

# BUSCR 2026 AGM Minutes

Friday 6th February

Meeting opened: 20:57, closed: 21:02

**Attendees:** Lucas Williams, Nikolai Komar, Ioan Normington, Oliver Mumberson, Oscar Hornberger, Benjamin Wigley, Isla Casserley, Charlotte Holiday, Lizzy Tennant, Heather Wilkinson, Oliver Mumberson, Aby Thomas, Lewis McEwan, Molly Mullaney, Amanda Veitch, Harry Wake, Megan Johnstone

## 1. Apologies for absence

Rob Carr, Fraser Wood, Benjamin Williams, Chris Faulkner, Louisa Webster, Connie Lupton, Lydia Redman, Frank Agar, Edmund Roberts

## 2. Review of the BUSCR constitution

Constitution sent out and read by members prior to meeting. Unanimously approved amendments

## 3. Minutes of last AGM

Those that were present last year agreed last year's minutes were accurate

## 4. Reports

### a. Master's report – Lucas Williams

It's been another very successful year as we have transitioned to become more self reliant and sustainable.

On the student ringing side we had a very successful recruitment in September, which I am confident reflects the significant effort put in. Two weeks of nearly every day on a stall, handing out leaflets (~1500), and ringing handbells to draw people in. Followed by 4 taster sessions, which saw 58 people come along. Of those 58, 9 have regularly attended practices or socials since September. Many of them are now ringing independently. The initial effort was totally worth it, and has made for another really fun and rewarding year so far.

We've had 42 QPs for the society, and one peal (plus three with nearly BUSCR bands), representing a significant number of firsts and organisation that I am proud of.

On the society bigger picture side of things, we've also had a productive year of progress:

- Refurbishment of the society's handbells
- Belfry and clock room lighting approved, nearly installed ;-(
- Rebushing of the clappers
- New tail ends on the ropes

A successful year in its own right, but also one that will benefit BUSCR future. I am immensely grateful for the tireless commitment and effort shown by so many of my fellow committee members.

Looking to the future, I'm excited to see the next committee continue building on the immense progress we've made so far. Completion of the improvements to lighting in the tower, masterminding the rehang project, ringing more quarter (and peal) firsts for our new recruits, and then recruiting even more in September to start all over again!

#### **b. Deputy Master's report - Ian Normington**

The main role that I have fulfilled is being an individual with more advanced ringing ability and knowledge who can assist the master with the educating of the society, which mostly consisted of people who were unable to ring more than rounds and call changes when I took office. With this in mind, I think that we have been extremely successful and I'm extremely proud of the work the master and myself have done alongside the society as a whole.

The society has grown in strength by a massive amount with many of last year's new recruits now being in a position to teach both basic handling and plain hunting to plain bob. The average competence of band members have gone from rounds and calls to plain bob, with a majority of last year's recruits now at the stage where they can ring quarters of plain bob.

With the departure of the master and myself from the committee, which had previously been the center of technical ability for the committee and much of the society, I have great faith in the ability of the returning members of the committee, alongside those who are to replace us, to be able to effectively continue the society going forward.

#### **c. Secretary's report – Nikolai Komar**

Following a neighbour noise complaint, we reached an agreement with the church that we should be allowed a maximum of 3 ringing sessions per week, including visiting band bookings. This has meant planning more carefully when we ring outside of our regular Friday practice, but has equally motivated us to ring at many other towers in the area for away practices, quarters and peals. The St Martin's Guild have been able to continue their regular monthly practices at Edgbaston without any issues; where possible, we prioritise visiting bands as they are valuable sources of income for the tower fund.

While we no longer ring regularly for the church Sunday service, we have, at the vicar's request, rung for several significant services, including Mother's Day, Remembrance and the big evening Carol Service. We additionally rang at the service last week in recognition of BUSCR's 71st Anniversary. We will continue to communicate well with the church to ensure we can put together bands for any occasions bells are requested and can maintain good relations with neighbours.

Although understandably at a smaller scale than last year, the Annual Dinner was very successful. The ringing catered to all abilities within the society, with an outing on the Saturday, alongside two quarter peals and a peal on Sunday and an open ringing session at Selly Oak. The dinner itself saw 31 attendees and allowed us to raise over £200 through the associated raffle, which will be put towards the upcoming rehang project.

Finally, we have put together several resources throughout the year which should continue to be updated in future. This includes the inaugural BUSCR Annual Newsletter, sent out in July to keep past members updated on the society. We have also put together a committee handbook, which will hopefully help future committees run the society this year and for years to come.

#### **d. Treasurer's report - Benjamin Williams**

This year has been another successful one for BUSCR's accounts. It began with the opening of a new bank account with NatWest, as the previous account began charging a monthly fee. Fundraising through RWNYS and winning the Sarah Beacham ART Award provided some valuable and unique

opportunities to raise funds and reinvest in the society. In addition, over the past year we have continued to receive a steady level of income from weddings, visiting bands, and organising outings to other towers.

Income from weddings did decrease early in the year after the church announced that there would be no weddings held until at least the end of the year. Despite this, we still had other strong sources of income such as the annual dinner. While not on the scale of last year's dinner, which was able to fully fund the refurbishment of the handbells, this year's event much like the last included a raffle which was organised to begin the fundraising for replacing the bearings.

The main areas of expenditure this year were stays, ropes, and handbells. Thanks to the hard work of the previous committee, the full cost of the handbell refurbishment was covered. However, as a result of the recruitment drive and the countless hours of teaching over the past year and a half, the bells have seen heavy use, leading to the breaking of many stays. Over the past year we have purchased 17 (12 being spares for the future) new stays, two of which were provided by the RW, leaving the total cost of stays this year as £1126.92.

In an attempt to offset this cost, a membership fee of £10 per term was introduced. However, the income generated from these fees does not cover even half of the cost of the stays, which strengthens the case for longer-term solutions such as the installation of a training bell or the conversion away from more expensive Hasting's stays. We were also able to fund eight new tail ends and have placed an order for three new ropes, which are expected to be completed by May. In addition to this upcoming expense, we are currently awaiting a quote for the replacement of the bearings, which is anticipated to be a significant future cost.

The accounts are in a healthy position to support BUSCR through the coming year, and we have closed the year with a higher balance than we began, while successfully tackling multiple projects. I apologise for not being able to attend this evening and wish the incoming committee every success in the year ahead.

#### **e. Steeple Keeper's report – Oscar Hornberger**

We've encountered a couple stay breaks this year, with several others found to be cracked beyond safe use. However, the current situation for spare stays is very good with at least one non-cracked, fully working spare stay per bell, with several bells having multiple spare stays, although some still require work before they are usable.

As mentioned in the Treasurer's report, we obtained 17 new stays this year from various different manufacturers: John Taylors, O'shea and Blyth & Co. None of these stay orders contained no issues at all, however, the recent order of stays from Blyth & Co came with 3/5 of the ordered stays having some sort of issue that completely prevented them from being used until resolved. I personally found the stays from O'shea to be the best and contain the fewest issues, so would recommend using them again in the future.

A lot of cleaning and tower maintenance/improvement has been carried out this year.

In the belfry itself a lot of cleaning has been done, from the ceiling to the floor, with very good progress made so far. Furthermore, the lower half of the metal ladder in the belfry, between the bottom of the wooden platform and the top of the bell frame, was removed. This greatly improves mobility and accessibility throughout the belfry and should make it easier for when the additional belfry lighting is installed (scheduled for 12th February).

A lot of work has also been carried out within the middle room of the tower this year.

We completely rearranged many moveable aspects of the middle room to improve accessibility,

storage efficiency and assist with a large clean of the room. The large slab of stone has been broken up and removed from the middle room, along with the considerable amount of debris and loose bricks surrounding it, all of which are stacked outside at the back of the church to be slowly put in the bin for removal.

Earlier this year we purchased a large quantity of brand new M10 hex nuts and bolts (I believe 50x bolts and 100x nuts), the type used for stays and dinglers. Although this purchase was large (it was cheapest to buy in bulk) it should provide enough nuts and bolts to last the society many years before needing to consider buying new ones.

We successfully replaced the ringing ropes this year as the previous ropes were starting to fray quite badly in the areas around the tail ends and sallies. We purchased 8 new tails ends for the existing ropes and 3 new whole ropes for bells 4, 5 and 8. The total cost being £1022 + VAT.

Recently we began the large project of taking down, cleaning and reorganising the peal boards in the ringing chamber. This involved taking each peal board off the wall, allowing the walls to be cleaned and old screws and fixings to be removed. Each peal board was then thoroughly cleaned, had new fixtures attached and placed back on the wall in a new, more organised and allowing space for future peal boards position.

Overall this year has been good and productive for steeple-related projects and maintenance, with several projects (e.g. the middle room debris and stone slab removal as well as the peal board reorganisation) finally being completed.

#### **f. Social Secretary's report - Benjamin Wigley**

Working with Yazzoo, the merch provider from last year, there is a [BUSCR branded clothing shop](#) that anybody is able to buy from, with provisions for group order bulk discounts if requested. Many thanks to Oliver and Lucas in particular for their time and research into making this possible. Furthermore, over this committee's term curry nights have been especially popular at Dilshad's. The post exam BBQ in May went particularly well.

After many revisions, we had a great flyer to hand out for recruitment and many members helped distribute them on the stall during freshers week. Socially, the taster sessions went well, members made sure that no prospective members were left out and the brownies/baking available perhaps enticed people to stay.

Speaking of baking, members have taken very well to the cake rota. We have seen baking every practice night throughout the term, many thanks to the 16 members that have provided for a practice so far this academic year - there are slots remaining if you want to sign up! Congratulations to Ben Williams for winning the Autumn term vote with his excellent Rocky Road.

Our first big social event of this academic year was a Halloween quiz which went very well and had a big turnout - and nobody died in a fire from the pyromaniac lighting fireworks to kick off the evening. The Coventry ice skating outing went well with many getting their first tower grab too. To finish off before christmas, we had a meal at the Bell Harbourne, preceded by a grab at Harborne St Peter. However, it would be wrong to not include the social failures endured this year. Instagram posts were often delayed and socials were organised a little last minute. This is on me and I apologise for that. Overall, I still believe it has been an alright year for socials.

Reports sent out and read by attendees in advance of meeting; no further comments or questions raised (except Harry said Ben was a bit too negative for his liking)

## 5. Election of new members

	Proposal	Proposer	Second
1	Louisa Webster	Lucas Williams	Ioan Normington
2	Harry Wake	Lucas Williams	Ioan Normington
3	Heather Wilkinson	Lucas Williams	Ioan Normington
4	Rob Carr	Lucas Williams	Ioan Normington
5	Fraser Wood	Lucas Williams	Ioan Normington
6	Charlotte Holiday	Lucas Williams	Ioan Normington
7	Molly Mullaney	Lucas Williams	Ioan Normington
8	Amanda Veitch	Lucas Williams	Ioan Normington
9	Lizzy Tennant	Lucas Williams	Ioan Normington
10	Isla Casserley	Lucas Williams	Ioan Normington
11	Chris Faulkner	Lucas Williams	Ioan Normington
12	Edmund Roberts	Lucas Williams	Ioan Normington
13	Megan Johnstone	Lucas Williams	Ioan Normington

Unanimously approved

## 6. Election of officers

Role	Proposal	Proposer
Master	Nikolai Komar	Lucas Williams
Deputy Master	Rob Carr	Nikolai Komar
Secretary	Charlotte Holiday	Rob Carr
Treasurer	Benjamin Wigley	Benjamin Williams
Steeple Keeper	Fraser Wood	Oscar Hornberger

Role	Proposal	Proposer
Master	Nikolai Komar	Lucas Williams
Joint Social Secretary	Oliver Mumberson	Ioan Normington
Joint Social Secretary	Louisa Webster	Benjamin Wigley

Unanimously approved

- i. Fundraising for rehang

Lucas to remain in and around the committee in order to manage the major upcoming bell rehang project. This is an informal role, he will not have an official title. Potential titles were nevertheless suggested and rejected; all happy with this plan.

## 7. Upcoming dates for diaries

- a) 8 Feb - Bowling social
- b) 20 Feb - Pancakes after practice
- c) 28 Feb - Warwick outing
- d) 7 Mar - Social (event tbc)
- e) 14 Mar - City Centre joint universities outing
- f) 27 Mar - Last Practice of term followed by a curry at Dilshad's
- g) 9 Apr - Swindon outing

Everyone has added these to their diaries

## 8. AOB

Minecraft server proposed by Heather

Decided this was not relevant AGM discussion

Meeting closed