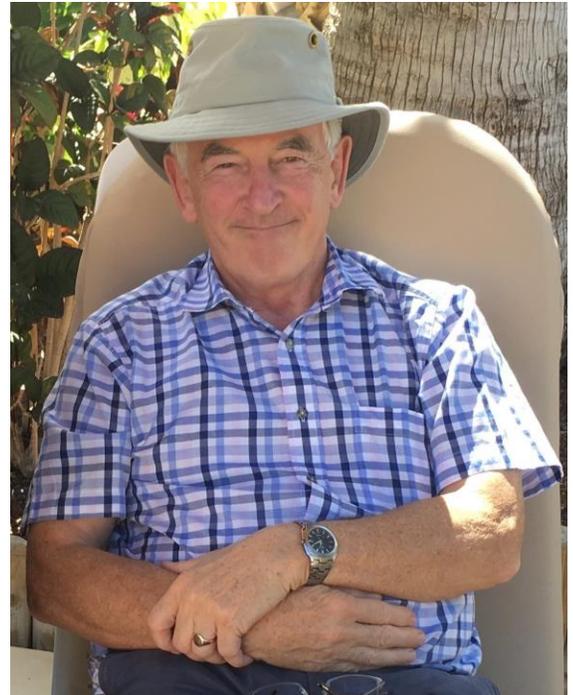


## Martin Johnson

I would like to introduce myself as a lay candidate for the General Synod elections in Ely Diocese. We are facing many challenging issues in the Church of England right now, from finances to fellowship matters and all exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. You will see that I offer some relevant skills and experience, though I am apprehensive about standing for election and potentially serving Christ in this way. Thank you for taking the time to read this and consider my candidacy.

### Career & Professional matters

I have enjoyed a broad and varied career across some very different sectors. I served for 21 years in the Royal Air Force, first as a pilot on Vulcan and Canberra aircraft, and later in administrative, intelligence, and security roles, retiring in the rank of Squadron Leader.



I was a Financial Adviser for nearly seven years, then for six years a Hospice CEO, where I led the expansion of adult care and the creation of a children's hospice. I was then the Director of the Thalidomide Trust 2000-2014.

Thalidomide was a supposedly "safe" sedative medicine marketed between 1958 and 1961. It killed many thousands of babies and left hundreds of survivors in UK born with severe birth defects of all kinds. The Thalidomide Trust was the British response to this worst of pharmaceutical disasters. As the Director, I helped change the law and increase the total funding for our beneficiary survivors by some £300+ million. I have also researched and published on the whole catastrophe.

### Skills and Experience:

Organizational leadership and management (MSc, PhD)  
Managing complex legal issues (Thalidomide, medical negligence)  
Research (Charity management, Disability and Hospice care, Pharmaceuticals, Hebrew)  
Teaching (KCL, University of Warwick)  
Financial Management

### Christian Life & Church activities

My earliest memories include Sunday School in St John's Church, Muxton, Shropshire. I was confirmed the year I was 12, and not long before tragedy struck our family. My faith sustained me through that time of heartbreak. I drifted from church life in my early years in the RAF, returning after becoming married with a family.

In our travels with the RAF (homes in Germany and Norway, as well as several different locations in UK) we experienced a wide variety of church life, including URC, Methodist, Baptist, and independent evangelical churches. I held various leadership roles, including preaching, teaching, and managing churches. Worshipping in a variety of traditions has greatly enriched my experience, and there is much we should value in the wide range of Christian traditions. We settled with St James' Hemingford Grey 30 years ago, and I appreciate the transparency and accountability that our established church can offer.

I learned that God answers prayer and can deliver what seems humanly impossible. This has happened in many things I've been a part of, including my hospice work and the Thalidomide campaigns. Nothing is impossible for God!

I hold a BD (London) and have taught Biblical subjects in a variety of Christian settings for nearly 40 years. I am an adviser to some Christian organisations, and have been on the Finance Committee of Ridley Hall college since early 2017. There I have supported the challenges in delivering theological training in these times of changing needs and technologies.

I serve on the Huntingdon Deanery Synod. I am married to Ann, and we have four daughters and eleven grandchildren. I enjoy kayaking on the River Great Ouse in Huntingdonshire in all seasons.

### **The Church of England today**

The Church of England has a big part still to play, bringing the good news of Jesus in these challenging times. I hope to be able to bring my experience to help develop the Church, especially in fields such as:

- Social policy matters such as health care and disabilities.
- Defence (I retain a close interest in current defence issues).
- Theological training. The future must involve both residential and distance learning, full and part-time, for both Lay and Ordained ministries.
- Carefully applying a biblical mindset to the discussions on Living in Love and Faith.
- Parochial ministry (The traditional parish ministry should be the stable platform at the heart of the Church of England, supporting outreach and church planting).

I seek to represent all laity in the diocese. If elected, I commit to being available to all electors in the diocese and providing feedback via written reports and (if invited) verbal presentations to the diocesan and deanery synods. Please do consider giving me your first vote (or failing that a high-preference vote).

**Martin Johnson**

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