

# Guildford Diocesan Synod: 12 March 2011

In my website page on the February General Synod I wrote:

## **“Central Stipends Authority**

Also circulated is the 2011 report of the Church of England’s Central Stipends Authority: <http://www.churchofengland.org/media/1173183/gc%20misc%20977.pdf>

Page 9 of the Report recommends that Dioceses should pay stipends at “not less than 1.5% below or more than 2.5% above” the figure they recommend for each diocese.

Page 10 of the Report states that the Diocese of Guildford is paying a stipend 5.9% above the recommended figure.

I intend to raise this matter at the Guildford Diocesan Synod. Either the Guildford Diocese should abide by national recommendations, or they should seek to get the recommendations changed. What they should not do is just ignore them.”

I therefore submitted the following question to the 12 March meeting of the Guildford Diocesan Synod:

“Noting that the Report of the Church of England’s Central Stipends Authority for the year 2010 (GS Misc 977), circulated to the General Synod in February 2011, states on page 9:

“Dioceses are asked to use their RSB [Regional Stipend Benchmark] as a guide in reaching their own stipend decisions, taking local factors into account. They are asked to set their Diocesan Basic Stipends – defined as the stipend paid to the greatest number of clergy of incumbent status within the diocese - at a level not less than 1.5% below or more than 2.5% above their RSB.”

Further noting that page 10 of the Report states that in 2010 the Diocese of Guildford paid a Basic Diocesan Stipend 5.9% above the Regional Stipend Benchmark.

What representations do the Bishops’ Council, or other appropriate Diocesan body, intend to make to the Central Stipends Authority to seek to persuade the CSA that the regional stipend benchmark figure for Guildford should be increased, so that in future years the Diocese of Guildford will no longer be in breach of national Church guidelines?”

At the meeting, the following reply from the Diocesan Secretary was circulated:

“Thank you Adrian. The Bishop’s Council looked at Stipends policy in general terms at its meeting in February. It noted the cost of living in this area, the financial pressures on clergy and their families, the reduction in the pension benefits and the history of stipend policy in the Diocese. The discussion concluded with (i) the need to address in part the point you make about the Regional Stipend Bench (RSB) - the RSB was seen to be producing strange results and had appeared to have recently been revised - the Council asked that the RSB be discussed with the National Church, and (ii) that further work be done on developing or reviewing our stipends policy.”

I was satisfied with the answer received, and did not ask a supplementary question at the meeting.