

Trustees' Annual Report

The Trustees present their report and financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2016.

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 2014.

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, Secretary Revd C N Melville, Treasurer O P Claxton

Review of Progress and Achievements

Bellringing—107 peals were rung in 2016, an increase of 12 on 2015. Peals were rung in 43 towers. The number of quarter peals rung declined slightly from 552 in 2015 to 499 in 2016. Quarters were rung in 98 towers. Both peals and quarter peals covered a wide range of methods from Doubles to Maximus, involved a diverse range of towers and ringers, and benefited all who took part. These were the successful attempts, the number of peal and quarter peal attempts which were unsuccessful is not known, but nonetheless they too are an important learning experience. Established training programmes are used to develop the skills of new ringers, and those new to teaching people to ring. Participants agree it is a valuable aid to the teaching and instruction of beginners, and a skills investment for the future.

Restoration activities—Members of the Belfry Advisory Committee have been very active throughout the year, carrying out inspections and making repairs to installations. Work has been completed at Stoke Ash - renovating decayed frame mountings; Otley - rectifying loose clappers; Cretingham - advisory work on installation of new tenor and fittings; Eye - work on clappers; Thornham Magna - minor adjustments; Melton Old Church, and Levington, - repairs to chiming bells; Badwell Ash - inspection of installation. In addition support and advice has been given for routine maintenance.

Guild Finances

Reserves Policy— In line with advice from Larking Gowen, the appointed examiners for the Guild, the Trustees have formulated a Reserves Policy. The Guild will expect to hold at the bank, a surplus of approximately one year's running costs.

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 - Compared with the 2015 account, income to the General Fund decreased by just 6%, although, as is always the case, some categories have increased, others decreased. Subscriptions were down 4%, but peal fee income had increased by 28%, albeit from an unusual low in 2015. Expenditure was 29% more than in 2015. Exceptional items were the purchase of lapel badges at £758 and administration costs of £687; together they account for virtually all of the expenditure increase. The remaining categories, affiliation fees, insurance, donations etc showed little variation from previous years. After transfers to other accounts, the General Fund stood at £4,817.

Restoration Fund The Restoration Fund income has increased by 11% to £59,783. There are two grants outstanding, each for £12,000. That for the restoration of Horringer bells is expected to be claimed in early 2017. The other, for proposed restoration work at St Margaret's, Ipswich, which has not yet started, will be claimed at a later date. No other funding requests for restoration work have been received.

Summary In 2016, there was a decrease in the General Fund balance mainly because of increased expenditure. All restricted funds have a positive balance. There are no new funding requests for restoration work.

A F Stanley
Trustee & Chairman
January 2016

O P Claxton
Trustee & Treasurer
January 2016

Revd C N Melville
Trustee & Secretary
January 2016