

David King

Election Address

Laity Candidate for General Synod Representing Portsmouth Diocese

I am standing for election to General Synod because I care deeply about the mission and growth of the Church of England, and I want to bring the voice and concerns of our Portsmouth Diocese to the national conversation.

About me

The Church of England has had a positive impact on my life from an early age, and I was confirmed by the Bishop of Buckingham in 1998. I have worshipped at Portsmouth Cathedral for the past 7 years having returned to Portsmouth in 2019 after moving away in 1988. I am a member of Cathedral Chapter and Chair of the Finance Committee and gain enormous fulfilment from my involvement with the wider team that deliver the ministry to the Parish, City of Portsmouth and support the Diocese.

I've been married to my wife Anne for 36 years and have been blessed with 3 wonderful children who are now grown up and forging their own lives and careers. I retired from full-time employment in August 2019 after spending 33 years working in hospitality, shipping and airports, including 20 years at divisional and main board level, before running my own business for a further 13 years. My consultancy business specialised in advising and working with shareholders and senior management teams of airports, travel hubs, travel retailers, food & beverage operators and brand owners, both here in the UK and around the world.

I am currently Chair of Governors and Safeguarding Governor for an early years school, have been a Parish Councillor for 11 years and a volunteer at Restore Hope, a Christian charity. Previously, I was an elected Buckinghamshire Unitary Authority Councillor, deputy cabinet member for transport and a Trustee of Amersham Youth Club and Amersham United Charities.

I have benefitted enormously from working with people from all walks of life and cultures around the world which has taught me to listen to and value the opinions of others. Understanding what success looks like and the pathways to appropriate outcomes has been a key learning and helped me 'to make things happen' in a collaborative and timely manner.

Why I'm standing

The Church is navigating significant questions about mission, safeguarding, governance, and pastoral care. The image of the Church has been tarnished due to safeguarding revelations in recent years and faces real questions about how to grow, reach new generations, and remain relevant and rooted in its parishes and communities. The 'Save the Parish' agenda articulates many issues including the complexities and outcomes of funding changes in recent years. I want to help Synod focus on:

- **Supporting parish mission.** Ensuring resources and decisions from the centre genuinely help local churches grow and serve their communities. It is not acceptable that many parish clergy are now looking after 4 or more parish churches making the task of building meaningful relationships with local communities very challenging.

- **Reaching younger generations and new communities.** There are now more than a million 16- to 24-year-olds not in education, employment or training (NEETS) that need help and support, and the Church of England has a role to play in helping young people reach their potential and live fulfilling and productive lives. Maintaining an active Christian representative in every parish community should be an absolute priority to reach out to the younger generation and build a sustainable following for the future. Nurturing relationships with all schools, colleges, universities and established youth organisations should be a prerequisite.
- **Practical, sustainable growth.** Being honest about what's working and what isn't and learning from parishes that are thriving – sharing best practices and replicating success.
- **Valuing our people.** We are fortunate to have so many wonderful and historic places of worship but without people they become just soulless artifacts. Our clergy are our beating heart and must be valued, cared for and supported in their mission to ensure their continued wellbeing. We are blessed with an army of volunteers that hold our parishes together and support the church in so many ways. They should be honoured, safeguarded and celebrated. Congregations are the life blood, hard won and should never be taken for granted.

What I'd bring

I don't come to this with all the answers, but I bring my extensive life experiences, willingness to learn, listen prayerfully, engage with an open mind, contribute fully and always report back honestly to the diocese about what's discussed and decided.

My commitment

I would be honoured to serve as your representative and to play a part in shaping the future of our Church with faithfulness and humility. If elected, I will attend all Synod sessions in full, prepare diligently for debates, and stay accountable to the 129 parishes and people I would represent across south east Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

I would be grateful for your vote.

Thank you.

David King, 96 Penny Street, Portsmouth, PO1 2NL

