

Trustees' Annual Report

The Trustees present their report and financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2015.

Charity

The Suffolk Guild of Ringers was registered with the Charity Commission on 10 December 1975, registration number 266869. The Charity's registered address is 2 Fredellen, Upper Street, Witnesham, Ipswich, IP6 9EW. It is governed under a constitution originally registered in 1977 and most recently revised in 2013.

Principal objectives

The purpose of the Charity is to promote and encourage the practice of bellringing within the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich; to recruit, train and encourage bellringers in the practice of their art; to cultivate the art of scientific change ringing; and to promote and advise on the preservation of bells in an efficient condition.

Trustees

The Trustees during the period were Chairman: A F Stanley, Treasurer: G E Slack (to 11th April 2015); O P Claxton (from 11th April 2015), Secretary: A J Shedden; (to 11th April 2015); Revd C Melville (from 11th April 2015).

Review of Progress and Achievements

Bellringing

Although the peal total for the year is down on 2014, there has been an increase in the number of quarter peals rung. The quarter peals covered a wide range of methods, from Doubles to Maximus, involved a diverse range of towers and ringers, and benefitted all who took part. The Integrated Teacher Training Scheme (ITTS) continues the established training programme. Those who have participated agree that it is a valuable aid to the teaching and instruction of beginners, and a skills investment for the future.

Restoration activities

Our main contributions were to Wickham Market and Elmsett, with other contributions to Halesworth, St Mary le Tower Ipswich and Stoke Ash. Members of the Belfry Advisory Committee continue to give advice and support, both for routine maintenance and restoration projects. On 4th July a 'Maintenance Get Together' was held at Long Melford and well attended by Guild Members, with rope splicing and general routine maintenance of bells and their associated gear being demonstrated.

Guild Finances

Policies

All money in the Guild's funds not required for day-to-day working purposes is invested or deposited by the Treasurer, as directed by the Guild Management Committee. Grants from the Restoration Fund are authorised by the Guild Management Committee but are only paid after completed work has been approved by the Guild Ringing Master and the Technical Adviser. Grants are normally only offered for work to restore bells and their fittings for full-circle ringing, but may include augmentation and other ancillary work associated with any such project.

In order to respond to the short term need to provide financial support to training activities the General Management Committee (GMC) have introduced a process to enable grants of up to £50 to be made immediately, at the discretion of the Ringing Master, and grants of up to £500 to be made within seven days at the discretion of the Guild Executive. In both cases subject to appropriate records being kept and presented to the GMC.

General Fund

Income to the General Fund decreased by 11% overall, although, as is always the case, some categories have increased, others decreased. Subscriptions were 1% higher than 2014, although this amounted to just £94 in total. A notable change was a 33% reduction in peal fees, obviously the result of fewer peals rung. Also, in the 2014 income account is £984 raised through 'Young Ringers Fundraising'. This was to cover specific expenditure, which if removed leaves a difference in incomes between the 2014 and 2015 of just £58. Expenditure was 28% less than in 2014. Again, some categories saw increases, some decreases and some very little change. Most of the difference arose from the absence of expenditure on digitisation of tower records and the Ringing World National Youth Contest. Overall there was a small increase, of £482, in the General Fund.

Restoration Fund

The Restoration Fund income, compared with 2014, is down by 20%. With the exception of interest received, which increased by £14, or 2%, income from all other categories has declined. Just two grant applications, for a total of £1800, were made and approved in 2015, the lowest for many years. As a result, the sum available for allocation to new projects has increased to over £53,000.

Summary

In 2015, there was a small increase in the General Fund balance and a small, but not significant, increase in subscriptions. Funding requests for restoration work was the lowest since before 2011.

A F Stanley
Trustee & Chairman
January 2016

O P Claxton
Trustee & Treasurer
January 2016

Rev. C Melville
Trustee & Secretary
January 2016