

Report on Guild Matters, 2017/18

Many issues currently under discussion by the Guild have been considered previously and will almost certainly continue to engage us in future:

Safeguarding is an ongoing concern. The Church of England proposed that each tower should have in place at least one safeguarding officer, which some see as impractical. To gauge current status in ODG towers, a survey went out to all towers of the Guild. (If your tower hasn't received an email about this from the Guild, please let me know.) **Please note** that all Tower Captains and trainers are now required to undertake the C2 training module following C1 online training (see all-members email via North Bucks Sec.).

The ODG website overhaul continues, led by PR Officer Elva Ainsworth assisted by Tim Hayward. Many features will reflect those of our Branch site, with sections for the public, and secure access for members/officers. A map of Oxford Guild towers (based on the Dove's site) will be included. Better communication with members and easier administration for courses are major objectives, and a functional mobile-compatible version should be available for the AGM in May. Population of this site with additional content is under way and there is a request for members to contribute articles and good quality photographs. Help is also requested with scanning items from the Guild's Library so as to make the resources accessible online.

Recruitment: The CCCBR's campaign to commemorate the loss of 1400 ringers in World War 1 was thought instead by some in the Guild to be disrespectful. ODG has its own version of the 'Ringing Remembers' poster available for download and the call has gone out via social and other media for new ringers to be trained this year to complement the 'Ringing for Peace' (Armistice 100) event for November 2018.

Training: The Guild continues to offer regular training opportunities, and the new Chair of the Education Sub-committee needs help with the organisation of the Radley, Michaelmas and Steeple Aston courses. The Radley Course is about to run for the 25th year; suggestions are invited as to how to make the occasion special, particularly from tutors/helpers/students from previous courses. A 10-bell (Grandsire Caters) course at Shrivvenham (November 3rd) is also in the diary.

If you feel there are any training needs not being covered, the Guild is keen to address those; current Branch deliberations will also take this into account. The Guild continues to support the Association of Ringing Teachers (ART) with an annual contribution (£500). This year's donation will be confirmed at the AGM in May subject to the Guild's sight of ART accounts and approval of spending.

Leadership: Recent Branch discussions and experiences on retention continue to feed into Guild policy and practice. Lesley Belcher this year organised a well-received leadership workshop with a focus on motivating Towers or groups of towers, and has shown vision and energy on this issue within ART as well as with Branch and Guild.

Bell & Restoration Funds: It is proposed that the General Committee's transfers to the Bell Fund and Restoration Fund be increased this year by £250 to £1000 each (to be confirmed at the AGM).

Future of the Guild: At the recent General Committee Meeting a short brainstorming session on the future of the Guild yielded a top priority of 'keeping the bells ringing' by means of better publicity and more efficient communication with all members. Further feedback from members directly to the PR Officer or via myself as your Branch Representative will be warmly welcomed.

Branch vacancies: Our Branch is entitled to at least one additional Representative beside myself, so if anyone's willing to travel the Oxfordshire lanes to ring and eat tea at more distant towers, please make yourself known in person or via the North Bucks website.

Patricia Rosewell - Guild Rep