

THE WINCHESTER AND PORTSMOUTH DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS

Founded 20 June 1879 as the Winchester Diocesan Guild

Presidents: THE RIGHT REVD THE LORD BISHOP OF WINCHESTER
THE RIGHT REVD THE LORD BISHOP OF PORTSMOUTH

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 15 NOVEMBER 2008 AT ST. BARNABAS' CHURCH HALL, LODGE ROAD, SOUTHAMPTON

1. Opening Prayer & Master's Welcome

The Master David Strong, supported by the Honorary General Secretary Pam Thompson, the Honorary General Treasurer Michael Bubb and Minute Secretary Francis Mitchell, opened the meeting with a prayer at 10.18 a.m. He welcomed everybody, especially those attending for the first time.

The others attending were:

Andrew Banks, Andy Byford, Chris Caryer, Andrew Case, Michael Church, Val Cleaver, Andrew Craddock, John Davey, David Forder, Keith Gillings, Maureen Kelly, Helen McGregor, June Mitchell, Peter Niblett, John Palk, Bruce Purvis, Mo Routh, Tony Smith, Mary Tester, Barbara Townsend, Jack Walters, Mike Winterbourne.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from:

Anne Bailey, Roger Barber, Diana Bishop, Gill Gardner, Jonathan Hetherington, Wendy Ling, Margaret Patterson.

3. Loss of Members from death since the last Meeting

The meeting stood to remember Janet Scott of Vale, Jenny Orchard of C&S, David Reed

4. Minutes of the last Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2008 had been distributed before the meeting. two amendments were made: 7 vi was clarified to record what happened at the meeting separately from what occurred afterwards; 7 ix had "Accounts for 2006 are still outstanding." added after the second sentence.

Acceptance subject to these amendments was proposed by John Davey, seconded by John Palk and agreed with no votes against. The minutes were signed by the Master as a true record.

5. Matters arising from the minutes

i. Guild Library.

A meeting with the Winchester Cathedral authorities is imminent to discuss structural aspects of increasing the height of the cabinet. Hugh Routh has offered to do the work at no charge to the Guild.

ii. Welcome Leaflet.

The Communications committee was asked to ensure that the two pages on the Guild website were correctly aligned for printing back to back on a single sheet.

iii. Striking Competitions.

The 10 bell competition had been cancelled in 2008 but would be scheduled for 2009.

6. Life Members

David Wilson of Ringwood was congratulated on achieving 50 years membership in 2009.

7. Budget Bids for 2009

i	Librarian & Archivist	£50	Proposed by Bruce Purvis, seconded by Mike Winterbourne. Bruce Purvis reported the Guild handbells need routine maintenance. Advice was given on how to do this.
ii	Guild Report Editor	£25	Proposed by John Palk, seconded by Keith Gillings.
iii	Belfry Stewardship Committee	£50	Proposed by Andy Banks, seconded by John Davey.
iv	Bell Restoration Fundraising Committee	Nil	
v	Education Committee	Nil	
vi	Communications Committee	£490	Proposed by David Forder, seconded by Mo Routh. (Domain Name Renewals £20, Web Hosting £50, Newsletter Printing £360, Post & Packing £60)
vii	Social Committee	Nil	
viii	Striking Competition Committee	Nil	
viii	Public Relations Officer	Nil	

All these bids were individually approved by the meeting with no votes against.

8. Bell Restoration Fund

i. Grant Proposals

Andrew Case reported that of the seven outstanding grants, all but one of the projects were expected to have the work completed and the grant paid by the end of 2009.

A request had been received from Shanklin where the longstanding restoration project is to be completed by £3,433 worth of work including new pulleys and flapping boards. The recommended grant is £450. This was seconded by Mike Winterbourne and agreed unopposed.

A further grant application was expected in connection with a proposed augmentation to five at Avington, for consideration at the AGM when a faculty had been given.

9. Proposal regarding life membership referred back by the AGM to the Executive Committee

Tony Smith introduced a proposed alteration of Guild Rules, seconded by Andrew Case:

*That the second sentence of Rule 6 b be amended to read (~~struck through text is deleted, underlined text is added~~):–
The Executive Committee may also recommend any individual for election Any individual may also be elected to life membership at an Annual General Meeting of the Guild in recognition of their exceptional services to the Guild.*

That the following text be added to Rule 7 after “Life members may only be elected at a General Meeting of the Guild”:–

Election of life members shall be by ballot and shall require the agreement of four-fifths of those members present. Nominations for life membership must be given in writing, signed by two members of the Guild, at least two months before the date of the meeting, to the Honorary General Secretary of the Guild who shall inform all tower secretaries of the Guild of this nomination at least one month before the aforesaid meeting.

Tony Smith emphasised the more democratic nature of election by ballot and the assurance of significant support for the life membership application amongst the Guild membership by stipulating that a very high proportion of the members present had to vote in favour.

Other views expressed were:

- The Executive Committee, as the elected representatives of the whole Guild membership, should be involved in the recommendation process;
- The Executive Committee should not be involved;
- The entire rule change is unnecessary, recommendation by Executive for approval at AGM is a good process, rejection by the Executive is less embarrassing than rejection at the AGM after wide notification of intent;
- A rule change of this nature could have “unintended consequences”;
- Bearing in mind the high feelings expressed regarding this rule change at the AGM, the Executive was the body best equipped to consider applications for life membership;
- Potential embarrassment could be further reduced by not nominating current members of the Executive;
- Inserting “exceptional” before “services to the Guild” was supported, though opinions varied as to the desirability of trying to define “exceptional services” for future guidance;

- The Executive would decide whether to support the nomination or not, in which case the reasons for rejection would be fed back to the nominees. In either case the nomination could still be requested to be put on the agenda for the next AGM.

Barbara Townsend proposed an amendment to the proposed change to rule 7 to the effect of requiring written nominations signed by two Guild members to be submitted to the Honorary General Secretary in time to be discussed at the Executive Committee meeting prior to an AGM. This amendment was seconded by Mike Winterbourne and carried by a large majority.

Mike Winterbourne proposed that in the change to rule 7, “four-fifths” be amended to “two-thirds”. This amendment was seconded by Andy Banks and lost by a large majority of the vote.

The vote on whether to proceed with the amended rule change was carried by 12 votes to 8.

Tony Smith’s offer to redraft the rule change in conjunction with Barbara Townsend for presentation to the next Executive Committee meeting was accepted.

10. Date of Formation of the Winchester Diocesan Guild

David Strong gave a brief resume of Derek Jackson’s article published in the Ringing World describing research into the actual date when the Guild was founded. No Guild documents, such as Minute book, from that period were still known to exist. But Basingstoke parish magazine recorded the inaugural meeting of the Winchester Diocesan Guild held on Friday 20 June 1879, not the 26th. Derek had raised this at the AGM for the Guild’s attention.

David Strong proposed “It is recognised the formation of the Winchester Diocesan Guild took place on 20 June 1879 and the date be changed where applicable”. This was seconded by Jack Walter and carried unopposed. A short article is to be inserted in the next Guild report.

11. Child Protection Issues

A proposal from David Strong had been circulated with the agenda. The next implementation of Child Protection legislation in 2009 will contain more appropriate provision for mixed groups such as bell ringers, but the Guild will have to take responsibility for ensuring that Guild events such as meetings, competitions and education days obey the law. More information will be forthcoming from the Central Council’s Belfry Stewardship Committee who are already in touch with the government department responsible for implementing the legislation.

David Strong proposed the appointment of a Guild Child Protection co-ordinator under rule 4. This was seconded by Mike Bubb and carried with no votes against. A volunteer is needed, to be co-opted to this role.

12. Notification to members of AGM

Pam Thompson outlined her proposal, circulated with the agenda, to replace the pre-AGM posting of AGM agendas and associated papers to all towers with a predominantly email distribution to District Secretaries for onward transmission to their District towers. This would save time and cost involved in printing and postage.

This proposal was not greeted with universal enthusiasm, especially by some of the District Secretaries present.

The feasibility of maintaining an accurate, easy to use email distribution list of Tower Secretaries for the whole Guild was to be investigated by the Communications Committee and the Report Editor.

13. Future Events and 2009 Meetings

i. Guild Dinner 2009

Mo Routh gave details of the arrangements so far for the 40th anniversary Guild Dinner at the Royal Hotel Winchester on 4 April 2009. Tickets will be available in December 2008.

ii. Arrangements are well under way for the AGM at Goodworth Clatford on 4 July 2009.

iii. The Executive Committee will meet on 14 March 2009 and 21 Nov. 2009 at St Barnabas Church Hall.

iv. Striking Competitions

Competitions will be held during Saturday mornings to help avoid other Guild events:

- 16 May - 6 and 8 bell competitions;
- 4 July - Inter-District 8 bell. (AGM day)
- 5 Sept - Inter-District 10 bell

Chris Caryer circulated a draft Striking Competition Certificate for comments. He informed the meeting that Striking Competition dates and results would be placed on the Guild website.

14. Any other business

- i. David Forder queried the inclusion in the Guild Report and Guild website of many towers that did not contain a reasonable number of ringable bells. For example swing chimes and unringable three's. Andy Banks suggested that full details be usually supplied only for rings of four upwards, with just a brief list of other bells revealed by the Bell Stock Survey. Districts were asked to consider their requirements and report back for the next executive meeting.
- ii. Pam Thompson reminded the meeting that the Guild display boards are available for use by members.
- iii. Bruce Purvis informed the meeting that a memorial service had been held recently at the Ringer's Memorial in Winchester Cathedral

15. Closure

The Master closed the meeting at 12.09 p.m.