

THE FOUR SHIRES GUILD OF BELLRINGERS

Minutes of the committee meeting held at Wellesbourne Parish Centre

on Monday 18th November 2024

Present: Peter Quinn (PQ); Alison Lee (AL); Claire Penny (PCP); Graham Lee (GL); Lena Stanks (LS); Michael Dane (MD); Stuart Cummings (SC); Yvonne Davies (YD)

In attendance: Jess McCarthy (JM)

1. Apologies for absence

Chris Povey, Christina Ireland, Len Morley

2. Agree minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 19th August 2024 were signed as a true record by the Guild Master.

3. Matters arising from the minutes.

Guild Handbells - To be carried forward.

The proposed updates to the striking competition rules and the increase in subscription were agreed at the AGM. It was confirmed that the junior subscription would be £5

4. Reports:

a. Guild Master

Nothing to report.

b. Secretary

New members. The following was elected unanimously:

- Yvonne Davies (Ilmington): proposed by Fran Chapman, seconded by PCP.

The committee were reminded that they should have written a description of their role and sent it to the secretary. Only AL had completed this. **ACTION: ALL** description to be sent to PCP no later than 10th February.

c. Treasurer

MD provided a written report on the Guild's finances (attached). PQ asked about the £500 expenditure showing as 'other'. This was the deposit cheque for the 2024 dinner which has not been cashed. MD will show it as outstanding in the 2024 accounts and then it will be released back into the funds.

MD reported that Lloyds bank were changing the terms of the bank account and there would be a monthly charge of £4.25 plus, potentially, some transaction fees. He would consolidate payments to reduce these. MD asked that people be encouraged to pay their 2025 subscription before 14th January as this is when the new charges come into effect.

He had looked at other accounts and this was amongst the cheapest. Banking was still free if the account holder was a registered charity. JM asked if we could register as a charity and MD responded that this had been looked into previously but it was a complicated process, and last time our income had not been high enough to register. **It was agreed** that we should review this at a later date.

MD reported that the Guild clothing was still selling, and it was confirmed that the anniversary branding would stop at the end of 2024.

MD had received a lump sum payment from Badsey tower but no information as to which subscriptions were being paid. **ACTION: GL to find out**

MD informed the meeting that he intended to stand down at the 2026 AGM. He will work with someone during 2026 so that they can take over from January 2027. The Guild will need to **elect a new Treasurer** at the 2025 AGM to work with MD in 2026

d. Ringling Master

AL reported that the Saturday afternoon practices were generally liked and were still attracting different members, but attendance had not been high. PQ asked about the possibility of moving all the practices to the afternoon, especially now we were in the winter months and people were less likely to come out. The committee felt that this would clash with too many other events **so it was agreed** to leave it as it was for the time being.

Dedicated practice: AL reported that they were well attended and there was a waiting list.

AL asked if it would be possible to have a designated 'Deputy Ringling Master'. At the moment if she was not able to go to a Guild event she had to find somebody to cover, and a deputy would save a lot of organisation. **The committee agreed** that, while it was not an official post, a designated person would be useful. Jess McCarthy agreed to take this post.

e. Safeguarding Officer

No report

f. Programme Secretary

AL reported that there had been two lock-outs recently and there had been no contact details for the tower contact available. LM usually provided these a few days before when he confirms the practice, **it was agreed** to ask CI to do the same

g. Newsletter Editor

Nothing to report.

h. Website and IT

PCP said that no problems had been reported. The number of hits had increased significantly in the week before the AGM. **ACTION: PCP to monitor and report hits to committee.**

i. Health & Safety

No report.

j. Peal Secretary

No report.

k. CCCBR Update

JM reported that she had completed the forms and submitted them to the CCCBR secretary.

AL asked if the CCCBR could help Broadwell deal with a noise complaint. **ACTION: JM to follow up**

5. Bell repair fund:

The pulley hat Winchcombe has been repaired

The Guild had received a letter of thanks from Treddington PCC

Clifford Chambers asked for an application form, but it has not been returned.

6. Guild activities:

i. Inter-shires competition

This competition had to be cancelled as two of the Shires had not been able to raise a band.

Nick Allsopp reported that communication from them had been poor and eventually there had been no option. **It was agreed** that the trophy should be given to CP for storage with the other Guild items.

ii. Striking Competition & AGM

AL reported that the striking competition had been a success. Full report in the January 2025 newsletter.

The 2025 Striking Competition and AGM will be on Saturday 18th October, possible venue Childswickham. **ACTION: GL to ask Childswickham PCC**

iii. Guild Dinner 2025

MD reported that 13 people had paid for the 2025 dinner and therefore had confirmed places. There were 25 names on the list.

The committee discussed possible speakers. **ACTION: AL to ask Jane Hall**

ACTION: SC to organise the raffle

iv. Christmas Party

In hand, volunteers are needed to help set up and clear away.

v. New Events

The committee agreed that the Guild needed to organise some new events as the current ones were not engaging the membership. AL said there had been a very poor response to a request for suggestions in the Newsletter. It was agreed to post a survey with suggestions on Facebook and the website. Suggestions:

- Quarter Peal day/week/month/tour
- Training days
- Social events
- Targeted help for specific towers
- Targeted practices for specific methods
- Tours
- Ringing weekends/holidays further away

ACTION: PCP to organise survey.

A summer social event was suggested, possibly a river trip with a barbeque. **ACTION: PCP to investigate** the possibility of a barbeque at the Bridge Inn, Offenham,

7. Any other business

MD reported that the insurance renewal from Ecclesiastical had been received. It was agreed that this should be paid and no other quotes were necessary.

Ilmington tower had asked what happened to the miniature shields that used to be awarded at the striking competition. None of the committee knew and it was suggested that CP may remember.

ACTION: MD to contact CP to find out.

8. Date & location of next meeting.

Monday 24th February 2025, 7pm at Church House, Evesham.