

<b>Agenda ref</b>	7.2
<b>Report title</b>	General Synod Report
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## INTRODUCTION

At its February 2025 group of sessions, the General Synod officially affirmed and proclaimed the Vacancy in See Committees Regulation 2024, as amended by the Vacancy in See Committees (Amendment) Regulation 2025, as an Act of Synod. For your reference, copies of the amended regulations (7.2.1) and the Act of Synod (7.2.2) are available. [Explanatory notes detailing the 2025 amendments can also be found here.](#)

## WHAT IS A VACANCY IN SEE COMMITTEE

A Vacancy in See Committee is a statutory committee with a permanent existence. It convenes specifically when there's a vacancy in the diocesan bishopric. The 2024 Regulations set out the framework for establishing, defining the functions, and determining the membership of these committees in every diocese. Each committee comprises ex officio, elected, and nominated members.

When a vacancy in its diocesan see is announced, a Vacancy in See Committee must:

- Prepare a statement outlining the needs of the diocese.
- Elect members (typically six, but three for Canterbury) to the Crown Nominations Commission. These elected members then serve on the Commission to shortlist and interview candidates for the vacant position.

## SUMMARY OF 2025 AMENDMENTS

The 2025 amendments to the regulations introduce several key changes:

- Special provision for the Diocese of Sodor and Man to account for its lack of a Bishop's Council.
- **Restriction on election and nomination to vacancy in see committees:** No more than one person with a "relevant connection" to a particular parish or worshipping community can be a committee member (unless they are ex officio members).
- **Requirement for a lay chair:** Vacancy in See Committees must now be chaired by a lay person.

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- **Gender representation on Crown Nominations Commission:** At least one clerical and one lay member elected from a Vacancy in See Committee to the Crown Nominations Commission must be female.
- **Restriction on Crown Nominations Commission elections:** Not more than one person with a "relevant connection" to a particular parish or worshipping community may be elected from a Vacancy in See Committee to serve on the Crown Nominations Commission.

## **ACTION FOR BRISTOL DIOCESAN SYNOD**

The Act of Synod must be proclaimed at the next session of the diocesan synod, which for Bristol is scheduled for June 14, 2025.

The suggested wording for the Chair to use when proclaiming the Act of Synod is: "At the group of sessions of the General Synod held at Westminster in February 2025, the Vacancy in See Committees Regulation 2024, in the form it takes following its amendment at that group of sessions, was formally affirmed and proclaimed as an Act of Synod."

An Act of Synod is the embodiment of the will or opinion of the Church of England as expressed by the whole body of the General Synod. Copies of the Instrument proclaiming and affirming the Vacancy in See Committees Regulation as an Act of Synod have been sent to members of this Synod."

## **RELEVANT DOCUMENTS**

### **7.2 a** Act of Synod instrument 2025

Proclamation of the Vacancy in See Committees Regulation 2024 as amended by the Vacancy in See Committees (Amendment Regulation 2025 as an act of Synod

### **7.2 b** Vacancy in See Committees Regulation 2024 as amended by the Vacancy in See Committees (Amendment) Regulation 2025