

# Anglicans vow to vote again on allowing women bishops

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CANTERBURY, England (RNS) The Church of England plans to rush through legislation to consecrate women bishops after last week's surprising defeat at the church's General Synod in London.

The church's Archbishops' Council ended two days of closed-door meetings on Wednesday (Nov. 28), and said a plan to allow women bishops needs to be "restarted" when General Synod reconvenes in July. Church leaders originally said the issue could not be reopened until 2015.

The 19-member council acts as the standing committee of the three-tier General Synod made up of bishops, clergy and laity.

"There was agreement that the Church of England had to resolve this matter through its own processes as a matter of urgency," the group said in a statement. "The Council therefore recommended to the House of Bishops ... to put in place a clear process for discussions in the New Year with a view to bringing legislative proposals before the Synod in July (2013)."

American-born Christina Rees, who is a member of General Synod and the Archbishops' Council, said the unexpected defeat of women bishops has left the church "galvanized and activated."

"The 'No' vote on Nov. 20 has proved to be a wake-up call for the Church of England," she said Thursday.

In a surprise move, opponents in the General Synod's traditionalist Catholic Group and the conservative group Reform have called for talks to break the deadlock.

The Catholic Group's Canon Simon Killwick and Reform's Rod Thomas had argued there weren't enough safeguards for dissenters, but said they would not push to

block a second vote.

"It has never been our intention to prevent the consecration of women as bishops," they said in a joint statement.