

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS

**NORTH BUCKS BRANCH**

**MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Held at Weston Underwood Village Hall on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2017**

**Chairman's Welcome**

The chairman, Graham Bartholomew, welcomed 36 members to the meeting.

**In Memoriam**

Members stood in silence to remember Margaret Hooton of Stony Stratford who had passed away last October.

**Apologies for absence**

Guild: Hilarie Rogers and Stuart Gibson.

Branch: Jean Mattinsley, Ann Birch, Hilary Reading, Claire Reading, David Phillipson, Mick Nimmo, Chris Abbott and Gordon Abbott.

Alan Marchbank's attendance as a representative from the Guild committee as well as Tower Captain for Great Linford was noted.

**Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the Autumn Meeting held at St Mary's Bletchley on the 17<sup>th</sup> September had been circulated prior to the meeting and published on the Branch website. No amendments were proposed. Adoption of the minutes was proposed by Simon Head and seconded by Becky Fawcett and agreed by a show of hands.

**Matters arising**

There were no matters arising.

**Officers' Reports**

The Officers' Reports had been published on the Branch website and were available for attendees to read. There were no questions on the reports.

**Branch Accounts**

The Treasurer, Sheila Watts explained that there were now three funds:

- General Fund

- Training and Development Fund
- The new Bell Fund.

Sheila then gave a brief overview of the financial position and confirmed that the grant awarded to Great Linford had been drawn down. Under the new bell fund rules the grant to Loughton would expire 3 years from the grant date, however the grant made to Hanslope was made before this rule came into force and there is no expiry. Sheila advised that when a grant lapses there was nothing to prevent the tower captain from applying anew.

Alan Marchbank reiterated that the Guild also had a Bell Fund which towers could apply to for up to 20% of the work and encouraged members to think of applying to that fund too when undertaking work.

The adoption of the accounts and officers' reports was proposed by Alan Marchbank and seconded by Phillip Starr and approved by a show of hands.

### **Guild 10 bell practice**

The Chairman advised that the branch will be hosting the Guild's 10 bell competition at Olney from 10am on the 25<sup>th</sup> November. The branch will be expected to provide guests with breakfast e.g. bacon butties and tea at the start of the competition, and to provide stewards. Graham asked for volunteers to help out on the day, members should contact any of the officers if they are interested.

### **Election of new members:**

Nominations were received for the following:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Tower</u>	<u>Proposer</u>	<u>Second</u>
Mr Darren Darkins	Lavendon	Brian Clifton	Gary Reading
Mrs Janet Osborne	Emberton	Phil Haslam	Sheila Watts
Mr Joshua Forrester	Emberton	Phil Haslam	Sheila Watts
Mr Edward Forrester	Emberton	Phil Haslam	Sheila Watts
Mr Michael Brough	Bletchley	Doug Hird	Gary Reading
Mr Michael Cullip	Bletchley	Doug Hird	Gary Reading
Mrs Sue Barden	Bletchley	Doug Hird	Gary Reading
Mrs Nicola Beckley	Bletchley	Doug Hird	Gary Reading
Mr Andrew Beckley	Bletchley	Doug Hird	Gary Reading
Mr David Beckley	Bletchley	Doug Hird	Gary Reading
Mrs Sally Gallimore	Olney	Liz Sheaf	Charles Knight
Miss Alice Toner	Olney	Liz Sheaf	Doug Hird
Mrs Ellie Constantinou	Olney	Roger Gay	Judy Gay
Ms Sophie North	Olney	Roger Gay	Judy Gay
Master Lawrence Edwards	Hanslope	Sheila Blenkhorn	Roy Keeves
Miss Alice Gambles	Hanslope	Sheila Blenkhorn	Roy Keeves

All were approved with a show of hands.

## **Safe Guarding – a discussion**

The Chairman led a discussion on the suggestion that the branch should consider appointing a Safeguarding Officer to assist towers should an issue arise. Members contributed to the discussion questioning if there was a need, what the role would be expected to do and if the role would add more confusion as each PCC now has its own Safeguarding Officer. Alan Marchbank advised the meeting that the Guild had discussed this at length recently and will be issuing guidance to branches at its Annual General Meeting next week, for cascade to Tower Captains, confirming what they should be doing. The escalation of any issue arising should be made by the Tower Captain to the PCC Safeguarding Officer who would seek support from the Diocese as appropriate. The Chairman thanked Alan for his clarification and the officers agreed to an action to circulate the Guild's Tower Captains' Guidelines on receipt.

***Action: Officers to circulate the Guild's guidelines to all Tower Captains upon receipt.***

## **Election of officers**

<b><u>Post</u></b>	<b><u>Nomination</u></b>	<b><u>Proposer</u></b>	<b><u>Seconded</u></b>
Chairman	Graham Bartholomew	Simon Head	Phillip Starr
Secretary	Gary Reading	Ted Fawcett	Nick Read
Minutes Secretary	Vacant		
Treasurer	Vacant		
RDL Buckingham	Lesley Belcher	Doug Hird	Linda Maycroft
RDL Milton Keynes	Simon Head	Doug Hird	Linda Maycroft
RDL Newport Pagnell	Doug Hird	Dave Middleton	Charles Knight
Guild Rep (1)	Patricia Rosewell	Phillip Starr	Gary Reading
Guild Rep (2)	Vacant		
Newsletter Editor	Phillip Starr	Patricia Rosewell	Becky Fawcett
Branch Archivist	Doug Hird	Phillip Starr	Simon Head

All of the above were approved with a show of hands.

After the election of the Officers the Chairman thanked Sheila Watts and Linda Maycroft, who were stepping down as officers, for their contribution to the branch and presented Sheila Watts with a bouquet of flowers and chocolates in recognition of the number of years she had been a Branch Officer, and in particular the last 19 years as Branch Treasurer.

An urgent appeal for members to come forward to fill the role of treasurer was made by the Chairman.

Gary Reading suggested that the officers be authorised to co-opt new officers to the vacant posts without the need to refer back to the membership. A proposal was made by Simon Head to that effect and was seconded by Ted Fawcett, and approved with a show of hands.

## **MK50 Ringing**

The Chairman advised that the branch has been asked by MK council to support its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary by ringing the bells in Milton Keynes. Graham thanked Anne McIntyre for stepping forward to organise a series of Quarter Peals around the branch in the forthcoming months. Currently Anne has 13 volunteers and members are asked to get in touch if they are interested in getting involved.

Linda Maycroft added that as agreed with MK Council the branch are encouraging towers to ring their bells at any time on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> November. The branch website now has a page dedicated to the MK50 ringing and towers are encouraged to advise either Gary Reading or Patricia Rosewell of their plans to join in so that it can be publicised. It was noted that this would be a good opportunity for individual towers to hold recruitment or open days and MK50 balloons and pennants are available from the Branch Secretary. Liz Sheaf asked if the ringing had to be a Quarter Peal and was advised that it could be anything. Simon Head added that there were plenty of methods that carry the names of some of the villages that existed before the new town and encouraged members to try these.

## **Any Other Business**

### **1) New ringers training**

Nicola Beckley asked if the branch could organise Saturday sessions to help new members develop their skills faster. This would be of particular assistance to Bletchey but would be open to the wider branch. A general discussion then took place on how this could be achieved. It was recommended that Nicola put together some suitable dates and make an appeal via the RDL for Milton Keynes for assistance in organising a session. Nicola was also advised that there is a branch rounds and call changes practice run by Mick Nimmo at Whaddon on the 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of every month which learners are welcome to attend.

***Action: Nicola Beckley and Simon Head to work together to pull a session together for learners***

### **2) Olney**

Charles Knight advised that work was about to commence to add sound control to the Olney bells which should enable more open ringing. The work will commence in May and continue for a few months - it is hoped that ringing will still be possible throughout the works.

### **3) Branch practices and meetings**

The Chairman opened a discussion on how we could encourage more new faces at the branch practices and meetings. Liz Sheaf suggested that something could be developed which could be printed off by Tower Captains and posted on the tower notice boards. Ted Fawcett suggested the Officers focus on those towers who are never represented at events and perhaps a visit by an officer to the practices a week or two before hand may increase

attendance. Sheila Watts also encouraged members present to help spread the word too. Doug Hird suggested we should find out why people weren't turning up.

**Action: Officers to discuss members' thoughts at their next meeting**

#### **4) Branch Outing in August**

The chairman appealed for a volunteer to organise a Branch Outing in August - Liz Sheaf kindly agreed to step in and fill the gap.

***Action: Liz Sheaf to advise officers of a date for the Branch Outing.***

- 5) The chairman on behalf of Patricia Rosewell expressed thanks to those present who had completed the Guild survey.

#### **Vote of thanks**

Graham proposed a vote of thanks to members of the GATE group of ringers and their helpers for the ringing and delicious tea, to the Revd Janet Lawrence for taking the service and to Nick Read for playing the organ.

The meeting closed 6.54pm