

SUSSEX COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF CHANGE RINGERS

Registered Charity No. 268588

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE HELD AT
THE VILLAGE CENTRE, HURSTPIERPOINT ON SATURDAY 1 MARCH 2014 (9.30am)

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| PRESENT: | | Librarian: | Stella Bianco |
| Master: | Christine Baldock | Safeguarding Officer: | Sue Elrick |
| Secretary: | Marisa Hayes | Central Council Reps: | David Kirkcaldy |
| Treasurer: | Val Burgess | | Stephen Beckingham |
| Trustees: | Val Atkins | | Diana Day |
| | Mike Wake | Divisional Representatives: | Margaret Oram |
| | Peter Wilkinson | (N) | Anne Ekins, Angela Cash |
| Education Officer: | Anne Franklin | (S) | Nick Cullen, Alan Seymour |
| Publicity Officer: | Kathy Howard | (E) | Frances Bradford, Peter Bradford |
| BRF Secretary: | Graham Hills | | Jack Burton, Moya Hills |
| Peal Secretary: | Alan Baldock | (W) | |

The Master took the chair and members were asked to stand in memory of members who had died since January. Sally Mackett (Maresfield) and Duncan Ball (Coleman's Hatch) had both died recently.

1. Apologies for absence had been received from Andrew Barnsdale.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2013: In the list of those members who had died the spelling of Margaret Binsted's surname was amended. At the top of page two "it was noted...". Item 5, bullet point 1: Subscriptions (plural). With these changes, AlanB and SueE proposed and seconded that the minutes were signed as a true record.

(a) Matters arising: DavidK reported that an article on simulators had been published in Soundbow and could be available for the website or newsletters. He had two names for the list of people to ask for advice: John Norris and Nick Cullen.

(b) A quick count up on BellBoard showed that 42 quarter peals were rung during Quarter Peal Week. Notable achievements were a quarter peal every day at Southover and a quarter peal at each of the four Eastbourne towers in one day. A full report would be published in Soundbow.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2014: First paragraph "... having passed away". The spelling of Binsted was amended. The third resolution in item 9 had not been correctly recorded and it was the wish of the proposer and seconder to amend the first line to read: a) divisional structure remains in place for the time being. With these changes DianaD and PeterW proposed and seconded that the minutes are signed as a true record.

(a) The Master proposed that matters arising be considered under item 7 of the agenda. There were no objections.

4. Reports for 2013

The officers' reports had been circulated via email during the previous week. The meeting did not require the reports to be read aloud. The Secretary recorded one or two small amendments to the reports circulated: final copies to appear as adopted in the 2013 Annual Report. With amendments in place and no further questions or remarks from the floor, the reports were proposed and seconded as follows:

(a) Master: StellaB, AnneE

(b) Publicity Officer: MarisaH, JackB

(c) Education Officer: ValB, StephenB

(d) Librarian: AnneE, DianaD

(e) Peal Secretary: DianaD, GrahamH

With the following addition from StephenB which was read to the meeting:

'The number of tower-bell quarter peals has decreased dramatically from 714 in 2012 to 610 in 2013. These were rung in 98 different towers, a decrease of 12 from the previous year. The leading towers were Hooe, Dewbys Bells with 67, Hailsham (49), Warnham, Bell Meadow (42) & Bexhill (38). The number of handbell quarter peals increased slightly from 11 to 13. These were rung in 5 different venues.'

(f) The four Divisional secretaries' reports had been adopted at their ADMs.

(g) General Secretary: StephenB, JackB

(h) Safeguarding Officer: MarisaH, AlanB

(i) The Treasurer gave a verbal report: "The Accounts are with the Auditors and I hope to have them back by mid March with a Finance Committee planned towards the end of March. I can report that Subscriptions are up and Expenditure is slightly up on last year. The accounts will look slightly odd due to a revaluation of the Library and the Master's Chain, resulting in a loss of £10,400."

The Treasurer clarified that the Library had been revalued from £33.9k to £20k and the Master's Chain from £8.5k to £10k.

Reg Johnson Fund: At the November meeting it was agreed that the costs of the youth ringing at the RW National Youth Competition be transferred from the General Account, based on year end figures. The General Fund made a small loss before revaluation, if I transfer the amount proposed, we retain over £9000 in the General Account. ValB proposed that £2,491 be transferred from the General Account to the Reg Johnson Fund. This was seconded by NickC and carried.
The Treasurer's report was proposed and seconded: MoyaH and SueE.

DavidK asked whether the Association had considered becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. The Keltek Trust had done this recently. **ACTION: Trustees to consider at the Finance Committee.**

5. Bell Restoration Fund

(a) The BRF Officer's had nothing to add to the report previously circulated. Proposed and seconded by AlanB, Jack B.
(b) The Treasurer gave a verbal report: "We have had a legacy of £1,000 from Charles Shepherd. Donations were up, mainly due to Nigel Gale's cycle ride and I was able to get a tax refund of £378.29 on gift aided donations. The only grant has been paid to Seaford College (£700). Thanks to the insurance claim by Pulborough, the grant of £3000 made to them has been refunded. One grant of £300 has been paid from the Brian Burrough Legacy towards a simulator at Ringmer."
Proposed and seconded by ValA and NickC
(c) There were no changes to BRF reps: Terry McGinn (N), Alan Seymour (S), Nicky Twort (E), Geoff Rix (W)

6. Nominations for General Officers

It was remarked upon that although they were nominated at Divisional meetings, neither Anne Franklin nor Marisa Hayes had been asked if they were willing to stand. All were asked to note that each nominee must be asked before they are nominated.

The following nominations had been recorded at the four ADMs:

- (a) Master: Christine Baldock
- (b) General Secretary: Marisa Hayes
- (c) Treasurer: Sue Gadd
- (d) Publicity Officer: none
- (e) Education Officer: none
- (f) Librarian: Stella Bianco
- (g) Peal Secretary: Alan Baldock
- (h) Safeguarding Officer : Sue Elrick
- (i) BRF Officer: Graham Hills

7. The vision and proposed rule changes (including any matters arising from the January meeting)

The response to the changes to the committee structure and teams had met with little enthusiasm at the ADMs but it was felt that there was a great deal of confusion surrounding the proposals to be taken to the AGM and members were not willing to volunteer without knowing what would be involved. There was a lengthy discussion at this point:

- The new teams are an aspiration until the AGM and members are waiting to see what happens before thinking about getting involved.
- AnneF remarked that the Training and Recruitment Team had met the previous night. Each secretary had been invited to send representatives and AnneF had added to the team with people she knew would be enthusiastic and engaged. There had been some excellent ideas coming out of the T&RT meeting.
- The role of the General Committee was to steer the Association and this needed to happen at this meeting.
- There was some doubt about the hub structure – particularly towers that may fall between the gaps.
- The new rules gave autonomy to the divisions or districts to start working with hubs and there was a team of people now in post in each division to oversee this.
- There was concern that the Association was trying to put things in place before it had been authorised by its members to do so.
- The aims of the hubs to reinforce grass roots training and to encourage towers to work together were agreed.
- Some felt that a name change from Committee to Team and Division to Area was unnecessary- they were still doing the same thing under a different name.

After a break, the Secretary read from the website an article she published on 18 January:

"During the course of the week it has become apparent that one key point which was agreed at the meeting was genuinely overlooked: Please note: There are to be no changes imposed on the Divisional Boundaries.

Whilst many members of the committee can see the value of smaller local level areas or hubs, there will be no changes to the Divisional structure.

It is not the wish of the Working Group to push through any changes which were not agreed by the meeting. Everyone is in agreement that there have been some positive changes as a result of last summer's discussion groups and it is hoped that things will develop naturally. No changes will be imposed as a result of the Vision."

The Master asked the meeting to look at the proposed rules step by step:

(a) Overview – no comment.

(b) JackB remarked that we are doing away with the election procedure and the meeting was in agreement with this.

Rule 3. NickC asked about the definition of a 'Ringer' and DavidK asked about achieving a standard before being proposed. AnneF said that one of the key benefits of membership was insurance and this was just as important for novice ringers. She also stated that members join clubs to learn skills, for example someone joins a croquet club to learn to play croquet and this was the policy which SCACR should adopt. MarisaH suggested drafting a guidance note which would go alongside the Membership Form **ACTION MarisaH.**

Rule7. Delete 'change' and add at the end of the rule 'without further payment'.

Change the * section to Rule 10 and re-number subsequent rules.

(c) Two matters were clarified: a full membership fee was due on joining the Association, whenever that might be during the year. The change to Rule 12 meant that Junior subs would be increased from £3 to £4. There were no objections to these.

(d) Association Business was covered next: The Secretary was asked to carefully check all cross references to rules in the final draft.

Rule 16. Insert before The purpose of the meeting: 'The quorum shall be twenty voting members.'

Rule 16-17. There was considerable discussion about the mechanism for electing Central Council Representatives and it was agreed that each Division should have the opportunity to nominate a rep of their own.

Rule 16e. after a number of options were discussed:

NickC proposed the following: 'Each area shall be entitled to nominate one Central Council Representative triennially.'

This was seconded by David K and carried by a majority.

Rule 22. PeterB queried the requirement to forward subscriptions to the Secretary, thereby by passing the Divisional secretaries. This led onto more detailed discussions about Rules 13-15 and the divisional structure.

It was at this stage that AlanB proposed that all references to Divisions be replaced by District; this was seconded by DianaD and carried.

Rule 25. Delete the final sentence 'Notice of such..... before the meeting'.

(e) Association Structure

Rule 13. attracted much discussion and there was general support for identifying a Secretary within each District to provide a formal focus for external and internal communications. It was also agreed that each District meet annually to ensure that the business of the Association is properly conducted.

Rule 13. PeterW proposed that the first bullet point read: 'Organise activities and business which achieve the Aims of the Association'. This was seconded by DavidK and carried by a majority.

NickC proposed and DavidK seconded the following amendment:

'Each District shall elect a Secretary and officers annually in February to enable it to fulfil its purpose.' This was carried by a majority.

Rule 14. PeterW proposed that the first line read: 'The work of the Association will be supported by four teams or committees who will be required to meet throughout the year.' Delete following sentences and end with: 'In the first instance these teams will be led by existing Association Officers:' This was seconded by DavidK.

AlanB proposed an amendment to the above by removing 'or committees'. This was seconded by SueE and carried by a majority.

The chair then returned to the first proposal with the amendment and this was carried by a majority.

The following changes were also noted:

Rule 15. Delete 'of' : 'will comprise the following:'

Rule 15. Tidy up spacing of d and e

Rule 15 g. replace existing with: 'A representative from each Association team'

Rule 15 i. Central Council Representatives.

8. Future Events

(a) AGM. NickC reported that everything was in hand for the AGM on 10 May at Uckfield and a notice had been circulated via newsletters.

(b) Striking competition. AnneF reported that there would not be an inter-divisional striking competition: On 12 July there would be an open striking competition at Alfriston, including a treasure hunt, hand bells and other activities. Everyone was invited, teams would be picked at random and it was hoped that it would be fun and attract interest from the public as well.

(c) Young Ringers. AnneF also reported that the next Young Ringers' event would take place on 7 April – details tbc.

(d) New Seminar. There are also plans to hold an evening seminar aimed at tower captains and others to share good practice on teaching, running practices, teaching theory and managing people. This was to take place as a trial on 20 June at Hurstpierpoint (tbc) and if successful offered across the county over the following year.

(e) External Competitions. The date for the Essex Trophy is tbc. The Ringing World National Youth Contest takes place on 5 July at Worcester. AnneF is putting a team together and will be arranging practices. StephenB confirmed that Sussex has a place to compete for the Tewkesbury Shield on 3 May and the team will be practising shortly at East Grinstead. The Master thanked both for organising the teams.

(f) Social Event. GrahamH said the West is planning a Shuffleboard evening at Pulborough on Saturday 11 October. The Master thanked the West for taking this on.

(g) The Ringing Course will run on 31 October and 1 November. AnneF and the Training and Recruitment Team would be taking this forward. There would not be a tea at the end of day two.

(h) Ringing Roadshow. KathyH reported that after much discussion, the Publicity Committee had decided not to take a stand at the Show. MargaretO said this was a great disappointment. StellaB said that we should still encourage members to attend. MarisaH to speak to Alan Collings who will be attending with Dewby's Bells to offer our support. **Action MarisaH and ALL to publicise the Roadshow.**

(i) South of England Show. No information had been forthcoming regarding handbell groups as requested in November and MarisaH felt she was not in a position to take this forward. With no one else volunteering, she would be contacting the Diocese Tent Committee to explain the position with the hope that we could perhaps have a fuller presence there in 2015. **Action MarisaH.**

9. Any Other Business

(a) Ringing Foundation. A further letter had been received from the Ringing Foundation and it was the wish of the meeting that the Secretary write again to inform them that we would not be supporting the Foundation financially. **Action MarisaH.**

(b) Central Council Funding. The paper on resourcing the work of the Central Council had been circulated via email. MarisaH summarised the five page document by saying that it was looking to double the Association's annual subscription from £150 to approx. £300: these proposals suggested each Association pay an annual fee of 16p per member. StellaB proposed and AnneE seconded that we support the motion and **MarisaH was asked to respond. Central Council Reps to note please.**

(c) Website. StephenB asked secretaries to send through officer updates for the website including pictures. **Action Secretaries.**

(d) Central Council 'Have Your Say' Workshop. StellaB asked if anyone would be attending the workshop at Winchester on 22 March. DavidK was speaking.

(e) Clothing. KathyH reported that Adele Potton is proposing to 'auction off' the items of clothing in stock at the AGM. There were no objections.

(f) Long Service Members. DavidK had a list of three members who had not received their 50 year certificate. MarisaH was happy to follow this up after the meeting.

(f) Minutes. Stephen Beckingham asked that members of the committee make their comments on minutes known to the Secretary as soon as minutes are published.

There being no other business, the Master thanked everyone for their contributions and closed the meeting at 12.30 p.m.