



Oxford Diocesan Guild  
of Church Bell Ringers

**GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**SATURDAY 12 MARCH 2022 at 2:15pm following ODBF AGM**  
**St Mary's Church, Wendover**

**AGENDA**

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Requests for urgent items of Any Other Business
3. Minutes of the General Committee meeting of 27 November 2021.

**INFORMATION AND REPORTS (circulated in advance where appropriate)**

4. Matters arising
  - a. Oxford Botanic Gardens 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary
  - b. F E Robinson Silver Bowl
5. Correspondence
6. Reports from and election of sub-committees
  - a. Education (Learning & Development Workgroup)
  - b. Towers and Belfries
  - c. Finance and General Purposes
7. Reports from
  - a. Peal Secretary
  - b. Safeguarding Officer
  - c. Librarian
  - d. Website Manager
  - e. Server Manager
  - f. Report Editor
8. Diary of Events
9. Posts specified in Rule 9(c) & (f) (iii): Notification of officers not willing to stand for re-election

**FINANCIAL MATTERS**

10. Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2020
11. Donations to the Bell Fund, the Ringing World, and ART.

**DISCUSSION AND CONCLUDING ITEMS**

12. Any other business, as agreed at the start
13. Concluding vote of thanks

## ITEM 3

### **MINUTES OF GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2021**

*Minutes are subject to confirmation at the next General Committee meeting.*

*Held at St Nicholas, Cuddington on Saturday 27 November 2021 and attended by 41 Committee members.*

*The meeting was chaired by the Master Catherine (Katie) Lane who started with an appraisal of the effect of the Covid pandemic on ringing in the Diocese. She was very grateful that so many members had ventured out to this meeting particularly on a cold day. She led a short silent reflection on the impact that Covid has had on so many of us personally.*

#### **1. Apologies**

*22 apologies for absence were received.*

#### **2. Any other urgent items of business**

*Ken Darvill said that Katie Lane would be reporting on recent correspondence from the Oxford Botanic Garden and that June Wells would be updating the meeting on changes in safeguarding requirements.*

#### **3. Minutes of the meeting on 13 March 2021**

*Robert Newton pointed out that in 6a, references to Working Party should be Workgroup. Acceptance of the minutes was proposed by Graham Clifton, seconded by Rob Needham.*

#### **4. Matters arising**

*a) F.E.Robinson Bowl*

*Katie Lane reported that Charles Morrish is currently making a box to hold the bowl.*

*b) Guild Registering as a Charity*

*Stuart Gibson reported that there had been no progress.*

*c) Survival & Recovery post-Covid*

*Katie Lane considered that the situation is mixed, but it seems that Branches and towers are helping each other out significantly. What develops in the future remains to be seen.*

#### **5. Correspondence**

*Heather Browning had asked the General Secretary to remind the Branch Secretaries and Guild Officers to respond promptly in January to her requests for the Annual Report information.*

*A letter from the Ringing World Editor was read out, thanking the Guild for their donation of £500.*

## **6. Reports of subcommittees**

### *a) Finance and General Purposes Subcommittee*

*Ken Darvill reported that subsequent to the written report, Andrew Goldthorpe had added to the website a full tower list for the Guild. He asked that Branches should check it for completeness and accuracy. Stuart Gibson reported that we are awaiting a demonstration of a possible membership database, hopefully early next year.*

### *b) Learning and Development Workgroup*

*Robert Newton added to the written report that a Grandsire Caters course had been held in early November. On 5<sup>th</sup> February an in-person Training Meeting is scheduled. He also commended the eBells which the Guild has purchased and are available for Guild members.*

### *c) Towers and Belfries Subcommittee*

*John Davidge paid tribute to the late Keith Vernon who contributed so much to the sub-committee. We need more people to help in the work of the group.*

## **7. Central Council Representatives' report**

*Katie Lane commended the comprehensive report to members.*

## **8. Diary of Events**

*Ken Darvill committed to sending out the 15 Year Plan for Guild events to Branch Secretaries. Graham Clifton said that he had started on arrangements for the Steeple Aston course on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2022.*

## **9. Subscriptions for 2022**

### *a) Resident Ringing Members & Associate Members*

*Stuart Gibson proposed that these remain unchanged at £8. This was seconded by Robert Newton and carried.*

### *b) Non-resident Ringing Members*

*Stuart Gibson proposed that these remain unchanged at £8. This was seconded by Robert Newton and carried.*

## **10. Peal Fees for 2022**

*Stuart Gibson proposed that these remain unchanged at 50 pence per ringer. This was seconded by Robert Newton and carried.*

### **11. Guild Budget**

*The budget has been published. In response to a query from Jenny Page, Stuart Gibson said that allowance had been made for higher costs associated with the National Youth Competition being at Exeter in 2022.*

*The accounts were accepted, proposed by Stuart Gibson and seconded by Colin Lee.*

### **12. AOB**

*June Wells highlighted the recent change in the safeguarding policy. This has been brought about because of the lack of information from the Central Council and the Diocese. The major change is that Tower Captains need to undertake the C3 Leadership Course. The major onus is on parishes to provide this training although June is looking at the possibility of the Guild providing some training.*

*Katie Lane said she had heard from the Oxford Botanic Garden who are celebrating their 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary. They are asking for ringing throughout Oxfordshire on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2022 in association with the Oxford Society. She is keen that we should participate in this activity since it is good publicity. She asked for support throughout the county and to be advised on what is being planned.*

### **13. Thanks**

*Catherine Lane thanked those at Cuddington for welcoming us and particularly for providing refreshments. She also thanked those attending the meeting.*

## **ITEM 6 a.**

### **Learning & Development Workgroup Report**

The group met once, via Zoom, on 14<sup>th</sup> January. A sub-group had met in November to discuss the Training Meeting planned for 5<sup>th</sup> February. Owing to very high infection rates in January, regrettably this was postponed and will now take place at Witney on 30<sup>th</sup> April.

Preparations are well underway for the Radley course on 9<sup>th</sup> April, with Lindsay Powell as organiser. There have been encouraging numbers of applications and we hope that there will be equally good support from our helpers. In order to minimize risk there will be no gathering at Radley at the beginning or end of the day and the course fee has been reduced to £20 to reflect this. We very much hope that the Michaelmas (24<sup>th</sup> September), Steeple Aston (29<sup>th</sup> October) and Ten-bell courses will also go ahead this year. We have received positive reports of high demand for upcoming ART courses.

On the technical side, Colin Newman has spent considerable time on the L&D pages of the website and improving links with other resources. There is a wealth of material available, which is well worth examining. Rather disappointing has been the minimal take-up of the eBells hire/purchase offer.

We are pleased to report that Dorothy Hall has been co-opted onto the group but sad that Colin Newman will leave us in April since he has moved out of the Guild. Colin Lee has taken over his coaching role of the RWNYS squad and we hope that he will now be elected to the L&D Workgroup by the General Committee.

Robert Newton (Secretary)

## **ITEM 6 b.**

### **TOWERS & BELFRIES SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT**

The T&B committee has met twice since the last GC report; once using Zoom and thankfully once face-to-face, which is so much more productive.

After missing several courses to lock-down, we finally held a very successful course at Ivinghoe in October. We have now followed this up with a February Belfry course at Twyford for the Sonning Deanery Branch and a week later, a Rope Maintenance and Splicing Course at Radley Church Hall. Both courses had about a dozen students and covered a relatively wide range of topics including, mending, maintenance and preventive maintenance. We also covered minor improvements to either reduce rope wear or improve the ringing experience. Indeed, some minor work can do both! By the time you read this, we should also have held a practical maintenance course at Langford in the W&W Branch including how to tighten loose wheels, headstocks and clappers and dealing with rope wear and correcting odd-struckness.

Feel free to email the secretary [tbsecretary@odg.org.uk](mailto:tbsecretary@odg.org.uk) or me [tbchair@odg.org.uk](mailto:tbchair@odg.org.uk) if you would be interested to host a course, either for the Guild or locally, for your Branch.

The T&B page of the ODG website [Towers and Belfries - Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers \(odg.org.uk\)](https://odg.org.uk) has more new material since my last report and many more useful links. More material is being loaded all the time so please go to the site for information. You will also find contact details and the services offered by our members. If you can't find what you are looking for, please get in touch with me [tbchair@odg.org.uk](mailto:tbchair@odg.org.uk)

We would still like more members. Thirteen may sound a lot, but we have three counties with 450+ towers on the patch so we are spread quite thinly! You don't have to be experienced but you do need to be interested in learning and gaining from the expertise of the other members.

The Tower Maintenance Award (TMA) is still active, despite the pandemic although many certificates have expired during the lockdown. We are working to get back at least to where we were before the pandemic. Towers are encouraged to ask for an inspection.

Since the last GC report, Committee members have been active, within lockdown constraints, with TMA, grant inspections and general advice at the following places: Slapton, Cheddington, Stoke Poges, Wavendon, Witney, Stony Stratford, Whitchurch on Thames, Ruscombe, Little Rollright and Iver.

There have also been many "return to ringing" inspections done on behalf of or with the local ringers.

Tony Crabtree – Chairman – Towers & Belfries Committee.

## **ITEM 6 c.**

### **Finance and General Purposes Sub-Committee Report**

The Finance and General Purposes Sub-committee has met once since the November General Committee meeting, in January via Zoom.

We are looking to expand the Public Relations Working Group.

There was some discussion about CO2 monitors for use in limiting transmission of Covid. Although the general Guild had not purchased any, North Bucks Branch have one. Alan said that skill was needed to use them correctly in the variety of settings found in ringing rooms.

Katie reported that Charles Morrish is making a box for the F E Robinson Silver Bowl. Once that is available she will consider the next step, possibly approaching Christ Church about their adding it to their silver collection, with the expectation that it would be on display.

The draft accounts for 2021 show a deficit of £1,333, largely because of reduced subscription income. The meeting agreed to set a touch of Plain Bob Major for the 8 Bell Striking Competition and Grandsire Caters for the 10 Bell.

The Treasurer reported that he will be chasing up the preferred supplier of the membership database software since they were scheduled to release a new version. The meeting agreed that the budget for support for teams from the diocese entering the National Youth Contest should be £1,500. This will enable all reasonable expenses for the Guild team to be paid and up to £500 for other teams, when accompanied by valid expense invoices.

The meeting also heard reports from the Server Manager and the Website Manager.

Ken Darvill

## **ITEM 7 a.**

### **PEAL SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR 2021**

A total of 63 peals was rung for the Guild in 2021 (23 less than in 2020): 39 on handbells and 24 on tower bells. These reductions again reflect the national situation with restrictions and lockdown as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. This puts the Guild seventh in terms of the highest ranking Guild/Association for the total number of peals rung during the year a significant drop from second place, 2 members rang their first peal and 2 members their first in hand. Congratulations to them and to John Wells, David Hilling and Robert Partridge on completing 70 years, 61 years and 60 years respectively of peal ringing. A summary of the leading peal ringers and their personal achievements can be seen below.

The leading tower was Tulloch Ringing Centre with 4 peals, and the leading handbell venue was Tilehurst, 15 Lytham End with 15 peals.

In 2021 footnotes recorded the following notable events:

#### Church:

To welcome Reverend Sonya Wratten to the parish of Reading Minster SMV. Rung as a farewell to Reverend Dr. Gordon Giles and to welcome Reverend Dr. James Lawson to Enfield.

#### National:

In thanksgiving for the life of HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

#### Personal:

The birthday of Charlotte Everett. The Ruby Wedding Anniversary of Helen McGregor and Peter Bevis.

#### Ringings:

500th in the house Tilehurst, 15 Lytham End.

The Guild remembered a number of ringers who passed away during the year or in recent years:  
 William Butler, past Master of the Guild, Robert A Crick, Helen Diserens, Dave Ford, Derek Fowles,  
 Martyn L J Jordan, Martin H Routh, Keith Vernon.

### LEADING PEAL RINGERS (20 OR MORE PEALS)

NAME	TOWER		HAND		ALL	
	Rung	Cond	Rung	Cond	Rung	Cond
Robert H Newton	9	2	19	6	28	8
Patricia M Newton	6	0	18	0	24	0
E John Wells	3	1	17	7	20	8
June D Wells	3	1	17	1	20	2

### TOWERBELL TOWERS

Tower	No of Peals
Tulloch (The Last Tower)	4
Alderney Ringing Centre	2
Burnham	2
Tulloch Ringing Centre	2
14 towers each with	1
Total number of different towers	18

### HANDBELL VENUES

Venue	No of Peals
Tilehurst, 15 Lytham End	15
Reading 26 Redlands Avenue	9
Aston Rowant, The White House	7
3 venues each with	2
2 venues each with	1
Total number of different handbell venues	8

### FIRST PEAL CONGRATULATIONS

Martha C Hazell, Sue Turner

### FIRST PEAL IN HAND

Stephen M Everett, Ian B Turner

### PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

Patricia M Newton	1,000 <sup>th</sup> handbell peal
Michael Hatchet/Jeffrey Knipe	1000 <sup>th</sup> peal together
E John Wells	900 <sup>th</sup> handbell peal
Colin G Newman	600 <sup>th</sup> peal
Jack E Page	300 <sup>th</sup> 12 bell peal
Marcia L Dieppe	200 <sup>th</sup> peal
Jenny M Page	100 <sup>th</sup> peal

Stuart F Gibson/Jeffrey Knipe	100 <sup>th</sup> peal together
Stuart F Gibson /Lesley Knipe	100 <sup>th</sup> peal together
Marcia L Dieppe/E John Wells	75 <sup>th</sup> peal together
Matthew R Johnson	50 <sup>h</sup> peal

## METHODS RUNG FOR THE FIRST TIME

First peal in the method: Longis Bay Surprise Royal (rung in hand)  
-30-14-50-16-70-58-36-50-16-90,12

## ANALYSIS OF PEALS RUNG IN 2020

() Denotes number rung in the method

## TOWER

<b>MINOR</b>	<b>Total: 5</b>	
<b>Surprise:</b> 7 methods (5)		
<b>TRIPLES</b>	<b>Total: 4</b>	
<b>Plain:</b> Grandsire (2)		
<b>Principles:</b> Stedman (2)		
<b>MAJOR</b>	<b>Total: 11</b>	
<b>Surprise:</b> Bristol (3), \Glasgow, Lessness, London, Rutland, Yorkshire (2)		
<b>Spliced Surprise:</b> 8 methods (2)		
<b>CATERS</b>	<b>Total: 1</b>	
<b>Principles:</b> Stedman		
<b>ROYAL</b>	<b>Total: 1</b>	
<b>Surprise:</b> Cambridge		
<b>MAXIMUS</b>	<b>Total: 2</b>	
<b>Surprise:</b> Yorkshire (2)		
	<b>Towerbell</b>	<b>Total: 24</b>

## HANDBELL

<b>MINOR</b>	<b>Total: 2</b>
<b>Other:</b> 4- 7 methods (2)	
<b>MAJOR</b>	<b>Total: 20</b>
<b>Plain:</b> Plain Bob (2), St Clement's	
<b>Treble Bob:</b> Kent (3)	
<b>Surprise:</b> Cambridge (3), Lincolnshire, Rutland, Superlative, Yorkshire (7)	
<b>Spliced Surprise:</b> 6 methods	
<b>ROYAL</b>	<b>Total: 9</b>
<b>Spliced Plain:</b> 8 methods	
<b>Treble Bob:</b> Kent (2)	
<b>Surprise:</b> Cambridge, Lincolnshire, Longis Bay, Swindon, Yorkshire	
<b>Spliced Surprise:</b> 3 methods	



**MAXIMUS** **Total: 7**  
**Surprise:** Bristol (3), Phobos, Zanussi  
**Spliced Surprise:** 3 - 4 methods (2)

**FOURTEEN:** **Total: 1**  
**Surprise:** Yorkshire

**Handbell** **Total: 39**

**TOTAL NUMBER OF PEALS RUNG IN 2020: 63**

Ken Davenport

## **ITEM 7 b.**

### **Safeguarding Report**

This has been a somewhat changeable year for safeguarding but hopefully we now have a set of expectations for a more stable future.

Early in 2021, the requirements for the training of Tower Captains were changed by the House of Bishops and there was an expectation that all would complete training up to Leadership level, irrespective of the make up of their bands and their perceived impact on the general safeguarding culture of the church community. This obviously caused consternation for some, even to the extent that some people felt that they did not wish to continue in the role given these expectations.

Fortunately, following extensive discussion between the CCCBR and the National Safeguarding team of the Church of England, an agreement was reached to reduce requirements for training of most captains to the two on line modules, with only those deemed at a local level to have an impact on the safeguarding culture within their church community being expected to complete the more advanced leadership training. However, a corollary to this was that all ringers are expected to complete the first of the online modules, Basic Awareness. The actual detail of the requirements was to be negotiated at Diocesan level.

Following our own discussion with the Oxford Diocese the training requirements for the ringers in the ODG were agreed to be as follows:

- ✧ All ringers should complete Basic Awareness module on line
- ✧ Tower Captains should also complete the online Foundation module
- ✧ Safeguarding Officers, leaders of youth groups within the Guild and any tower captains asked to do so by their own Parish should complete the Leadership course

Links to the training, the Safeguarding Policy and Safeguarding Checklist have all been updated on the Guild website but changes on the Diocesan site might take a while longer.

The Leadership training booked by the Guild has now been cancelled and all booking should be done directly with the Diocese.

June Wells, Guild Safeguarding Officer

## **ITEM 7 c.**

### **Librarian's Report**

Books and other material acquired for the library during 2021 is as set out in the Guild Annual Report. A further acquisition of note in early 2022 was a box of papers belonging to William Butler, kindly donated to the library by his son Richard. Notable amongst the items is the notebook of J.J.Parker, in which he sets out his observations about Grandsire Triples and a number of compositions in the method.

There were 18 enquiries and loan requests during 2021. This is one fewer than during 2020. Many of the requests for information during this and previous years, have been connected with the on-going Central Council project to increase the accuracy of its peal records. Please note that a summary of individual queries is routinely included in the librarian's reports in Odd Bob.

Sorting through the 16 boxes of papers that have not so far been catalogued has taken something of a back-seat this year, partly because of the varied nature of the material, but progress is being made.

Adding annual reports to the electronic archive has continued, and there is now a report for at least one year during each decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. There is plenty more to do however, so if anybody would be interested in helping to increase the content by photographing or scanning library items, please let me know. As well as the scanning task, doing the coding for the electronic annual reports using existing templates is an option for those interested. It is reasonably straightforward - comparable to producing formulae in a spreadsheet. So if anybody would like to add simple computer coding to their skill-set alongside producing the images, this is an opportunity.

Invitations to visit the library have been suspended for the past two years because of the Covid-19 pandemic. There is no real reason to continue this suspension, so if anybody would like to visit the library, please let me know. The offer to look up information is however still always there, as is the opportunity to borrow items - just get in touch.

Doug Beaumont

## **ITEM 7 d.**

### **Report of Website Manager**

Progress continues to be made in transferring content from the old Guild website to the most recent version. Plans are in place to upgrade the server capacity, create a development server, and to offer hosting to all branch websites.

The Master and Secretary are working with the Webmaster on adding more published material and thus transparency to the website, as well as revising the menu. As much care as possible will be taken to preserve links that Google will already have crawled.

Recent additions to the website have been two "Tower Lists" covering every tower in the Guild, one an updated version of the Guild map which requires more updating, and a column sortable tower list to aid with planning. Both are works in progress, and I would encourage branch members to

examine the details currently published for their tower and feedback any amendments directly to [webmaster@odg.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@odg.org.uk).

If any member has graphic design skills and is willing to volunteer some time, there are several maps that need updating. Again, please contact [webmaster@odg.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@odg.org.uk).

Andrew Goldthorpe

## **ITEM 7 e.**

### **Server Manager Report**

The server manager continues to deal with changes to email distribution lists and the forwarding addresses for the generic email addresses. These are in response to requests from branch secretaries or the webmaster of a branch where a branch has its own website hosted on the Guild server.

The server currently hosts 30 mailing lists for nine of the branches and seven mailing lists at Guild level. The server also has some 691 email forwarders redirecting email for Guild officers, branch officers, and individual towers.

As well as the Guild website the server hosts nine branch websites. As well as the Guild website, six of the branch websites are built on the popular WordPress website application. A number of the branch WordPress instances are out of date and pose security threats to the server. I will be liaising with the relevant branch webmasters to bring their website installations up to date.

As well as looking at a server upgrade in order to increase the memory, I am currently investigating alternative suppliers who can provide a significant increase in resources for a

May I remind you that the server is run for the benefit of the whole Guild so if any branch or tower who is not already doing so, would like to use any of the services mentioned above then please contact me. Please direct any queries to [serveradmin@odg.org.uk](mailto:serveradmin@odg.org.uk).

Richard Stanworth

## ITEM 8

# DIARY OF EVENTS

(as at 11<sup>th</sup> February 2022)

### 2022

Rope Splicing & Maintenance Course Saturday 26th February	Radley
March General Committee and Bell Fund AGM Saturday 12th March	Wendover
Radley Course Saturday 9th April	Radley
<i>St George's Day</i> <i>Saturday 23rd April</i>	
Training Meeting Saturday 30 <sup>th</sup> April	Witney
Ringing Day Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> May	Sonning Deanery Branch
AGM and Eight-Bell Striking Competition Saturday 21st May	Goring
<i>The Queen's Platinum Jubilee</i> <i>Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> to Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June</i>	
<i>Oxford Botanic Garden 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary</i> <i>Friday 15th July</i>	
Michaelmas Course Saturday 24th September	EBSB and neighbouring branches
Six-Bell Striking Competition Saturday 1st October	Newbury Branch
Steeple Aston Course Saturday 29th October	Steeple Aston
November General Committee Saturday 26th November	VOWH Branch
Ten-Bell Striking Competition Saturday 26th November	VOWH Branch