

Item 8 - General Committee Report for 2024 AGM

The General Committee has met twice in the past twelve months, both as in-person gatherings in halls.

The November 2023 meeting was at Steeple Aston and agreed that for 2024 subscriptions and peal fees should be increased to £10 (split £7.00/£3.00 Guild/Branch) and 50p per ringer, respectively.

The March 2024 meeting was at Great Brickhill and followed the AGM of the Oxford Diocesan Bell Fund.

At the March meeting this year it was agreed to recommend to the AGM that the following donations be made:

£2,000 donation to the Bell Fund

That the AGM would discuss donation value for ART and the Ringing World

£ donation to the Association of Ringing Teachers (ART)

£ donation to the Ringing World.

The Treasurer proposals to raise the subscription sum for 2024 were agreed. Items cited as requiring funding were support for our youth bands, and payment for new membership software.

The Master advised that the focus for 2023/24 was on improving communications. The system we have chosen to do this is a commercial, professional software called Membermojo (MM). The software is used by many guilds – Essex, Lincoln and Sussex for example. The MM project team meet weekly via Zoom to ensure progress is good and to schedule. The MM project team have briefed branch offices and branch AGMs & answered questions. MM will ensure ODG complies with GDPR. Members will be able to opt out of receiving emails they don't want. However, members will get Branch and Guild news (if opted in) more reliably, more directly.

The Learning and Development Workgroup (L&D) have organised a full set of courses this year.

The new competition for Raising and Lowering with a trophy sourced by the competition proposer Robert Newton held its inaugural competition which was a success.

The Towers and Belfries Sub-committee (T&B) have held a full complement of courses which have been well attended. The T&B members have resumed inspections of towers for TMA, grant inspections and general advice, but would welcome more Guild members to help – you do not need to be a General Committee member.

The L&D and T&B workgroups have both comprehensively added material to the Guild website.

The 2024 Bell Fund ringing day (Oxford City Branch) on the 1st Bank holiday in May is progressing well.

Reports were received from the Peal Secretary, Safeguarding Officer, Librarian, Website Manager, Server Manager and Report Editor.

A safeguarding report will be submitted at the 2024 AGM.

The Website manager advised that maintenance and re-organisation work continues behind the scenes. Work with Branch webmasters is commencing as the ODG server work is concluded.

Thanks were extended to our Server Manager Richard Stanworth. The main activity this year has been the transfer of the Guild server to Eco Web Hosting, the provider which also hosts the development domain set up in 2022. The server has been migrated to a larger server with twice the memory of the previous server and a faster CPU. As part of this transfer the Domain records for the Guild domain and its subdomains were also transferred. There were several issues which caused some of the main email providers, mainly Gmail, to reject emails from our domain. These issues have now been resolved and all emails should now be delivered. This move will eventually allow the expansion of the guild and branch websites by moving them to our web hosting package which allows us to set up an unlimited number of websites. The email services may also be moved to the web hosting package but for now will continue with our own server until we implement MemberMojo.

The work of the many contributors to the Guild report to improve its accuracy was commended and thanks extended to the Report Editor.

The Diary of Events was discussed. The introduction of 8 and 10 bell practices has been well received. The new members events have also been fully attended and great fun.

Karen Pile, Guild Secretary

Item 9 Safeguarding Report to Guild AGM 2024

There have been no major changes in CCCBR or C of E requirements/recommendations for Safeguarding during the previous year. Compliance within the Parishes is still somewhat patchy but remains the responsibility of Incumbents, PCC and PSOs to monitor.

The monitoring of youth groups within the Guild for safeguarding compliance has been completed during the year, with both groups demonstrating compliance with ODG and Diocesan policy. I plan to visit both groups within the next few months to see them in action.

Some minor amendments to the Safeguarding Policy have been made and this has been posted on the website.

There are a number of teaching groups that operate across parishes within the Guild. Whilst these are often based on ART recommendations, so are likely to comply with Guild Safeguarding requirements, they are not monitored by ART so a report on safeguarding within these groups should be submitted to me.

June Wells, Guild SO