



**Minutes of the North East District Quarterly Meeting held at
St Mary's Church, Sweffling, Suffolk at 16.15 hours on Saturday, 10th February 2024**

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

Dave Goldstone (**DG**), Chair of the North East District, welcomed 17 other members from the NE District to the meeting together with the Guild Chairman, Mark Ogden.

Apologies for absence were received from Sal Jenkinson, Sue Child, Kate Assman, Michelle Golding, Keith Dennis, Mike Sage, Trevor and Julie Hughes, Helen Mower, Hilary Stearn and Kevin Mossop.

2. Approval of the minutes of the North East District Quarterly Meeting held on 12th August 2023 at Barsham

The minutes of the last North East District Quarterly Meeting held on 12th August 2023 at Barsham (a copy of which had been circulated with the agenda) were approved with no amendments or additions proposed.

3. Matters arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the North East District Quarterly Meeting held on 12th August 2023.

4. In memoriam

DG delivered a brief testament to the life of John Uden who had passed away on 18 January 2024 written by his fellow Southwold band members Kate Assman, Julia Johnson and Mike Sage. John had been Tower Captain at Southwold between 2000 and 2008 and its Steeplekeeper. He was a self-taught craftsman in wood and metal, creating spiders for towers as far afield as Hexham Abbey, Northumberland. His other projects include a model bell, learning aids and even a bespoke door to the clock chamber (a joint project with Mike Carter). The North East District has a permanent reminder of John's lasting influence in the form of The Harry Archer Memorial Trophy made by him and awarded each year by the Ringing Master to a Band considered to have made notable progress.

5. Election of new members to the Suffolk Guild

It was noted that no applications to become new members had been received before for the meeting.

6. District Ringing Master's comments

(a) Review of ringing in the District

The District Ringing Master, Philip Gorrod (**PJG**), reported that there are now too few ringers with

most practices at least one ringer short. He explained that this means that most ringers need to ring at other than just their home towers in order to progress, as some practices are devoted to one or more particular methods or focused on different levels of ringing. If members are unsure where they should visit he recommended asking their tower captain or PJG.

PJG reminded the meeting that he had been asked about 8-bell ringing opportunities. He explained that 8-bell practices took place at Halesworth on the second Tuesday of the month. He commented that Aldeburgh sometimes struggles to have enough ringers to ring all 8 bells (practice night Monday) and there are opportunities at Beccles (practice night Wednesday) and Bungay (second Monday of each month). In addition, there are now monthly Quarter Peals rung at Halesworth and quarterly Quarter Peals rung at Southwold.

(b) District Striking Competition

PJG reported that he has secured a judge for the next District Striking Competition which is to be held at Theberton on Saturday, 11th May 2024. He encouraged members to form a team or half of a team as the rules will be adapted to fit the number and capabilities of entrants.

Mark Ogden commented that the South East District Striking Competition had seen entries from twenty bands, some of which had been formed for the sole purpose of the competition and that it had been a very enjoyable social event.

(c) Quarter Peal week or fortnight

PJG suggested that, with many ringers having appreciated the fortnight of Quarter Peal ringing afforded by the King's Coronation in 2023, should there be sufficient interest, a similar Quarter Peal week or fortnight might be held this year. A number of those present at the meeting indicated their support for this proposal and it was agreed that the District Committee be tasked with identifying a suitable week or fortnight and possible venues.

7. Recruitment and Training - Sole Bay Ringing Hub

DG explained that Sue Child (**SC**), who leads the Sole Bay Ringing Hub initiative, could not be present but had provided him with a report on The Hub's activities and her aims for the project going forward which he delivered to the meeting.

In her report SC thanked all those involved in The Hub whether learners, improvers or tutors and encouraged anyone who hasn't yet visited to come to one of its sessions, even if just to see what's going on. The Hub is open on Saturdays from 9.30pm to 11.30pm and there is always cake, coffee and conversation.

SC explained that The Hub tries to cater for everyone so, if there is someone who would benefit from extra ringing, The Hub is there for them. As its original learners have progressed, ringing includes rounds, call changes, Plain Hunt, and even some simple methods, as required. PJG added that this means that it would be of interest to anyone who is not ringing beyond Plain Bob Doubles.

SC added that The Hub is now looking for more people to become tutors and, to that end, is aiming to host a ART Teaching Level 1 Bell handling course later this year. SC encouraged all those who consider themselves a safe and competent ringer to think about attending the course as the course can benefit a ringer by enabling them to co-tutor or tutor a learner and improve their own handling skills.

DG commented that he had heard nothing but positive comments about The Hub. Kate Gill (**KG**) added that, as a recently trained ART tutor, she finds The Hub very helpful.

8. Any other business

Jonathan Stevens thanked all those who had attended the afternoon at Sweffling.

DG thanked all those at Sweffling who had welcomed the District to the tower and Robert Gill and KG for organising the catering and all those who had contributed the cakes.

No other business was raised by those in attendance.

DG declared the meeting closed at 16:37 hours.

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Chair