

Sue Pascoe

Candidate for the House of Laity

General Synod 2026 to 2031, Diocese of York

New Ainsty Deanery Synod and York Diocesan Synod

York Vacancy in See Committee

Parish Safeguarding Officer, Tadcaster Benefice

Proposed by **Andrew Severn**, New Ainsty Deanery

Seconded by **Brenda Christmas**, New Ainsty Deanery



I would welcome your first preference vote.

Why I am standing

When Jesus was asked which commandment mattered most, he gave two: love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength, and love your neighbour as yourself. I am standing because the Church is at its best when everything it does can be traced back to these two sentences, and at its weakest when it cannot.

I want a Church that is open, welcoming, inclusive and safe for everyone who comes through the door, and confident enough in its own tradition to be all four at once. These are not modern additions to the Gospel. They are what the Gospel asks of us.

A little about me

I am 66 years old from Yorkshire, living on a farm near Tadcaster with my horse, Freddie. I have two sons, Ben and Tom, and two grandchildren, Evie and Arthur, who I adore. My church at Kirkby Wharfe is a central part of my life and worship. I serve as Parish Safeguarding Officer for the Tadcaster Benefice.

I trained as a Chartered Accountant and spent part of my professional life as a Consulting Partner with PwC as their UK head of Outsourcing and Shared Services Consulting. After retiring from PwC, I held the post of Head of Inclusion at Channel 4 and Director at Yorkshire Cricket Foundation. I now sit on the Appeal Tribunal of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, advise charitable organisations and hospitals, and serve on the North Yorkshire Chief Constable's Advisory Panel and on the Violence Against Women and Girls Whole System Group. Much of my life has been spent in governance, risk management and efficiency of one kind or another, and I have come to believe that careful, unglamorous work behind the scenes is how institutions either keep faith with people or quietly fail them. Treating everyone with respect, dignity, compassion and a little individual kindness on merit goes a long way to building trust and confidence.

What I would bring to Synod

Scrutiny. Synod approves budgets, legislation and national safeguarding structures. That work needs members who will read the papers properly, follow the money, and ask intelligent and probing questions courteously. As a Chartered Accountant, professional business adviser and tribunal member I have the training, objectivity and independence of thought and diligent mindset to serve Synod and the Church of England.

Safeguarding at the sharp end. I know from my own traumatic life experiences what happens when safeguarding goes wrong and I'm passionate to see that our churches are safe places for all. I have held safeguarding responsibilities as a charity trustee, where the duty rests with the board and cannot be

delegated away and I have advised many organisations on governance, risk management and what makes an organisation a good place to work. My work as an Appeal Tribunal member of the ICAEW also touches on the regulatory aspects of professional conduct for Chartered Accountants not just in the UK but around the world.

Good safeguarding protects people and builds trust at the same time. It is patient, practical work: knowing who is responsible for what, making sure volunteers are trained and supported rather than left to carry risk alone, and responding well when someone brings us something difficult.

I also want to see safeguarding properly resourced. Parish officers are volunteers. If we ask them to carry serious responsibility, we owe them clear guidance, real support and someone to ring.

I wish to see national safeguarding material that is rigorous about practice and rooted in the equal dignity of every person. Current training teaches us to see one another first as categories of power and privilege and that puts a barrier between people at exactly the moment when trust is what safeguarding depends on.

A settled view of every person's worth. Whatever else we disagree about, each person we meet is made in the image of God. That is where I start, and it is where I would keep coming back to.

Open and welcoming

A welcoming church is not a church without convictions. It is a church where nobody has to earn their place before they are met with kindness, and where the door is genuinely open to the person who arrives unsure whether they belong.

When I led inclusion at Channel 4 I learned something there that I would bring to Synod: people flourish when they are valued as unique individuals, not sorted into groups or ranked merely by their protected characteristics. That is good practice, and I think it is also sound theology. Love your neighbour as yourself does not come with a list of exceptions.

I am committed to equality for everyone, at all levels and roles within the church, regardless of disability, economic power, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, learning disability, mental health, neurodiversity, or sexuality.

Synod contains people who disagree profoundly, in good conscience, and it will continue to do so. My commitment is to listen and be open to other people's views, whilst also being prepared to communicate honestly and articulately my considered and respectful perspectives.

In short. I stand for:

- a Church that is open, welcoming, inclusive and safe for all, grounded in the two commandments Jesus gave us;
- safeguarding protocols that protect people and build trust;
- good governance, effective scrutiny and budgetary control;
- a diligent, professional approach to the papers and processes of Synod, voting by conscience rather than faction, and reporting back to lay members in an open and collegiate manner.

Thank you for taking the time to read about me. Voting is by single transferable vote, so if you are minded to support me, please give me your first or highest possible preference. Do contact me before you vote if there is anything you would like to ask. I would be glad to hear from you.

Sue Pascoe

East Garth Barn, Catterton, Tadcaster, LS24 8DH

sue.pascoe@hotmail.com 07848 110155