



**Belfry Advisory Committee
Minutes of meeting at Hacheston
4 February 2010 at 7.30 pm**

Committee members were welcomed by David Clough, who kindly provided refreshments. Members rang the bells before the meeting.

Present

Jonathan Stevens (JS) (Chairman), Winston Girling (WG), Chris McArthur (CM), Alan Moulton (AM), Michael Rolph (MR), Bruce Wakefield (BW)

Minute Secretary: Suzanne Stevens.

In attendance: Carol Girling.

1. Welcome

JS thanked everyone for coming to Hacheston and thanked David Clough for being so hospitable.

2. Apologies for absence

David Greenfield, Chris Nunn, John Pereira, David Salter, John Taylor, Neville Whittell.

3. Minutes of the 1 October 2009 meeting (previously circulated)

These were agreed and signed as a true record by the Chairman.

4. Matters arising from the minutes

- 4.1 Wetherden; The second had been slipping wheel. New gudgeons had been put in by Neville. Going well now.
- 4.2 Eye; need rehangng

5. Correspondence

- 5.1 Morton Partnership. A letter had been received by the Chairman, which was read. He then read his reply. Members agreed with the Chairman's comments.

6. Technical Advisor's Report (Jonathan Stevens)

I've not been quite so busy this last four months but have found time to do the following.

October 09.

Enquiry from Ixworth about external sound control.

9th went to Stradbroke as they had complaints from a peal band that the bells were unringable. Indeed, some of the headstocks were loose as were the gudgeon plates on the sixth; I asked Michael Rolph to sort them out, which he did.

MR elaborated on the work he had done.

17th Wissett test ring. This was a little early in that the project was far from finished but it did give me the opportunity to advise on a number of issues.

19th Harkstead to discuss the rehangng of these bells in a new frame.

20th Wissett to check routing of ropes and to discuss the provision of floors.

November 09.

14th Southwold to adjust striking and advise on maintenance.

17th Wissett site meeting with Bob Carr (DAC Archaeologist), Graham Pledger (English Heritage) James Halsall (DAC Secretary) to discuss floors.

Metfield to check installation and change rope.

29th Sudbury St Gregory to assess the internal sound. Found bearing movement on second and frame wedged off stair turret with old stay.

December 09

1st. Chediston meeting to discuss external sound control.

5th Orford to correct oddstruckness.

6th Wissett dedication.

January 2010

8th Wissett with Andrew Mills to oversee remedial works and cajole into sorting striking.

16th Hopton with Ruth and Steve Young to review their project, now being done by the new John Taylors.

31st Dennington dedication.

7. District Reports

7.1 North East

Blythburgh The pulleys have been greased and are much quieter now.

Stradbroke JS reported that permission had been given by DAC to do work on the sound as the front eight are too loud in the ringing chamber until the tenors are ringing, then the tenors are too loud. The scheme was to box in the tenors on an experimental basis, then go for the faculty. However, now thinks that getting the clock weights out of the way and blocking the holes is important. The clock winder has to go up every three days. If the weights are out of the way then the holes can be stopped once and for all. Funding; should the GMC be asked whether or not they would support a grant if one was requested to have an autowind put in, as clock work is not normally supported. It would give a usable ring of ten, which there isn't at the moment. The work would cost about £5,000 so a grant request would be for £500. Members thought it might open the floodgates to many requests to fund clock work.

7.2 North West.

Gislingham WG asked if the Guild grant had now been given back. This was not known.

Ixworth JS reported that the sound control was being put in at the moment.

Hopton JS said that work to take the fittings off would be starting on 19 February. They have planned to put sound control in. The tower crack has been stitched. They will be having eight. The rope guide will be lower in the ringing chamber.

Cotton WG reported that the bier is out of the ringing chamber at last. He will be removing the mess from birds, putting on new ropes, putting pulleys on and getting the fifth going better.

7.3 South East

Charsfield CM said that the bell is still in the porch, but he has mentioned it to the PCC.

Easton The third is now back in now perfect condition without any intervention, so it was thought that it should be left alone. The pulleys need rebuilding and ball bearings putting in.

Woodbridge BW reported that the back bells had been very odd struck during a recent peal attempt. JS will arrange to go and check if they have slipped back again and alter if so.

7.4 South West

Thorpe Morieux One side of the three bell frame was found to be unsupported at one end. Supports have been put underneath. They are swing chimed.

8. Grant Applications

8.1 Heritage Lottery Fund Stuart Hopley, the Development Manager would be speaking at the AGM in April at Bardwell Tithe Barn. James Halsall and JS will be there. Parishes will be invited. Need to spread the word that bell projects can extend and get good funding. This is a way of extending interest and also raising the profile of the Guild in the parishes.

8.2 Applications. None.

9. Routine Maintenance

9.1 Seminars are planned for 8 May 2010 at Rougham in the NW, 10.00 am start. The first session will be theory. JS is happy to run this. The second session will be after lunch; a demonstration on splicing, short and long splices, together with someone there to show people around the belfry. Help will be needed on 8 May as it is the same day as the NE District Striking Competition. Another seminar planned in the NE at a venue to be arranged.

12. Any other business

- Fressingfield; an email from David Salter sent after the recent first peal on the rehung bells was read by JS expressing concern about various aspects of the project, particularly the retention of the old frame.
- JS asked the members if the BAC minutes should be sent to James Halsall and the DAC. Items like the above are often discussed in meetings and it may be useful to share them with the DAC, some of whose members may not have such detailed knowledge. AM has a voice on the DAC but the minutes may give it more weight.

There was further discussion re Fressingfield. It was pointed out that had the Guild not given a grant, it would not have had any influence over the remedial works, which have made a considerable difference to the outcome of the project, so it was very important to be involved.

WG said that JS was to be complimented on the amount of work and time that he had put into the project.

JS thanked MR for his help.

- AM stated that if the minutes go to James Halsall he may pick up on points he doesn't otherwise know, so it is a good idea. DAC don't go to look at projects after they have been done, so don't always know the outcomes. The DAC have suggested a seminar to discuss the problems re frame retention problems, possibly in the Autumn.

AM said that Brian Morton (who is also on the DAC) mentioned to him that he now agrees with grouting in beams properly with a strong mix, which was a good step forward. The Tower and Belfries Committee have circulated all DACs re the question of grouting in.

JS remarked that Bedfield PCC has asked Brian Morton, via Matthew Thomas, the architect, to look at Bedfield, even though the BAC can do it for free.

Minutes to be sent to James Halsall, proposed by JS from the chair. Passed unanimously. The minutes of this meeting will include a copy of David Salter's email re Fressingfield.

- **Halesworth** WG said that he has got the leather, but Pete wants to do the job on his own. WG thinks he could benefit from an experienced helper. WG will provide the leather and suggest that he has some assistance.

13. Action List

- **Minutes to be sent to James Halsall**
- **Help needed at Maintenance Seminars**

14. Date and venue of next meeting.

Thursday 3 June 2010, at Barking. 7.00 pm ringing, 7.30 pm meeting. (**Postponed, new date 1st July**)

JS thanked everyone for coming.

The meeting closed at 8.47 pm.