

Diocese of Guildford

Election to The House of Laity of General Synod 2026

BRUINVELS:	Peter Nigel Edward	1
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Proposed by - **Lizzy Klintworth**
Bishop's Council and Guildford Deanery Synod

Seconded by - **Graham Everness LLM**
Lay Chair - Dorking Deanery Synod, Bishop's Council



Canon Peter BRUINVELS

About Canon Peter BRUINVELS CC

Member of The General Synod since 1985

Governor and Church Commissioners 1992-2024

Vice President and Chairman of The House of Laity - Diocesan Synod 2003-2012

Born in Dorking and married (to Alison) with two daughters - Alexandra – Solicitor in Bristol and Georgie – with a PhD (Medicine and Intervention Science) from UCL. Has two granddaughters. Educated at Downsends, St. John's Leatherhead, London University (LLB Hons) and Inns of Court School of Law (Bar Exams).

Freeman of The City of London and Fellow of The Royal Society of Arts (FRSA). Member of The Corporation of Church House since 1985.

Parish and Deanery:

Member of **St. Martin's Church, Dorking since birth. Member of Guildford Diocesan and Dorking Deanery Synods since 1974;** served on **St. Martin's PCC as Vice-Chairman** for many years. A trained Sunday Club Leader, Intercessor, OLM/NSM Training Chairman.

Diocese:

Peter serves on **Bishop's Council, College of Canons, St Martha's College, Vacancy-in-See and Dorking Deanery Leadership Team.**

Former Member of GDET (Guildford Diocesan Education Trust);

Guildford Diocesan Board of Education and was its Chairman 2005-08.

Nationally / General Synod:

- As a Governor and Trustee of the Church Commissioners, he served on the Board 1992-2024; Deputy Chair: Mission Pastoral and Church Property Committee (10+years) and Assets Committee (**£11.6bn**).
- Member of the 'Green Guide' for Parsonages Working Party - he reviewed it as part of the Mission and Pastoral Measure Review.
- Elected **Member of the GS Mission and Public Affairs Council** working with and advising the **Bench of Bishops on Policy Issues in The House of Lords**
- Peter is **Armed Forces Champion for The Church of England.**
- **Chair of The Queen Victoria Clergy Fund (Patron HM The King)** making grants (**£150k+**) to distressed Clergy spouses.
- An **Acting Deputy Chair of the Parliamentary Legislative Committee** reviewing all Synodical Measures, prior to them going to the Ecclesiastical Committee of Parliament.
- An elected Member of the Cathedrals Fabric Commission for England for 10 years and on its FAC Appointments and Grants Committees.
- Served on General Synod Board of Education, Dioceses Commission and Dearing Commission (1996-2006). On General Synod, he is a member of the **Evangelical Group (EGGS), STP and Catholic Group.**

Education:

A former **OFSTED Inspector (RE) of Church Schools and Chair of Governors. Nominated Chair: St John's School, North Holmwood 2026**-Formerly Chairman of **Surrey CC Schools Organisation Cttee and Member of Surrey LEA**, he has campaigned on General Synod for RE and family values to be taught by qualified and committed RE Teachers and for more Church Schools.

Profession and General Interests

Peter Bruinvels is **Armed Forces Covenant Lead and Civilian-Military Liaison Adviser** to Surrey CC liaising with all Surrey Local Authorities and Military Bases; Farnham Pirbright, Sandhurst, Keogh and Aldershot Garrison.

Armed Forces Champion for Guildford Diocese and for **The Church of England** He has been an Army Civil Servant for **11 Infantry Brigade** and **MoD Trainer** on the **Armed Forces Covenant** and **Armed Forces Awareness** for Forces Connect. Peter was instrumental in having the **Armed Forces Covenant** signed by **+Andrew** and **11 Infantry Brigade** on Remembrance Sunday. He also arranges the Annual Flag Raising and Launch of **Armed Forces Week** at Guildford Cathedral and is a regular Newspaper reviewer on **BBC Radio Surrey**.

He was also Service Chaplain for Surrey Fire & Rescue Service.

Honours:

In June 2017, Peter Bruinvels was awarded **The Canterbury Cross** by Archbishop Justin for "*sustained and outstanding work in support of the Church of England*".

Peter Bruinvels is Principal of his own Media Management, Community Engagement and Public Affairs Consultancy -**PETER BRUINVELS ASSOCIATES**.

A former **MP**, serving on the Backbench Defence, Education and Urban Affairs Committees, the Parliamentary Christian Group and **The Houses of Parliament Ecclesiastical Committee**.

Re-Elect....

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Peter BRUINVELS

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Dear Elector

September 2026

A SAFER, BOLDER AND UNITED CHURCH MOVING FORWARDS WITH RENEWED CONFIDENCE

In 2021, I was privileged to be re-elected to General Synod by Guildford Diocese for which I thank you. I now offer myself again for re-election. During these past 5 years, I have endeavoured to live up to that trust shown in me as an active **full-time** Christian participant in all spheres of Synodical Government culminating in my re-election as a **Church Commissioner** and re-appointment as the longest serving **Governor of The Church Commissioners**. Until 2024, I served as a **Member** and **Trustee** of its **Assets Committee (£11.6bn)** having been re-appointed by the Archbishops, where I took a strong interest in ethical and green issues, as well as advocating that The Church of England goes carbon net zero to safeguard God's creation.

I continued to make Guildford's presence felt, ensuring orthodox faith and apostolic order were upheld as a **regular attendee** and **participant** in many Synod debates and at **Question Time**. I strongly supported the **Cathedrals Measure** having served on the **Cathedrals Fabric Commission**. Having successfully proposed the adoption of the **Armed Forces Covenant** with the support of both Archbishops offering pastoral, welfare and spiritual support for the Armed Forces Community, I continued as **Armed Forces Champion for The Church of England** with Guildford Diocese (+Andrew) having signed the **Armed Forces Covenant** with **11 Infantry Brigade (Aldershot)** in **Guildford Cathedral**. I have helped **9 Dioceses** including **Oxford and Rochester** sign the **Armed Forces Covenant**. I also spoke for **The Armed Forces Chaplains (Licensing) Measure** enabling Service Chaplains to lead Services 'outside the wire'.



As an **Acting Chair** and member of Synod's **Legislative Committee**, I have been working closely with the new **Ecclesiastical Committee** to get them 'onside' attending informal meetings and seeing Members privately as we need to work 'in tandem' rather than have them reject measures such as the **National Church Governance Measure**. The good news is that we saved the **Clergy Conduct Measure 2025** – because we separated **Safeguarding** and made it our number 1 priority saying we would pay whatever it costs in compensation to the many victims through the Church Commissioners.

During the next five years of Synod, sadly without +Andrew, we will need unity and stability within our Church of England to enable the agenda for **'Working Together'** to **flourish**. I will continue to make our Bishops remember their commitments solemnly given at their consecration - that there is only **ONE CHURCH, ONE FAITH** and **ONE LORD** embracing the **Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion** with **Biblical Teaching** placed at the heart of it all. A number of senior Bishops and Lay Members have encouraged me to stand for **re-election** and assured me that my churchmanship and long experience is needed and that I still have a **valuable** contribution to make.

There are more than **15** issues of concern that will dominate Synod during the next **5** years, such as **Church-State Relations**, **Suffragan Bishop numbers** with **Diocese mergers**, **See Houses**, **Stronger Safeguarding**, **Supporting the Parish System (STP)** with direct grants to the **Parishes**, **Clergy Discipline Commission**, **Racial Justice**, **Living in Love and Faith** – which I cannot support, **Dispossessions on Pastoral Review grounds**, **Rural Issues**, **Being Church and Vocations**, **Church Planting and Growth** – (I used to be a **Church Army Director**), **Mission Action Plans** and **Evangelism** building on my experience as a **Director of St Martha's College**, **Strategic Development Funding**, including giving more to **Cathedrals** and giving evidence to the **Mission and Pastoral Measure** to retain its independent **Appellate Role**. If only we had more priests available!

During the last Synod, I remained one of the most active and enthusiastic members. My energy and enthusiasm continue unabated as a **full-time member** and **questioner**, standing up for Guildford. **Continuity, keenness** and **experience** will all be important. When **Diocesan Lay Chair**, I represented the breadth and comprehensiveness of our Diocese and did so on General Synod. If elected, I will continue to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ afresh in each generation and seek to be a Church that is Jesus centred and Jesus Christ shaped. We must also continue with +Andrew's legacy, as well as supporting +Paul during the Vacancy. Any queries – do please ask me. I do hope that you will feel able to re-elect me by giving me your **first** or an early preference vote.

Yours Sincerely *Peter Bruinvels*

MAJOR ISSUES

The Appointment of Bishops including the next Bishop of Guildford: How the Crown Nominations Commission appoints our Diocesan Bishops - and the ongoing role of Suffragans / PEVs - in a reformed House of Lords - with fewer Sees? I favour the Church of England being established with appointments being more transparent as in the public sector. In July 2026, the Archbishop of Canterbury agreed with me that CNCs should draw up a list of two appointable candidates, in case the first declined or withdrew as in Bristol. I am serving member of Guildford's Vacancy-in-See Committee.



Getting People Back into Church: Following the Pandemic, Online Church has made our churches more open to busy families and the young. I did support **Hybrid Church** and as a Commissioner voted for **£2m** to be allocated for **digital worship**. We must be relevant and accessible to all.

Finance: Despite a dramatic drop in membership, the Church Commissioners wise investment policy and stewardship has seen our portfolio increase to **£11.6bn** committing to Triennial Funding. I continue to lobby for more SDF grants for our Diocese and Cathedral. So I do not think we should continue with **Project Spire** – and instead give the **£100m** directly to the Parishes with an anti-slavery education package sent to Dioceses.

Church Unity: We need to ensure that there is a valued place for all our priests and lay to belong to enable the Church of England to flourish as both Archbishops stated to keep our Church **"united and together"**. A Church for all and for 'the common good'.

Clergy Discipline and Safeguarding: My amendment ensured that no complainant could hold any Clergy member to ransom stating if they did not change their attitude immediately, they would lay information against them. I support **independent scrutiny and proper governance** arrangements and the **Redress Scheme**. There is a spiralling rise in legal fees (**£10m pa**) because of a major increase in Safeguarding cases.

Living in Love and Faith: is a divisive issue and there is no common ground for it to proceed any further.

Clergy Wellbeing: Our clergy need more support and better stipends in today's economic crisis. I am campaigning for a common economic policy throughout The Church of England, as well as supporting the **'Save the Parish'** campaign as our Clergy act as First Responders in mission delivery.

Synodical Government: I am an ardent supporter of our **Parish System** and **Deanery Synods** – as they are the pulse of the Diocese and, should have their roles strengthened, not weakened - to **witness** God's love and **proclaim** His Gospel message in each Parish and across each Deanery.