



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 MARK JACKSON
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General Secretary & Treasurer
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Annual General Meeting, Saturday 11th May 2024 At South Petherton

AGENDA

1. Opening Items

- 1.1. Welcome – Master
- 1.2. Attendance and Apologies
- 1.3. Remembering Friends
- 1.4. Minutes of previous Annual General Meeting held on 13th May 2023 (Annex 1)
- 1.5. Matters Arising (not covered elsewhere)

2. Elections & Awards

- 2.1. Election of New Members
- 2.2. Election of Officers (Annex 2)
- 2.3. Ratification of election of non-resident life members elected prior to peals
- 2.4. Long Service Awards
- 2.5. New Honorary Life Member presentations
 - Jennie Taylor
 - Matthew Higby
 - David Kelly

3. Officers Reports (printed in the 'Report Section of this book)

- 3.1. Master's Report
- 3.2. General Secretary's Report
- 3.3. Treasurer's Report & Accounts
- 3.4. Tower Advisor's Report
- 3.5. Ringing Support Fund Officer's Report
- 3.6. Education Officer's Report
- 3.7. Edna Grabham Memorial Education Fund Report
- 3.8. Safeguarding Officer's Report
- 3.9. Peal Secretary's Report
- 3.10. Quarter Peal Secretary's Report

4. Information

- 4.1. Association Striking Competitions
 - 6 Bell – Chew Branch, Saturday 29th June
 - 8 Bell – Frome Branch, Saturday 28th September
 - National 12 Bell Final – Chilcompton, Saturday 15th June
- 4.2. Decisions taken at General Committee, Saturday 9th March 2024

- Not to charge subscriptions from new members in the year of election (Annex 3)
- To reduce the subscription window from two months to one (Annex 4)

4.3. Update on new Website (Annex 5)

4.4. 2025 AGM – Taunton Branch, Saturday 10th May

5. Other Business

5.1. Any Other Business – to be notified to General Secretary before Monday 6th May

5.2. Vote of Thanks

6. Close

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Draft Minutes of the 2023 Annual General Meeting Held at 3:15pm on Saturday 13th May 2023 at Holy Trinity, Street

1. Opening Items

Annex 1

1.1. Welcome – Deputy Master

In opening the meeting Marilyn Backhurst explained that our Master was unwell and unable to be with us but had sent everyone his good wishes. Consequently, as Deputy Master for this year, she would be chairing today's AGM. The meeting asked the Deputy Master to convey their good wishes to Mark.

The Chair then welcomed everyone to the meeting, thanking Glaston Branch for hosting us this year.

1.2. Attendance and Apologies

Apologies had been received from:

Brenda Arscott	Julian Back	Bob Boulton	Helen Beaufoy	Jill Hansford
Mike Hansford	Annie Holland	Mark Jackson	Tim Marshall	Margaret Marshall
Bernard North	Helena Parfrey	Philippa Parfrey	Gordon Rendell	Jan Swann
Paul Taylor	George Wyatt	Jan Wyatt		

1.3. Remembering Friends

The meeting stood while we remembered those of our number who we have sadly lost.

In 2022

Peter Alderson	Ron Ballam	Roy Cave	Margaret Chapman
Roy Davis	Ian Hay Davison	Tim Edmonds	Sue Fairhouse
John Hayter	Eddie Hancock	Tony Hodgson	Julian Kerry
Jeffrey Knipe	Reg Lee	Jim Major	Bruce Oakley
Edric Ovens	Debbie Parfrey	David Purnell	Mike Seeley
Victoria Sutton-Thompson		Derek Vowles	Bob Walker
Margaret Whatmore	Brian Whitlock		

And In 2023 thus far we have said good-bye to:

David James Chris Swatton

1.4. Minutes of previous Annual General Meeting held on 14th May 2022

The minutes had been reviewed at the General Committee in March and had been published with the meeting papers for this AGM. The meeting was content for the Chair to sign them as a true record of the 2022 AGM.

1.5. Matters Arising (not covered elsewhere)

No matters had been identified prior to the meeting, and none were identified during the meeting.

2. Elections

2.1. Election of New Members

The following new members were elected en-block:

- Cade Gather – Junior Member from Somerton. Proposed by Bill Hall.
- Melissa Cooper – Wells. Proposed by Sam Shead
- Lynda Friel – Wells. Proposed by Sam Shead
- Henry Sage – Ditcheat. Proposed by Paul Feast
- David Bailey – Ditcheat. Proposed by Paul Feast
- Grayson Pattermore - Ditcheat. Proposed by Paul Feast

2.2. Long Service Awards

The meeting celebrated the service given by its members over many years. Special framed certificates were awarded to the following members recognising their long service:

Mervyn Buckley – 50 years	Martyn Cave – 50 years	Jenny Cornwell – 50 years
Mark Davies – 50 years	Steven Davies – 50 years	Clive Dennis – 51 years
Ellie England – 50 years	Maureen Hawkins – 60	June Legg – 50 years
Yvonne Nicholls – 50 years	Beverley Perry – 50 years	Gordon Rendell – 75
Ivan Rendell – 50 years	Jan Sapiezynsk – 50 years	Andrew Sealy – 60
Christopher Summers – 50 years	Peter Tudball – 75	Sandra Verrier – 50 years

2.3. New Honorary Life Members

The Chair was pleased to be able to inform the meeting that Honorary Life Membership of the Association had been awarded to David Bromwich and Julian Back in recognition of their great contribution to the work of the Association. She was delighted to be able to present David Bromwich with his certificate, Julian who was unable to be present would receive his certificate later. Julian Back We are delighted to announce the election of David Bromwich and Julian Back as Honorary Life Members of the Association. Both have given vast service to our Association and we are extremely grateful.

2.4. Election of Officers

The following officers were elected en bloc:

Master - Mark Jackson	Deputy Master - Marilyn Backhurst
General Secretary - David Parfrey	Treasurer - David Parfrey (b)
Education Officer - Jill Hansford	Deputy Education Officer - Janet Wyatt
Membership Secretary - David Parfrey (c)	Peal Secretary - Tony Cox
Quarter Peal Secretary - Clifford Nicholls	Report Editor - Ken Hallett
Safeguarding Officer - Steffi Penny	Librarian - David Bromwich
Ringing Support Fund Officer - Margaret Lee	Association Bookstall - Janet Wyatt
Webmasters - Julian Back & Paul Taylor (d)	Independent - Examiner Anna Hallett
Central Council Representatives - Paul Feast, Michael Hansford, Matthew Higby, Charles Pipe-Wolferstan, David Parfrey	

(a) The Tower Advisor & Assistant Tower Advisor are appointed by the General Committee and not through election at the AGM, it was noted that John Hallett and Bernard North had been respectively appointed to these positions.

(b) Although David had been elected as Treasurer at the last AGM, he wished to record his gratitude to Liz Lane who had generously continued in post through 2022 to cover the role whilst David needed time out.

(c) As agreed at 2022 AGM the roles of General Secretary & Association Treasurer have been brought together whilst we move through a period of modernising and restructuring, a

part of which will lead to redefinition of the roles required by the Association. It was noted that since Debbie's death David has covered her Membership Secretary role, and it is proposed to add this to the restructuring activity as there are currently areas of overlap. (d) Paul Taylor was elected Webmaster in 2022, however as we are working on a new Website Julian has kindly continued to support the existing website.

Members were encouraged to note the explanatory comments below the table. Particularly noting that we agreed at 2022 AGM that we would seek to simplify, modernise and improve our admin processes, and this would have an impact on some of the officer roles we presently have, for example in removing present overlaps and duplications. DP apologised to the meeting that he did not make the headway on this that he had hoped during 2022, because of the sudden illness and subsequent death of his wife, Debbie. Nevertheless, one gap in our officer coverage he is concerned about is communication with members and beyond, he believes we need someone to handle this area. Although a role description has yet to be developed, and hence no election was sought at the AGM, DP said that he would be pleased to hear from anyone interested in this area after the meeting.

Notice was given today particularly for two roles requiring election in 2024:

- Peal Secretary – Tony Cox has indicated that he wishes to step down in 2024
- Master - Mark had indicated this week that he wishes not to seek re-election in 2024. This means that during the coming months, and at an appropriate time, we will begin the task of 'recruiting' a new Master. There will of course be a formal election at the 2024 AGM as there is every year, but in advance of that there will be process to identify potential candidates and pave the way for a successful transition.

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

The Secretary reported that he had been made aware of three:

- Colin Newman from Reading who rang a peal at Wells on 28th May
- Adam Crocker from Bromsgrove who rang a peal at Chilcompton on 12th June
- Nicholas Elks from Peterborough who rang a peal at Long Ashton on 30th October

3. Officers Reports

The following officers reports had all been circulated in advance of the meeting, and can be viewed in the 2023 Annual Report book.

- 3.1. Master's Report
- 3.2. General Secretary's Report
- 3.3. Treasurer's Report & Accounts
- 3.4. Tower Advisor's Report
- 3.5. Ringing Support Fund Officer's Report
- 3.6. Education Officer's Report
- 3.7. Edna Grabham Memorial Education Fund Report
- 3.8. Safeguarding Officer's Report
- 3.9. Peal Secretary's Report
- 3.10. Quarter Peal Secretary's Report

4. Information

4.1. Association Striking Competitions

The General Committee had decided it wished to follow the same format as last year, and rules and explanatory notes had been circulated prior to the meeting. The competition will be at the kind invitation of Cary Branch on the last Saturday in September (30th). It will be based at Wincanton (8 bell class) and Pen Selwood 96 bell class) with everyone together for

tea and results. Paul Feast had offered to lead on the arrangements for the competition and entries should be communicated direct to him.

4.2. Update on new Website

The Webmasters had sent their apologies for the AGM, however it was reported via the Secretary that progress is being made on the requirements definition of our new website. Paul & Julian had been trawling through other ringing association websites, not to copy them, but to see what they are offering and what works well and not so well; it was reported that our vision is for a best of breed, all new site. It will be produced for us by Will Carey of the Big Dot Co. Whilst the definition phase is not yet complete, new features might include on-line subscription payment, on-line updating of membership details etc, with the database behind this becoming the single source for all membership reporting, including the annual returns.

4.3. 'Festival of Ringing'

DP apologised that for the reasons already given he has not been able to progress this idea as he wished, and that 2022 had been overtaken by events of national importance involving ringing across the country (Jubilee and the death of Her Majesty the Queen). Also it was noted that 2023 has also had great national focus on bellringing as we came together to celebrate the Coronation. Given all these things, and the need to progress admin improvements DP proposed to return to this in 2024.

4.4. 2024 AGM – Ilchester Branch, Saturday 11th May 2024

Members were asked to note the date and location for the 2024 AGM. The Chair reminded members that they should now be used to the fact that 2nd Saturday in May each year is AGM day, and she asked them to put it on branch calendars, tower calendars and their own calendars now, and make a point that whenever Christmas, or whatever, brings a new calendar this date goes straight on. She emphasised that the point of having a fixed date means that we don't need any comms to tell us when it is going to be, only where it is going to be.

5. Other Business

Two items had been notified in advance of the meeting, and a third was requested at the meeting:

5.1. Milverton with Halse, Fitzhead and Ash Priors

This was a proposal from the Master to transfer the tower affiliations and membership of the Milverton with Halse, Fitzhead and Ash Priors Benefice from Taunton Branch to Dunster Branch. The meeting was informed that this has the support of the committees of both the Taunton and the Dunster Branches.

Keith Beale commented that the members of these towers were not supportive of this change and had no wish to change Branches. As neither the Master nor the representatives of the Taunton committee were present it was felt that this could not be taken further at this meeting. Keith had wished to raise his unhappiness with the overall situation with regard to the Benefice, its members and the Taunton Branch, he had prepared a note for the Master concerning this however, again because the Master and Taunton Committee representatives were unable to be present, Keith did not ask for this to be discussed further at this time.

5.2. Committee Communication

Glenn Taylor had concerns about the present level of communication between the Committee and the Association's membership, and clarity in areas of the rules.

It was generally agreed that improved communications would be very beneficial. The Secretary responded that as he had mentioned under the election of officers he felt the need for a committee member dedicated to the role of internal and external

communications, and would undertake to develop a draft brief for the role, he hoped a volunteer would be forthcoming. However, he also reminded the meeting that every Branch has a representative on the General Committee, and that the purpose of this role is to maintain the link between the Committee and the Branches, and through Branches to our members.

As to rules, the meeting agreed that they had only been redrafted two years ago, after a great deal of consultation. That is not to say that they are perfect and further improvements that could be made. Members may propose amendments to the rules for consideration at any AGM, and the rules do require a formal review every five years, the next of which will be due during the next two years with the outcome to be submitted for approval at the 2025 AGM. A particular issue is the implementation rules and the processes required to make them work, and the Secretary had produced an accompanying procedures document. He apologised that this had not been posted on the website, he wanted to review it again in the light of experience gained since it was originally drafted, and he hoped that when published it would help.

5.3. Committee Work

Sam Shead asked if he might comment on the work being done by the officers on behalf of the Association's members. He reminded the meeting that all the officers are volunteers and give freely of their time, and that they do their best and they deserve members thanks for all they do. He paid particular tribute to the Secretary, who despite such a very sad year had remained in office and continued working for the membership. He asked the meeting to join him in a round of applause for the officers.

5.4. Vote of Thanks

John Hallett gave the vote of thanks, to the Revd Ana Lawrence, for taking the service and allowing us to come to Street, to Charles Pipe-Wolferstan for again playing the organ, to Mike Palmer and Graham Darke for local arrangements, to everyone worked to give us such a splendid tea, and of course to Marilyn Backhurst for stepping in the Chair the meeting.

6. Close

The meeting closed with the Grace.

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	Ken Hallett
Safeguarding Officer	Steffi Penny	Vacant (e)
Librarian	David Bromwich	Bob Boulton (f)
Ringling 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	Ken Hallett (h)
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) Proposed by Charles Pipe-Wolferstan, seconded by David Parfrey

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

5. The proposed collection cycle is half the present length, and therefore is a task for Branch Treasurers that will last half as long.
6. 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.
7. 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
 - RWNRYC
 - 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)