

Be sure to **USE YOUR VOTE!** in September

“Lack of participation threatens the common sense of democracy, leaving it to extremist groups to fill the void,” was a recent *CHURCH TIMES* comment about PCCs.

T rue in local and national elections, even more true for the General Synod. A poor turn-out in the 2005 election deprived the General Synod of a full-hearted mandate. Each and every Deanery Synod member needs to make sure that does not happen again in 2010. In this election **YOU** are the voters.

VOTING IS AS EASY AS ONE, TWO, THREE

When the Ballot paper arrives in mid-September, read the Election Addresses. Candidates you might vote for may not make it clear where they stand on the issues which matter to you. Phone them to get an answer, or email them to get them to state their position.

Simply number the candidates in your order of preference: 1, 2, 3 ... Keep going until there is no-one left whom you would want on Synod.

This way your vote cannot be wasted. If your First choice is knocked out for having the least votes, your whole vote will be transferred to your next choice, or to the next of your choices who is still in the count.

Your First choice is the most important - give it to the person you most want to see elected. Do not assume “S/he’s sure to get in. I’ll give someone else a chance.” Many a

valued old hand has been dumped that way.

If your First choice gets too many votes, your vote is still not wasted. The surplus of your vote not needed to elect that candidate is transferred to your next choice.

This is called the ‘Single Transferable Vote’ - the fairest system there is. The Church of England has been using it for 40 years - for once we are ahead of the times.

Make sure you return your ballot paper to the Presiding Officer before the closing date shown on the ballot paper.

Don’t forget to sign the back of the ballot paper. That’s to prevent cheating. No-one will know how you voted.



M aybe you should stand yourself, or someone you respect should. If you have a vote, you will be sent a Nomination paper this August. Ask a former General Synod member you trust what is involved.

Candidates need to be nominated by two Deanery Synod members. Because voters vote for those they know, or those who know you, seek out well-known proposers in other parts of the diocese from your own.

Make sure you get your Nomination form signed before your chosen sponsors go off on holiday. Get it back to the Returning Officer before the Nominations closing date early in September.