



**Hereford Diocesan Guild of Bellringers**  
**Management Committee Meeting – Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2024**  
**Held in the Forbury Chapel at Leominster, 7.15pm**

**Those present:**

<i>Guild Master</i>	Sue Robinson	<i>Bridgnorth Rep.</i>	Val Roberts
<i>Guild Secretary</i>	Fran Watkins	<i>Bromyard Rep.</i>	Ady Taylor
<i>Public Engagement Officer</i>	Nicky Aubrey	<i>Church Stretton Rep.</i>	Andy Wilson
<i>Tower Stewardship Advisor</i>	Alan Reade	<i>Clifford &amp; Kington Sec.</i>	Pat Key
<i>Webmaster</i>	Nick Chapman	<i>Clifford &amp; Kington Rep.</i>	Ian Price
<i>Clerical Rep</i>	Barney Bell	<i>Hereford Sec.</i>	Barbara Fox
<i>Clerical Rep</i>	Anthony Ellis	<i>Leominster Sec.</i>	Abigail Pugh
		<i>Ross Rep.</i>	Sally Townsend
		<i>Events Team Rep.</i>	Richard Bracher

Also present – Andrew Watkins (*representing Kris Perruzza, Master Elect*) and Anne Hone

**Apologies were received from:**

<i>Guild Treasurer</i>	Mark Aston	<i>Bromyard Sec.</i>	Clare Bellis
<i>Education Officer</i>	Jessica Pugh	<i>Church Stretton Sec.</i>	Lesley Harling
<i>Peal Recorder</i>	Neil Bennett	<i>Hereford Rep.</i>	Chris Brackston
<i>Report Secretary</i>	Neil Bragg	<i>Ledbury Sec.</i>	Chris Jones
<i>Master Elect</i>	Kris Perruzza	<i>Ledbury Rep.</i>	Chris Roberts
<i>Belfries Officer</i>	Ashley Fortey	<i>Ross Rep.</i>	Syd Ewart
<i>Clerical Rep.</i>	Nicky Seabright		

**Not in attendance:**

<i>Bridgnorth Sec.</i>	Darren Swancott
<i>Leominster Rep.</i>	Alice Pugh

**1. Welcome and opening prayers:**

The Guild Master welcomed everyone to the meeting, then opening prayers were led by Rev. Barney Bell and remembered those who have died since our last meeting in March 2024:

Reg Maund (Clun)

Frank Osbaldiston (non-resident life member)

Vic Chamberlain (Stoke Prior)

David Waring (Bishops Frome)

Chris Kippin (Cleobury Mortimer)

James Foster (non-resident life member)

Frederick Jones (past member from Condoover)

Norman Mattingley (Freeman)

2. **Apologies for absence:** were formally received from those members listed above.
3. **Minutes of the March 2024 MCM:** the minutes had been distributed to all committee members prior to the meeting. Acceptance of the minutes was proposed by Pat Key, seconded by Nick Chapman, they were agreed unanimously and signed by the Master as a correct record of the meeting.
4. **Matters Arising:** a 'summing up' of the Events Committee had not been completed by the Exec. Officers prior to the AGM, the Guild Master advised that the current Trustees were looking at this and other issues such as ringing at closed churches, and this would be discussed further under item 9.
5. **Correspondence:**
  - i) The Guild Secretary advised that following the proposed closure of Hereford St. Nicholas Church the Guild had initiated contact with the proposed new owners Encore Enterprises and their backers, Stronger Hereford, to register our interest in the bells and to discuss continued access. The Keltek Trust had also recently sent correspondence highlighting the proposed closure. Initial responses from the proposed new owners had been encouraging but no arrangements had yet been agreed.
  - ii) The Central Council had written regarding their consultation on their financial plans and proposed increase in the affiliation fee, this had been forwarded to the members via the district secretaries. Subsequently at the CCCBR meeting in September a motion was passed increasing the affiliation fee to 40p per member for 2025, and £1.00 per member for 2026.
  - iii) The Trustees had written to request a change to rule 20b (see appendix i)  
Details of the Rule change had been sent to all committee members prior to the meeting and the Guild Master proposed that the request be accepted and taken to the District AGMs for consideration.  
Andy Wilson believed that the original rule had been designed to ensure that rule changes could be discussed at District AGMs and the proposed rule change would mean that any future rule changes could be submitted as late as February, when District AGMs will already have taken place.  
The Guild Secretary advised that the original intention of the rule change was to ensure that Districts could have scrutiny of rule changes, however the cut-off date of 30<sup>th</sup> September had unintended consequences, such that if a rule change was proposed at this meeting, the existing rules mean that it could not be passed until the AGM in 2026, and such delays would hamper the progress of the Guild. The Trustees had looked at the circumstances should a rule change be proposed for a Special General Meeting, this would only require six weeks (42 days) notice. Nicky Aubrey commented that as 90 days' notice would be given, and details of any rule change would be sent out to Management Committee Members, there would be an opportunity for proposed rule changes to be discussed at the March meeting prior to an AGM.



Barney Bell said that whilst we might need to guard against any rule changes being too hasty we should not hinder our own progress.

The Guild Master asked whether all members were happy and understood the proposed rule change. She asked for a vote on taking this rule change forward to be discussed at District AGMs, to the March MCM and the 2026 AGM and this was unanimously supported.

**6) Officer's Interim Reports:** Written reports had been received and distributed prior to the meeting from the Guild Master, Guild Treasurer, Guild Secretary, Master Elect, Report Secretary, Tower Stewardship Advisor and Belfries Officer (see appendix ii).

The Guild Master asked if there were any questions, Val Roberts commented that although she did not have a question she would like to comment on the amount of information included within the Tower Stewardship Advisor's report and that it must have taken a lot of time and work. Val thought it was a wide and complex area, the Guild Master agreed and advised that the Trustees are looking at writing policies to cover many areas including safeguarding and tower stewardship. The issues are too complex to be discussed at this meeting and another meeting will be required to work through many of the topics. The Guild Master thanked the Tower Stewardship Advisor for all his hard work and the regular and detailed information he provides.

Anthony Ellis then gave a verbal report on the recent Central Council meeting which he and Abigail Pugh had attended in Exeter. He advised the Central Council's strategy for 2030 was a large project with three areas for Marketing, Recruitment and Development of more ringers. Under this project the Central Council has developed a large range of resources that can be used, these are freely available online and it is for us, as ringers, to make use of them. He mentioned that the Central Council have developed resources specifically for use within schools. There has been a lot of work done to assist with recruitment, but we need to make sure that there are ringers on the ground who are aware of the resources, and are willing to actively recruit new ringers.

Anthony described that the main motion was the increase of affiliation fees to fund the administrative work of the Central Council. Anthony was not against the increase in principal but he had supported an amendment that would not permit further increases past 2025 unless the Executive came up with a business plan, he supported the amendment because he thought the Executive had not fully considered the implications of taking on an employee. There was also some concern about how the increase in affiliation fee would affect non-territorial societies, and that some ringers could end up paying CCCBR affiliation fees (indirectly) several times over. Anthony explained he had felt disappointed that the Executive had not properly thought through all the consequences of the proposed increase and was not satisfied that the Executive had prepared or planned properly. The amendment to the motion had been defeated and the proposal to increase affiliation fees to 40p per member for 2025 and £1.00 per member for 2026 had been carried.

Andy Wilson asked whether any further increases in affiliation fee might mean that our subscriptions would increase. It was agreed that this could be the case, the only option we would have would be to no longer affiliate to the Central Council.

Alan Reade pointed out that the Central Council does provide associations with a great deal of guidance in complex areas such as safeguarding and health and safety, we increasingly rely on them

to keep up to date with legislation, and the work they undertake helps protect the trustees of the Guild.

The Guild Master asked how we could ensure that we hold the Central Council to account and that they spend our money wisely. Anthony replied that the best way would be to continue to monitor this and scrutinise their work closely at meetings. The Guild Secretary asked Anthony whether he believed we would be wise to increase the number of Central Council representatives we send to meetings. We are currently entitled to send four representatives but only send two, Anthony agreed that this could be a positive move and the Guild Secretary asked the members to take this back to their AGMs to see if anyone would be willing to stand as a Central Council Representative at next year's AGM.

Anthony finished his report by saying that he had also been disappointed that the Central Council had not discussed the problem of increasing numbers of churches facing closure, and the effect this would have on ringing and bells.

**7) Insurance:** The Guild Secretary had prepared a report on our current insurance and alternatives (appendix iii). She explained that Ecclesiastical had recently reviewed and changed their underwriting for small charities and that they were now very competitive. As the premium had been so much cheaper whilst offering wider cover than our current providers she had phoned and spoken with the underwriter twice to ensure that they had a full understanding of what we do, and he had confirmed his understanding and that the premium was correct. As a result the Trustees recommend that we reinsure for next year with Ecclesiastical. Barney Bell was pleased to see the substantial premium difference between our current policies (£1863.29) and the Ecclesiastical premium of £229.62, but felt that the Ecclesiastical would have a much better understanding of what we, as ringers, do. The Guild Master proposed that we accept the Ecclesiastical premium, this was unanimously agreed.

**8) GDPR and Membermojo:** The Guild Master outlined how a membership package, such as Membermojo, would work for the Guild and would solve any GDPR issues as each member would be responsible for the accuracy of their own information, and could manage their own communication preferences. She recommended that members look at the Guild of Devonshire Ringers for guidance and an example of how Membermojo would work. It would be possible to add in functions such as online payment, and donations to BRF as we develop the system. There would be a cost for taking out the package but this would be on annual contract, the information would remain ours, and we could cancel/change at any time.

Barbara Fox asked who would have access to the information, the Guild Secretary explained that the information would be held on secure UK servers and only the administrators set up by the Guild (likely to be the Guild Secretary, Guild Treasurer and the Webmaster) would have direct access to the personal information stored. Members would be placed into administrative groups (eg on a district level), and the secretary of each group would have access to contact the group via the administrators on a single administrative email address. Any changes to members information would automatically be updated to the contact groups.

The Guild Secretary advised that our current system does not comply with GDPR, and to ensure that we do have proper control of the data we will either need to set up a central membership form which would need to be administered by the Guild Secretary throughout the year with her manually providing updates to the District officials, or we can use a tool such as Membermojo to streamline and automate the process.

The Guild Master acknowledged that whilst this might feel like a big change, in fact it is only changing the way in which we use the information we already store.

Barbara asked how quickly this could be implemented and whether this would need to go to an AGM. The Guild Secretary advised that it would not need to go to an AGM as there are no rules regarding our current arrangements or membership forms, it is an administrative matter.

The Webmaster advised that he has set up a small trial of Membermojo on the Guild 'Test' site and if we were to proceed we would need to set up a working group including a District Secretary and a District Treasurer to develop the work needed to get the system up and running. He advised that the system would not be ready to accept subscriptions for 2025, but that it could be set up to get the membership information for 2025 with a fuller launch (including subscriptions) for 2026.

Barbara asked how secure the system was and whether it could be hacked. The Webmaster replied that it would always be possible for any information to be hacked, and the Guild Master advised it would be far more secure than our current arrangements. Ady Taylor asked whether it would be likely that Membermojo would have access to our data, the Guild Master confirmed that other than having support should be needed to correct any issues, the information would not be available to Membermojo.

Barney Bell asked for details of the cost, the Guild Secretary advised that based on our current active membership it would be £175.00 per year, if we were to expand the system to include non-resident life members (approx. 500 NRLM) then the cost would increase to £300.00 per year.

Alan Reade pointed out that we do need to comply with GDPR as it is the law, and he had been advocating for an annual membership form for several years.

Val Roberts asked whether some older members might be put off renewing by filling in an online form, and the Guild Master replied that the Trustees have considered this and we will offer support to those who need assistance. Alan Reade said he would be willing to support members at his church who would need help.

After further discussion on the practicalities and implementation of Membermojo for information gathering in the first year, Anthony Ellis felt that we have no option but to comply with GDPR law. Alan Reade proposed, and Sally Townsend seconded that we set up Membermojo to gather membership information for 2025, a vote was taken and the motion was passed, with no votes against.

The Guild Master confirmed that a presentation pack and support would be sent out to the districts for their forthcoming AGMs.

Alan Reade took the opportunity to advise committee members that all safeguarding and tower stewardship information is available on the Guild website under Summary Advice to Tower Captains, and this will continue to be maintained via the website.

**9) Management of Events:** the Guild Master explained that everything the Guild does needs to be in line with the aims we have identified as a charity, and we also need to ensure that we are compliant with safeguarding, health and safety and our insurance obligations.

The Trustees have discussed the Guild's responsibilities and, whilst having no wish to dampen enthusiasm or add layers of bureaucracy, we recognise the need to implement a simple checklist/risk assessment type document to be completed for each event that is organised. The Events Team have been trialling a working document in the organisation of the upcoming Tower Open Day, which is perhaps more complex than most Guild or District events.

The Guild Master outlined that the document would need to consider items such as how the event meets the aims of the Guild; who the event is aimed at; possible safeguarding or health and safety issues, insurance; how and where the event will be publicised, and ensuring that we have met our responsibilities.

Ian Price asked whether this would include ad-hoc arrangements to ring at a few towers, the Master replied that if the ringing was under the guise of a Guild/District or maybe tower event then the answer would be yes, but if it were the choice of individuals to go and ring a quarter peal, then the answer would be no. The Master advised that other associations have risk assessment templates available on their website, and this would be the type of thing we would be aiming for. In the first instance however we would be looking at the Events Team and other Guild events to ensure that everything we do is in line with the aims of the Guild as a charity.

After a wide ranging discussion that included concerns regarding closed churches, or churches without a regular band or maintenance, or a full PCC, several members welcomed the proposed guidance and felt that it would be a sensible idea to protect ourselves in changing circumstances.

**10) Guild Report:** The Guild Master briefly outlined that the membership renewal form will allow people to opt in or out of receiving a printed report, and although, in the short term we will continue to compile the report in the traditional manner, once the membership form is established it should streamline a lot of the work and allow for less duplication of work and the elimination of potential mistakes.

**11) Forthcoming District AGMs:** The Guild Secretary had a list of almost all upcoming AGMs which was read to the meeting, the dates will be sent out to all the districts.

**12) Proposals received from the Hereford District:** proposals had been submitted requesting that the Guild invest in materials to encourage new ringers or to help recruitment, and that ringers of any age could be sponsored to attend the Hereford Ringing Course. The Guild Master advised that the Trustees meetings have discussed the issue of how our funds are spent to support the aims of the Guild and that the Treasurer is drafting a financial plan and policy for the allocation of Guild funds. So, whilst the proposal could not be answered immediately, funds for recruitment and training will definitely be considered going forward.

Suggestions from the floor about suitable materials included the Pam Copson 'One per learner' materials, the ART scheme, and Abi Pugh drew attention to the Bluebell badge for Guides and Scouts that has been drawn up in association with the Central Council.



The Guild Secretary suggested that the Guild could take a leading role in advising our members what resources are available , and this information could be published on the website.

### **13) AOB:**

Clifford & Kington district raised the issue of King's Pyon which is in the C&K district, but is in the same group of parishes as Canon Pyon and Wellington which are in the Hereford district, they wondered whether it might be sensible to rationalise things by moving the tower to the Hereford district. The Guild Master stated that in recent years the Guild had expended a lot of time and energy on discussing a change of district boundaries which was emphatically rejected. Although in the past towers have been moved between districts, the Guild Master questioned whether the position of King's Pyon is causing a major issue at the moment. Pat Key confirmed that there was no issue currently but the forthcoming Tower Open Day had just highlighted the anomaly, and thought it should be brought to the Management Committee meeting before the district discusses it at their AGM. The Guild Secretary said there were probably other instances where parish groups are spread over district borders, it was agreed that the C&K district should discuss the issue at their AGM and come back to management committee if needed.

Anthony Ellis raised the issue of church closures, he said that this was a growing problem across the church, The result of church closures could be the church becoming a Festival church, sold to a private owner, or becoming part of the Churches Conservation Trust. Anthony felt that the Guild needs to be prepared for these eventualities, bells may be lost to us and we need to have a strategy in place for when this happens. The Guild Master advised that the Trustees have agreed that we should set up a working party to look into this, and that Anthony has kindly agreed to lead the group. Closed churches lead to a number of questions regarding access, maintenance and insurance that refer back to our earlier discussions on risk assessments. Val Roberts highlighted the recent closure of Berrington church, as there was no group of ringers at the church, there may have been a lack of focus on the bells during the closure, and we are now uncertain about how we stand with access to the bells. Sally Townsend commented that as we have a lack of ringers we are spreading ourselves very thinly, and we may need to be reasonable about our efforts to keep some towers open. The Guild Master will be writing a project brief for the group. The Guild Secretary advised that she had also contacted the Bell Restoration Fund committee about our concerns in this area, unfortunately as Neil Bennett could not be present at the meeting he cannot give an update on their approach. Barney Bell highlighted the importance of keeping up to date with church closure information, as the closure of Llanbradach church had resulted in the transfer of a ring of 8 to Kingstone church. Anthony felt that there may already be a lot of information within the districts that could be useful, it was agreed that we would ask for volunteers to join the group.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8:45pm.



## Appendix i

Letter to the Hereford Guild of Bellringers on behalf of the Guild Trustees  
Sue Robinson 19.09.24

**Amendment to Rule 20b** - The trustees would like to recommend an amendment to Rule 20 (b)

Rule 20 (a) states: No alteration, deletion or addition to these Rules shall be made except at an Annual or Special General Meeting.

Rule 20 (b) goes on to state: Any such proposal for consideration at an Annual General Meeting shall be made either by a District or by the Management Committee and shall be received by the Guild Secretary not later than 30th September in the preceding year.

This in effect prevents implementation of initiatives that would have a beneficial effect for an excessive period.

For example:

- A new proposal is made at a management committee held in Oct (year 0)
- It cannot be accepted for consideration at an AGM until it has been submitted in writing by the Secretary not later than 30th September of the following year (year 1).
- It would then need to be considered again at the management Committee in October of that year (1), to be then presented to the districts at their respective AGMs (years 1 & 2),
- Finally, to be voted on at the Guild AGM in Year 2.

Rule 20 (b) should be amended to allow for a shorter consideration and implementation timescale.

Draft rule change: **proposed change in blue**

20 (b) Any such proposal for consideration at an Annual General Meeting shall be made either by a District or by the Management Committee and shall be received by the Guild Secretary not later than 30th September in the preceding year.

20 (b) **Any such proposal for consideration at an Annual General Meeting shall be made either by a district or by the Management committee and shall be received by the Guild Secretary not less than 90 days prior to the Annual General Meeting.**

**Sue Robinson – Guild Master. On behalf of the Guild Trustees.  
19.09.24**



## Appendix ii

### Hereford Diocesan Guild of Bellringers - Guild Master Interim Report

Firstly, I'd like to take advantage of this opportunity to thank everyone who has encouraged and supported me to take on this role. I will do my best to build on the legacy of previous Masters and leave this post with the Guild in a good position to greet its future with optimism.

During the past year we have held a number of ringing sessions for learners ranging in abilities from bell handling to plain hunt and simple doubles methods. The idea to connect learners across the Guild came from sharing thoughts with other towers that are teaching and realising how isolated the learners might feel, spending a great deal of their ringing experiences with the same people all the time. With the support & enthusiasm from those other towers & teachers, a couple of handbell experts to take care of any downtime, four sessions have taken place to date, with two more planned in September and October respectively. The sessions have been well attended and very much enjoyed by helpers and learners alike. With the model being so successful we aim to do something similar for those in the next phase of their ringing journey. Thank you to everyone who has supported these events and helped to make them a positive experience.

It has been a busy few months since the AGM with all Guild officers contributing many hours of their time behind the scenes carrying out essential & beneficial, but mainly unseen, tasks.

More visibly there have been two Guild officers' gatherings where we managed to assemble a good proportion of all the people who carry out a guild role. Primarily so we could all put names to faces and secondly to provide an opportunity for people to have a voice and for us try to understand what is needed out there in our ringing community. We even managed a bit of bellringing at each meeting! I am also pleased to report that we preceded the second officers meeting with a Quarter Peal at Eardisland, the first quarter of the Guild Quarter Peal fortnight, with Guild Officers making up the band.

The Hereford Guild has charitable status, therefore undertaking certain Guild officer roles also requires you to become a guild trustee. There have been tasks to complete regarding updating our information on the charity website and more importantly making ourselves aware of the responsibilities as trustees for us newbies. To that end we have held a couple of Trustee meetings and have identified a number of initiatives we would like to progress during our initial few months.

The areas that we will as a Guild will be looking at over the next few months include:

- Safeguarding – providing simple guidance for training & DBS requirements at a tower, district & Guild level
- Guild insurance provision – clarification of current policy. Assessment of alternative providers (like for like or improved cover & cost comparisons)
- Introduction of a membership management tool
- Establishing a project team to produce a blueprint for the Guild to manage church closures in relation to the future of the bells and the bell ringing community affected.
- Identifying the categories of expenses the Guild is requested to reimburse and set parameters for reimbursement
- Implement appropriate Risk Assessment documents for events at all levels – to ensure any event aligns with the aims of the Guild & is complicit with the safeguarding and health & safety requirements.
- Review the current peal fee arrangement
- Review any Guild rule relating to any of the above points and propose amendments as required.

Through the management committee meetings and subsequent district AGM's all members will have an opportunity to contribute to the final status of each of the above topics, we look forward to your engagement and opinions.

Sue Robinson 19.09.24



## **HDGB Treasurer's Report October 2024**

Sadly due to work commitments I am unable to attend the management committee on 12/10/24

At this stage of the year we have a quite a good picture of our finances and even with the increased grant to the BRF (£1400) a larger grant to districts than last year (£670) and the purchase of books for resale and publicity material (£999) we are on course to finish the year, very much due to Fran's hard work in reducing the insurance premiums very close to where we were at the start of the year.

The proposed cost of introducing an electronic membership system will not only enable us to comply with GDPR legislation and in future will streamline the paying of guild subs for all. The price is well within our budget (£250)

Looking forward, I am currently working on a basic expenses policy to ensure clarity for all, as a charity we need to demonstrate what we are doing with our money.

I am working with Neil to streamline the collection of peal fees which electronic banking as now made much easier.

Can I remind everyone that Subs for next year are now £10 (as agreed at AGM) sadly the new CCBF fees will of swallowed a fair bit of that inflation led increase, and ask that district treasurers don't pay any money to the guild before the 1st Jan 25 and wherever possible try and make just one bulk payment rather than multiple ones.

### **Balances 5/10/24**

Lloyds £3516.57

Virgin £5361.00

## **Guild Secretary Report – October 2024**

I've very much enjoyed my first few months as Guild Secretary, there has been a lot to take on board. Mark, the outgoing secretary, has provided me with some very useful information and advice to take forward. I've also received helpful guidance from longer standing members of the committee such as Neil Bennett and Alan Reade, and I'd like to thank them for the support they have offered which is most valuable.

Getting to know new people has been very rewarding, Sue and I had only met once briefly before the AGM, but since then we've started to build a very positive working relationship. One of the fundamental things we agree on is getting to know our membership, and having good communication with our members, so it was very good to hold our two informal meetings for District and Guild Officers to get to know one another.

As secretary, and therefore the Data Protection Officer of the Guild, I'm very concerned by our compliance with GDPR. Our current system whereby Guild and District officers hold member's information in various formats means a huge duplication of workload and frequently information is not updated in all records. I am aware that districts hold information that is not included/correct on the Guild database. We already face an annual problem in gathering the data for the publication of the report, but we, as a Guild, would face a bigger problem should we ever be challenged about our GDPR compliance.

As a first step I have revised our Privacy Notice, the new version is available on the Guild website.

The next step will be to require each member to complete an annual membership form from 2025.

This is something that I know our Tower Stewardship Advisor has been pressing for over several years, and as Data Protection Officer, I feel is absolutely necessary.

The annual membership renewal form will need to be completed online via the Guild website, this will allow for a centralisation of correct data, which will then be made available to district secretaries. If a member changes any contact information during the year the form can be completed ensuring our data remains accurate and up to date.

Although the form will need to be completed online there will be a facility for a family member/ringing colleague or district official to complete the form on behalf of those who do not have access to the internet. If absolutely necessary a paper version of the form can be issued.

Although there may be some resistance to the introduction of an annual form, our legal obligations are clear, and I hope that district secretaries will support the new scheme. It will save a great deal of duplication of work, and ultimately make our communications with the members of the Guild more reliable. Improved communications can only be a positive step forward in the work of the Guild.

I hope that members enjoyed the Guild Newsletter we sent out in July, I hope to be able to do this quarterly, and am very grateful to those who have submitted articles for the next issue.



I have reviewed our insurance policies which are shortly due for renewal, an information sheet is attached, together with a report on the Guild's property.

### **Master Elect report – October 2024**

Being 'Master Elect' is a great opportunity to learn how the Guild operates, and I have enjoyed working alongside Sue and Fran, trying to support them with the variety of things, from the day to day running of the Guild through to bigger projects that Sue has mentioned in her report. I know how much work has had to be done, and there is a lot more to do yet, but I am optimistic that we are heading in the right direction. I will continue to support Sue, Fran and the rest of the Management committee in securing a positive future for the Guild.

Although Master Elect is an odd position to be in, especially when there are no guidelines or official duties to fulfil, the Guild Objectives are at the heart of everything I do, is and I will continue to deliver these in supporting, co-ordinating and facilitating our members to achieve their personal goals.

### **Report Secretary Report – October 2024**

At this time of the year there is little to report. I have received one or two notes from District Secretaries with regard to change in members and or updates on phone numbers. I have logged the various updates and we will incorporate in the next AR.

The biggest issue we have had this years is that not all districts appear to have distributed the AR to towers. Val Roberts may wish to comment on this at the meeting. The AR were available to some Secretaries directly and to most at our AGM meeting in May.

Going forwards we still have to decide how many copies we need of the AR. Last year we went again for the full print run, but are the members all picking up their copies? I really need guidance here.

Finally there is the issue of the revised District data and where it goes after the District AGM's. For the last few years I have cut and pasted a previous years District info to Secretaries and they have then sent their revisions to Mark who has collated and sent the file to me. If Fran is happy, I would suggest that we stick with this process, as it prevents duplication.

I look forward to hearing from you all, sincere apologies for missing the meeting.

### **TOWER STEWARDSHIP ADVISOR'S INTERIM REPORT**

The setting up of a welcome new Young Ringers Group in the Hereford District has precipitated a general review of the Guild's safeguarding and stewardship guidance in liaison with the Hereford Diocese and the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers.

The review has considered the potential risks to the Exercise resulting from the clustering of parishes and the reduced numbers of experienced churchwardens and PCC members at individual churches especially where there is no resident band of ringers.

A Report has been prepared (attached) for presentation and discussion at the October 2024 management committee meeting.

**Alan Reade**

17 September 2024



## **BELFRIES OFFICER REPORT 2024**

This year I have had the chance to inspect a number of rings of bells within the guild. Firstly, in March I inspected for the advice of suspected broken gudgeon on the tenor bell at Bishops Frome. Quickly assessment ascertained that in fact a gudgeon was clearly broken and professional bell hangers would need to carry out the work to repair the break.

Chris Jones asked for the assistance for an inspection of Coddington bells as part of a greater initiative to inspect all the deemed necessary rings of bells in the Ledbury district. I was impressed with the proactive nature of the officers of the district and though Coddington a very pleasant and easy going ring of bells, we did find some minor issues that needed addressing. This highlights a greater point I have as a regular steeple keeper, all bells whether relatively new installations or that of rings of bells of some age require care and attention. This is because through the act of use and that often of neglect, items can deteriorate. I have also inspected Colwall and carried out further inspections and work at Withington. I also replaced a hasting stay at Stoke Prior with the help of Mark Ashton. Other inspections carried out have been at Bosbury and Chelmarsh where sadly work needs to be carried out and I will be soon working to rectify the problems. There is also the request of inspections at Cradley, Bodenham and Pipe Cum Lyde that I am in the process of arranging.

On Saturday 15th of June at Wellington Church I was invited to conduct a belfry maintenance day organized by the officers of the Hereford district. We spent a morning and an afternoon going through the basics of belfry maintenance as then a demonstration of the David Bagley Oddstruckness meter. This proved to be beneficial to the six students with various degree of knowledge. I am happy to do this course again as it important we as a guild promote the care of the bells we are so often blessed to ring. Thank you to Jason Walker and Kris Perruzza for conducting the arrangements. Another course is set for this month at Fownhope for more students to learn about belfry maintenance.

I have been approached to give advice of a few towers but no formal invitation to come and without that it is not my remit to come to a tower uninvited. Also my concern is I have had no invitations from the North districts of the guild to carry out inspections. I am here to help and if you want any advice support etc then I am very happy to help.

Thank you to all those who come and assist me with the job of Belfries Officer and it is my intention to build a larger base of people who are comfortable to help with practical maintenance of bells.

Ashley Fortey  
Hereford DG Belfries Officer

## Key Information

- Guild Public Liability only covers members taking part in Guild (or district) events. Ringing for service or practice should be covered by the church's liability insurance, any other ringing activities should be covered by your own personal liability insurance (such as is included with a household policy).
- In the event of a Personal Accident claim the Guild would be the beneficiary rather than the injured person.

## Current Policies

**AXA Public Liability Insurance** – this is a generic commercial combined liability insurance such as may be taken out by any small business/trader. Public Liability Sum Insured - £2million. Policy excludes maintenance.

Premium 2023 £742.61

Renewal premium 2024 **£763.08**

**AIG Group Personal Accident** – Benefits (payable to the Guild) on: Death, Loss of sight, hearing, speech or limb £10,000. Age range 16-65, reduced cover applies over 65 years. Temporary Total Disablement £100.00 per week for 104 weeks. The schedule shown in the current report is incorrect – Permanent Total Disablement is not included within the policy.

Premium 2023 £1100.21

Renewal premium 2024 **£1100.21**

**Total Renewal Premiums £1863.29**

## Alternative Quotations

Company	Premium	Public Liability	Employers Liability	Personal Accident sum insured	Personal Accident Age Range	Excludes	Includes
<b>AXA liability</b>	<b>£763.08</b>	2 million	n/a	n/a	n/a	Maintenance	n/a
<b>AIG Personal Accident</b>	<b>£1100.21</b>	n/a	n/a	£10,000	16-65, reduced cover outside this range	Permanent Total Disablement	
<b>Ecclesiastical</b>	£229.62	5 million	10 million	£2,500	16-80		Trustees Liability £100,000
<b>Hiscox</b>	£380.75 subject to 3 year long term agreement	10 million	10 million	£100,000	16-90	PA benefit only whilst undertaking Guild activities. Maintenance	Trustees Indemnity £5 million
<b>Aviva</b>	£1201.20	5 million	10 million	£15,000	16-75	PA benefit only whilst undertaking Guild activities	Trustees indemnity £1 million

NB other than our current AXA policy, all policies view volunteers/members as employers and they are covered under the Employers liability section of the policy

**Executive Committee recommendation is the Ecclesiastical policy at £229.62**



Bell Ringers Guild Property as at 11/10/2024

Item	Whereabouts	Person responsible	Notes
Master's chain	The Salmon Pool Orleton Lane Stanford Bridge WR6 6SX	Sue Robinson	
Gavel Set	New House Farm, The Marsh, Weobley	Fran Watkins	Good
Guild Database	New House Farm, The Marsh Weobley	Fran Watkins	Stored on a memory stick, program is Microsoft Access 2000
Printed Minutes files	New House Farm, The Marsh, Weobley	Fran Watkins	3 files – 2000-09 -MCM - good 2000-09 AGM - good 2010 onwards combined - average
Old handwritten minutes books	New House Farm, The Marsh, Weobley	Fran Watkins	7 volumes 1891 Tower Book – dusty, poor A/cs/BRF 1911- 1964 – dusty, poor Minutes 1886 – 1924 – dusty, poor Minutes 1925 – 1964 – dusty, poor Minutes 1964 – 1979, dusty, poor Minutes 1980 – 1986 – average Minutes 1986 – 1990 – average Minutes 1989 – 1999, loose leaf binder, untidy/average
Old Attendance record books			Whereabouts not known
Handbells	New House Farm, The Marsh, Weobley	Fran Watkins	
Thomas Cooper Trophy	Ludlow Tower	Richard Bracher	
The Osbaldiston Shield	Hereford Cathedral	Nicky Aubrey	Condition Good, needs engraving/plaque with name
Centenary Plate	New House Farm, The Marsh, Weobley	Fran Watkins	Good
Set of Bound Reports	New House Farm, The Marsh, Weobley	Fran Watkins	8 volumes – 1886-94 (bound folder enclosing docs), 1894-1910, 1911-1933, 1934-1957, 1958 1972, 1973 – 1983, 1984 – 1992, 1993- 2000 - good



Badges – Green 25 years 50 years	New House Farm, The Marsh, Weobley	Fran Watkins	Green - 185 Silver - 217 Gold - 39
Printed Membership Certificates	New House Farm, The Marsh, Weobley	Fran Watkins	200 plus
Printed Long Service Certificates	New House Farm, The Marsh, Weobley	Fran Watkins	25 years – 13 50 years - 60
Recruitment materials – leaflet/badges	13 Meadow Drive, Canon Pyon	Nicky Aubrey	
Recruitment Banner & Flag	13 Meadow Drive, Canon Pyon	Nicky Aubrey	New 2024
Display Board	13 Meadow Drive, Canon Pyon	Nicky Aubrey	New 2024
Guild Book Stall & storage boxes	13 Meadow Drive, Canon Pyon	Nicky Aubrey	New 2024 Purchased Books Sales £84.20 Donated Books Sales £37.00 Total Sales £121.20 Remaining Purchased Stock Sales Value £308.80
Other Guild archive items	New House Farm, The Marsh, Weobley	Fran Watkins	Copy of Guild Survey 2001 responses 5 x new member packs
Orders of Service	New House Farm, The Marsh, Weobley	Fran Watkins	87 copies, fair/rusting staples
District Trophies?			
District Records			
Old orders of service	New House Farm, The Marsh, Weobley	Fran Watkins	Approx. 90 including Photocopied versions
6 pairs of ear defenders	Fownhope Tower	Ashley Fortey	New 2024