

SIR TIMOTHY CLIFFORD



Election statement as candidate for election to the House of Laity of the General Synod of the Church of England, in the Diocese of St. Albans



My Life and the Church

I have had the privilege of serving as the Church Warden at St. Michael and all Angels, Millbrook, Bedfordshire for 8 years. I am also a serving member of the Ampthill and Shefford Deanery Synod (Diocese of St. Albans) and a trustee of the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Historic Churches Trust.

Our church at Milbrook, like so many small parish churches, has enjoyed and celebrated Christian worship for nearly a thousand years. We, like so many, face issues of funds and retaining congregation numbers. However, despite this, we have a regular weekly attendance of up to 30 worshippers. Additionally, there are numerous people who do not attend church services but help the church in various ways, doing the flowers, cleaning, arranging the annual fête, the Harvest Supper, and maintaining the churchyard. While remaining endlessly grateful for the fortunate position our Church is in, I remain cognisant of the situation many other parishes find themselves in with respect to financing and congregation numbers.

I am standing on the ticket to **Save The Parish** under the auspices of Father Marcus Walker of St. Bartholomew-the-Great, Smithfield. The top priority is to shift from endlessly appointing ever more individuals into administrative roles, and instead start to consolidate the number of working priests across the parishes. The thousands of cultural, spiritual, and historic places of worship under the guardianship of the Church of England need to be protected, under a more effective and sustainable system of management. Once these parish churches have been closed, our spiritual network will have been diminished and these locations will be difficult to revive. Are we really prepared to tolerate this? Now is the time to stand up and be counted. I want to work to protect our Parishes at risk, help implement a more sustainable and accountable system of management and see the religion I have had a lifelong connection with continue for future generations. In this respect, I would deem it a privilege to represent you in this endeavour to Save Our Parishes.

CAREER IN HERITAGE INCLUDING CHURCHES AND CHURCH ART

I have long experience and contacts in the heritage, management, and preservation sector of keeping our Christian and cultural institutions in good financial order while also remaining relevant and appealing to a modern audience.

I am the retired Director General of the National Galleries of Scotland, which I had the privilege of running for 21 years. This comprises probably the finest collection of Western art outside the London nationals. With the support of my dedicated team, I had a reputation for launching public appeals, quickly raising significant funds, and attracting major sponsorship both for exhibitions and for protecting buildings.

Before Edinburgh I was Director of Manchester City Art Galleries for 8 years. Before Manchester I worked at the British Museum Print Room responsible for British Drawings and Watercolours and before that I was Assistant Keeper of Ceramics at the V&A. My wife, Jane and I are both Art History Graduates

from the Courtauld Institute, University of London. I also have experience as a main board member of the British Council and a Commissioner of the Museums and Galleries Commission.

I have served on the Manchester Diocesan Committee for the Care of Churches and on numerous other boards including President of **NADFAS** (which has played a major part in Church Recording). I was Chairman of the International Committee for Museums of Fine Art (part of ICOM), trustee of the Hermitage Trust, and was on the Committee of 'Come to Scotland's Churches'. I was a trustee of the Wallace Collection and of the City Museums and Galleries of Venice, and a committee member of the Musée de la Renaissance, Palais de Luxembourg, Paris. I am a Fellow of the Royal Society, Edinburgh, and hold honorary doctorates from the universities of Glasgow, Aberdeen and St. Andrews.

I have been closely concerned for all my museum career with aspects of sacred art and the beauty of the Christian religion whether through architecture, sculpture (church monuments) paintings, drawings, prints, metalwork, and textiles (tapestry and embroidery including vestments and altar-frontals). For centuries, art and music have been a central part to the Church's identity and have played a powerful and educating role in keeping its flock continually inspired. This is a side of the Church I have always connected with deeply, throughout my career.

In my professional capacity I have curated, purchased and overseen aspects of restoration and conservation, and published very widely. This has taken the form of catalogues of permanent collections, exhibitions, and articles in national and international periodicals, experience which should be of particular use to the Synod.

Please give me your vote!