

## Meeting of Suffolk Guild of Ringers Management Committee

2 pm Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2024

Held via Zoom

Minutes by Kate Gill

### 1. Welcome

- a) Mark Ogden welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- b) Members present:

**Officers:** Chairman Mark Ogden, Treasurer Tim Hart, Ringing Master Katharine Salter, Secretary Kate Gill

**North East District:** Philip Gorrod, Joanna Wilkinson

**North West District:** Chris Davies, David Everett, Mark Steggles

**South East District:** Stephen Christian, Mary Garner, Jenny Scase, James Smith

**South West District:** Pauline Brown, Richard Knight, Alan Moulton

**Observer:** Erika Clarke, NE

### 2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Neal Dodge, Sarah Plummer, David Steed

### 3. Absent Friends

- a) Mary Garner read out the names of Absent Friends who have died since the last GMC meeting, as detailed in her report:  
Brian R Wells ( NW Barrow); Muriel R Page (SE Stonham Aspal); Adrian Knights (SE SMLT); Jill B Rood (NW Thurston)
- b) Also remembered are Elizabeth A Teverson (NW Rougham); Rosetta (Rose) Godfrey (SE Bramford); Hilary Mann (SE Rushmore).

The meeting took a few moments of reflection to remember them.

### 4. Minutes of the meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2023

Mary Garner proposed, and Tim Hart seconded, that the minutes be approved as correct. All were in agreement.

### 5. Matters arising from the minutes, including actions completed

- a) Comments on items in action log from 29<sup>th</sup> October 2023:  
(23.10) 11b. Katharine Salter commented that the Guild survey threw up no surprises in terms of recruitment and training. Some practices would benefit from a greater number of experienced ringers. R&T is considering events.  
Also under this item, additional simulator kit at Felixstowe is being purchased at nominal cost.
- b) 15 c. Mark Ogden advised GMC that the trustees have discussed a potential Guild Social in 2024. If any district wishes to organise a Guild Social, the Guild will support them with this.

**ACTION LOG FROM 29<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2023**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Progress</b>
<b>(23.10) 11b</b>	R&T to consider recruitment and training issues raised in Guild survey	Katharine	Completed
<b>(23.10) 13 e</b>	R&T to consider expenditure of remainder of Golden Bottle Fund perhaps at Ipswich or Fornham St Martin	Katharine	Still underway awaiting information from NW and SW districts
<b>(23.10)14a</b>	Policies to be reviewed by Liz Christian in conjunction with Katharine	Liz and Katharine	Still underway
<b>7a ii</b>	Trustees to report back to GMC before 31.12.23 re Reserves Policy and potential transfers out of General Fund	Trustees	Complete
<b>7b ii</b>	Amend number of SE members in GRM October report	Katharine	KS and MG to liaise. Mark as complete
<b>7f iv</b>	Consider adoption of 'Code of Ringing' at Feb 2024 GMC	All	On agenda
<b>11d</b>	Establish whether charity law permits the Guild to dispose of donated or bequested handbells	Tim	On agenda
<b>11h</b>	Consider reducing the asset value of the handbells, having regard to point 11i below	Tim	On agenda
<b>11i</b>	Research cost of 4 refurbished sets of handbells to replace current sets	Tim	On agenda
<b>11j</b>	Obtain insurance quote on the replacement value of handbells	Katharine	On agenda
<b>11 k</b>	Renew handbell insurance in December, providing premium not substantially higher than at present. If it is, extraordinary Zoom meeting of GMC to be called before renewal.	Katharine and Kate	On agenda
<b>15 c</b>	Decide on date and venue of Guild Social in 2024	All	Complete

## 6. Correspondence

None received.

## 7. Officer Reports

### a) Treasurer's Report

There were no questions.

### b) Ringling Master Report

Katharine Salter said she had not submitted a report, but the months since the last GMC have been a quiet period. She asked members to refer to the full report within the Guild Annual Report. Kate Gill will distribute this to members as the Annual Report has not been published yet.

### c) Recruitment and Training Report

See b) above.

### d) Belfry Advisory Committee Report

The SMLT request for funds will be covered under agenda item 9, Reserves Update

### e) Membership Secretary Report

- i. Mary Garner advised that almost 20% of the membership has joined within the last two years, spurred on by the Platinum Jubilee, and 'Ring for the King'.
- ii. Around 30 centenary badges remain unsold and are still available at the discounted rate of £10.

### f) Safeguarding Report

- i. Liz Christian was not at the meeting.
- ii. Mark Ogden said that the position of the Safeguarding Statement will be altered in the Annual Report, to give it more prominence.
- iii. There are a large number of safeguarding policies produced by the Diocese, with some loose ends to be tied up, such as liaison between towers and the Diocese.
- iv. After discussion about how safeguarding responsibilities operate between incumbents, Parish Safeguarding Officers and towers, Tim Hart proposed that an audit should be undertaken, by the Guild asking districts to check with towers whether they have safeguarding awareness training in place. David Everett seconded this and it was approved.
- v. Tim Hart will help to design an online form for districts to circulate to towers. It needs to be accessible as a paper based version as well. He will also suggest a way of communicating this audit to districts.

### g) PRO Report

There were no comments.

### h) Webmaster Report

There were no comments.

## **8. Applications for Grants and Grants Outstanding**

- a) Chris Davies advised that SMLT have submitted an application for six dumbbells, supported by an Abel simulator and six laptops.
- b) BAC do not believe that such a facility falls within the remit of our grant conditions, but recognises that this is a worthwhile scheme for the Guild to consider.
- c) The application from Drinkstone has not yet completed the R&T stage so is not ready for submission yet. GMC agreed that the approval will need to wait until GMC in June but should not be delayed beyond then.
- d) Westhorpe are progressing well with training. The bells are due back in late spring.
- e) There have been cracked bells found at Fornham St Martin, now being repaired or replaced and retuned. The original faculty did not cover all aspects of the work and a second faculty is now being obtained.

## **9. Reserves Update**

- a) Mark Ogden advised the Guild executive has considered the establishment of a 'Special Projects Fund' as some initiatives do not fall within the current grants guidelines. Examples of projects that might fall into this category include training, dumb bells and sound control. This fund would be financed from the Guild reserves, which have increased over the past twelve months, but not by means of a ring fenced special fund.
- b) Philip Gorrod said that the GMC should give serious consideration to the request from SMLT and what percentage of the cost should be granted.
- c) Kate Gill observed that if we are going to fund some special projects, that we should publicise this so districts are aware.
- d) Katharine Salter emphasised that she is distancing herself from the discussion, as she is a member of the SMLT band, and James Smith said the same applied to him.
- e) The total cost of the SMLT proposal is around £27,000, with around £13,000 left to find, although Chris Davies advised this has been covered in the interim by an open ended loan.
- f) Katharine was asked to circulate the full application submitted to R&T.
- g) The proposal will be considered again by GMC at its June meeting.

## **10. Handbells**

- a) Tim Hart introduced this item and explained that historically, the handbells were valued at £30,000. The sets are listed in the Annual Report ; three sets of 8 for change ringing and a set for tune ringing.
- b) Handbell Ringers of Great Britain advise that replacement costs, rather than new costs, should be used for valuation purposes, and calculated at one third of the value of a new set.
- c) Tim has therefore assessed the replacement value at £11,000, which has been rounded up to £15,000 to give headroom.
- d) The handbells have been insured for £15,000. After researching possible providers, now Balens have stopped offering cover, Allianz was selected, providing UK cover, car cover and no specific required location; at a lower price than the previous Balens premium.
- e) Mark Ogden said the new lower insurance premium has removed the urgency to make a decision regarding the handbells.
- f) The Guild needs to check the status of donations of some sets, and whether we can dispose of them and potentially seek replacements. We need to decide to what purpose handbells are used for going forwards. For example, should they be replaced with smaller/lighter sets for change ringing?
- g) Mark also commented that we need to consider the future guardianship of the handbells if Brian Whiting decides at some time in the future that he no longer wishes to be responsible for them.

- h) Mark asked members and districts to contribute views over the coming weeks about the future use of the handbells.

#### **11. Membership MoJo Discussion Paper**

- a) Tim Hart introduced this item and referred to his paper that had been circulated with the GMC papers. The Guild Treasurer correlates subscriptions with the Guild and District Treasurers, involving a manually intensive process.
- b) A number of other Guilds use MoJo and Tim gave examples in his paper.
- c) MoJo would enable central sharing of information and minimise administration. The main drawback is members not paying subscriptions online and towers paying en bloc. But, it may appeal more to younger members and also provides an online shop that could be used for selling tickets to Guild events.
- d) The cost is £95.00 per year, or £175.00 per 1000 members.
- e) Mary Garner asked about GDPR implications. MoJo protects data within the system and the company is GDPR compliant.
- f) GMC agreed that Tim should set up a pilot of the system and send invitations to GMC members to try the system for themselves.

#### **12. Ratification of NRLMs**

Lucy A Warren was ratified as a NRLM.

#### **13. Arrangements for Guild AGM 6<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

David Everett reported on the plans for the AGM. These include the facility to book a place for quarter peal attempts (rather than open towers), open ringing at Stowmarket, followed by a two course hot meal in the church hall and then the AGM in the church.

#### **14. Adoption of 'Code for Ringing'**

It was agreed that this contains a worthwhile set of principles and will be adopted by the Guild.

#### **15. Any Other Business**

- a) Richard Knight advised that he had attended a meeting at Sudbury Arts Centre and was concerned about the very poor state of the ringing chamber, and only the front six ringable from the balcony. A scheme is under consideration to allow the other four bells to be rung from the balcony. He has asked for sound control to be installed. Taster sessions at lunchtimes are attracting interest and a training bell might help.
- b) Alan Moulton commented that he is still awaiting details of the proposals. He observed that the Art Centre and their architects did not follow any advice from the Guild technical advisers. He does not think ringing all ten from the balcony will be viable, as two of the ropes would fall too close to the balustrade.
- c) Katharine Salter enquired whether any objections were made to the listed building application. As far as Alan knows, no objections were raised at the time.
- d) Katharine confirmed that the Guild Striking Competitions will take place at 10.30 am at Falkenham and 2.30 pm at Felixstowe.
- e) Chris Davies asked about the latest position regarding ringing a quarter peal at Laxfield, as they were given a grant 3 years ago. Philip Gorrod said he has spoken to Fiona Shuttle, who wants him to conduct the first quarter peal on the new bells, but she is awaiting Andrew Ogden's availability, as he was involved in the rehanging. Philip will contact Fiona again to find out the latest progress.
- f) No volunteers for the post of Peal Secretary and Report Editor have been found. David Everett is putting himself forward for election as the Guild Secretary.

- g) Mary Garner asked members to advise her if they know of anyone with 50 years continuous membership.

**Date of next meeting**

Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> June at Stowupland

The meeting closed at 4.12 pm.

***ACTION LOG FROM 18 FEBRUARY 2024***

<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>
<b>(23.10) 13 e</b>	R&T to consider expenditure of remainder of Golden Bottle Fund once response received from SW and NW districts	Katharine
<b>(23.10)14a</b>	Policies to be reviewed by Liz Christian in conjunction with Katharine	Liz and Katharine
<b>(29.10)7bii</b>	Amend number of SE members in GRM October report	Katharine
<b>(29.10) 11d</b>	Establish whether charity law permits the Guild to dispose of donated or bequested handbells	Tim
<b>7b</b>	Circulate GRM report within Annual Report to GMC members in lieu of GRM report to February GMC	Kate
<b>7f v</b>	Design online audit regarding safeguarding for districts to circulate to towers and suggest way of communicating with districts.	Tim
<b>9f</b>	Circulate full SMLT proposal to GMC before June meeting	Katharine
<b>10h</b>	GMC members and districts to feed in views about future use of the handbells	All
<b>11f</b>	Set up pilot of Mojo system and send invitations to GMC members to try it out	Tim
<b>15e</b>	Contact Fiona Shuttle to find out latest progress with first QP at Laxfield	Philip
<b>15g</b>	Advise Mary Garner of any members with 50 years continuous membership	All

# Suffolk Guild of Ringers

General Management Committee Meeting 18 February 2024

## Treasurer's Report

26 January 2024

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### Financial summary 31 December 2023

2023 accounts have been submitted and reviewed by our independent advisor.

	Year 2023
	£
<b>Current Assets</b>	
CAF 12mth bonds	0.00
CCLA/CBF General a/c	86,570.74
CCLA/CBF Jubilee Fund	36,217.53
Barclays Current Account	8,051.89
District Cash in hand	390.84
	<u>131,231.00</u>
<b>Representing</b>	
General Fund	16,015.45
Restoration Fund	61,584.39
Restoration Grants Allocated	11,850.00
Library Fund	227.22
Handbell Fund	992.50
The Golden Bottle Trust Fund	3,264.52
Centenary Dinner Fund	67.42
Jubilee Fund	36,217.53
The Pipe Family Trust Fund	1,011.97
	<u>131,231.00</u>

#### Noteworthy points:

- The independent auditor noted that we should review our expenditure. Our net worth grew £5K last year, and we could be challenged that this is not aligned with our charitable objectives

#### Restoration fund

The restoration fund contains £ 61584.39, with an additional £11,850.00 allocated as per the table below.

### Grants - Approved and Paid (2023)

	£				£	£		
	Approved Previous Years	Approved This year	Date Approved	Date of Expiry	Grants Paid	Grants unpaid	Date Paid	Notes
Ipswich, St Clement	500.00		22/10/2017	31/12/2025		250.00	16/08/2018	Part Paid
Stowmarket	11000.00		17/02/2018	31/12/2025	11000.00		31/07/2023	Fully Paid
Fornham St Martin	5600.00		17/02/2018	31/12/2025		5600.00		
Combs Sudbury, St Gregory	8,000.00	(£2500 paid 31/10/22)	30/06/2019	12/02/2023				Grant expired
Westhorpe	3000.00		12/02/2022	12/02/2025	500.00		05/01/2023	
Blythburgh	5000.00		23/10/2022	26/10/2025		5000.00		
		1000.00	29/10/2023	29/10/2026		1000.00		
	<u>33,100.00</u>	<u>1,000.00</u>			<u>11,500.00</u>	<u>11,850.00</u>		

### Subscriptions

Subscriptions for 2024 stand at £3295 at the time of writing. An online spreadsheet has been introduced to allow District Treasurers and the Membership Secretary to see the current status.



## **Belfry Advisory Committee (BAC) Report for 18 Feb 2024 GMC Zoom Meeting**

The BAC held a meeting on 30 Jan 24 at Stowmarket. The opportunity was taken for BAC members unfamiliar with the tower to ring the splendid new bells. Many thanks to W Girling for hosting the meeting and his hospitality.

A grant application has been received from St Mary le Tower (St M le T), Ipswich. It requested support for a new installation of 6 dumb bells, for use with an Abel simulator and six laptops in a manner similar to the St Peter Mancroft Ringing Centre installation. Total project estimates were not provided, but a contract has been let with Matthew Higby for £26,657 for the supply of the dumb bells. After considerable discussion, the meeting concluded that in the past we have been more successful in repairing and rebuilding our bell stock than recruiting new ringers, and particularly youngsters to our towers. Thus, any provision to encourage training of new recruits must be encouraged. However, the committee were unanimous in the belief that the rules and previous precedent governing the Bell Restoration Fund (BRF) would not allow a BRF grant. In particular, the rules preclude grant support for new additional bells and simulators. In fact, ST M le T did not ask for funding support for the Abel soft and hardware, nor the required computers, but only the dumb bells. Nonetheless, the committee unanimously believe that this project falls outside the current BRF guidelines.

Similar dilemmas have been successfully resolved in the past. Grants for simulators, ineligible for BRF funding, were financed from the Golden Bottle Fund. The BAC believed the rules governing the application of the BRF had evolved over the last 50 years into a robust framework, guiding the grant process. It is possible to re-write the rules to accommodate both simulators and dumb bells as specific allowable exceptions to the existing rules. However, if the rules are thus amended, virtually every tower in the county would be eligible to apply for a simulator. Having said yes to ST M le T, how could we refuse others? Therefore, the BAC felt it would be better to look for money elsewhere to fund the project. If money could not be found, it might be more prudent to ask the AGM to pass a 'one-off' grant for the project, given its importance to the future of the Guild.

An application for grant aid has been received from Drinkstone, who have a faculty to replace the existing frame, fittings, and ring of 6 bells (which were declared unsafe in 2020) with an 8-cwt peal of 6 new bells in a new, eight pit, steel frame. The difference in cost between the 6 and 8 bell frames was negligible, and the spare pits allow the easy addition of two new trebles in the future, should they be required. In 2021, estimates were obtained from Taylor's, Nicholson's, and Matthew Higby and Taylor's were selected as their bellhanger of choice. They have promises for approximately £50K of the £128,931 (Jan24 estimate after allowances for self-help assistance) project. Of that £129K estimate, £110,562 would be eligible for our grant assistance. They hope to raise the remainder of the funds, including a lottery grant application in 2024, so that work can be carried out in the 2025.

A training plan has been submitted to R&T, but is yet to be approved, and the parish has yet to sign our Guild T&C's. The BAC recognise that the GMC may not be able to deal with this application at the February meeting, but nonetheless dealt with their part of the application. This well thought out plan has been guided by Alan Moulton throughout and the BAC were unanimous in suggesting an £11K grant toward the project (9.95% of the allowable cost).

There are currently two ongoing restoration projects. At Fornham St Martin, the original six bells have been removed to Nicholson's. However, a Keltic supplied bell and the old No6 were found to be cracked. The old No6 has been welded at Soundweld and returned to Bridport whilst Keltic have supplied a replacement for their cracked bell. Tuning will recommence on 12 Feb. A 6-8 week project delay occurred due to the lack of a faculty for a new bell chamber floor and sound control, which had not been included in the original application. The bells should return in late Spring/Summer 24.

The Westhorpe project is continuing smoothly. The re-casting of three bells has been completed. The future band are being trained at Gislingham and Redgrave and are making steady progress. The bells are due to return in the late Spring/Summer 24.

The BAC spent some time discussing the GMC request for the BAC to run a bell maintenance course in 2024. Some unease was expressed amongst members about trainees whose enthusiasm outweighed their practical ability. Given that the BAC are prepared to travel throughout the county to assist with maintenance, it was felt that it would be much safer to offer a Bell Maintenance Awareness Course. In this way, trainees could be guided through the problems that might be found in a ringing chamber/belfry but encouraged to call for BAC assistance rather than undertake repairs for themselves. The BAC will offer such a course on the website in February, and undertake the course based upon the response.

The BAC are very aware that there were a lot of members in the committee. Although it is very useful to have members throughout the county who can quickly respond to local maintenance issues, we also expect them to attend BAC meetings at least once a year. All our members have been asked if they wished to remain, and all said yes. However, members who are reluctant to help with repairs, and who will not attend meetings are of little use to the committee, irrespective of often a long history of valuable contributions to the Guild. To that end, we have reduced the BAC membership to those members who actively support the work of the committee, and we thank you for all the past contributions made by members no longer part of the committee.

During the last four months, the BAC's work has continued helping and advising parishes throughout the county. These included:

Bures St Mary the Virgin: Clapper welded.

Copdock St Peter: Advice provided with reference to rehanging the bells in a new frame. There is little space in the bell chamber and the bells currently swing into the louvre window recesses. This project is gaining momentum and is increasingly more likely to happen.

Falkenham St Ethelbert King of East Anglia: Inspection. Locals have made a fine job repainting the frame.

Framlingham St Michael and All Angels: Serious water ingress problems in the tower roof means that the bells, fittings, frame and ringing chamber carpet are all soaking wet. Reportedly there is no money for repairs. The consequences of the soaking wet frame may be very serious since it is these very conditions that encourage death watch beetle.

Framsden St Mary. This 16cwt eight bell ring is only occasionally rung on the back 6 (the two tenors are recently reported as being hard work), The trebles are not rung due to a lack of flooring under the bells. The BAC intend to replace the flooring to enable all eight bells to once again be rung after a full test ring.

Ipswich St Lawrence: Tower unringable due to disintegrating flintwork on the tower.

Lakenheath St Mary the Virgin: Technical advice given reference the poor going of the bells, especially the tenor. Recommended new bearings and gudgeon pins be fitted to the back five bells. The refurbishment of the tenor has been completed, but there are no immediate plans for the other bells.

Metfield St John the Baptist: Inspection, general maintenance, and advice to the band.

Stanton All Saints: Clapper tightening on the four, hung dead, chiming bells.

Sudbury St Peter: Inspection. Building now called "The Art Centre". Bells rung from downstairs, where the bells can't be heard, or upstairs where they are very noisy.

Wrentham St Nicholas: Inspection of these 6 bells. Unstable tower means the bells remain classed as not to be rung.

Whepstead St Petronilla: Replacement Stay

**Suffolk Guild of Ringers**  
**Membership Report to the GMC**  
**18<sup>th</sup> February 2024**

By December 31st seventy two people had been elected as new members in 2023, 34 full, 8 in the 70-79 category, 4 FTE and an Associate member, almost all of them new to ringing. With 47 new members last year, almost 120 people learnt either for The Platinum Jubilee or to Ring for the King. They represent nigh on 20% of our membership. Probably most significant is that younger members have increased from 18 to 32 (by 78%). Membership for 2023 totalled 643.

As mentioned in my last GMC report 2023 marked the first year of a subscription for those aged over 80. This has enabled us to make a more accurate count of our older members. It is therefore unsurprising that of the 65 people who did not renew in 2023, 37 (57%) were in the over 80 category. However more than 20 returned to Guild membership from previous years.

### Membership Summary for 2023

	NE	NW	SE	SW	2023	2022
Full	62	87	123	69	<b>341</b>	320
70-79	30	43	58	43	<b>174</b>	163
80 and over	12	21	30	9	<b>72</b>	99
FTE	5	8	17	2	<b>32</b>	18
Life Honorary	2	2	8	1	<b>13</b>	15
Associate	3	3	2	3	<b>11</b>	12
	<b>114</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>643</b>	627

FTE (Full time education): members mostly aged 21 and under.

The potential membership for 2024 is 639 at present, with six new members elected to date. The "paid up" membership stands at 397 (Feb 9<sup>th</sup>)

Sadly four members have died since the last GMC meeting:

**Brian R Wells** (NW Barrow). Brian died on 7th November 2023, he was 86. He had been a member at Barrow since his election in 1967. He rang 4 four peals for the Guild, the first at Horringer in 1968. He was churchwarden at Barrow for many years only standing down earlier in 2023.

**Mrs Muriel R Page**, nee Pipe (SE Stonham Aspal). Muriel died on 5<sup>th</sup> December, aged 87. She was elected to the Guild in 1954. She was a Life Honorary Member and had rung over 300 peals for the Guild, her first being on 24th January 1954. She will be remembered by many for instigating the annual Veteran Ringers afternoon at Debenham, which she organised for 25 years.

**Adrian Knights** (SE Ipswich SMLT) Adrian (Arnie) died on 16<sup>th</sup> December, aged 76. He was taught to ring in Leiston by one of the Bailey brothers, Sid. He rang his first peal in 1962. In all he rang 1055 peals, 885 of which were for the Suffolk Guild.

**Mrs Jill B Rood** (NW Thurston) Jill died on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2024, aged 66. She was elected to the Guild in 2012 and was tower correspondent at Thurston.

To be remembered also are

**Mrs Elizabeth Anne Teverson** (NW Rougham) Elizabeth died on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2023, aged 91. She was elected to the Guild in 1988 and remained a member until her death. She rang 24 peals for the Guild, the first of these on the ten at Bury St Edmunds.

**Mrs Rosetta (Rose) Godfrey**, nee Planten (SE Bramford). Rose died on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2023, aged 86. She was elected to the Guild in 1955 being taught at SMLT by her grandfather Fred Tillet in 1955. After a 25 year gap she returned to ringing at St Matthews and thence to Bramford where she was Tower Captain for many years. She stopped ringing in 2021 due to ill health.

**Mrs Hilary Mann** (Talbot) (SE Rushmere). Hilary died on 26 October 2023, aged 71. She was elected to the Guild in 1985, ringing her first peal of ten during that year. She was both tower correspondent and tower captain at Rushmere during some of these years. She remained a member until 2002, when ill health forced her to stop ringing.

Mary Garner

Membership Secretary

9<sup>th</sup> February 2024

**Safeguarding is:**

- everyone's responsibility
- the actions taken to promote a safer culture for all bell-ringers
- identifying risks
- implementing strategies to reduce potential harm or abuse
- promoting the welfare of young people under 18yrs

Safeguarding exists to protect everyone and by working together we can ensure all ringers are safe and can enjoy bellringing together.

The Suffolk Guild of Ringers has always stated that it takes its safeguarding responsibilities seriously.

With this in mind, I have been working with the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer over the past 2 years to ensure the Suffolk Guild of Ringers has in place documents and policies to fulfil these responsibilities. During this time a lot has happened in Safeguarding and more changes to be in place in 2025.

This report aims to provide you with a picture of why and how the current Suffolk Guild of Ringers safeguarding documentation has come about.

Everything will all be on the revamped Safeguarding section [with dropdown menu] of [suffolkbells.org.uk](https://suffolkbells.org.uk) by the AGM.

**My latest meeting with Karen Galloway, Diocesan Safeguarding Officer**

at Diocesan Office, St Nicholas Centre

on Friday 19th January 2024

Throughout the meeting consideration was given to Suffolk Guild of Ringers, CCCBR, ART and Diocese of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich.

Concerns/enquiries raised by bell-ringers were shared.

Advice was sought. Healthy discussions were had. Documentation content was finalised.

- **What to do with a Safeguarding Concern information confusing**
  - Changes made to the section on the Document name: Guild Safeguarding [A4 poster] 2024. We hope this is clearer to everyone reading it.
- **As safeguarding is so important, why is it to be found at the back of The Suffolk Guild of Ringers 2023 Handbook, pg 70?**
  - *Safeguarding belongs to us all. We all have a responsibility to look out for one another and to speak up when we see that someone is not being treated with respect or is at risk of abuse or neglect.*
  - Request to the GMC for the Document name: Safeguarding page for 2024 Handbook to be located in the Handbook, after the Guild accounts and before the start of all the District pages. This flows well with the opening text on the statement and provides support to all bell ringers, in poster formats.
  - Fully appreciate such a request might now be too late for 2024 Handbook, but ready for 2025 Handbook.
- **Ringling chamber notice boards and suffolkbells website** will now have the following:
  - Document name: Suffolk Guild Safeguarding A4 poster  
Ready to be personalised with all the individual tower information for bell-ringers
  - Document name: Code for Ringing  
CCCBR resource summarising the values of the ringing community and results from a recommendation from the Social Care Institute of Excellence that the Council should develop a clear position on good practice.
- **Concern about the level of parish monitoring of bell-ringers completing the relevant safeguarding training**
  - Collaboration is of key importance here between all church volunteer bell-ringers and the Parish Safeguarding Officers [PSO]
  - A link post created: Tower bell-ringer link:
    - A named member of the band who has established a direct link to the Parish Safeguarding Officer [PSO] to assist with communication between the church volunteer bell-ringers and the PSO.
    - Introduces themselves to all new bell-ringers starting to learn to ring as well as experienced bell-ringers who join the band

- Directs all band members to the Document name: Safeguarding Help Sheets for each of the bell-ringer roles, providing step-by-step support to complete their safeguarding training
- Can introduce a bell-ringer to the PSO, if they should wish to meet them in person
- A record will be kept by the PSO of the safeguarding training completed by all their tower volunteer bell-ringers
- With bell-ringers [those who ring and are not Suffolk Guild members as well as those who are Suffolk Guild members] and Parish Safeguarding Officers [PSOs] both actively supporting this following plan now put into place, things will work more effectively .  
This approach has been trialed with 18 bell-ringers and 4 PSOs in the bellsashen Teaching Hub.  
Tweaks have been made along the way to reach this point. The help sheets are on suffolkbells website.
- **Support to access safeguarding training, suitable for individuals needs**
  - Following receipt of an Email prior to a phone conversation together, help was provided. The outcome was not only completion of safeguarding requirements but inspired to make a couple of changes at home tower, and made some new contacts.
- **Safer Recruitment** in volunteer roles is very important
  - Document name: Guidelines for Bell Ringing at [named church] [named Teaching Hub]  
The document:
    - provides information to all parties, in one place, in support of appreciating and understanding responsibilities and collaboration from across the Church of England, CCCBR, ART, Suffolk Guild within individual churches]
    - has sections where certain aspects can be personalised
    - is there to support healthy discussion between bell-ringers, incumbent, churchwardens and PCC
  - Would you consider applying for paid employment if you did not know what it involved? This is no different when considering a volunteer role.
  - Building on from the existing 'A grid of Guild and District Officers Tasks & Responsibilities' on the website, SE District have personalised the District officers Tasks & Responsibilities and produced Document names: SE District ..... Role Descriptors for 2024, with more detail relevant to the committee roles
  - Intention is that these will be reviewed each year in time for distribution prior to the ADM
  - The latest information sent out to all members concerning 2 of the Guild roles coming up for election this coming April - Guild Secretary and Guild Peal Secretary - were informative as the main duties/tasks were listed and gave everyone an insight into these two roles.
  - If you would like to know more about where this approach is coming from, follow this **Safer Recruitment link**.
- **As the CCCBR-S11-Audit tool states ' A clear statement of the Guild's responsibilities towards young ringers is available to all members'**  
Young People as well as the parents and carers of Young People involved in bellringing do expect there to be safeguarding and health and safety policies and procedures in place, as with all other organised activities they take part in.
  - Document name: Suffolk Guild of Ringers Permission to Ring Consent Form - Young Person [under 18yrs]
  - Document name: Suffolk Guild of Ringers Permission to Attend Outside Activity Consent Form - Young Person [under 18yrs]
  - Suffolk Guild of Ringers Young Person [under 18yrs] Membership Application Form separate from the generic Membership Application form
- **As the CCCBR-S11-Audit tool states ' Planning for Guild events takes account of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of young ringers and is informed, where appropriate, by their views**
  - Document name: Code of Practice for Organising Training and Events  
Relevant to tower, District and Guild situations
- **As the CCCBR-S11-Audit tool states ' The Guild has written policies'**
  - Document name: Equality and Diversity Policy - a Suffolk Guild of Ringers policy
  - Document name: Preventing Bullying & Harassment - Encouraging Positive Relationships Policy - a Suffolk Guild of Ringers policy
  - Document name: Social Media Policy - a Suffolk Guild of Ringers policy

- Document name: Whistleblowing Policy - a Diocese of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich policy  
2.2 The term 'worker' includes ..... volunteers. All bell ringers are volunteers
- Document name: Complaints Policy - a Diocese of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich policy  
The Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) views complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person that has made the complaint
- These two policies provide members with a route, a good thing to have

Elizabeth Christian

Suffolk Guild Safeguarding Officer

[safeguarding@suffolkbells.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@suffolkbells.org.uk)

## **Public Relations Officer report October 2023-Feb 2024**

I have continued to support the restoration projects at Drinkstone, Copdock, and Westhorpe in various ways.

I was approached to provide advice to a project at Felsham which is at the early stages.

Conversations continue regarding ringing arrangements at Sudbury Arts Centre, Christine and Richard Knight are leading the discussions. We had a productive meeting last week.

Progress with the Fornham St Martin project continues, the bells were removed in October, subsequently the old tenor and donated bell to be the new seventh were found to be cracked this has delayed the project. The old tenor has now been welded and different replacement bell has been sourced. I was pleased to secured a £10k grant from the Garfield Weston Foundation. The bells are now tuned and we await confirmation of a delivery date.

Neal Dodge

Public Relation Officer

Feb 2024



## Webmaster's Report for the GMC Meeting on 18/2/2024

### Guild email system (*Mailchimp*)

639 people are subscribed (an increase of 19) to the Guild email system, 594 of these are "members" (an increase of 17).

The system can be used to send emails to groups of subscribers, e.g. *All members, SE District members, All Tower Correspondents, NW Tower Correspondents* etc. Just send the copy to me.

I have sent out 59 emails since the last meeting (up until 9/2/2024).

### Guild email addresses (*towername@suffolkbells.org.uk*)

I am re-creating these email forwarders as and when required. So far I have re-created 155 .

Chris Garner  
9/2/2024

# Membership Mojo

Tim Hart 26/1/24

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## What is Membership Mojo?

Membership Mojo is an online service that societies, such as the Suffolk Guild, can use to manage their membership.

Their marketing text: *'Take control with our online membership management software. Online applications and renewals, electronic payment, a central member database, group email distribution, attendance register and membership cards are a few clicks away. membermojo is used by clubs, associations and charities across the UK to remove tedious administration and provide members with a simple, quick and modern way to manage their membership.'*

Our members would need to create an online account, similar to those created for other online services. They would be accountable for managing their own membership & would get reminder emails when subscriptions are due.

Tower captains and treasurers can manage groups of members in cases where members are unable to manage their own membership online.

GMC members (treasurer, membership secretary) can have oversight of the accounts recorded on the site.

## What are the benefits?

The primary benefit will be the reduction in administration tasks performed by the membership secretary, district treasurers & guild treasurer.

Mary has a complete membership list & I correlate incoming payments against this, following up with her and district treasurers if there are any queries. However limitations in the text that can be added to a BACS transfer means that some transactions require multiple follow-ups. Members changing tower or attached status require follow-up. It is important that we can link all transactions to gift-aid status to ensure we have accurate records in the event of an audit. While Mary has a unique identifier for each member (collated over many years), members are unaware of this and do not use when making payments.

The introduction of a website for which members take accountability for their membership information will reduce the manual administration by the committee. Membership mojo allows members to choose their tower affiliation, as well as arrange to pay their subs. They can still do bank transfers, but will be given a unique bank reference number to add to online transactions allowing

easy correlation by the treasurer. It offers the ability to register for GA (although we may still need the physical forms – to be researched). District Treasurers will still be able to see who has and hasn't paid. It future-proofs the role - less admin for fewer people. There are controls to prevent new members registering without approvals, so we can uphold the integrity of our membership.

We can also sell events – tickets for meals for example. We can also include affiliation payments – an administration role that has not been filled.

### Who uses it today?

A large number of societies already use it:

- Essex – screenshots attached
- Sussex
- Surrey
- Lincoln
- Devonshire
- St Martin's Guild
- Lancaster

### How did our members pay last year?

The majority of subscriptions are now paid online. Some 2023 statistics:

- £10095 subs paid in total, spread over 346 separate transactions.
- Around £6K of this was received in single or double transactions
  - 300 online transactions for £5, £10, £15, £20, £35 or £40
- The remaining £4K was received in 46 transactions ranging from £50 to £310.
- Just 11 transactions were offline – post office or bank deposits

### What are the downsides?

We still have a number of members who are not online, or who pay cash/cheque to someone else. The 'someone else' would need to own these members within their accounts & then co-ordinate the payments.

### How is it Membership Mojo funded?

It costs £95 a year for up to 500 members, or £175 up to 1000.

Members can pay membership through Paypal, although paypal charity fees: 1.4% + £0.20 per donation seem quite high. I note Essex don't support Paypal.

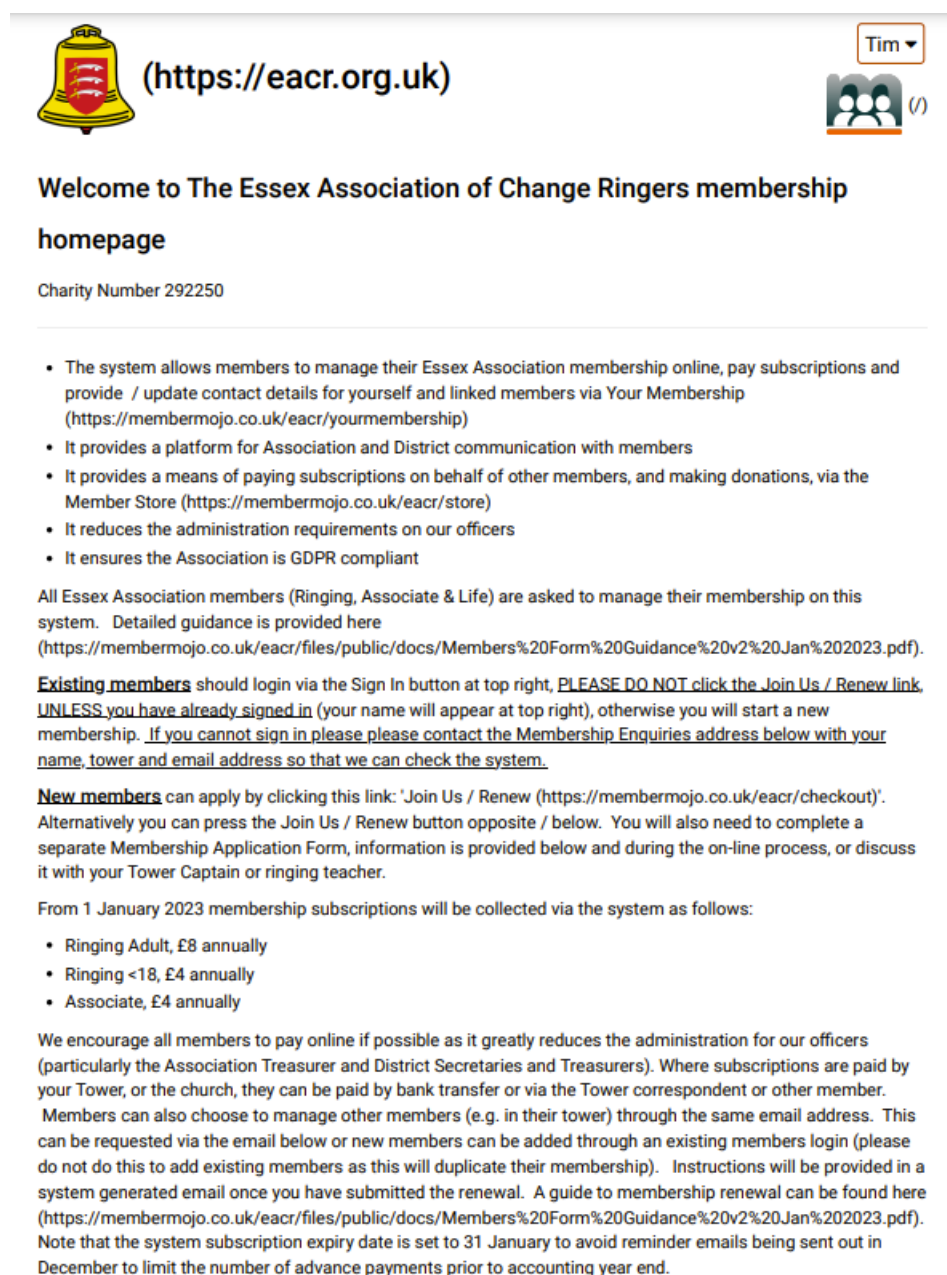
## Proposal: 2024 pilot

Create accounts for GMC and district officials. Allow them to experiment. Those who haven't paid subs yet (tut tut) can do so via the website.



Onboard existing members ready for 2025 subscriptions.

Does this need to be voted on at the AGM?

## Essex Association webpage samples



The screenshot shows the homepage of the Essex Association of Change Ringers. At the top left is a yellow bell icon with the URL <https://eacr.org.uk>. At the top right is a user profile for 'Tim' with a dropdown arrow and a group icon with '(1)' next to it. The main heading is 'Welcome to The Essex Association of Change Ringers membership homepage'. Below this is the charity number 'Charity Number 292250'. A list of bullet points describes the system's features: it allows members to manage their membership online, pay subscriptions, and update contact details; it provides a platform for communication; it allows for paying subscriptions on behalf of others; it reduces administrative requirements; and it is GDPR compliant. A paragraph explains that all members are asked to manage their membership on this system, with a link to detailed guidance. A section for 'Existing members' instructs them to sign in via the 'Sign In' button, warning not to click 'Join Us / Renew link' unless they are already signed in. A section for 'New members' provides a link to 'Join Us / Renew' and notes that a separate application form is also available. A paragraph states that from 1 January 2023, subscriptions will be collected via the system, with a list of rates: Ringing Adult (£8 annually), Ringing <18 (£4 annually), and Associate (£4 annually). The final paragraph encourages online payments and provides instructions for managing other members, including a link to a renewal guide and a note about the subscription expiry date.

 (<https://eacr.org.uk>) Tim ▾  
 (1)

### Welcome to The Essex Association of Change Ringers membership homepage

Charity Number 292250

- The system allows members to manage their Essex Association membership online, pay subscriptions and provide / update contact details for yourself and linked members via Your Membership (<https://membermojo.co.uk/eacr/yourmembership>)
- It provides a platform for Association and District communication with members
- It provides a means of paying subscriptions on behalf of other members, and making donations, via the Member Store (<https://membermojo.co.uk/eacr/store>)
- It reduces the administration requirements on our officers
- It ensures the Association is GDPR compliant

All Essex Association members (Ringing, Associate & Life) are asked to manage their membership on this system. Detailed guidance is provided here (<https://membermojo.co.uk/eacr/files/public/docs/Members%20Form%20Guidance%20v2%20Jan%202023.pdf>).

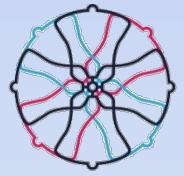
**Existing members** should login via the Sign In button at top right, **PLEASE DO NOT** click the Join Us / Renew link **UNLESS you have already signed in** (your name will appear at top right), otherwise you will start a new membership. If you cannot sign in please please contact the Membership Enquiries address below with your name, tower and email address so that we can check the system.

**New members** can apply by clicking this link: 'Join Us / Renew (<https://membermojo.co.uk/eacr/checkout>)'. Alternatively you can press the Join Us / Renew button opposite / below. You will also need to complete a separate Membership Application Form, information is provided below and during the on-line process, or discuss it with your Tower Captain or ringing teacher.

From 1 January 2023 membership subscriptions will be collected via the system as follows:

- Ringing Adult, £8 annually
- Ringing <18, £4 annually
- Associate, £4 annually

We encourage all members to pay online if possible as it greatly reduces the administration for our officers (particularly the Association Treasurer and District Secretaries and Treasurers). Where subscriptions are paid by your Tower, or the church, they can be paid by bank transfer or via the Tower correspondent or other member. Members can also choose to manage other members (e.g. in their tower) through the same email address. This can be requested via the email below or new members can be added through an existing members login (please do not do this to add existing members as this will duplicate their membership). Instructions will be provided in a system generated email once you have submitted the renewal. A guide to membership renewal can be found here (<https://membermojo.co.uk/eacr/files/public/docs/Members%20Form%20Guidance%20v2%20Jan%202023.pdf>). Note that the system subscription expiry date is set to 31 January to avoid reminder emails being sent out in December to limit the number of advance payments prior to accounting year end.



# Code for Ringing

Every ringer, ringing leader and ringing society plays their part in creating a safe, welcoming environment and in representing ringing to both church and public.

This **recommended** checklist for ringing societies summarises the values of the ringing community and its expectations of all who ring, in their interactions with other ringers and when representing ringing at large.

## ALWAYS

1. Create a tower environment where all feel safe, respected, welcomed and valued.
2. Create a positive learning environment where feedback is timely and supportive
3. Respect your surroundings, the tower, church and the community where you ring.
4. Understand and observe others' personal boundaries.
5. Ring responsibly, with the well-being of your band and visitors in mind.
6. Look out for others' safety, raise concerns promptly and know what to do if you witness unacceptable behaviour.
7. Make sure all your interactions, online or in person, show empathy and courtesy.
8. Consider the impact of your words and actions on others; apologise if you're at fault.
9. Uphold the safeguarding policies of your parish and the ringing societies to which you belong.
10. Take pride in being part of the ringing community.

## NEVER

1. Engage in, trivialise or endorse any form of abuse, bullying or harassment, or let these go unreported.
2. Engage in banter or language which could make someone feel demeaned, threatened or unwelcome, whether in person, by phone, online or via social media.
3. Undermine, ridicule or intimidate a less experienced ringer.
4. Personalise disagreements; deal with the issue, not the person.
5. Allow your decisions as a ringer to be compromised, by prejudice or any other cause.
6. Act unlawfully in your role as a ringer or in a way that brings ringing into disrepute.

If you witness unacceptable behaviour and are not sure how to respond, contact your parish or association safeguarding officer. Where someone is in immediate danger or requires urgent attention, call your local authority's children's or adult social services team, or the police on 999.

Edition 1 – 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2024