

Winchester & Portsmouth Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers

Winchester District Annual Meeting

Saturday 13 February 2021, 2.45 for 3.00 p.m.
via Zoom: link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88388969942?pwd=VGhHOGFaTmYxZlBQbHILU0ZxaE8vZz09>

or, meeting i/d: 883 8896 9942 and passcode: 135246

AGENDA

1. Chairman's Welcome
2. Apologies for Absence
3. Minutes of the Annual District Meeting, 8 February 2020
4. Matters arising from the minutes of the ADM
5. Loss of members through death
6. Election of members
7. Officers' annual reports
8. Election of officers
 - A Chairman
 - B Secretary
 - C Treasurer
 - D Ringing Masters
 - E Executive Committee Representative
 - F Independent Examiner of Accounts
 - G WebMaster
 - H Newsletter Editor
9. Future Events
10. Guild Striking Competitions
11. Guild Master
12. Any Other Business

Bruce Purvis
Winchester District Secretary
23 January 2021

**Winchester and Portsmouth Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers
Winchester District**

Unconfirmed Minutes of the Annual District Meeting held on Saturday 8th February 2020 in the Parish Hall, Hursley.

1. Chairman's Welcome. The Chairman, John Croft, opened the meeting at 5.28 p.m., with a welcome to those present, including the Master of the Guild, Peter Jordan and our other visitors, and with thanks to the Rector and Wardens for the use of the bells, to the Rector, the Revd William Prescott for leading the service, to Gary Davies for playing the organ and to the Hursley Band for hosting the day and in particular Christine Hill and her helpers for laying on a splendid ringers' tea [*applause*], and all those present for supporting the meeting

2. Attendance. The following 28 members of the District (representing eleven bands and unattached), and three guests signed the attendance register: Robert Eames and Roy LeMarechal (Bishopstoke) Janice Higgins, Christine and Ian McCallion, Tessa and Tony Smith, and Martin Waldron (all of Hursley), Gary Davies and Brenda and John Palk, (all of Lockerley and East Tytherley), Roger Booth (New Alresford), Caroline and Martin Daniels and Jennifer and Nigel Herriott (all of Romsey), Rodney Skinner (Ropley), Jenny Watson (Sparsholt), Micki Nadal (Stockbridge), John Colliss, and Bruce Purvis (Winchester Cathedral), Paul Fitzgerald and Christine Knights-Whittome (Wonston), John and Joyce Croft, and Trisha Shannon (all unattached); Charlotte Colliss (Swanmore), Pete Jordan (Guild Master - Basingstoke) and Jennifer, Martin Waldron's partner comprising the guests. Also present were Christine and Peter Hill, Jinny Kufluk, Christine and Barry Saunders and Derek Stewart (all of Hursley), Caroline Fairley (Winchester Cathedral), John and Joyce Croft and Edmund Wratten (all unattached); a total of 35.

3. Apologies for absence. Apologies for absence were received from Amanda Bayford, Jen Churchill, Drew and Sue Craddock, John Gawne-Cain, Philip Gillibrand, Andrew Glover, Carol Higgins, Sara Janssen, Elizabeth Johnson, and Charlotte and Jonathan Smith.

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting. Subject to amendments ('Northington' from 'Broughton', item 9, *Future Events* refers and 'Elizabeth Johnson' from 'Rodney Skinner', item 10 no. 3, *Channel Islands District* refers) adoption as a true record of the minutes of the Autumn District Meeting held on 9 November at Easton Parish Hall was proposed by Rob Eames, seconded by Jenny Watson and carried on a show of hands.

5. Matters Arising.

Minute 5, 'Romsey Show': John Palk remarked that the potential for securing as many as 60 names for follow-up at the Romsey Show was a 'pipe-dream', and questioned the value for money of the outlay of £300. Roger Booth observed that at similar undertakings there had indeed been as many as 50 or 60 enquiries. On this occasion some 15 people had left their details to be contacted, but there was an issue of poor follow-up on the names forwarded to towers. Given the amount of money in the Guild's reserves, there was the potential for a great deal of outreach work for the outlay of a very small proportion of these funds. Nigel Herriott observed that, at Romsey at least, recruitment was not a problem. Roy LeMarechal pointed out that the Romsey Show was visited from across the county of Hampshire and beyond.

Minute 5, 'Donation to the Youth Ringers' Outings': Tony Smith reported that the £100 offered to the organiser to support these outings was taken up in due course.

Minute 5, 'Ringing World National Youth Competition' Martin Daniels sought reassurance that the failure of any District ringer to be chosen for the Guild entry for the RWNYS did not mean that the District's offer of financial support would not be renewed. The Treasurer confirmed that the offer was permanent.

Minute 9 'Future Events'. The Secretary remarked on the resounding success of the Carol Service at Northington.

6. Loss of members through death. None notified.

7. Confirmation of belfry elections.

Compounding member:

Emily J Crowder of Kensington on 9 November 2019 prior to a peal at Bishopstoke, proposed by Roy LeMarechal, seconded by Graham Wright.

Probationary members:

Douglas Page and Oscar Schultz of Winchester College on 12 November 2019, proposed by Alec Graham, seconded by Caroline Fairley.

Madeleine McHardy of Sparsholt on 6 January 2020, proposed by John Cleverley, seconded by Jenny Watson.

Hephzibah Murray of Winchester College on 28 January 2020, proposed by Caroline Fairley, seconded by Edmund Wratten.

Christine Hyde of Sherfield English on 4 February 2020, proposed Caroline Daniels, seconded Martin Daniels.

Hannah Whaites of Wonston on 8 February 2020, proposed by Gerry Cornick, seconded by Christine Knights-Whittome.

8a. Election of new ringing members.

Richard Eames of Bishopstoke, proposed by Roy LeMarechal, seconded by Peter Clarke.

George Mansfield, Bailey Riches, Harriet Riches and Nathan Smith of New Alresford, proposed by Ian Redway, seconded by Roger Booth.

Jon Butler and Alison Jones of Romsey, proposed by Andrew Glover, seconded by Rhoda Willson.

Che Haefner and Claire Webster of Winchester College, proposed by Alec Graham, seconded by Caroline Fairley.

Ella Kesterton, Rianne Li and Esther Sweeting of Winchester College, proposed by Caroline Fairley, seconded by Edmund Wratten.

Milena Nunn of Wonston, proposed by Christine Knights-Whittome, seconded by Gerry Cornick.

8b. Presentation of Certificates. Membership certificates and badges were taken for members at Bishopstoke, Lockerley and East Tytherley, and Sherfield English, and certificates for members at Romsey.

9. Officers' Reports. *Secretary's Report:* the secretary's report was presented for scrutiny for errors and omissions: with none noted it could be forwarded to the Guild Report Editor for publication. *Treasurer's Report and accounts:* adoption of the accounts, as usual carefully examined by John Colliss, was approved by the meeting, and they were signed and dated by the Chairman.

10. Election of Officers. The Chairman, in standing down prior to the election, remarked that if elected he was prepared to serve for a further term of one year, but felt it was right not to remain in office for too long, so that the District might benefit from the new ideas and new directions that could result from a change of chairman. So the District has the coming year to give due thought to choosing his successor. The Secretary echoed these sentiments, adding that if he were elected this year would mark a decade in post. The Treasurer was happy to continue in post, though he 'would not be offended if anyone else wished to take over as treasurer'. The other sitting officers, bar the Newsletter Editor were likewise willing to stand for 2020, and John Colliss was willing to continue as Independent Examiner of the accounts. The offices were filled as follows:-

Chairman: John Croft, proposed by Peter Hill, seconded by Nigel Herriott;

Secretary: Bruce Purvis, proposed by Nigel Herriott seconded by Roy LeMarechal;

Treasurer: Tony Smith, proposed by Roy LeMarechal, seconded by John Palk;

Ringling Master: Edmund Wratten, proposed by Nigel Herriott, seconded by Bruce Purvis

Joint Ringling Master: Jenny Watson, proposed by Bruce Purvis, seconded by Trisha Shannon;

Executive Committee Representative: John Croft, proposed by Nigel Herriott, seconded by John Palk;

Independent Examiner of Accounts: John Colliss, proposed by Bruce Purvis, seconded by Martin Daniels;

Webmaster: Andrew Glover, proposed by Christine Knights-Whittome, seconded by Bruce Purvis;

Newsletter Editor: Following a brief discussion on the need for a newsletter in current circumstances, the meeting agreed to leave the editorship vacant; candidates for all other posts elected on a show of hands.

11. Future Events. The Secretary advised the meeting that the year's programme was still at an early stage of compilation, with district practices for February and September being established and – most importantly – the location of the next Annual Meeting being settled, at Twyford on 13 February 2021. Concerns were raised – and duly noted – regarding the date for the Spring District Meeting falling on 9 May, conflicting with VE Day commemorations taking place that weekend, and regarding the staging of the Stockbridge Ringing Festival in the height of summer, likely to be busy with weddings and the Trout'n'about Festival. The date of 2 May for the Spring District Meeting and an autumn date for the Festival of Ringing were proposed.

12. Guild Striking Competitions. The Secretary reminded the meeting that the Guild Inter-District 8-bell competition would take place on the morning of the AGM on Saturday 13 June at Alton, with the draw at 10.30 a.m. The Guild Inter-Tower competitions (6- and 8-bell) would take place at Fawley and Eling respectively on Saturday 16 May, with draws at 3.00 p.m. The Inter-District 10-bell competition would take place at All Saints', Basingstoke on Saturday 5 September, with the draw at 10.30 a.m. Tony Smith volunteered to organise teams for the Inter-District Competitions, and his offer was accepted with gratitude.

13. Guild Master. Pete Jordan, the Guild Master, said that when he was learning to ring, he was amazed at the time and effort that was devoted to teaching new learners. Ringing was a hobby, undertaken voluntarily, and he wished to thank us all for our efforts in the teaching and learning process, for our commitment to Sunday service ringing, and for taking on roles at tower, district and guild levels. He thanked us all, very much indeed. Secondly, Pete drew the attention of the meeting to the Heritage section of the Guild Action Plan, which included a planned initiative to record peal boards throughout the Guild. Allan Yalden, the project co-ordinator, had requested that photographs of peal boards be sourced and copied – or taken from scratch and sent via e-mail – to him¹. Caroline Daniels enquired how Allan could be contacted: the answer was “via the Guild website”.

15. Any Other Business.

1. *Beyond Bob Doubles, February.* Edmund Wratten gave notice of the next Beyond Bob Doubles practice, at East Tytherley on Wednesday 26 February, concentrating on triples and major methods such as Grandsire, Stedman and Little Bob Major.

2. *Guild Report.* John Palk reminded the meeting that the provision of copies of the new Guild Report was on an opting-in basis, requiring members to request their copies through their tower secretaries.

3. *Format of meetings.* Nigel Herriott observed that our average age was now above 60 years. “Six or seven years ago” our ADM at North Stoneham had “filled the church”, and he wondered whether the format for District meetings of ringing – service – tea – business meeting was still viable as our age-profile gradually increased and people were retiring from ringing as they got older. Caroline Daniels enquired rhetorically whether there were any people coming into ringing in their twenties. The Secretary agreed that, although the traditional format of meetings had been subject to change during his tenure, the level of interest and attendance did concern him, and he proposed to organise a tower reps’ meeting to address just this issue. Tower Reps’ meetings were usually held in June. Roger Booth suggested the issue was not served well by a delay of four months, and that a meeting in April would address the issue to greater effect.

4. *Bell Restoration Fund.* The collection for the BRF raised £27.

The meeting closed at 6.13 p.m.

¹ At allan.yalden@mac.com

District Secretary's Report, 2020

It will come as no surprise that this year's report is largely of activities at the level of bands and social groups.

During the year we welcomed 13 ringing members and 6 probationers: the membership figures are now 245 full, life and associate members and 12 probationary members. We mourned the passing of Brian Lovelock (formerly of Hursley), Colin Slade (formerly of New Alresford) and Carol Ward (of the Candover Valley Ringers)

Our year began with a District practice at Kings Worthy, and our Annual Meeting at Hursley, following which we were looking forward to a busy schedule of 21 events to January 2022 – as well as Edmund Wratten's "Beyond Bob Doubles, the Hursley Surprise Major practices and Rhoda Willson's unusual doubles and minor methods at Lockerley. We held our second District practice at Crawley ... and then came the Prime Minister's statement on 16th March regarding non-essential contact and unnecessary travel, followed by Daniel's sombre warning on Win-Port: "We ALL need to take this seriously, we ALL need to follow the advice of the experts and now is the right time to do so. As a doctor I can't ask this strongly enough of anyone who reads this. Stay safe everyone", and with Lockdown I starting on 23rd March all District activity stopped. The one exception was Edmund Wratten's illuminating webinar on Coursing Order, delivered using Zoom on 14th November.

The lockdowns and tier restrictions did not mean, however, that we stopped being bands, and stopped being ringers. As well as phone contacts, regular zoom meetings to keep in touch and enjoy quizzes, most notably at Bishopstoke, Hursley, Lockerley/East Tytherley, New Alresford, Sparsholt and the Cathedral, and doubtless elsewhere. From time to time, during the summer, we have enjoyed picnics, and socially-distanced walks. In addition, regular practices, training and development have continued through the godsend of the Ringing Room, with weekly sessions at Hursley, Lockerley/East Tytherley and Romsey, and daily practices for Stockbridge/King's Somborne and friends as far afield as Surrey. Where social distancing has permitted, handbell ringing has flourished, as at Awbridge, Romsey and New Alresford.

Meanwhile, once restrictions were lifted from July the sound of bells rang out in Winchester, and in towns and villages and across the downs, with fifteen minutes of service ringing at Bishopstoke, the Cathedral, East Tytherley, Easton, Hursley, New Alresford and, thanks to the Ellacombe mechanism, at Romsey. At both Easton and Cheriton a single bell has been tolled every evening, and elsewhere – as at Awbridge, New Alresford, and down the Candover Valley, both in sadness – for funerals or *in memoriam*, or in celebration. Where multiple bells have been rung it has been subject to social distancing, normally with just three, four or six bells, to celebrate birthdays and, at New Alresford, to mark the 75th anniversary of VJ Day. To comply with the terms of William Davis' bequest three bells were rung at Twyford on 7th October. Christmas Day witnessed the back six of the 10 in F being rung at the Cathedral, and four of Twyford's bells.

There have, however, been many towers where ringing has ceased altogether, sometimes because church services have been replaced by online services via Zoom,

obviating the need for the call to worship. And there is a real cause for concern, in some towers at least, that ringers may not return. As a result, consideration is being given to merging bands, especially when within a united benefice. Beyond that, what will happen in 2021 is anyone's guess, and we cannot plan for the future until life returns to a new normal, which will assuredly be different from our old, pre-Covid normal. All we can do is support each other through our companionship, and as appropriate, keep up our ringing through the Ringing Room, other platforms and the much-appreciated podcasts from Cathy Booth and others on the internet. And, as one tower captain remarked to me, look forward to the joy we shall feel when the bells ring out once more.

**WINCHESTER AND PORTSMOUTH DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS
WINCHESTER DISTRICT**

Income and expenditure account for the year ended 31st December 2020

	No.	2020 £ p	£ p	No.	2019 £ p	£ p
INCOME						
Subscriptions						
Full	86	860.00		98	980.00	
Over 60	126	945.00		125	937.50	
Student	22	143.00		19	123.50	
Probationary	12	24.00		30	60.00	
Associate						
Associate over 60	6	45.00		6	45.00	
Compounding			2017.00	2	20.00	2166.00
Bank Interest			10.75			18.23
Sundry						
BRF collections etc.		31.00			34.50	
Badge sales					6.00	
Advance			31.00		14.50	55.00
TOTAL INCOME			<u>2058.75</u>			<u>2239.23</u>
EXPENDITURE						
To Guild Treasurer						
BRF element of subs		480.00			500.00	
70% of subscriptions		1075.90			1166.20	
BRF collections		31.00	1586.90		34.50	1700.70
Administration						
Secretary		35.28	35.28		22.04	22.04
Other						
Carol Service					7.75	
Meetings Expenses		40.00			77.50	
Certificates & Badges					24.00	
Romsey Show		3.00			297.95	
Young Ringers		100.00	143.00			407.20
TOTAL EXPENDITURE			<u>1765.18</u>			<u>2129.94</u>
EXCESS INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)			293.57			109.29
Fund brought forward			2894.64			2799.85
Sundry creditors						(14.50)
FUND CARRIED FORWARD			<u>3188.21</u>			<u>2894.64</u>

**WINCHESTER AND PORTSMOUTH DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS
WINCHESTER DISTRICT
Balance sheet as at 31st December 2020**

	2020 £ p	£ p	2019 £ p	£ p
CAPITAL ACCOUNT		<u>3188.21</u>		<u>2894.64</u>
Represented by:-				
BANK BALANCES				
Current account	1705.87		1536.85	
Deposit account	3056.74		3045.99	
Cash	0.00	<u>4762.61</u>	0.00	<u>4582.84</u>
		<u>4762.61</u>		<u>4582.84</u>
LESS				
Owed to BRF	4.00		7.50	
Due to Guild	1075.90		1166.20	
Due to BRF	480.00		500.00	
Sundry creditors	14.50	<u>1574.40</u>	14.50	<u>1688.20</u>
		<u>3188.21</u>		<u>2894.64</u>

I have examined these accounts and compared them with the vouchers produced to me and relating thereto and certify them to be correct

..... District Independent Examiner

..... Date

I certify that these independently examined accounts were presented to the Members of the District and were approved by the members present at the Annual General Meeting of the District held at on

..... Chairman



**THE WINCHESTER AND PORTSMOUTH DIOCESAN
GUILD OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS**

Founded 20 June 1879 as the Winchester Diocesan Guild

Presidents:

THE RIGHT REVD THE BISHOP OF WINCHESTER
THE RIGHT REVD THE BISHOP OF PORTSMOUTH



Guild Forum notes Recovery after Lockdown 24th Jan 2021

Present

A&P District- Roger Barber, Matt Watts, Simon Poyser
Andover District - Tim Pink, Mike Winterbourne, Helen Thomas, Roger Thomas.
Basingstoke District - Mirriam Taylor, Jon Soar, Martin Barnes.
C&S District - Steve Hough, Kim Matthews, Andy Ingram.
Portsmouth District - David Mattingly, Peter Cripps, Allan Yalden
Winchester District - Jenny Watson, Edmund Wratten, Peter Hill, Roger Booth

Apologies

Duncan Loweth, Justin Read, Helen McGregor, Barry Downer, Steve Noyes.

Background

There appear to be 2 clear phases to restarting ringing after the covid-19 pandemic lockdown where there has been no realistic tower bell ringing for over a year.

Phase 1 - Initial restart of realistic ringing which is likely to be socially distanced.

Phase 2 - A need to teach new learners which may need to wait until social distancing is relaxed.

Purpose

The main purpose of this forum is to start to consider the second Phase, although ideas will almost certainly benefit the first Phase. Ideally we would like to use DISTRICT resources (Towers / Teachers / Helpers etc.), to support initial handling and some basic ringing techniques before new learners go back to their own towers where they can be supported moving forwards. Each district may decide that they wish to approach teaching differently and that is fine. This could be relating to resources, demographics, experience etc.

Outcome

To start to plan that we have a robust plan across the Guild for teaching a large number of new recruits, and that no districts are left needing support.

The meeting began with each participant briefly outlining their own tower situation during lockdown and in some cases their concerns for local recovery.

This was followed by presentations from each District outlining their future plans, what had worked well for them in the past etc.

Andover

There was a big concern over losing existing ringers and the focus required to get ringers back into towers to overcome their loss of confidence and skill.

A&P

Again there was a concern about holding on to the ringers that we have. There were a number of new recruits before lockdown who are unlikely to return due to various reasons.

To support local training and support they are looking at grouping up local towers into 'buddy' groups of 5 - 6 to share resources etc. which will help to strengthen bands.

Basingstoke

A clear understanding of the status quo is required. Suggesting sending out a questionnaire or something to the towers to identify what the perceived losses will be and viability to return to ringing. This will assist with a recovery plan and future recruitment.

Communications between towers in the district will be key. Whatsapp group?

Set up a ringing centre where training can be carried out safely and efficiently. Considerations - Use of simulator, large tower, space easy access to bells etc.

The social side of ringing is important. Try to encourage pub nights after training etc. An ideal place to cover the theory.

C&S

The district is well set up for simulators.

Before lockdown Ealing was acting as a good ringing centre with extra practices on Saturdays, a core of teachers big enough that all did not have to commit every week etc.

Portsmouth

Liked the idea of tower 'buddy's'

Liked the Ealing model

There were a number of people confident to teach in the district.

Strategy for restarting and recruitment would be very much dependant on the situation when we come out of lockdown.

Winchester

Retention is seen as an issue as many towers have older bands

Teaching is also an issue. More teachers required.

There needs to be an understanding of ringers expectations upon returning to the tower.

There has been good progress with ringing room and people have been advancing their method capabilities however translating this into ringing on real bells will be an issue.

In favour of ringing centres and combined practices to give more strength and support
The district has simulators and good centres of excellence.

4 towers meeting regularly on ringing room.

There were no representatives from the Channel Islands or Isle of Wight Districts present.

Discussion.

There then followed some lively and useful discussion which are summarised in the following points.

- There was consensus that retaining existing ringers was key to recovery. We should reach out to the ringers that we have to encourage them back up the tower when safe to do so and have training and resources in place to support them.
- Accurate data would be helpful for planning from each tower to assess potential losses and concerns etc. It was suggested that any request for information came out from and was tailored by the districts rather than the guild in the hope that ringers might be more responsive to local information.
- Writing to individual ringers to encourage them to return to ringing. Richard Paxford has a draft of such a letter which the Andover district are working on.
- Use the same communication route to encourage sign up to the guild database. This would be a good tool for communication by the districts to its members regarding restarting of ringing.
- Ringing centres are a useful tool which make use of teachers across the district and so spread the load.
- Teachers do not need to be ART trained. There are many teachers out there who have excellent teaching skills.
- Investigate tower 'buddy' groups. This may not work in all cases and needs to be carefully thought out and handled, however there are many country churches who could benefit from working together in small groups to provide teaching support and to make up numbers in dwindling bands until new recruits can be found.
- Set up 'help squads' of ringers to go to struggling towers to help get them restarted.
- Effective sound control or simulators are an asset in towers for teaching. New systems are around £550.
- The guild simulator which is very long in the tooth and may require some expenditure for repair has been requested by Roger Barber for Hawkley on a permanent basis. This was agreed by the group.
- To get ringers together and as an interim step between ringing room and tower bell ringing it was suggested to have handbell sessions in a large hall with ringers using one bell each.
- Use mobile belfries for outdoor events to get exposure
- Youth coordinators in districts to work with the younger ringers.

Recruitment

- Any recruitment is good but particularly target younger ringers. Schools, youth groups etc
- Learners coming up to retirement are also committed and looking for something new to do.
- Use mobile belfries for outdoor events to get exposure
- Use social media more to tell the world how much fun ringing is.
- Generally be upbeat about ringing - feelings rub off and will encourage others.

Actions

The Master requested that the district groups get together over the next 2 months to discuss the suggestions above to see what works for them and how they will implement plans. **Please can the ringing masters report back to the Master by email with feedback by March 28th** by which time we should also have a better feeling on when lifting of lockdown might happen.

Richard Paxford to send a copy of the Andover letter to ringers to the Master who will forward on to the group for consideration.