

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS

**NORTH BUCKS BRANCH**

**MINUTES OF AUTUMN MEETING**

**Held at St Mary's, Bletchley on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2016**

**Chairman's Welcome**

The chairman, Graham Bartholomew, welcomed 20 members to the meeting.

**In Memoriam**

Members stood in silence to remember Mike Lowndes from Newport Pagnell, who had passed away on the 26<sup>th</sup> July.

**Apologies for absence**

Alex & Tine Marchbank, Hilary & Claire Reading, Lesley Belcher, Doug Hird, Sheila Watts, Sheila Ware, Terry Page.

**Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the AGM held at Great Brickhill on the 5<sup>th</sup> March had been circulated prior to the meeting and published on the Branch website. No amendments were proposed. Adoption of the minutes was proposed by Alan Marchbank and seconded by Ann Birch, and agreed by a show of hands.

**Matters arising**

There were no matters arising.

**Election of new members:**

Nominations were received for the following:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Tower</u>	<u>Proposer</u>	<u>Seconded</u>
Miss Leisa Frost	Newton Longville	Nigel Titley	Alex Titley
Mrs Linda Windmill	Newton Longville	Nigel Titley	Alex Titley
Mr Andrew Cox	Newton Longville	Nigel Titley	Alex Titley
Mrs Vanessa Cox	Newton Longville	Nigel Titley	Alex Titley
Mr Mark Findley	Shenley	Edward Fawcett	Becky Fawcett

Mrs Angela Northen	Great Brickhill	David Middleton	Rosemary Howell
Mr Mitch Hudson	Great Brickhill	David Middleton	Rosemary Howell

All were approved with a show of hands.

### **Adoption of the Branch Bell Fund**

The rules of the branch bell fund had been circulated prior to the meeting and published on the Branch website. Martin Petchey proposed the insertion of the words “next Branch” in point 6 of the Management of the Fund to aid greater clarity “*Grant applications will be discussed by the Branch Officers, who will arrive at a recommendation for the next Branch Meeting where the application will be discussed*”. The slightly amended wording was proposed by Martin Petchey and seconded by Brian Baldwin, and agreed by a show of hands.

### **Increase to Adult Membership Fees**

Following the suggestions from members at the AGM the officers had discussed ideas for funding the new Branch Bell Fund, the officers’ proposal had been circulated prior to the meeting and published on the Branch website and within In Touch.

Linda Maycroft proposed the officers proposal as published and this was seconded by Gary Reading.

Alan Marchbank then addressed the meeting, praising the work of the previous bell ringers who through their efforts in maintaining the bells over the last hundred years have ensured we have so many towers with ringable bells today. As bell ringing is such a cheap hobby Alan proposed that the £2 increase to subs for adult members be increased to £5 making the total membership fee for 2017 £13 rather than the £10 proposed by the officers. Nigel Titley seconded this motion.

Brian Baldwin addressed the meeting supporting Alan’s comments and suggested that it might be more beneficial to increase the subscription further to enable the fund to quickly amass vital resources to enable work to be carried out sooner. Simon Head proposed an amendment to Alan’s proposal raising the adult membership fee to £15 of which £7 would go to the Branch Bell Fund, £5 to the Guild and £3 to the branch running costs. This revised proposal was seconded by Brian Baldwin.

Martin Petchey asked whether the Guild element was expected to increase in 2017. Linda Maycroft advised the meeting that the Guild decide on any increase in membership fees at their meeting in November. Alan suggested that it was unlikely the Guild would increase the subscription for next year as the accounts are running in surplus due to a number of cost saving initiatives that have been implemented. Linda Maycroft suggested that a cap could be added to Simon’s proposal to ensure the annual adult subscription would not rise above £15 for the next 2 years.

John Marchbank asked what would happen to junior fees if the Guild did put up the subscriptions. Alan Marchbank advised that the Guild made no distinction between adult and junior membership

fees and that this was a local decision to subsidise junior membership. Simon amended his proposal so that it was a capped increase and this was seconded by Brian. and carried by a show of hands.

Branch subscription for Adult members will therefore increase to £15 in 2017 and will be capped at this level for 2018 regardless of any increase in subscription to the Guild. Junior membership will remain at its current level of £6. From the £15 adult membership the guild subscription, expected to be £5, would be paid, £3 would be kept in the branch's general fund with the remaining amount, expected to be £7, being paid into the Branch Bell Fund.

### **Any Other Business**

- 1) Alan Marchbank on behalf of the trustees of the ODG Bell Fund noted their grateful thanks to the members of North Bucks for donating a 50% share of the ringing wave fundraising monies. Alan reminded the meeting that the ODG Bell Fund is a capital fund and as such the donation will continue to generate income to spend on the maintenance of church bells within the diocese for years to come. The Bell Fund will donate 20% of the value of any eligible work, which greatly assists in the fundraising efforts of the tower and the PCC.
- 2) Martin Petchey advised the meeting that Milton Keynes will be celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a new town in 2017 and asked if there were any plans for the branch to mark this celebration. Gary Reading advised that he had met with MK council who wanted us to mark the end of the celebration with ringing; a day in November is to be put forward being mindful of Armistice Day.
- 3) The meeting offered lots of suggestions for the officers to consider:
  - 50 Quarter Peals or 50 Peals
  - Naming of a new method and ringing a peal of it
- 4) Brain Baldwin expressed his thanks to Richard Booth from Chiltern Branch who quickly came to the rescue and mended a rope to enable a QP to be successfully completed.
- 5) The Chairman informed the meeting that Philip Starr has agreed to become the branch's In Touch editor and has now successfully produced two editions of In Touch for which we are very grateful.

### **Vote of thanks**

Graham proposed a vote of thanks to members of Bletchley for the ringing and the magnificent tea.

A breakout discussion was held where members shared their thoughts and best practice for tower practices. The output of this will be circulated within In Touch and online.

The meeting closed at 7.18pm