

Trustees' Annual Report

The Trustees present their report and financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2017.

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 2017.

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, C N Melville, Treasurer, O P Claxton

Review of Progress and Achievements

Bellringing - 103 peals were rung in 2017, 4 less than 2016. Peals were rung in 41 Suffolk towers. There was a drop in the number of successful 10 and 12 bell peals. Peal attempts had been arranged, but lost, however they are still a very useful learning experience.

In 2017, at Suffolk Guild venues, 439 tower bell quarter peals and 2 handbell quarters peals were rung. These involved 379 bellringers, 71 conductors, and 97 venues across the county. Over all, the number of peals and quarter peals rung suggest a healthy level of activity through the Guild. In addition most towers hold a regular practice night and ring for Sunday services, and special occasions.

The number of training programmes used to develop the skills of new, and established ringers, and those new to teaching people to ring, has increased. These are proving to be a valuable aid and a skills investment for the future.

Restoration activities - Members of the Belfry Advisory Committee have been very active through out the year, carrying out inspections and making repairs to installations. Over 23 towers have been inspected. Some required minor work like at Chevington, where loose bolts and a noise problem were the issue, others sought support and advice on routine maintenance. At Horringer, on completion of the £110,000 tower restoration and installation of a complete ring of new bells, the finished work was thoroughly inspected, and deemed as meeting the required standard for payment of the Guild £12,000 grant.

The Guild has been successful in being shortlisted for the Suffolk Heritage Award category within the High Sheriff's Awards which recognises and rewards a society, voluntary group or other organisation, that cherishes Suffolk's history, heritage or built environment and that helps people access and understand that heritage.'

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 years 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.

As an enabling measure, the Public Relations Officer has been given a budget. The purpose being to enable greater flexibility, and faster reaction, to PR recruitment opportunities when they arise.

General Fund Compared with the 2016 account, income to the General Fund increased by 8%, although, as is always the case, some categories have increased, others decreased. Expenditure was 10% less than 2016. There were no exceptional items. Net income 48% up on 2016.

Restoration Fund - The Restoration Fund stands at £69,942. There are four grants outstanding, totalling £27,250. That for St Margaret's Ipswich, of £12,000, is expected to be claimed in early 2018. That for Little Cornard, of £10,000, is for work still in progress. That for Cretingham, of £4,000, is expected to be claimed in early 2018, as is the grant for Offton, of £1,250. No other funding requests for restoration work have been received.

Summary: In 2017, there was an increase in the General Fund balance mainly because of decreased expenditure. All restricted funds have a positive balance. There are no new funding requests for restoration work.

A F Stanley
Trustee & Chairman
January 2017

O P Claxton
Trustee & Treasurer
January 2017

C N Melville
Trustee & Secretary
January 2017