

Meeting of Suffolk Guild of Ringers Management Committee

2 pm Sunday 18th February 2024

Held via Zoom

Draft 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 29th 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 29th 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 29th OCTOBER 2023

Item	Action	Owner	Progress
(23.10) 11b	R&T to consider recruitment and training issues raised in Guild survey	Katharine	Completed
(23.10) 13 e	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
(23.10)14a	Policies to be reviewed by Liz Christian in conjunction with Katharine	Liz and Katharine	Still underway
7a ii	Trustees to report back to GMC before 31.12.23 re Reserves Policy and potential transfers out of General Fund	Trustees	Complete
7b ii	Amend number of SE members in GRM October report	Katharine	KS and MG to liaise. Mark as complete
7f iv	Consider adoption of 'Code of Ringing' at Feb 2024 GMC	All	On agenda
11d	Establish whether charity law permits the Guild to dispose of donated or bequested handbells	Tim	On agenda
11h	Consider reducing the asset value of the handbells, having regard to point 11i below	Tim	On agenda
11i	Research cost of 4 refurbished sets of handbells to replace current sets	Tim	On agenda
11j	Obtain insurance quote on the replacement value of handbells	Katharine	On agenda
11 k	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
15 c	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 Reportj. 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 6th 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 23rd June at Stowupland

The meeting closed at 4.12 pm.

ACTION LOG FROM 18 FEBRUARY 2024

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