# The Central Council of Church Bell Ringers

## Minutes of the 129th Annual General Meeting, held on Saturday 5th September 2026 at The Benn Hall, Newbold Road, Rugby, Warwickshire, CV21 2LN

The Chair was taken by the President, Tina Stoecklin.

The President asked everyone to sign the attendance roll before the start of the meeting.

The President welcomed members of the Council to Rugby. She reminded the meeting only Fellows elected before 2018 and representative members to The Council may vote. All membership returns and all except one subscription had been submitted on time. The Veronese Society's subscription had been received after 9th August 2026. However, their representative was not present at this meeting.

The Rev Max Drinkwater (Guild of Clerical Ringers) opened the meeting with a prayer.

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### 1. Application to affiliate and other changes to affiliation

In the past year, no applications for affiliation were received.

A number of societies had changed their membership status during the year:

Societies who transferred to the category of Associated Society:
- Durham University Society
- Guild of Clerical Ringers
- Leeds University Society
- Oxford University Society
- Devon Association
- Welsh Colleges Society
- University of London

Societies who transferred to the category of Registered Small Society:
- Central European Association
- Liverpool Universities Society
- National Police Guild
- South African Guild

### 2. Welcome to new members

The President welcomed new and returning members (indicated in the list at the end of these minutes).

### 3. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received and listed at the end of these minutes.

### 4. In Memoriam

The Rev Canon Anthony Ellis (Hereford Guild) read names of the following members and former members whose deaths had been notified to the Council up to May 2026:

Paul Nichol Mounsey, Oxford University Society 1978 – 1984, attended 6 meetings, died 29 May 2025

Dr Donald Henry Niblett, Oxford University Society 1957 – 1960, Kent County Association 1978 – 1999, attended 19 meetings, died 14 July 2025

Dennis Bernard Clive, Lichfield & Walsall Archdeaconries Society 1999 – 2005, attended 5 meetings, died 10 July 2025

Revd Canon Michael Stuart Hart, Hereford Diocesan Guild 1967 – 1969, Lancashire Association 1987 – 1992, attended 5 meetings, died 19 July 2025

Anthony James (Jim) Poynor, Leicester Diocesan Guild 1981 – 1984, attended 2 meetings, died 24 August 2025

Fr John Malcolm Hughes, Llandaff & Monmouth Diocesan Association 1990 – 2005, attended 8 meetings, died 4 September 2025

Peter James H Wycherley, Hereford Diocesan Guild 1969 – 1972, attended 2 meetings, died 3 July 2025.

Margaret Patricia Byrne, Truro Diocesan Guild 1977 – 1987, attended 7 meetings, died 22 October 2025

John Frederick Mallett Maybrey, Guildford Diocesan Guild 1964 – 1969, attended 5 meetings, died 29 November 2025

Peter John Shipton, Scottish Association 1993 – 2005, attended 9 meetings, died 18 December 2025

Revd Canon David Marlyn Hoare, Bath & Wells Association 1959 – 1960, attended 1 meeting, died 9 January 2026

Gwilym G Salmon, Bath and Wells Diocesan Association 1960 – 1967, attended 4 meetings, died 10 February 2026

John Francis Irving Turney, Hereford Diocesan Guild 1969 – 1972 & 1993 – 2004, attended 12 meetings, died 21 February 2026

John Heber Croxton, Hereford Diocesan Guild 2004 – 2019, attended 12 meetings, died 13 February 2026

Melvyn Arthur Rose, Lincoln Diocesan Guild 1978 – 1984, attended 6 meetings, died 27 February 2026

John William Nicholls, Gloucester & Bristol Diocesan Association 2008 – 2016, attended 7 meetings, died 21 March 2026

Revd John Michael Stephens, Bedfordshire Association 1954 – 1955, attended 1 meeting, died 8 April 2026

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Shân Elizabeth Nash, Winchester & Portsmouth Diocesan Guild 2019 – 2022, attended 2 meetings, died 21 April 2026

Brian John Bull, Southwell Diocesan Guild 1993 – 2002, attended 7 meetings, died 30 April 2026

Anthony Rex Agg, Hertford County Association 1972 – 1981, attended 8 meetings, died 14 May 2026

Robert James Cooles, Surrey Association 1975 – 1978, Honorary member 1980 – 2010, Additional member 2010 – 2017, attended 39 meetings, died 15 May 2026

Alastair Robin Heppenstall, Lincoln Diocesan Guild 1987 – 2016, attended 26 meetings, died 19 May 2026

Alan Edwin Chantler, Peterborough Diocesan Guild 2000 – 2016, attended 11 meetings, died 28 May 2026

No members' deaths in earlier years had come to light.

Canon Ellis led the meeting in prayer.

**5. Minutes of the 2025 Annual Meeting**

All corrections notified to the Secretary by members who attended the 2025 ACM had been made to the minutes before this meeting. The meeting approved these corrected minutes, which were signed by the President.

**6. Matters arising from the Minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda**

Neil Dodge (Suffolk Guild) asked if there had been any progress made on the Council's submission to the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) for the inclusion of bell ringing in UNESCO's register of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH). The President gave a summary of the application, thanking Ian Sterritt and Alison Edmonds, all the writers and contributors for their work in the submission. It was understood that an announcement from the DCMS was due in the next few months. If approved, it would become part of the UK inventory of ICH.

**7. Trustees Annual Report for 2024**

The President introduced the report for 2025.

Fred Bone (Essex Association) noted an updated set of accounts for 2025 had been issued recently and asked if this had been approved by the Independent Examiner and the Executive. He asked when the revised version was going to be approved by the Executive. The President explained an anomaly had been discovered in the accounts. It was being worked over by the outgoing and incoming Treasurers, together with the Independent Examiner. She explained the meeting will not be asked to vote to adopt the accounts.

The Executive would call a Special Council Meeting (called under Rule 5.2) on Saturday 31 October 2026, by Zoom. The purpose would be to adopt the accounts. The required 8-week notification would be sent immediately following this meeting.

Michael Church (Winchester and Portsmouth Guild) asked, if any significant changes to published papers were made, could it be made clear what the changes were.

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## 8. Accounts for 2025

The Treasurer apologised for the errors in the accounts. The main change was moving a loan facility of £5,000 which should have been shown in the balance sheet as a debtor.

The total assets as at 31 December 2025 was £478,220. The general fund made a small loss of £4,176 and the publication's fund was profitable as in previous years and after discussion it was decided that the publication's income would be treated as primary purpose trading. Hence, we would not have to inform HMRC in respect to corporation tax.

As per last year, the Friends of the Library had a small deficit of £2,647. And it should be remembered within the library the largest asset was the collection and the bookcases and this had the effect of increasing funds for the Council by some £76,000, but these were not available liquid assets.

There was one grant paid from the Fred Duke Bell Restoration Fund which had previously been awarded and remained unpaid. Two grants were paid from the Bell Restoration Fund on completion of work, leaving £18,300 in outstanding.

The first South West course was held in October 2025, financed by a grant of £5,000 from the Council, together with a cash flow loan of £12,000, which was repaid shortly after the course took place.

The Council had received the first tranche of funds from the John Long bequest. John was a ringer in Bedford and left the monies to be used for additional bells for St Andrews and St Pauls, Bedford churches. The balance of the funds was to be used to provide loans for Sanctus and Bourdon bells in high Anglican churches. Any remaining residue after 21 years could then be used for general purposes of the Council.

Nick Elks (Peterborough Guild) asked about the ACM costs in the accounts, as it appeared to be higher than previous years. He also asked about how the loan to the Mobile Belfries Trust (MBT) going to be repaid. The Treasurer explained that some of these increased costs included costs for the 2025 Ringing Roadshow. The Treasurer explained that the loan to the MBT would be repaid from fees they charge for hiring out the belfries. It was pointed out that loans of this type were covered by a written agreement.

Fred Bone (Essex Association) noted the Treasurer said there had been a transfer from Publications to the general fund of £12,000, but the recently circulated accounts stated there had been no transfers. He asked if there was another version of the accounts to be published. The Treasurer advised this was being worked on, and would be available shortly.

Paul Wotton (Bath and Wells) asked about funding for residential ringing courses, as the Recruitment and Development Workgroup was actively looking to set up a third course. The Treasurer assured him that funding would be available in the form of loans, as it had been for the South West Course.

Richard Smith (Cambridge University Guild) asked if outstanding loans should be shown on the balance sheet. The Treasurer said one loan had been repaid and was now not shown. He added that others should be shown and would be on the revised balance sheet when it was published.

David Towell (Lichfield and Walsall) asked if the library actually represented a tangible asset The Treasurer replied the library books have historically always been included in the balance sheet, and had been depreciated at 2.5% per year. However, it was felt that most of the collection was irreplaceable.

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Michael Church (Winchester and Portsmouth) pointed out that the accounts needed to be filed with the Charity Commissioners by 31 October 2026. The President replied that the Executive is doing the best it could, within the Council's Rules, with the Special Council Meeting to be held on 31 October. Mr Church pointed out that the Executive could approve the accounts before 31 October.

## 9. Annual Report Workgroups for 2025 – May 2026

All Workgroup reports were contained within the meeting papers.

### A. Young Ringers for Ringing 2030 Workgroup:

Andrea Haynes (Ex-Officio) presented the formal launch of the Young Ringers Hub. This included the University Ringing Hub, the Under 18s pages, together with a library of resources. She mentioned the upcoming online briefing.

Mary Bone (Essex Association) asked if there was any progress on the School Lesson Plans. Andrea Haynes replied that it was on the list, but needed resources to progress the subject. There was a plea for anyone who could help to get in touch.

John Martin (Guild of Devonshire Ringers) would like to ask his members for help with the CCCBR work, but feels members need a job description. The President replied that this would be considered.

### B. Technology for Ringing 2030 Workgroup:

The report was taken as printed, and there were no questions.

### C. Ringing 2030 Recruitment and Development Workgroup:

The Current Workgroup lead, Paul Wotton, was retiring at the end of this Council meeting, and the President thanked him for his work.

John Martin (Guild of Devonshire Ringers) asked if Ringing 2030 required 10,000 new active ringers and an equivalent number of teachers. He asked if there was any information about the number of ringers being recruited and the development of sufficient teachers to be available. The President noted the question and asked John to wait until the items on the Forward Plan and Ringing Census further down the agenda.

### D. Ringing 2030 Marketing:

The report was taken as printed, and there were no questions.

### E. Ringing 2030 Environments:

The report was taken as printed, and there were no questions.

### F. History and Archive:

The report was taken as printed, and there were no questions.

### G. Technical and Taxonomy:

The report was taken as printed, and there were no questions.

## 10. Ringing 2030 and Forward Plan for 2027

The President gave a summary of the Ringing 2030 strategy, including the three pillars. She reported 11 projects had been completed, 18 were on target, and there were several requiring further work. Several had not yet been started but this was according to plan. Several risks had been identified, including the marketing portal.

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She emphasised the success of the Ringing 2030 project relied not just on the Council, but all its members, the affiliated societies, and ringers in general.

The only way the Council has to measure the number of ringers was via the annual membership returns that the affiliated societies provide to the Council. However, it was recognised that not all active ringers are members of a society. Hence, it was felt that a data backed system of measuring active ringers was required. The Council had commissioned a Ringing Census. This would be discussed in a later agenda item.

Jane Wilkinson (Cumberland Youths) asked if there was any data on the effects of COVID on the number of ringers. No information was currently available.

Mary Jones (Norwich DA) asked how we are going to measure retention rate. The President replied that the Executive were not sure how to measure it, but if anyone had any ideas then please get in touch.

The President then talked about the forward plan for the next year. The forward plan is to continue with the Ringing2030 Projects, and these plans have mostly been described in the WorkGroup reports already supplied. and the President emphasised this was a project for ringing as a whole. The President said she would be happy to talk to any association or group of ringers to help move the project forward.

Workgroup reports were contained in the meeting papers. Results of the Ringing Census would be evaluated and high-level results would be shared with Associations. The Council's Data Protection Policy would be reviewed, and it was hoped to set up a review group to look at the topic of Direct Membership.

**11. Ringing Census**

Vicki Chapman (Essex Association and Deputy President) outlined the purpose of the ringing census. The Census aimed to: (1) produce a more accurate picture of bellringing, (2) estimate the total number of ringers, (3) understand characteristics of the ringing community and (4) compare the data against the last full census. Data would be collected by a "individual ringer" census (completed by as many as possible during the "Census Week"), and a "tower representative" census (completed once for each participating tower based on who rang there during the "Census Week and generic tower related questions") and targeted areas to account for everyone.

Data would be held using the UK Data Protection Regulations. No personal data would be held. Anonymised data would be held for future use.

Vicki Chapman gave a presentation as to how the census would work. Elva Ainsworth (University of Bristol) explained the Enumerator's Role, who would promote the census and chase down the target towers to ensure, as far as possible, they do provide a response. They would also act as a local point of contact for any questions. There would be a number of enumerator briefing sessions scheduled to explain how the enumerators could help.

Census Week would be 16 to 22 November 2026.

Dickon Love (Central European Association) asked if enumerators would be able to keep track of their towers and if they had responded. The answer would be yes, via the census software.

Alistair Donaldson (Peterborough DG) asked how the targeted towers would be chosen, if for example, what happened if not all of the towers in a "group" rang during census week. Vicki

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Chapman replied saying the census was a point in time snapshot, but there were questions as to if the ringers of those towers ring elsewhere.

Maurice O'Rilley (Irish Association) asked how the 500 target towers would chosen, to give a representative spread of towers. It was planned to cover a whole range of tower (inner city, rural, etc). The final choice would depend on the location of the volunteer enumerators.

Will Bosworth (Editor, Ringing World) endorsed the project, saying it would be a very useful data gathering exercise, and encouraged everyone to take part.

Fred Bone (Essex Association) asked about the Ringing 2030 target of 10,000 extra ringers, and what the baseline was Vicki Chapman replied that the 2026 census was designed to give us a baseline.

Linda Pelc (Derby DA) asked how frequently the census was to be repeated. Vickie Chapman replied that it would be repeated in 2031 to see the effects any of the Ringing 2030 projects had had.

**12. Financial update for 2026 and outline General Fund budget for 2027**

Fergus Stracey (Ex-Officio, Council Treasurer) spoke on this item.

He thanked affiliated societies for accepting the increase in affiliation fees. The Council now had two employees and the costs for them are shown within the statutory obligations. The Executive would consider the renewing of the contracts in the early part of 2027.

The general fund this year was forecasted to create a surplus between £4,000 and £5,000. The spending on Workgroups and Ringing 2030 would result in a deficit. That deficit was forecasted in the region of £40,000.

Interest received was higher than anticipated, likely to be approximately £5,700.

He reminded societies that Thirtyone: Eight (an independent Christian organisation) provided safeguarding support which was available to all societies.

There had been further payments to Yellow Yo-Yo for work amounting to £1,410, bringing the total spend for the Yellow Yo-Yo for Ringing2030 to £26,485.

The outline budget was compiled in June. The expenditure split between our statutory obligations, for example insurance, employees, looking after our historical archives, concessionary expenditure, and work approved for Ringing 2030. Various projects had been included in the 2025 budget for 2026 and may not reach fruition until next year. Therefore, they had been included in the provision of budget in 2027.

In 2025, we spent £2,064 on a new website and new website hosting. This was due to be renewed in 2027 at an estimated cost of £2,500.

There would be some spending reserved for various projects to benefit the exercise as a whole and these would be reviewed by the Executive as they arose. The budget for some of these was still being put together and would be included at a later stage. It was difficult at this stage to be precise with the expected costs of Ringing 2030 until some project development requirements become clearer.

Nick Elks (Peterborough DG) said it is good to see that the Council was spending money. He asked the total Workgroup Ringing 2030 expenditure was £81,000 in the initial budget. It was now

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being reduced to £45,000. If employment costs were included, that was roughly a difference of £65,000. He asked why it reduced by so much, and was this expenditure per year, and does the Executive feel it was value for money.

He also asked why expenditure of the Executive has increased by 130% from £1,500 to £3,500.

On the second point, the Treasurer replied non-executive and ex-officio members of the Executive would claim their travel to meetings. One member of the Executive had requested we covered their accommodation costs for travel to this meeting as they were not a society rep. There was also spending for setting up contracts and various other legal matters to deal with the employees.

On the first point, the Treasurer explained the costs of one of the employees had been moved to statutory obligations. Also, the budgets of some Workgroups had been reduced as they did not need to spend the money originally requested to do the planned works.

Alison Hodge (Worcestershire and Districts Association) asked as the Council was now employing people if all the HR contingencies were in place. The President replied the Executive had sought help from an HR specialist, who had set up a reasonable suite of employment processes. This specialist would be available if help was needed in the future.

Neil Dodge (Suffolk Guild) asked if the 2027 budget would be discussed at the Special Council Meeting on 31 October. The President replied the budget was usually set at the December Executive meeting. Neil Dodge also noted that the published accounts revised down the unrestricted funds so that on the current budget listed for 2027 the total figure was going to be less than the reserves policy, an amount the Executive had stated, of £75,000. He asked if that was intentional or would the figures be revised again to ensure that the Council still had £75,000 in reserve. The Treasurer replied it would be revised as we go forward to protect the reserve figure of £75,000.

Sue Marsden (Ely DA) asked if the circumstances of paying for accommodation could be explained. The President explained that the Council has a duty to pay reasonable expenses to employees. The expenses policy extended this to ex-officio members and Workgroup leads. This policy also covers reasonable accommodation if claimed. There are processes in place where such expenses must be approved in advance.

Will Bosworth (Editor, Ringing World) asked that following the recent rise in affiliation fees, how successful and sustainable that revenue stream was for the new employees and for further employees. The President replied that it was still under review.

Bob Blandon (Gloucester and Bristol) pointed out that our employees are doing much more work than their contracted hours.

**13. Motions**

**Motion A**

That the Rules and Standing Orders are updated so that:
1) subscriptions get renamed to Affiliation Fees;
2) Affiliation Fees must be paid by 31 March; and
3) give a clearer definition of when societies should calculate their membership numbers.

Proposed by: Peter Harrison – ANZAB Seconded by: Ernie de Legh-Runciman – Ex Officio

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Peter Harrison (ANZAB) pointed out the document on the website that contained the details of the rule change had some minor edits in it, there were updates to section numbers only, and did not change any text. After feedback, he clarified that societies may still change their representatives at any time, in writing.

Alistair Donaldson (Peterborough DG) felt that the new deadline for submission of membership numbers of 31 March would cause major difficulties to societies in providing such information, due to having to report membership more accurately than under the previous banding system. Peter Harison responded that the change of date reflects the position pre-2019, when the ACM was held in May. Also, the change of rules allowed a figure from the previous year to be used.

Tristan Lockheart (Leeds University Society) spoke in support of this motion because it just made sense logistically and as long as the Executive sent out e-mail reminders at the appropriate time.

Doug Hird (Oxford DG) asked if it was to be a snapshot on 1 January, or did it need to be delivered on 1 January. The reply was that it needed to be delivered by 31 March.

Alistair Donaldson (Peterborough DG) proposed, Simon Dixon (Peterborough DG) seconded that item 2) of the motion be amended to: Affiliation Fees must be paid by 30 June;

The amendment was put to the meeting. It was not carried, with 6 for the amendment and 13 abstentions.

David Towell (Lichfield and Walsall) asked about possible confusion as to if associated and small societies have to pay an affiliation fee. It was pointed out that the rules state that all types of society are required to pay an affiliation fee.

Peter Scott (Yorkshire Association) pointed out that a two thirds majority of those voting was required for a rule change.

The original motion was put to the meeting. It was carried with 6 against and 13 abstentions.

**Motion B**

That the Council's expenses policy be amended to include a claimable mileage allowance for car travel on Council business of 55 pence per mile, and that in the event of any future changes in the HMRC-approved mileage rate the claimable amount be altered to match those changes.

Proposed by: Robert J Perry - Truro Diocesan Guild. Seconded by: Ian P Self - Truro Diocesan Guild

David Smith (ANZAB) stated that not everyone who was entitled to claim expenses did so, and asked if the Council had any idea roughly what proportion of expenses that could be claimed were claimed. The Treasurer replied that in 2024 milage claims were £437.80. If paid at 55p/mile it would have cost £870. For 2025 it was £339 (it would have been £746 at 55p/mile). 2026 to date it was £356 (£762).

Peter Scott (Yorkshire Association) felt that the HMRC figure was aimed at business use, and felt that the 30p the Executive have used in the recent update to the expense policy was more realistic.

Neil Dodge (Suffolk Guild) proposed that the motion be now put to the meeting. Seconded by John Harrison (Oxford DG). This was carried by a show of hands.

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Motion B was put to the meeting. It was carried with 12 against and 23 abstentions.

**14. Election of Trustees**

At this point, the President relinquished the chair of the meeting to Alison Edmonds, a member of the Executive.

The following have been nominated as Trustees.

| Office | Nominee | Proposer | Seconder |
|---|---|---|---|
| President | Tina Stoecklin | Allison Devine | Zoe Bennett |
| Deputy President | Vicki Chapman | Eileen Butler | David Smith |
| Treasurer | Jason Carter | Roger Haynes | Simon Dixon |

The Secretary confirmed these nominations were valid and met the criteria set out in the Council's Rules.

These were elected unopposed.

Alison Edmonds handed the chair back to the President

**15. Appointment of Independent Examiner**

Duncan Walker was proposed by Charlotte Boyce (Guild of Devonshire Ringers) and was seconded by Jackie Roberts (Guildford Guild).

There were no further nominations Mr Walker was elected unopposed.

**16. Appointment of Stewards**

The President outlined the problems of length of service limits for Stewards contained in the current rules of Council. However, three Stewards who were due to retire had all resigned before this Council meeting. Hence as there are three vacancies, new stewards can be appointed at the next Council meeting (i.e. this one).

So that this problem did not arise in the future, the Executive may bring forward a rule change.

The Executive would appoint stewards to fill the vacancies at their next meeting. They would also look to appoint extra Stewards, especially where at present there was only one in position post.

**17. Future Meetings**

The following invitations had been accepted by the Executive:

a. 2027 – Lichfield and Walsall Archdeaconries Society*
b. 2028 – Truro DG
c. 2029 – Essex Association*
d. 2030 – St Martins Guild
e. 2031 – Oxford DG*
f. 2032 – Worcestershire and Districts Association

* Roadshow year

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David Towell (Lichfield and Walsall) and Andrew Aspland (North Staffordshire) outlined the plans for the 2027 Annual Council Meeting and Roadshow, which would be held at Uttoxeter Race Course over the weekend of 3 – 5 September 2027.

**18. Any other business**

Nik Galton (Shropshire Association) asked what was the Church ofEngland's (CofE) explanation for omitting the CCCBR as a relevant "stakeholder" in the CofE's recent Safeguarding Structures Programme Board review process.

Furthermore, regarding the Central Council's Safeguarding Committee's proposed topics for discussion with the manager of the CofE National Safeguarding Team, Willma King (as per the ACM Meeting Papers, page 51): would the Executive assure membership that the first and second so-called "key issues" were addressed as points of urgency. This was in view of confusion and inconsistencies between churches, parishes and dioceses, as to the distinction between "visitors" and "volunteers", and who precisely was responsible for checking ringers' CofE safeguarding training credentials, as this must not be made yet another responsibility of tower captains.

Ian Roulstone (Cumberland Youths and member of the Executive) responded.

The Church of England's Safeguarding Structures Programme Review (published in February) was highlighted by Nik. Bellringers and ringing organisations were not consulted, despite safeguarding policies directly affecting their activities.

Pam Thompson (Chester Guild Safeguarding Officer) joined the Central Council team last year. Sean Acustine, (Chester Diocese Safeguarding Officer), had substantial experience working with ringers and understood ringing culture. A meeting with Sean was held to discuss broader safeguarding issues affecting ringers. Sean recognised the concerns and offered to connect the CCCBR team with relevant people in the National Safeguarding Team (NST).

Contact had been established with: Wilbur King, Head of Learning & Development (NST), Ian Bowles, Senior Caseworker (NST), Ian attended a CCCBR team meeting in June.

The Council presented issues outlined in the Safeguarding Team's report, particularly that safeguarding implementation relied heavily on Parish Safeguarding Officers (PSOs). The current models did not recognise the peripatetic nature of ringing (ringers move between many churches). This created unmanaged risks and inconsistent safeguarding expectations. The CCCBR team had now established active engagement with NST representatives who understood the need for structured dialogue.

Multiple diocesan safeguarding officers had recently contacted the CCCBR team, recognising current safeguarding processes did not work well for ringers.

The Council was gathering numerous reports of safeguarding problems across the country, indicating systemic issues. Mark Ogden (Chair, Suffolk Guild) was meeting Bishop Joanne Grenfell next week. Bishop Grenfell previously led safeguarding for the Church of England. The Council intended to use this opportunity to informally raise issues and reinforce the need for improved safeguarding structures that work for both ringers and the church.

Robert Perry (Truro DG) felt there was a generalisation, ringing does not enter into the Church's mainstream consciousness. Any contact by the Council to the churches hierarchy must in general be a good thing.

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David Everett (Suffolk Guild) agreed with previous speakers but emphasised that ringers need to work with the church at all levels, and specifically with the parish safeguarding officers.

Paul Wotton (Bath and Wells) believed there was a disjointed approach to safeguarding across the country, and asked if the church could have a standardised approach in all dioceses.

In response, Ian Roulstone said he believed the National Safeguarding Team were willing to engage with the Council. They had had discussion about the different levels of leadership training across the CoE.

Mike Handsford (Bath and Wells), as a DAC bells advisor, said he had recently dealt with a number of cases involving shrinking woodwork in bell frames and fittings. He asked if this is caused by climate change. Mark Ogden (Suffolk Guild and Environments WG Lead) replied this situation had been noted. The Council was working with a group from Birmingham University on this subject.

Mary Bone (Essex Association) asked if all Workgroups would list their members when submitting reports for the ACM She encouraged all WG Leads to get the copy for their reports in before the deadline to make the Secretaries job easier.

The President presented a certificate and a small gift to three people retiring from their roles in the Council:

Fergus Stracey – Treasurer of the Council
Paul Wotton – Lead of the Recruitment and Development Workgroup
Andrea Haynes – Lead of the Young Ringers Workgroup

**19. Vote of Thanks**

Nik Galton (Shopshire Association) presented a vote of thanks. She thanked the hosts the Coventry Guild, Annie Hall, Audrey Aldrich, Christine Homer, Joy Pluckrose and John Newbold plus of course their fantastic army of volunteers who were looking after us over the course of the weekend. She also thanked Phillip Green for the printing, Doug Davis for the IT support, Dave Richards, Ellen and Ethan for the technical support with the audio, visual and live streaming service.

She thanked Vicki Chapman and Ernie de Legh-Runciman for the hard work of putting the weekend together. She understood that at some time they may have been working almost full time on the event. She also thanked the President, Tina Stoceklin, for keeping us in order.

She then went on to say:

> "Since I took a Central Council rep role for my association in January I've gained a little more insight into the vast amount of work that's done behind the scenes by the volunteers at the Central Council and I might add that I wrote this a couple of days ago but now I've sat here nearly all day I realise it's more than a vast amount
>
> But actually it reaches further. It reaches further into the associations and societies. It includes everyone here and those reps listening remotely. You're the link to the broader ringing fraternity and may you continue to preserve our traditions, particularly in the face of today's challenges.
>
> Thank you for being here and all that you do."

**20. Meeting attendance**

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The meeting attendance was reported below.

The President closed the meeting at 5.13pm.

**Apologies for absence were received from:**

| | |
|---|---|
| Jo Belsten | Norwich DA |
| Ian Oram | Ex-Officio |
| Tim Jackson | Ex-Officio |
| Hayley Young | Truro DGR |
| Leonie Wooward | Ladies Guild |
| Steve Millington | Leicester Guild |
| Dave Mattingley | Ex-Officio |
| David Roskelly | Veronese Association |
| Keith Butters | Lincoln Guild |
| Richard White | National Police Guild |
| Alan Marchbank | Oxford Diocesan Guild |
| Chris Sharp | Lincoln Diocesan Guild |
| Barbara Wheeler | Fellow of the Council |
| Ian Bucknall | Gloucester and Bristol |
| John Couperthaite | Guildford Diocesan Guild |
| Beth Ingham | Lancashire Association |
| Andy Kayll | Lancashire Association |

**The following members of the Council were present at the meeting, having indicated their presence by signing the roll:**

**Fellows:**
Alan Frost, David Kelly, Chris Mew

**Ex-Officio Members:**
Ernie de Legh-Runciman, Alison Edmonds*, Andrea Haynes, Alan Regin, Fergus Stracey

**Affiliated Societies**
Ancient Society of College Youths: Richard Allton, Euan Thomas, Andrew Wilby
Australian and New Zealand Association: Peter Harrison, Matthew Shaw*, David Smith
Barrow and District Society: Catherine Williams*
Bath and Wells Diocesan Association: Michael Handsford, Matthew Higby, Paul Wotton
Bedfordshire Association: Patrick Albon, Richard Horne
Beverley and District Society: Rosina Baxter, James Blackburn
Cambridge University Guild: David Richards, Richard A Smith
Carlisle Diocesan Guild: Jayden Milby, Duncan Walker
Chester Diocesan Guild: Carole Hallam, Graham Jenkins, Peter Wilkinson
Coventry Diocesan Guild: Annie Hall, John Newbold, Tracey Newbold, Joy Pluckrose
Derby Diocesan Association: Andrew Hall: Susan Hall, Gill Hughes, Linda Pelc*
Durham and Newcastle Diocesan Association: Howard Smith
East Derbyshire and West Notts Association: Edward Sterland
Ely Diocesan Association: Philip Bailey, Lynne Hughes, Sue Marsden, Daniel Stevens
Essex Association: Martin Axon*, Mary Bone, Fred Bone, Vicki Chapman, Anne Donaldson*
Four Shires Guild: Jess McCarthy

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Gloucester and Bristol Diocesan Association: Bob Blanden, Jason Carter. Roger Haynes, Richard While
Guild of Devonshire Ringers: Harry Andrews, Charlotte Boyce, John Martin, Alena Wardle
Guildford Diocesan Guild: Deb Margason-Baker, Jackie Roberts,
Hereford Diocesan Guild: Canon Anthony Ellis, Frances Watkins*, Andrew Watkins
Hertford County Association: Stuart Brant, Tony Crowther, Elaine Gazzine*, Geoff Horritt
Irish Association: Maurice O'Reilly*
Kent County Association: Sue Bassett, Chris Bassett, David Holdridge, Neil Jones
Ladies Guild: Allison Devine, Alison Everett, Elizabeth Smith
Lancashire Association: Pauline Campling, George Campling
Leicester Diocesan Guild: Sally Brown, Carol Franklin
Lichfield and Walsall Archdeaconries Society: Gary Crutchley*, Tracey Crutchley,* David Towell
Lincoln Diocesan Guild: Judith Rogers, Christopher P Turner
Llandaff and Monmouth Diocesan Association: Robert Brucer*, Helen Phillips, Matthew Turner
Middlesex County Association and London Diocesan Guild: Brooks Hayes
North American Guild: Eileen Butler, Bob Crystal*, Beverly Faber, Christian Haller
North Staffordshire Association: Andrew Aspland, Greg Pearce*
North Wales Association Cameron Mitchell*
Norwich Diocesan Association: Raymond Harwood, Mary Jones.
Oxford Diocesan Guild: John Harrison, Doug Hird*, Lucy Hopkins Till
Oxford Society: Dorothy Hall
Peterborough Diocesan Guild: Sarah Bence*, Simon Dixon, Alistair Donaldson, Nick Elks
Salisbury Diocesan Guild: Bob Crighton, Trish Hitchens, Anthony Lovell-Wood, Julian Newman
Scottish Association: Zoe Bennett, Tina Stoecklin
Shropshire Association: Nik Galton*, Paul Lewis,
Society of Royal Cumberland Youths: Ian Roulstone, Fraser Storie, Joseph Waters, Jane Wilkinson
Southwell and Nottingham Diocesan Guild: Jim Crabtree, Chris Glenton, Steve Green, Graham Hayward
St Davids Diocesan Guild: Ian Hastilow*
St Martins Guild: Richard Andrew, Simon Linford
Suffolk Guild: Neal Dodge, David Everett, Mark Ogden
Surrey Association: Noel Gibbin, Ed Gosden*, Jason Hughes, Niki Tompkinson*
Sussex County Association: Janice Crawford, David Kirkcaldy, Stephanie Pendlebury
Truro Diocesan Guild: Caroline Beckett, Robert Perry, Ian Self
University of Bristol Society: Elva Ainsworth, Josephine Leggett
Winchester and Portsmouth Diocesan Guild: Michael Church, Mike Hopkins Till, Greg Jordan
Worcestershire and Districts Association: Alison Hodge, James P Mort, Chris Tennant
Yorkshire Association: Barrie Dove, Adrian Garner*, Simon Plows, Elaine Scott, Peter Scott

**Associated Societies**
Devon Association: Tim Jones
Durham University Society: Phil Hughes
Guild of Clerical Ringers: Revd. Max Drinkwater*
Leeds University Society: Tristan Lockheart
Oxford University Society: Craig Robertson
Welsh Colleges Society of Change Ringers: Fiona Hartley

**Registered Small Societies:**
Central European Association: Dickon Love*
Guild of Railway Ringers: Chris Beckett

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Lilliputters Guild: Simon Edwards*
Liverpool Universities Society: Martyn Bristow
Sheffield Universities Guild: Tam Jones
South African Guild: James Champion

* New, returning or transferred member

The following societies were not represented: Dorset County Association, Swansea and Breacon Diocesan Guild, Veronese Association, University of London Society and the Open University Society

| Attendance Figures | | | Members attending | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Voting Associations | | | Fellows | 3 |
| Fully Represented | | 24 | Ex-officio | 4 |
| Partial Represented | | 28 | | |
| Not Represented | | 3 | Affiliated Societies | 136 |
| Total | | 53 | Associated Societies | 6 |
| | | | Small Societies | 6 |
| Associated Societies | | | | |
| Represented | | 6 | | |
| Not Represented | | 1 | Total | 155 |
| | Total | 7 | | |
| Small Societies | | | | |
| Represented | | 7 | | |
| Not Represented | | 1 | | |
| | Total | 8 | | |

Ernie de Legh-Runciman
Secretary
Central Council of Church Bell Ringers

23rd September 2026

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