



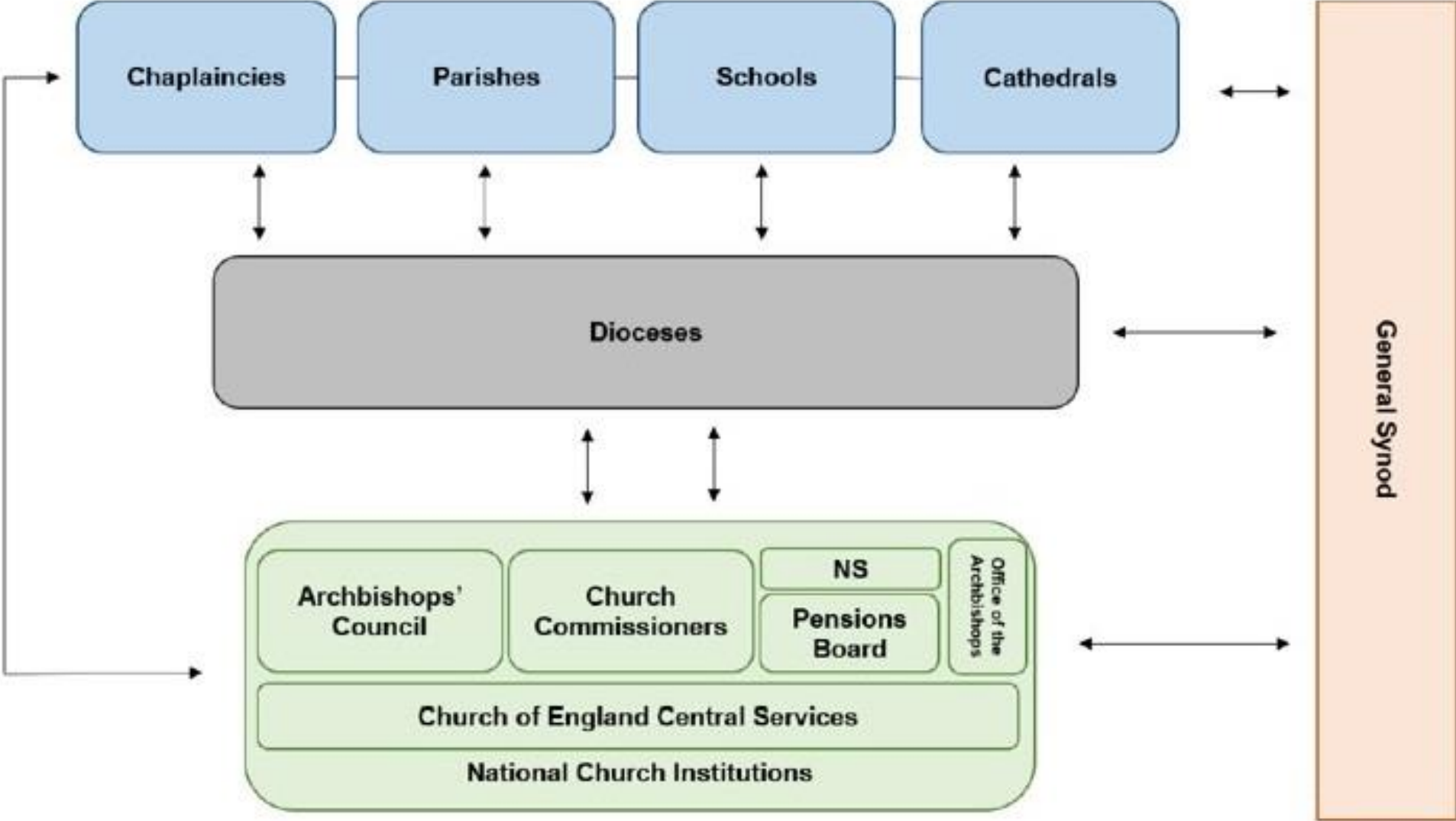
# General Synod report

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24 November 2022

# General Synod - introduction

- The national assembly (legislative body) of the Church of England, established in 1970. Origin in medieval synods (convocations) of bishops and clergy in the Provinces of Canterbury and York. Based on principle CofE is 'episcopally-led and synodically-governed'
- Today General Synod
  - considers and approves legislation affecting the whole of the Church of England covering doctrine, discipline, clergy terms etc
  - formulates new forms of worship, including liturgies to use alongside the BCP
  - debates matters of national and international importance
  - approves the annual budget for the work of the Church at national level

# National Church Governance Diagram



- General Synod is elected every five years. Most recent election in September 2021 for the five years (quinquennium) 2021-26
- General Synod has 478 members from two Convocations (Canterbury and York) plus laity
  - House of Bishops – 42 diocesans plus 11 suffragans/others
  - House of Clergy – 208, mostly elected from each CofE diocese \*
  - House of Laity – 217 lay members \*
- Inaugural session (opened by the Earl of Wessex in the Queen's absence) in November 2021
- Working sessions usually twice-yearly – in Feb (London) and July (York)

\* Includes armed forces, religious communities, universities/TEIs, UKME and other *ex officio*

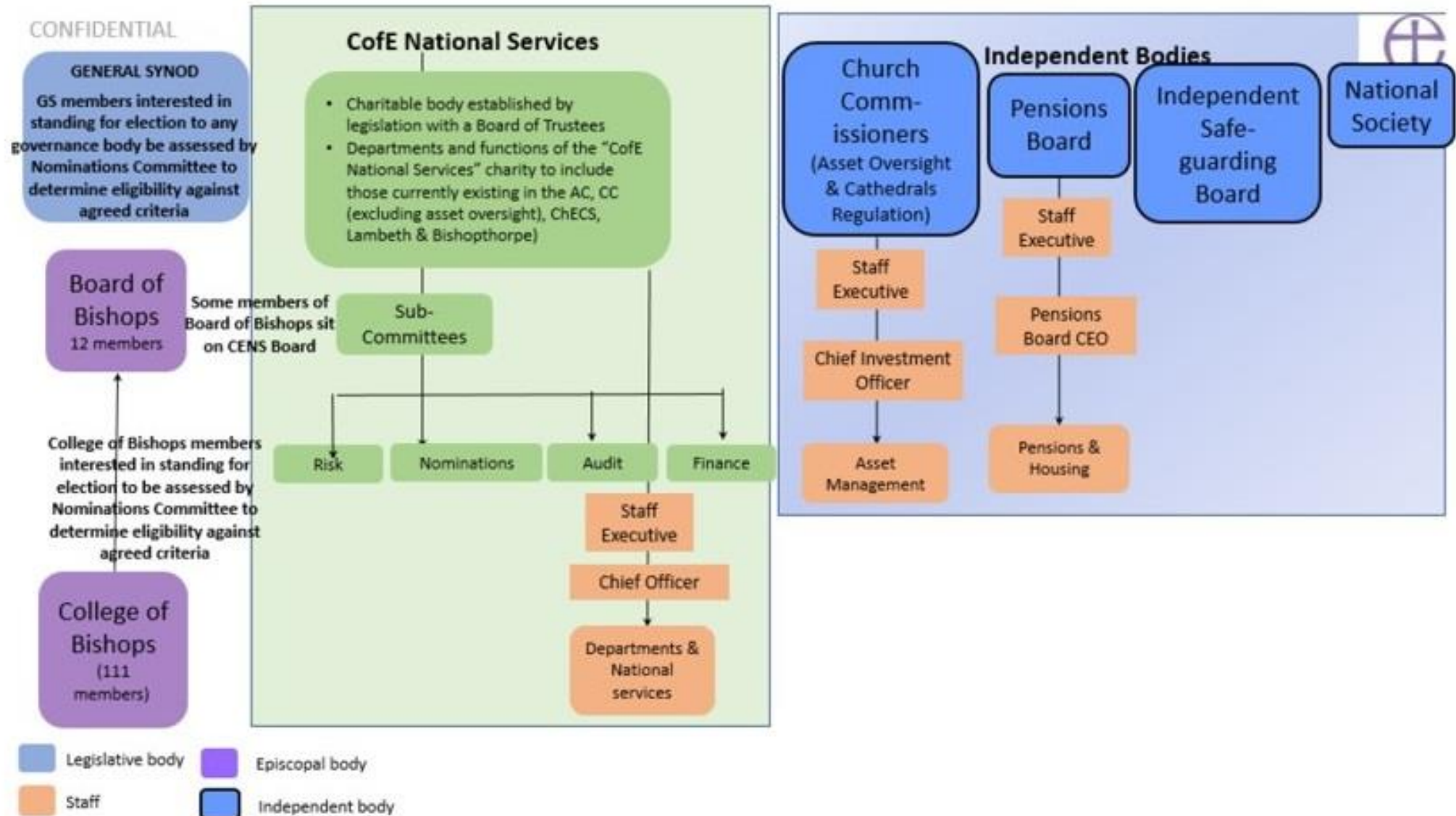
# General Synod – Nov 2021 sessions

- A ‘gentle introduction’ to the work of Synod
- Presidential address from Archbishops of Canterbury and York
- Debate on **Generosity and Diocesan Finances**
- Debate on **tackling inequality** – call on HMG to tackle UK wealth gap
- Discussion on Archbishop Stephen’s **Vision & Strategy** initiative
  - A church that is ‘simpler, humbler, bolder’
  - A church where ‘mixed ecology’ (parish and other forms of witness/presence like Fresh Expressions) is the norm
  - A church of missionary disciples
  - A church which is younger and more diverse
- Initial discussion about overhaul of the Church’s **governance structures**
- Questions & Answers and discussions about finances

# GOVERNANCE REVIEW GROUP

## ANNEXE I

### Governance Model Diagram



# General Synod – Feb 2022 sessions

- Debates on racial justice, the Church's **'Setting God's People Free'** initiative, on **the persecuted church** and **modern slavery and human trafficking**.
- Reports on **clergy remuneration** (including a promise that clergy stipends will increase in line with inflation!) and **safeguarding**
- Further discussion on **the church's governance**
- Initial discussion about how the next Archbishop of Canterbury should be chosen (**Crown Nominations Commission for the See of Canterbury**)
- More Q&A
- And finally some legislation!
  - Changes to the **Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2015**

# THE GENERAL SYNOD





# General Synod – July 2022 sessions

- Debates on the Church's **Routemap to Net Zero Carbon**, the **War in Ukraine**, **Disability**, **Assisted Suicide** and **Age Verification for Porn Sites**
- Discussion about **safeguarding** and **church finances**
  - Change to Canon 42 for dioceses to have a safeguarding officer (DSO) with the power to act independently from his or her diocese
- Debate and agreement on how to constitute the **Canterbury CNC**
  - Diocesan vote reduced from 6 to 3 (out of 17); Anglican Communion vote increased from 1 to 5, with a balance of men and women and at least half of the Communion's five being GMH
- Houses of Clergy and Laity elections to the **Crown Nominations Commission (CNC)**
- Group work on **Living in Love & Faith (LLF)** and **Vision & Strategy**

- Debate on **Resourcing Ministerial Formation**
- Update on a new **Clergy Conduct Measure** to replace the largely discredited Clergy Discipline Measure
- Passing of the **Diocesan Stipends Funds (Amendment) Measure** – allowing money from the income account of a diocesan stipends fund to be given to other dioceses
- Debate about **Qualifications for PCC membership** - the need for a less complicated Electoral Roll form and whether a PCC member needs to be an ‘actual communicant’
- Minor pieces of legislation

# General Synod – what is next?

- Proposals from the House of Bishops on how to respond to the **Living in Love & Faith (LLF)** consultation on sexuality and marriage
  - Strong views on both sides of the debate
  - Potentially the most controversial issue since previous General Synod debates on women's ordination (1992), divorce and remarriage (2002) and women bishops (2014)
- Draft legislation on **reforming church governance**
  - What will be the role of General Synod?
- Draft legislation on **clergy discipline**
- New proposals on **Qualifications for PCC membership**

The image features three overlapping, tilted teal shapes arranged horizontally. The leftmost shape is a dark teal rectangle. The middle shape is a medium teal rectangle, overlapping the right side of the first. The rightmost shape is a dark teal rectangle, overlapping the right side of the second. The text "Any questions?" is written in white, sans-serif font across the three shapes, with "Any" on the first, "questions?" on the second, and a question mark on the third.

Any questions?