

## Minutes of the General Meeting

Sunday 15th September 2024

Held online

### Officers present

Eleanor Linford (Guild Master), Rachel Mitchell (Ringing Master), Sand Cooper (Secretary), Trish Everett (Safeguarding Officer)

12 members were present including the above officers.

	Action
<p><b>1. Welcome and apologies</b>            Apologies received from Malcolm Paulson (Treasurer), Kirsty Gifford (Public Relations Officer) and Sonia Field.</p>	
<p><b>2.1 Ringing Master's Update – Rachel Thomas</b>            Rachel reiterated her thanks to everyone who attended and those who helped make the challenge day held at the Moseley towers, 11th May, a success. She hoped everyone had a good time and got something out of the day. She was amused how competitive some team members were when it is the taking part that counts.</p> <p>Over the summer Rachel had attended the August workshop at Sheldon and a mid-week Moseley practice. It was really encouraging to see them so well attended by enthusiastic ringers. A particular well done to Margaret Burling for her conducting.</p> <p>A massive congratulations to Elliott and Luke Daniel on completing the longest ever peal of minimus, and in hand. What an achievement, especially for Elliott!</p> <p>She was disappointed not to make it to the walking tour which was brilliantly organised. Thanks goes to Mike Dodson for all his hard work. Photos shared showed everyone had a great time.</p> <p>She highlight the excellent work done by the team behind the Higher Numbers practices at Solihull. Changing the focus of one of the summer practices to encourage those less experienced on 10 and 12 demonstrated exactly what the guild is so good at doing. The tower was fit to burst with ringers keen on gaining experience and she hoped they'd continue to attend. It was brilliant that the quarter arranged in August was successful which demonstrate how much everyone has learnt.</p> <p>Looking forward to the tour to Shrewbury she anticipates a great day, arranged by our Guild Master. She reassured everyone would be welcome at any ability. There will be ringing to suit everybody in attendance. She noted how encouraged she felt as a learner on outings. She looks forward to seeing lots of people there on 12th October.</p>	
<p><b>2.2 Finance Update - Malcolm Paulson</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We currently have 264 members of the Guild.</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Bell Restoration Fund currently has £35,043 available. We have given support to three projects so far this year.</li> <li>● The CCCBR recently voted to increase their fees for 2025 to £0.40 per Guild Member and £1 per Guild Member from the start of 2026. The CCCBR fees are paid out of your Guild Membership each year. The CCCBR has done this to help fund their 2030 plan. Malcolm will be preparing a forecast and whilst an increase in fees is unlikely at the 2025 AGM we may need to give notice to increase our fees at the AGM Jan 2026.</li> <li>● We have agreed at the last Standing Committee meeting to increase the amount that the Guild pays to Towers used for practices and events. The amount has not altered for some time and the increase brings the amount in line with what towers charge for visiting bands. We don't ask for individuals to pay at Guild events.</li> </ul> <p>Asked about the pipeline for BRF funds it was advised that this is a delicate balance waiting for towers to ask for funding. Some inspections have been paid for by the Guild and remedial work begun. This is regularly discussed at Standing Committee meetings.</p> <p><b>Merchandising</b> Having contacted our previous suppliers we will offer the same range at the same price point with a 10% discount for first time orders. We are aiming for orders to be ready for collection at the January AGM and potentially quicker to allow for Christmas items.</p> <p><b>ACTION Malcolm</b> is asked to explore Bucket Hats with the supplier.</p>	<p>Malcolm</p>
<p><b>2.3 Safeguarding Update – Trish Everett</b></p> <p>The Safeguarding Learning and Development Framework 2024 was approved as the Safeguarding Code, at General Synod of the CofE. Birmingham is producing its safeguarding strategy outlining how the framework will be implemented from January 2025 – December 2027. The Safeguarding training reference group which Trish is a member of, will be discussing this at its meeting September 24<sup>th</sup>. Bell Ringers are now mentioned in every part of the strategy.</p> <p><b>The requirements for bellringers are as follows:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The PCC is the body responsible for ensuring that training is undertaken, rather than our Guild.</li> <li>● All bellringers must undertake basic awareness training – via the C of E training portal : <a href="https://www.cofeportal.org">Home   Safeguarding: Training Portal (cofeportal.org)</a></li> <li>● Tower captains and ringing teachers must undertake foundation training, again accessed via the CofE portal</li> <li>● Tower Captains at prominent towers (including cathedrals, towers with frequent visitors, or people learning) and the Master and Safeguarding Lead of bellringing guilds must undertake leadership training. The leadership training is online and there is a booking form <a href="https://cognitofrms.com">Leadership Safeguarding Training Booking Form (cognitofrms.com)</a> (Note the link has not yet been updated to include Tower Captains and Trish will raise this at the meeting 24<sup>th</sup> September</li> <li>● We need to agree which towers we consider to be prominent, Trish suggests The cathedral, St Martins, St Pauls and Moseley (the latter as it has had 6 learners in the last year and also hosts Brumdingers). It is suggested that as Solihull has 7 ART students it too should be a prominent tower.</li> </ul> <p>Trish will seek guidance based on what we have suggested.</p>	

The Safeguarding and Support Officer at Lichfield Cathedral has shared a document – Promoting Safer Church Guidance and Jonathan Townsend has agreed to share this with Trish.

Trish will seek guidance for the catholic churches in our area, not covered by CofE guidance.

Eleanor thanked Trish who is well connected and keeps us well informed.

### 3. Election of Members

Elected via Standing Committee since the general meeting in May are

#### Associate members

Allie Lyo  
Jo Bramall

#### Full members

Pat Hicks - Packwood  
Robert Vaughan - Solihull  
Jayne Shipley - Knowle  
Emma Lansberry - Knowle

#### Full Member to be elected

Liz Collett, proposed by Rowena Shipley and seconded by Sand Cooper - agreed

### 4. Future Events

- Guild Outing to Wellington and Shrewsbury 12th October

Circa 25 attending with a wide range of experience and likelihood of change ringing on 12.

Eleanor will be checking with a suitable pub for lunch.

- AGM 11th January 2025

Venue is being arranged.

- Henry Johnson Dinner 22nd February 2025

We are booked at the Burlington. Michael Wilby will be in the chair.

We will need to consider the chair for 2026, suggestions to Eleanor will be welcomed.

- BUSCR 70th Anniversary Dinner 2025 To be held at Edgbaston Cricket Ground.

We have agreed to help promote this event and it will be included in the next monthly update.

They are keen that people book early as there is a large deposit to be paid.

Details here:-

[70th dinner sign-up - BUSCR \(google.com\)](#)

- 2026 Calendar of Events

We will soon be working on next year's calendar and would welcome feedback and ideas.

### 5. RWNYC

5th July 2025

SMG will host the event and Simon Linford has agreed to lead this. The London event is seen as the pinnacle of the event and had some 140 volunteers. We may not need as many but we may need help from neighbouring areas. Simon has a meeting with the Ringing World Coordinator to agree the responsibility matrix. There will be several key roles that Simon will need help with including tower booking and volunteer coordination. Activities for non ringer parents will be required. He will know more in the next month.

<p>We are all asked to mark our diaries as, as many as half of our Guild members may be needed to volunteer.</p>	
<p><b>6. Merchandise</b> This item was covered as part of the Finance Update</p>	
<p><b>7. Tower Keeper Training</b> In March towers were asked about their Tower Keepers - support required/skill levels/sharing of knowledge and interest in training/facilitating training. 13 towers responded. 6 have Tower Keepers 7 don't have a named Tower Keeper. Succession planning is raised as a concern, as it is to us. 5 Towers mention servicing or inspections by Taylors/Whites. Two towers have relied on training provided by Worcestershire Association who have invited us to another course being run at Feckenham 19th October - requests to Alison Hodge, Worcestershire Association Belfry Advisory Panel Convenor at <a href="mailto:convenor@wdcra.org.uk">convenor@wdcra.org.uk</a> by Sat 5th October. We have had no offers to run a similar course within SMG albeit Alison has offered to share her material or run a course specifically for SMG. We are asked to be mindful of towers we think are in need and point them in the direction of training or advise the Standing Committee.</p>	
<p><b>8. Any Other Business</b> <b>14<sup>th</sup> December 2025 Midlands Youth event</b> Simon Linford is organising an event in the east/south of Birmingham and is exploring suitable towers. 3 or 4 towers are required with most attendees travelling by car.</p>	