

# Coventry Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers

## Minutes of the Annual General Meeting,

### Held on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2018 at Berkswell Church Room.

#### 1. President's welcome.

Joy Pluckrose (JP) opened the meeting by welcoming 58 members from across the Guild. It had been enjoyable to ring at Kenilworth and she thanked the Berkswell ringers for their warm welcome. She commented that it had been a busy year, made successful, by the contribution so many members had made. She asked the meeting to show their appreciation, to each other, with a round of applause.

Prior to the start of the meeting, Andrew Alldrick, had proposed a vote of the thanks to the Rev Dr Mark Bratton, vicar of Berkswell, for such an uplifting service; to Keith Chambers for playing the organ and to the Berkswell band, for such a wonderful tea.

The Draw club had also been taken before the meeting.

#### 2. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Janice and Ray Sheasby; David Leafe; Isobel, Keith and Immi Murphy; Freda and Mike Bennett; Barbara and Roger Howes; Graham Nabb and Mike Burdett.

#### 3. Obituaries

Six members had passed away since the last meeting and moving tributes were paid to them.

Dawn Colley  
Leslie Lunn  
Ted Copson  
Harry Bodenham  
Francis Westcott  
David Ellis

In addition, Arthur James Rathbone, who was killed on 13th April 1918, a ringer at Southam was also remembered.

The meeting stood in silence as a sign of respect.

#### 4. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held at Brinklow in October 2017, had been published on the Guild webpage, Chris Worley proposed and Gerald Trevor seconded the adoption of the minutes which were signed as a true record of the meeting.

### **a. Matters arising from the minutes**

Item 8. Guild training would continue on the fourth Saturday of the month, in May, June and July. Details would be sent to District Secretaries.

Item 8. The Guild conducting workshop had been held on 14<sup>th</sup> April. This had been challenging but enjoyed by 11 members.

Item 13. The Guild handbook had now been printed and a copy issued to all new members elected since 2015. Certificates and Handbooks were issued to members joining since October 2017.

Item 11. The augmentation and rehanging at Pillerton Hersey was now completed with the dedication scheduled for Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> May.

Item 16. CRAG. AH informed the meeting the new structure of the Central Council now allowed for individuals to be members of the Council and an email had been issued encouraging members to sign up for email updates. This is to be circulated through District Secretaries. Mike Chester (MC) cautioned this might have implications under GDPR.

Bob Taylor(BT) asked why the minutes of the last meeting were circulated rather than the last AGM. It was pointed out this is the way it has been in the Guild for at least the last 30 years.

### **5. Adoption of Accounts**

Copies of the accounts for 2017 had been distributed before the meeting and also printed in the annual report. Simon Rogers (SR) Treasurer reported the additional income was for late subscription payments for 2016. Officers' expenses were higher owing to the CC reps visiting the meeting in Edinburgh. Training expenses were also higher because of monthly training sessions and donations paid to the relevant churches. Overall, there is a surplus of £1117. BT asked if a contribution could be made to all churches following Guild visits. It was pointed out that contributions made from refreshments are often donated to the church funds.

SR presented the budget for 2018 (See App 1). JP reminded the meeting the Guild rules require a budget to be published.

### **6. Receipt and ratification of Report**

The annual report had been distributed to all towers prior to the meeting and also published on the Guild Website. JP thanked everyone who had written a section of the report. Andrew Alldrick proposed and Becki Johnson seconded the report be accepted. MC asked all towers to check details and let him know of any errors.

A request was made for all towers to be asked how many reports they need for next year. Some towers now needed more than 1 copy. Additional copies are available from the secretary.

### **7. Notification of members elected at District meetings**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Tower</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Tower</b>
Patricia Wilson	Cherington	Simon Darks	Bedworth
Robert Gornall	Bidford on Avon	Peter Hollings	Kenilworth
John Houseman	Bidford on Avon	Jean McDonald	Fillongley

Hugh Shorthouse	Aston Cantlow	Mark Weller	Leek Wootton
Ingrid Emerson	Aston Cantlow	Susan Chapman	Bulkington
Ken Davis	Kenilworth	Loe Illing(J)	Rugby
Norman Smith	Withybrook	Edward Haynes(J)	Brinklow
Tom Baker	Walsgrave (J)	Barbara Hines	Leek Wootton
Ronald Foalks	Ansley	Hayden Kirby(J)	Kineton
Nicola Flanders	Bishops Itchington		

**7.a Notification of new members elected at the meeting.**

Name	Tower	Name	Tower
Marion Mitchel	Stratford upon Avon	Guy Darvill	Kenilworth
Rhod Mitchel	Stratford upon Avon	Kathleen McCarthy	Tredington
Ann Darvill	Kenilworth		

**7.b Notification of Non Resident Life Members elected.**

Name	Tower	Name	Tower
Susan O'Neill	Washington Cathedral	Andrew Mills	Nottingham
Heather Pickford	Kinver	Richard Lewis- Skeath	Transfer
Ian Butters	Nottingham		

**8. Notification of District officers**

Coventry District	Rugby District	Warwick District
Chris Worley, Chairman	Chris Idle, Chairman	Sue Roderick, Secretary
Clare Gould, Secretary	Mike Burdett, Secretary	Barbara Howes, Ringing Co-ordinator.
Ray Sheasby Ringing Master	Nicholas Brett, Ringing Master. Tim Wykes Ringing Master	George Wrycroft, Guild Committee member and Treasurer
Gerald Trevor, Membership Secretary	Keith Chambers Committee member	Emma Hooper, Committee member. John and Tracey Newbold
	Sally Idle, Finance	

**9. Election of Officers**

After 3 successful years as President, the Guild rules required JP to retire. On presenting Joy with flowers, SR reported how Joy had made a significant contribution to the Guild during her period in office. She had brought an energy and commitment to new projects and had lead with enthusiasm and purpose.

AH asked the meeting for nominations for a new President. None were forthcoming.

The Trustees had anticipated this prospect, and wished to invoke Rule 9 (c);

If a vacancy occurs amongst those officers the Executive Committee may co-opt an Acting Executive Officer who will exercise all the duties of the office until the vacancy is filled at a Guild Meeting.

It was proposed by Rosemary Spencer and seconded by RT that Joy Pluckrose be appointed as Acting President in an ex-officio capacity until the Guild Meeting in October 2018. The meeting voted overwhelmingly in favour of this appointment.

The following officers were re-elected.

Office	Nominator	Seconded
Annie Hall General Secretary	John Newbold	Peter Spencer
Simon Rogers Guild Treasurer	Gerald Trevor	Mike Chester
Simon Rogers Peal Secretary	Becki Johnson	Mark Sayers
Mark Sayers Ringing Master	Rosemary Spencer	Steve Tibbetts
David Leafe Independent Examiner	Geoff Pratt	Ruth Border
Web Master Mike Chester	Andrew Alldrick	Mark Sayers

After a number of years in the post Chris Mew said he would like to stand down from the post of Safe Guarding officer. He proposed Mike Young of Cubbington for the post, where he is Safe Guarding Officer for the Parish. This was seconded by Sue Roderick. JP thanked Chris for his contribution and welcomed Mike to the new position.

The Guild has not had a Public Relations Officer for a number of years. Rosemary Spencer indicated she would be interested in this position. It was proposed by Annie Hall, seconded by Chris Mew and voted overwhelmingly in favour by the meeting. JP thanked Rosemary for standing.

Appointment of Working parties. There is only one at present, the Tower and Belfries committee chaired by Andrew Alldrick. He agreed to carry on and it was hoped a list of members could be provided for future reference.

## **10. Legacy in Trust**

JP informed the meeting Phil Faulks, a long time ringer at Warwick, had bequeathed a substantial sum of money to the Coventry Diocesan Board of Finance, the income to be used by the Guild Bell Repair Fund. She also provided details of the process the Trustees had been through to clarify the usage of the money (see app2). JP asked the meeting to indicate whether they were content for the Exec Committee to accept the terms offered by the

Coventry Diocesan Board. A vote indicated overwhelming support for the offer. Keith Chambers thought the Guild should pursue having a Guild member become a member of the Board of Trustees.

### **11. General Data Protection Regulations**

JP informed the meeting the Guild were undertaking an audit of all information held on members. When this is completed, a consent form will be issued to all members seeking permission on how to contact them. Becki Johnson warned not to over complicate matters as her understanding of the regulations implied that members by being part of the Guild consented to information being supplied to them.

### **12. Dates for the Diary**

The Archbishop of Canterbury is in the Diocesan on the following dates.

3<sup>rd</sup> May at Frankton

4<sup>th</sup> May at Chilvers Coton where a quarter peal is being rung

5<sup>th</sup> May at the Cathedral and a quarter peal is being rung on the 6<sup>th</sup>.

The next Guild Social meeting will be on 14<sup>th</sup> July when the Rugby Deanery are organising an outing in the Banbury area.

The Guild Meeting and 8 bell striking competition will be in the Warwick District on 6<sup>th</sup> October, in Leamington Spa.

Ringing Remembers will be commemorating the centenary of the end of WWI with muffled ringing before 11.00am and open ringing afterwards.

The Carol service will be in the Coventry District, date to be agreed.

The next AGM will be held on 27<sup>th</sup> April in the Rugby Deanery

### **13. AOB**

Chris Mew informed the meeting the Guild had been bequeathed a second copy of the 'Bells of Warwickshire'. This is held in the Guild Library and available for borrowing.

Guild badges were available for purchase at £5 with the proceeds to the BRF.

Copies of the Guild Newsletter were available.

Additional copies of the Guild Report were available from the Guild Secretary.

### **14. Next Meeting.**

The next meeting will be held in Leamington Spa on 6th October.

JP thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at 6.47pm.

## App 1

### Coventry Diocesan Guild of Church Bellringers Budget 2018

<u>Income</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>
Resident Subscriptions	5000	
Gift Aid	600	
Non Resident Subscriptions	30	
Other	40	
	<b>5670</b>	
<u>Expenditure</u>		
BRF Contribution	2500	
Officers Expenses	500	
Insurance	350	
Annual Report	320	
Newsletters	250	
Central Council Subs	160	
Education/Training	540	
PR etc	100	
Youth Team	150	
Contingency	800	
	<b>5670</b>	

Notes:

Income based on approx 500 adults at £10 plus juniors

Budget levels are indicative and expenditure can be reallocated if necessary.

Any surplus (contingency) will be discussed and allocated by the General Committee.

Should membership numbers fall funds will be taken from reserves to make up the shortfall.

## App 2 The Phil Faulks Memorial Fund

This has presented the Executive a challenging few months trying to dig our way through a Will and the attendant legislation. We shared all the facts with the General Committee at our meeting in March. I do not intend to cross every t and dot every i at this meeting but I am quite willing to meet with anyone who would like more information.

So in essence. Phil Faulks was a long term ringer at Warwick - a character, a bachelor and a regular attended at St Marys. Please feel free to ask any of the Warwick ringers to give you more details. He died on the 14<sup>th</sup> of May 2014 and there was money left in Trust with The Coventry Diocese to establish a Phil Faulks Memorial Bell Repair Fund, two thirds of the interest from this Trust coming to The Coventry Diocesan Guild Bell Repair Fund. However it was not until the 8<sup>th</sup> December 2017 that I got notification from Steven Davenport that there was any money left to us and asking for a meeting. I was off to Aus so asked the other members of the Exec to go to a 'Meet and Greet' meeting with the Diocese in January. On the 9<sup>th</sup> January 2018 we got a copy of the Will and the conditions of The Trust Fund. The capital was £670,000 - 2/3rds of the Interest of which was to come to our Guild and 1/3 to accrue to the capital. There was no record of where this money had been since 2014 although by all accounts this had been a most difficult Will to administer. The meeting with The Diocesan Trustees took place on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2018, led by Mary Allanson from Rotherhams, and probably raised more questions than answers. By this time our Independent Examiner, David Leafe had been able to discover

that the Capital had merely been put into the Diocesan Current Account, gaining the minimum of interest.

The Executive informed the General Committee that they intended to seek advice from Robert Cooles, the Legal Advisor to The Central Council and also to Taylor's Bell Foundry. He was very helpful and flagged up several issues with this Will and the way it had been handled and the lack of transparency regarding several historical blunders.

A further meeting of The Executive was held, followed by a Conference Call with Robert and a further meeting of the Executive.

Five Proposals were then put before the Diocese.

1. There should be written affirmation that The Diocese were the Trustees of the money, but The Diocesan Guild of Ringers were the beneficiaries. This prevents the Coventry Diocese with-holding any money if they fall into a financial crisis.
2. There should be a Trustee Member from the Guild on the Board of Trustees.
3. There should be a transparent Audit Trail of where the money has been for the last three years and the establishment of an Annual Audit Trail for the future.
4. All of the Interest accrued should be transferred to the Coventry Diocesan Guild. It is not legal to accrue 1/3 of the interest to the capital and a separate trust Fund would have to be established. The proposal was also that the money be paid in full, and not by a case by case process which the Diocese had originally proposed.
5. That within the three year limit, if the Coventry Guild was not satisfied that the capital was being invested in the best interests of The Guild then we should seek to open a new Charity with equal Trustees from the Diocese and the Guild.

This was then sent back to The Board of Trustees. The outcome was 3 out of 5 gains.

1. There is affirmation of the relationship between the Diocese and The Guild.
2. We now have an Audit Trail of where the money has been and will be
3. All of the Interest will be transferred directly to The Guild on a regular basis.

At the moment they will not agree to a member of the Guild being a Trustee although our capital is nearly 20% of the total money held in Trust by the Diocese!

They will not agree to a new Charity being established, but this does not close the door for pursuing this in future if we think the present arrangements are not working.

We have shown the reply to Robert Cooles and he thinks we have come out of this very well. He is quick to point out that historically many mistakes have been made along the way but believes that there is nothing to gain from pursuing this angle. We have asked him to draw up a 'Memorandum of Understanding' between the parties, and with the permission of this meeting we would like to go back to The Diocese, draw the matter to a close and get our money invested as soon as possible.

We think the next question will be whether we should be investing our New Found Wealth as there will be substantial money in the BRF. What it does do is to ensure we can provide more realistic grants to Churches and make more considered decisions on proposals put before The General Committee.