

## Central Council of Church Bell Ringers Annual Meeting 2023

We were proud to host the 126th meeting of the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers as part of our centenary year over the first weekend in September. The main venue being The Hold, the County Archives in Ipswich for both the meeting and the Ringing World AGM.

On Friday 1st September, we ran a number of popular focused ringing sessions ranging from 'Moving on to Minor, Moving on to Major or Moving on to Surprise Major. These sessions were held at various towers outside of Ipswich including Buxhall, Hitcham, Rushmere, Offton, Bramford. During the evening, there was open ringing at St. Mary le Tower, followed by an informal social at the Halberd Inn.

Following the main events on Saturday we held a popular curry and beer evening at St Peter's by the Waterfront. Then on the Sunday we held further training and development sessions in Ipswich including handbells, conducting, rope splicing, tower maintenance. All the events were open to Guild members in addition to Council members we were very pleased to receive positive feedback from both groups. Thank you very much to everyone who helped make the weekend a success with a special thank you to Katharine Salter.

This year the council meeting will be held in Exeter then in Yorkshire in 2025.

The key topics from the Ringing World AGM and CCCBR annual meeting are as follows:

### RW AGM (the AGM can be viewed online [here](#))

- **2022** was a good year in financial terms, boosted by donations from ringing for the **Platinum Jubilee**.
- **2023** – expected outcome is good, boosted by donations for **Coronation Ringing** performances.
- **2024** projected to be a tougher year due to lack of significant events and postage rate increases.
- **RW National Youth Contest in York** was a big success; the **2024 contest** will be held in **London**.
- RW survey has generated lots of data which is still being sifted; broadly, the older age group prefer the existing weekly format, while the younger generation tends to receive its news in a less traditional way via news websites and online content. **BellBoard** is the RW's most popular product, but has not yet been 'monetised' via the addition of optional extra features. A useful summary is available [here](#).
- The RW may trial a new monthly product alongside the current publication.
- Book: '**The Voice of the Church**' – recommended as a gift for your clergy.

### CCCBR Annual Meeting (the Meeting can be viewed online [here](#) with the Ringing 2030 presentation [here](#))

Many of the new reps were younger ringers this year – a 16-year-old is the youngest member ever with the council reflecting more than ever the ringers that they represent. 144 members attended the meeting.

#### Safeguarding

- Ringers taking Basic Awareness training from 2024 will be offered specific case studies designed and submitted by bell ringers. Ringers will be the first group (other than clergy) to benefit from this approach.
- A "Code for Ringing" has been produced for use by associations and towers wishing to develop their own codes. This has been adopted by the Guild.
- A pamphlet "[From Practice to Perfect](#)" has been distributed to DSAs to educate them about bell ringing
- A set of template safeguarding agreements is in preparation for use by towers when engaging with their PSO/DSA.

### **Promotion and Recruitment**

- “Ring for the King” produced an impressive uptake of ringing, with extensive media coverage.
- CCCBR has worked with a professional film-maker to produce two short videos about bell ringing, which are freely available for associations to use. They can be viewed [here](#).

### **Ringling 2030 and Forward Plan**

- Simon Linford’s presentation (given on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> September) noted that the current ringing population grew from a base of young ringers five times the size of what we have now. Based on current rates of recruitment and retention, the ringing community in 25 years’ time will have reduced to 16,500.
- Simon and Tina Stoecklin, the Council’s new President, presented a Forward Plan based on 3 “pillars” – raising awareness of the art of bell ringing, good recruitment & development and a quality ringing environment. The presentation included details of over 30 projects which would support these pillars, and can be read or downloaded [here](#).

### **Council Funding**

- Recruitment of professional administrative support had been a recommendation of the 2017 CRAG Report, but has not yet been delivered. The Council receives only 20 pence of each association member’s annual subscription, not enough to fund even a part-time resource. The Council’s 2022 accounts show a general fund balance of £95k, with further investments of £266k either from donations/legacies for specific purposes or held in reserves. In 2022 the Council spent £70k and received £55k of income.

**Ringling survey** – has now been trialled in 3 areas with useful results

**Small society subscription** fee is now £10

A motion to **reduce the number of representatives** (see [video](#) starting at 2 hours 30 minutes) was not passed

A recommendation from the Historical & Archive Workgroup to move the **CCCBR Library** to the Loughborough Bell Foundry Trust was approved

Neal Dodge  
Central Council Representative for the Suffolk Guild