



Bath & Wells Diocesan Association of Change Ringers

President: THE RIGHT REVEREND THE LORD BISHOP OF BATH AND WELLS
The BELL FUND of the Association is Registered Charity No. 73962

Master:
Rev'd Mark Jackson
12 Palmer Street
South Petherton
Somerset TA13 5DB
01460 242171
Master@bath-wells.org

General Secretary & Treasurer:
David Parfrey FCMA FRSB FloD GCMA
9 Kingston Avenue
Saltford
Bristol BS31 3LF
01225 873887
General.Secretary@bath-wells.org

Minutes of the A.G.M, Saturday 11th May 2024 At South Petherton

1. Opening Items

1.1. The Master, Rev Mark Jackson opened the meeting by welcoming all present and receiving apologies for absence.

1.2. Apologies:

Received from: David Kelly, Tim Hawkings, Philippa Parfrey, Mike Palmer, Julia Tourville, Sue D'Souza, Sam Shead, Julian Back, Susan Wales, Yvonne Criddle. Also Roy Rice, Elizabeth Lane, Maureen Lord, Keith Prime, Rosemary Tuhey

1.3. Remembering Friends

The meeting stood to remember those ringers who had died in the past year.

John Attwood, North Curry

Byron Baker, Pawlett

Ron Ballam, Congresbury

Christiane Banton, Crewkerne

Robert Beck, Chilcompton

Mark Birkinshaw, Long Ashton

Jim Bond, Lydeard St Lawrence

Mervyn Buckley, Chilcompton

Mike Callow, Clevedon St John

Roy Cave, Charlton Mackrell

Michael Comer, Dinder

Sophie Courtiour, Rodney Stoke

Ian Crighton, Easton in Gordano

Eric Davey, Backwell

Roy Davis, Frome Branch

Arthur Frod, Shepton Beauchamp

Mary Grief, Nunney

Pat Hatchett, Dunster Branch

David James, Clevedon St John

The Master gave a blessing.

Eric Lane, Wilton

Alan Lee (HLM), Bradford on Tone

Roger Lowe, Wincanton

Chris Marshall (HLM), Milverton

Felicity Marshall (ME), Milverton

Brian Mountjoy, Glastonbury

Andrew Pugh, Glastonbury

Graham Sage, Batcombe

Mike Senior, Dowlish Wake

Cynthia Sharpe, Dulverton

John Sparks, Porlock

Valerie Stone, Durleigh

Chris Swatton, Worle

David Wales, Milborne Port

Colin Watkins, Wincanton

Marianne Webb, Nunney

Ivor Whitehead, Evercreech

Maurice Willis, Farmborough

1.4. Minutes of previous Annual General Meeting (13th May 2023) were reviewed and accepted unanimously by the meeting: Proposed by John Hallet.

1.5. There were no Matters Arising.

2. Elections & Awards

2.1. Election of New Members: No New Members were elected.

2.2. Election of Officers.

- Resignations had been received from Paul Feast, Ken Hallett and Steffi Penny.
All of these officers were warmly thanked by the Master for their services for the Association.
- The post of Safeguarding Lead was identified as needing a volunteer and the Master asked anyone interested to give their name to the General Secretary. Job Description available from the General Secretary or Education Officer.
- The Master then thanked the following post holders who retired after long service:
 - David Bromwich served 48 years as the Association Librarian.
 - Charles Pipe-Wolferstan, retiring as Central Council representative.
 - Tony Cox, retiring as Peal Secretary.
- **Elections:** All the posts were endorsed by a unanimous show of hands (details in Annex 1)
 - Master – Revd Guy Scott, Proposed by Robert Perry, seconded by Adrian Beck.
 - Deputy Master – Gordon Rendell, nominated by AGM host Branch (this year Ilchester Branch).
 - Peal Secretary – Matthew Higby, Proposed by Tony Cox, seconded by Sam Shead.
 - Librarian – Bob Boulton, Proposed by David Bromwich, seconded by Michael Hansford.
 - Central Council Reps – Paul Wotton, Proposed by Matthew Higby, seconded by Julian Back.
 - Safeguarding Officer. - Post Vacant.
 - Tower Advisory posts are elected by the General Committee, not the AGM, and that John Hallet and Bernard North were re-elected by General Committee on 9th March.

2.3. Ratification of election of non-resident life members elected prior to peals

- Kevin J Skillings

2.4. Long Service Awards

Certificates were presented to the following

76 Years	Rosemary Smith
75 Years	Reginald Beale
74 Years	Keith Prime Charlie Back
73 Years	Beryl Morris
72 Years	Ernest Bray Roger Fox
70 Years	Adrian Beck Bob Lampert
68 Years	Alan Kent Wally Rice

67 Years Bryan Williams
66 Years Edwin Dibble
Freda Prime
65 Years Roy Rice
63 Years Una Rendell
62 Years Edward Venn
61 Years Janet Hayter
57 Years David Hammonds
55 Years Fiona Cumming
54 Years Helen Beaufoy
Hilary Venn
50 Years Alistair Bartlett
Annette Organ
Jane Parton

2.5. The following were elected Honorary Life Members and presented with certificates:

Jennifer Taylor
David Kelly
Matthew Higby

3. Officers Reports

All members present had received a 2024 Handbook/2023 Annual Report and all Officers had filed reports in them.

Two items were raised by the Treasurer

- a) The Treasurer proposed a transfer of £30,000 from the General Fund to the Ringing Support Fund. This was seconded by Margaret Lee and Accepted unanimously.
- b) There was a general discussion on a proposal to look into dividing the fees (membership and affiliation) into two parts so that an element was a voluntary donation. This may permit a recovery of gift aid against the donations. The meeting was in favour of investigation leading to a possible rule change in 2025.
- c) The Treasurer proposed no increases in membership fees or affiliation fees. This was unanimously accepted. The Fees remain:
 - a. Adult Membership £10 p.a.
 - b. Junior Membership £5 p.a.
 - c. Affiliation (by a PCC) £20 p.a.

General Secretary thanked all Branch Officers for their support in improving record keeping and to all Tower Contacts liaising over Affiliation Fees.

4. Information

4.1. Association Striking Competitions

- 6 Bell – hosted by Chew Branch, Saturday 29th June at St Mary's Walton, Clevedon

The following rules were adopted by the meeting

- i. Teams must consist of members of the Branch they are representing and be paid-up members of the Association. A ringer may ring for only one Branch.

- ii. There will be two classes of entry: Doubles or Minor and there will be separate awards for each. Branches should indicate which class they are ringing in on the entry form.
 - iii. The test piece will consist of 240 changes of Doubles or Minor, preceded by and terminated with rounds (including at least one whole pull at the end).
 - iv. All the rounds and the test piece will be judged but failure to set at the end will not be penalised.
 - v. A team failing to complete the test piece will not be given a score
 - vi. Two minutes practice ringing will be allowed for each team immediately prior to their test piece. This will be supervised by a time-keeper who will advise the band when the time is running out and call stand if the time limit is exceeded.
 - vii. The treble will be rung for two whole pulls to signal the start of the test piece.
 - viii. The order of ringing will be decided in two draws, the earlier one for the nearer Branches, and the later one for the more distant Branches.
 - ix. There is an entry fee of £6 per band to cover a tower donation and other expenses and an entry form must be submitted to the organiser at least 3 days before the competition.
- 8 Bell – Frome Branch, Saturday 28th September
 - National 12 Bell Final – Chilcompton, Saturday 15th June

Matthew Higby invited all present to attend the competition and Paul Wooton asked for anyone wishing to contribute to sign up on the volunteer's website.

4.2. Two decisions by the General Committee were noted:

- Subscriptions from new members will not be charged in the year of election (Annex 2).
- The subscription window is reduced from two months to one (Annex 3).

4.3. All members were directed to the Project Update of the new website in the Handbook/Report (Annex 4). General Secretary reported more work required on finalizing requirements with the chosen service provider. The Dunster Branch proposal as detailed in the Annex to the report was discussed and carried by a vote.

4.4. Date of 2025 AGM: Saturday 10th May, Tea and Service will be in St James', Taunton. Ringing arrangements in due course.

5. Other Business

5.1. Any Other Business –Review of Association Rule 11 iv and the relevant guidance notes regarding the election of Honorary Life Members

Matthew Higby on behalf of working party proposed a change to rule 11 iv:

“Honorary Life Membership (HLM) is awarded for outstanding contribution to the objects of the Bath & Wells Diocesan Association of Change Ringers, as described in these rules. Decisions are made by the General Committee, and recipients cease to be required to pay membership fees in recognition of this important award”.

Helen Beaufoy seconded.

The New Guidance was accepted by the meeting.

New Master:

The Master then formally introduced the New Master who gave a few words of appreciation for the service of Rev Mark Jackson as outgoing master and Rev Guy Scott was installed with the chain of office. Rev Mark Jackson was then appointed a New Honorary Life Member.

5.2. Vote of Thanks

Jan Wyatt proposed the vote of thanks to Rev Tracy Hallett, to the Tea Team, to the Ilchester Branch for hosting and organizing the itinerary and to Sue Cave for organizing the ringing.

6. Close

The Master closed the meeting with a Grace and a blessing.

OFFICER ELECTIONS 2024

Officer	Present Incumbent	Proposed
Master	Revd Mark Jackson	Revd Guy Scott (a)
Deputy Master	Marilyn Backhurst	Gordon Rendell (b)
General Secretary	David Parfrey	David Parfrey
Treasurer	David Parfrey	David Parfrey
Tower Adviser	John Hallett	John Hallett (c)
Assistant Tower Adviser	Bernard North	Bernard North (c)
Education Officer	Jill Hansford	Jill Hansford
Deputy Education Officer	Janet Wyatt	Janet Wyatt
Membership Secretary	David Parfrey	David Parfrey
Peal Secretary	Tony Cox	Matthew Higby (d)
Quarter Peal Secretary	Clifford Nicholls	Clifford Nicholls
Report Editor	Ken Hallett	Holding vacancy (h)
Safeguarding Officer	Steffi Penny	Vacant (e)
Librarian	David Bromwich	Bob Boulton (f)
Ringing Support Fund Officer	Margaret Lee	Margaret Lee
Association Bookstall	Janet Wyatt	Janet Wyatt
Webmaster	Julian Back & Paul Taylor	Julian Back & Paul Taylor
Independent Examiner	Anna Hallett	Anna Hallett
Central Council Representative	Paul Feast	Paul Wotton (g)
Central Council Representative	Michael Hansford	Michael Hansford
Central Council Representative	Matthew Higby	Matthew Higby
Central Council Representative	Charles Pipe-Wolferstan	
Central Council Representative	General Secretary	General Secretary

- (a) Proposed by Robert Perry, seconded by Adrian Beck
- (b) Nominated by AGM host Branch (this year Ilchester Branch)
- (c) Tower Advisory posts are elected by General Committee
- (d) Proposed by Tony Cox, seconded by Sam Shead
- (e) Steffi Penny does not wish to continue in post, hence a volunteer for this post is needed
- (f) Proposed by David Bromwich, seconded by Michael Hansford
- (g) Proposed by Matthew Higby, seconded by Julian Back
- (h) We are reviewing the future production and will hold this vacant pending clarity in this

Proposal to Change the Requirement for New Member Subscription Fees

Current Policy

At present the policy is to collect a full year subscription from new members upon their election. These new members join the annual subscription cycle at the following January, with the exception of members elected during the last quarter who's fee on election carries them through the following year.

Issues

The present policy is administratively complicated for Branch Secretaries and Treasurers, and the Association Treasurer and Membership Secretary. The annual subscription cycle is a major exercise requiring collection, recording and banking of fees at Branch level, and identification and recording of banked monies at Association level. In effect this whole process is repeated every time a new member is elected. It is further complicated when members are elected in the last quarter as Branches need to remember not to collect fees from those members in the following January. For new members, excepting those elected in the last quarter, they are presently asked to pay a full year's subscription for a part year of membership, which seems a little unwelcoming.

Proposal

To have a single subscription collection cycle each year. New members would not be required to pay a fee in the year elected, but to join the normal cycle at the next collection round. This does not represent a rule change, it is a matter of policy, not rules, and hence does not require an AGM membership decision.

Benefits

1. New members can be welcomed better by giving them a period of free membership
2. Branch officials would not have to collect, record and bank fees when new members are elected, thus significantly simplifying the Branch financial administration through the year
3. The Association Treasurer would not have to identify and match small subscription amounts through the year.
4. Branch officers and Association Officers will not have to manage the complexity of GMs & JMs elected in the previous last quarter not being required to pay fees

Dis-benefit

There is only one: the loss of fees for new members elected between January and September each year. In 2023 this was 10 GM & 1 JM across the Association, equivalent to £105 in fees, which amounted to 0.7% of the total fee due for 2023.

Action

The General Committee is recommended to approve the proposal that New Members are not charged subscriptions upon election, but join the normal cycle of collection at the following January.

D L Parfrey

Proposal to Change the Requirement for Payment of Subscription Fees

Current Policy

At present the policy is to collect subscriptions falling due on January 1st by the end of February.

Issues

The present policy is slow, and being drawn out over two months is unnecessarily burdensome for Branch Treasurers and the Association Treasurer. In a number of Branches the subscriptions are received in small amounts across the two months needing Treasurers to record and bank in drips and drabs. Depending on the timing of receipts the Branches will complete the cycle at varying times leading to equally varying times in the transfer of funds to the Association Bank Account, leading to unnecessary administrative burden for the Association Treasurer in reviewing the account and completing the relevant accounting.

Collection of subscriptions is a dependency for the finalising of membership numbers and names at the outset of the year to ensure the accuracy of the membership database and the production of the Annual Report and Handbook. The present timescale means that confidence on the database accuracy and commencement of work to complete the Annual Report and Handbook cannot commence until early March, and if there are queries it could be two months before the data had been collected leading to unnecessary difficulty, through the passage of time, in resolving these queries.

This year the accounts have been finalised, inspected, and prepared for publication in time to present to the General Committee meeting. Under the current policy it is not possible to give the meeting membership numbers with absolute confidence or to present the final draft member listing in readiness for review and validation prior to inclusion in the Annual Report and Handbook.

Proposal

The proposal is to reduce the subscription period to one month. Annual subscriptions fall due on January 1st, and this proposal would ask members to pay subscriptions to the Branch Treasurer, or directly to the Association Account by January 31st. This does not represent a rule change, it is a matter of policy, not rules, and hence does not require an AGM membership decision.

Benefits

1. The proposed collection cycle is half the present length, and therefore is a task for Branch Treasurers that will last half as long.
2. The overall effort required by Branch Treasurers will be reduced as the time taken to bank subs is the same whether it be £10 or £1,000, and so less bankings will be required. Equally the administrative effort in recording and reporting receipts will be reduced.
3. The Association Treasurer will be able to complete the accounting and reconciliation with regard to subscriptions in less time with less overall effort.

Dis-benefit

There is a risk that this may be unpopular to a small number of members when announced, although the risk is small and likely to be temporary.

Action

The Committee is recommended to approve the subscription collection window to 1st Jan – 31st Jan.

D L Parfrey

**DUNSTER BRANCH PROPOSED MOTION
FOR CONSIDERATION AT THE BATH & WELLS DACR AGM, 2024**

Re: ASSOCIATION WEBSITE

1. Dunster Branch requests that the officers of the Association give a clear update at the AGM on the status of the proposed new website for the Association, particularly with respect to timescale, cost, consultation with branches over structure and content, and progress made.
2. Dunster Branch considers it essential that designated branch officers (e.g. Chairman, Secretary, Education Officer and Ringing Master) are able to update their own sections of the website, particularly with respect to contact details, practice nights and programmes. This will ease the burden on the webmaster and make it easier to keep information accurate and up to date. Dunster Branch therefore proposes that the website commissioning team should ensure that this function is included in the project specification.

BWDACR New Website – Project Update

Introduction

We are working with 'The Big Dot Company' in the creation and implementation of an all-new website. The website will incorporate many new facilities, for example facilities for authorized Branch Officers to update Membership Records on-line, and for membership subscriptions and peal fees to be paid on-line.

Our aspiration is that the new BWDACR website should be 'best of breed', i.e. setting the standard for bellringing association websites. The present website was leading edge in its day, and it has served us very well, but we believe it to be over twenty years old now, and does not offer the facilities available in more modern sites. Our new website will therefore be all new. We have researched other existing association sites, and these are a mixed bag, from the very amateur to professionally produced, and ranging from very simple to much more comprehensive. As stated, our ambition is that our new site will set a new standard. It will be robust, secure, attractive, compelling, and easy to find, navigate and use.

The new website forms a significant part of our modernisation programme, where the digital aspects also include the membership database, on-line payment facilities (for example member subscriptions and peal fees), email management systems, events diary management facilities, and possibly more. Wherever possible these digital facilities will be integrated, although we are investigating the future hosting of our email systems as separate strand of this project. Where on-line actions are part of a process (e.g. the election and registering of a new member), 'workflow' processes will be used – i.e. an on-line activity will automatically prompt others who are required to take an action as a part of completing the overall process.

The information below is work-in-progress and should not therefore be regarded as complete, or final.

Further work to agree the final design requirement is underway, and this will include agreement on costs. Prior to formal quotation it is not commercially sensible to place a budget in the public

domain, nevertheless as previously reported adequate funds are being retained in the general fund to finance this work.

Accessibility

The new website will be accessible via PCs, tablets & mobile phones.

Many of the elements listed below will require secure access rights, the list includes a mix of elements open to the public and elements that will be only available to authorised users.

Basic Requirements

The following is the requirement list under discussion with the provider (listed here in no particular order), and where things are duplicated below it is only for completeness of the listing, the data will be held once but referenced multiple times:

- News – 1 page + archive
- Events & Meetings – 1 page + calendar and links to other pages
 - Association
 - Branch
 - Training
 - Other
- Education & Training Information – at least 1 page + calendar and documents
 - 'About Training'
 - Programmes
 - Diary of training events
 - How to access training
 - Payment of any training fees
- Association Rules 1 page + documents
- Ringing Support Fund Rules – 1 page + documents
- Process Guidance Notes – 1 page + documents
- All forms used by the Association – 1 page + documents
 - For completion on-line
 - For downloading
- Safeguarding policies and procedures
- Tower information (using links to external sources as appropriate) – at least 415 pages
 - Name
 - Location, including map view
 - Photograph
 - Facilities available, such as toilets
 - Parking information where available
 - Tower contact details
 - Ringing times
 - Other information such as peal/qtr availability
 - Free text for Tower Correspondent (possibly)
- Branch information – 11 x ? pages + documents
 - Officers
 - Events & Meetings
 - Newsletters
 - Free text for Branch use
- Association information – at least 1 page plus documents

- 'About us'
- Officers
- Governance
- Rules
- Forms
- Guidance Notes
- Archive
- HLM Listing
- AGM
 - Current year plans, agenda and papers
 - Past minutes
- Ringing Support Fund - at least 1 page + documents and forms
 - Trustees
 - Rules
 - Forms
 - Guidance Notes
 - Projects supported
- Striking competition – multiple pages + printable information (e.g. rules)
 - Rules
 - Current year plans, venues, times etc
 - Previous winners
- Membership
 - Forms
 - Subscription payment details with on-line payment facilities
 - Rules
 - Merchandise
- Young Ringer events
 - RWNYRC
 - Other events
 - How to get involved

On-line Admin

It is hoped that via the website as much as the administrative activities will be placed on-line, for example:

- Membership changes actioned by Branch Secretaries
 - New members
 - Notification of deaths
 - Name changes
 - GDPR permissions
 - Tower changes
 - Lapsing of Membership
 - Changes in Membership categories, eg JM to GM
- Maintenance of Tower contact information, including associated GDPR permissions
- Payment of subscriptions
- Payment of affiliation Fees
- Payment of peal fees
- Circulation of meeting papers

- Papers placed in-line and accessed by relevant attendees (will require security and access rights)
- Maintenance and management of the Membership Database

To facilitate this it is proposed that the membership database should be incorporated into the website technology (although it will not be directly accessible to those viewing the website)