



# The Parish of Felixstowe

## St John the Baptist with St Edmund, King & Martyr

The Revd Canon Andrew Dotchin (tssf)  
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## General Synod Election 2021

### Details for Revd Canon Andrew Dotchin

**Ordained:** Deacon 1984 Priest 1985 (Johannesburg Diocese)  
**Age:** 65  
**Most Recent Qualification:** Post-Graduate Diploma in Pastoral & Contextual Theology (Anglia Ruskin University 2009)  
**Family:** Married to Lesley-Anne. We have three adult sons,  
**Posts:** Vicar of St John the Baptist with St Edmund, Felixstowe  
Rural Dean of Colneys Deanery  
Chaplain: Felixstowe Police Station  
356 (Felixstowe) Squadron Air Training Corps  
TS Landguard (Felixstowe) Sea Cadet Corps  
Orwell District Scouts  
**Proposer:** Revd Canon Sharon Potter  
**Secunder:** Revd Canon Rich Henderson

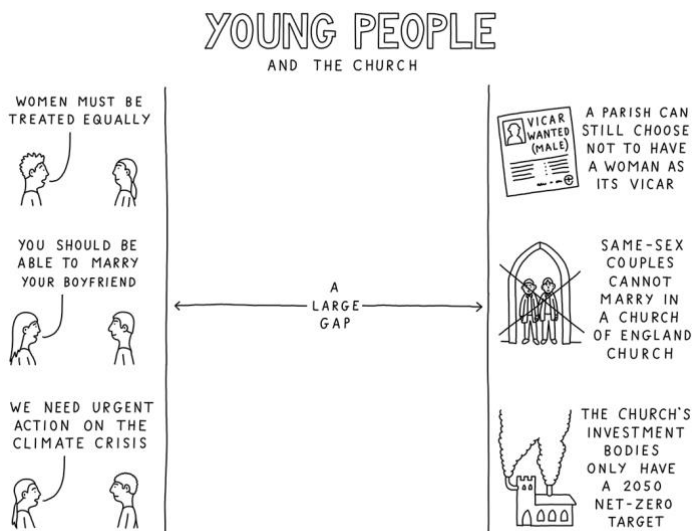


### Aspirations for this Synod

The forthcoming General Synod needs to focus on leading the Church through recovery from the COVID pandemic and into renewed ways of sharing the Good News. This needs to be done through well-established Parish Structures, manifold Fresh Expressions of Faith, a conscious commitment to Young People and the ministry of the Laity, and the recovering of ministry to and amongst our most deprived and vulnerable members (especially Estates, Rural Communities, and the Disabled)

For this to occur we must be a proactive Synod which accomplishes the dual tasks of putting our own house in order on subjects such as the Climate Crisis, Equal Marriage, and a fall in vocations and congregation numbers, whilst at the same time changing the public picture of the Established Church so that we become more a Church 'for' England and not only the Church 'of' England. We cannot speak of God in public if the people of God can no longer hear the voice of the Church.

[Living in Love and Faith](#) will come to a head during the life of this synod and we must be diligent in ensuring that the Church offers the '[Radical new Christian Inclusion](#)' for which our Archbishops have asked. This issue, as is our Care for Creation, is not just a concern for LGBTI+ members of the church but for all her members. If we fail to be more inclusive and offer a better care for the world around us we will find even fewer young people joining the faith.



I am (as a member of [Inclusive Church](#) and [MOSAIC](#)) in favour of Equal Marriage for both laity and clergy. I am also committed to finding a way in which we may live with 'Good Disagreement'. By its very nature the Anglican Church is an 'inclusive church' with a broad heartland wherein many find nurture. It would be intensely sad if some part of the church felt they had to 'walk apart'. I would hope in our discussions on these issues we would be able to find a response that recognises we live in a mixed economy wherein all views are valued and *Mutual Flourishing* is one of our guiding principles.

As a Franciscan I am intensely concerned for the Care for Creation and have sponsored a successful motion at General Synod raising the awareness of [Food Waste](#), encouraging churches to find ways of distributing it, and asking the Government to assist the food industry to fill tummies instead of Landfill.

As a Liberation Theologian I am convinced that if we bring the Gospel only to those who 'have' we will never truly meet our Lord who told us in the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats that we would find him amongst the ranks of the 'have nots'. If we are not eager to serve the Least, the Last, and the Lost we will not be able to serve our hungry, thirsty, migrant, naked, imprisoned Lord.

As someone whose parochial ministry has always been enriched by chaplaincies to non-church and para-church groups within the parish I am convinced that we need to find helpful fruitful ways of calling out and enabling more ministries (both ordained and lay) across the Church. To do this we would be foolish to refuse to use existing parish structures as a springboard and resource for such work.

When we have worked through these issues - God willing speedily and with grace and care for each other - then we will be better able to speak to the nation and the world.

## **Synodical Experience**

I have served our Diocese on General Synod for the last two Quinquennium and have always been an active and involved member both on the floor of the Chamber, through the work that happens with Church organisations on the fringes of Synod, and representing Synod on National Committees.

Besides the successful motion on Food waste (mentioned above) Synod accepted my amendment on a motion concerning [Conversion Therapy](#) to call on Her Majesty's Government to outlaw the practice completely. Work that is hoped will be completed during the current sitting of Parliament.

I represent General Synod on the Churches Funeral Group and the British Council of Funeral Services and work towards addressing the issue of funeral poverty and improving the training of Ministers in Bereavement Ministry.

I sponsor the annual 'Chaplains on Synod' Day in which the work done by ordained and lay people in chaplaincies in all sectors of society is supported and encouraged.

I have made it my aim to ensure that several church agencies always have space to put forward their concerns and cares at meetings of General Synod and frequently sponsor stalls for the Mothers' Union, USPG, Mission to Seafarers, and Open the Book.

During my time I have worked to bring Synod to Suffolk and Suffolk to Synod and over the years have been able to bring several initiatives to the Diocese. This has been especially so in improving our Diocesan practice for the Occasional Offices.

Prior to being on General Synod I was for 20 years a member of the Provincial Synod of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa (ACSA). My chief privilege during that time was to be the person who formally proposed the Ordination of women and men to the Priesthood and the Episcopate. During my time on Provincial Synod I was Secretary to the House of Clergy for nine years as well as Secretary to the Committee of Synod (the mechanism through which ACSA deals with second readings of legislation). This has meant that I have a facility to help with the wording of Measures and Motions, a skill which would be well used in the forthcoming quinquennium.

## **Church Practice**

Frequently I found myself to be described by others as 'high church' however I do not easily see myself as a member of any particular 'party' within the Church. The best description that has been given of me is 'bare catholic' something informed by my long membership of the Third Order of the Society of St Francis. My ministry has very often been with groups within the parish and I have been described as 'Chaplain to anything with a badge'. A sobriquet which I am happy to own as chaplains are the original Pioneer Ministers.

My early Christian journey was with several evangelical groups working in the seaports of England and Scotland a heritage that I have always found valuable and cherish to this day. In Felixstowe, as Moderator and now Vice-Moderator of Churches Together, I work frequently with partners from other denominations both 'up' and 'down' the candle. Besides joint worship events this has included action on care for those in food and fuel poverty, the care of Seafarers, and ministry to members of the LGBTI Community. At General Synod I am a firm supporter of seeking closer relationships (and hopefully reunion) with the Methodist Church and look forward to closer working with all denominations. Full details of my Ministry Experience can be found in [Crockfords](#).

I would welcome any questions from electors as to my position on any of the issues facing the Church of England. Please do not hesitate to contact me by any of the means detailed on the masthead of this letter.

Pax et Bonum - Andrew Dotchin (tssf)

*[The Cartoon 'Young People and the Church' is copyright © and used with permission of Dave Walker]*