stay together as a church, finding the right way forward.

Safeguarding and HR

Recent debates on this at the February meeting of the General Synod have seen significant steps forward in the Church's approach to this. I welcome the agreement to move forward with an independent safeguarding team at national level. However, we need to do more, I think, and am pleased that more work will be done on the legal mechanisms to enable diocesan safeguarding teams to be brought under the same independent umbrella.

I am also concerned that the debates also highlighted the lack of comprehensive HR policies across the Church. For example, we still lack adequate processes and guidance to deal with bullying. Whilst some initial consideration has been given to the bullying of clergy, I think that we need to expand this remit and look at bullying at all levels across the Church, including that between laity, as well as laity and clergy.

Chaplaincy/Parish-based ministry

There are many challenges facing our local ministries with falling attendances and stretched funding in all the dioceses, coupled with depletion in numbers of those coming forward for ordination. I believe that we need to focus on encouraging and enabling lay ministry as well as vocations to ordination.

Your Vote

I am asking for your first preference vote, as I would like the opportunity to make a difference, working within Synod to facilitate the mechanisms and the funding to support our Mission and Ministry. I would welcome the opportunity to work with the other Diocese in Europe members of the Synod to represent the views and needs of this diocese. This diocese has its own special challenges in many areas, in funding and recruiting clergy, for example.

If you would like to engage with me on any of the issues here, or other matters of concern to our church, please contact me by email at phillips.a@churchinmidipa.org