

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS



NORTH BUCKS BRANCH

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the North Bucks Branch of the Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers will be held at St Andrew's, Parklands, Great Linford, Milton Keynes MK14 5AU on Saturday, 24th March 2012

- 3.30 Ringing
- 4.30 Service
- 5.00 Tea
- 5.45 Annual General Meeting

Tea will be provided for those who notify Alan Marchbank
rdl_mk@northbucks.org.uk or 01908 611434
by Tuesday 20th March.

AGENDA

1. Chairman's welcome
2. In Memoriam
3. Apologies for Absence
4. Minutes of previous meetings – as published in In Touch
5. Matters arising from minutes
6. Election of New Members
7. Officers Reports – included below
 - a) Chairman
 - b) Secretary
 - c) Treasurer – Adoption of Accounts
 - d) Deanery Ringing Development Leaders
 - e) Guild Representatives
 - f) Branch Archivist
8. Election of Branch Officers
 - a) Chairman (Brian Newman)
 - b) Secretary (Helen Stanworth)
 - c) Treasurer (Sheila Watts)
 - d) Deanery Ringing Development Leader
 - Newport Deanery (Doug Hird)
 - MK Deanery (*Alan Marchbank)
 - Buckingham Deanery (Richard Stanworth)
 - e) Guild Representatives (*Hugh Butler, Richard Stanworth)
 - f) Newsletter Editor (*Jonathan Griggs)
 - g) Branch Archivist (Doug Hird)
 - h) Independent Examiner (Alison Fowler)
9. The Big Ring Pull
10. Forthcoming Events
11. Any Other Business
12. Vote of Thanks

(* Denotes officer not willing to stand for re-election)

4. Minutes of Autumn Meeting Held at Old Wolverton on 17th September 2011

Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman, Brian Newman, welcomed everyone to Old Wolverton for the Autumn Meeting and thanked them for coming

Apologies for Absence

Received from Beverley Hollins, David Joyce, Anne Perry, Nick Read, Simon Read, Catherine Stanworth, John Stanworth, Victoria Stanworth, Michael Tinsley, Robert Newton (Guild Master), Hilarie Rogers (Guild Secretary)

Minutes of previous Meeting

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at Newport Pagnell in March had been published in In Touch. No comments were made regarding the minutes so the Chairman deemed this as acceptance of the minutes as a true record.

Election of New Members

One nomination proposing two members had been received

Tower	Name	Proposed by	Seconded by
Hanslope	Sarah Pollitt	Sheila Blenkhorn	Roy Keeves
	Dorothy Mutch		

Both were elected without dissent.

Officers Reports

Treasurer - The Branch Account balance at the Building Society is currently £1031. Two towers have not paid, Leckhampstead and Tingewick, but it is hoped that we can re-ignite interest from them.

Members were thanked for contributing £12.50 to today's collection for the Bell Fund

Deanery Ringing Development Leader(Buckingham) – Richard was pleased to report that work was progressing at Beachampton with the rehanging of the bells.

Forthcoming Events

An up to date Calendar of events had been distributed before the meeting. A number of the dates have still to be confirmed but should be as advertised.

Big Ring Pull

Jonathan Griggs, Project Manager of the Big Ring Pull introduced this part of the meeting about the big Ring Pull.

Richard Stanworth announced that following a meeting with the events manager for Middleton Hall we had now been offered a date when we could hold the recruiting event – Saturday 11th February 2012.

This is the first Saturday of the schools half-term which could help with increased footfall. We will be able to use a third or a half of the hall, with the rest being made available to a non-competing event. It is intended to hire the Charmborough ring, provided that it is available. Now that this date has been set the detailed planning can move forward and dates identified for the intensive training course.

As reported in the latest In Touch the training will now take place at Newport Pagnell, as Downs Barn will be too expensive and is unlikely to be available when we want it. Doug Hird reported that all the parts for the simulator are now at Newport and installation is in progress.

Sheila Watts reported that the revised budget for the project was £3,400 and that pledges to the fund were still needed. She reported that we had received a grant of £600 from the Guild and that the request for a grant from the Ringing Foundation of up to £1,000 was looking promising. David Middleton offered the fees from two forthcoming weddings at Bletchley, on 24th September and 1st October if members would volunteer to ring for them.

Jonathan Griggs provided an update on the teacher training events planned for October and November. Places were still available and he urged all those interested in teaching to come forward.

Any Other Business

Richard Stanworth pointed out that the date of the AGM in 2012 would need to be moved as the normal date of the first Saturday in March was likely to clash with the Big Ring Pull training course. After some discussion it was agreed that the AGM in 2012 would be held on Saturday 24th March 2012. A query was raised regarding grants for training courses. The branch requires that applications are made before attending a course. However a number of branch members have applied to attend the Steeple Aston course but do not yet know if they have a place, so cannot apply for a grant. The Chairman said that this would not be a problem as long as they applied to the Secretary for a grant as soon as they have a place. The application can then be dealt with at a branch practice by calling a business meeting to consider grant applications. He gave notice that such a business meeting is likely to be held at the Branch practice at Shalstone in October.

Vote of Thanks

On behalf of everyone present the Chairman thanked Rev Peter Dockree for taking the service, and the Old Wolverton ringers for preparing the tea. Members showed their appreciation in the usual way.

4. Minutes of Business Meeting Held at Shalstone on 15th October 2011

A short business meeting was held for the election of four new members and two grant applications for the Steeple Aston Course.

Election of New Members

Four nominations had been received proposing the following new members.

Tower	Name	Proposed by	Seconded by
Stoke Goldington	Charlotte Hagan	Sheila Ware	Roy Keeves
	Richard Macgowan	Sheila Ware	Roy Keeves
Stony Stratford	Trevor Cooper	Wendy Price	Jonathan Griggs
Milton Keynes Village	Sara Wheeler	Tricia Gifford	Jonathan Griggs

They were elected without dissent.

Grant Application

Notice had been given Liz and Ella Sheaf from Olney Tower had places on the Steeple Aston One-Day Course, and had applied for a grant from the Branch. The normal grant towards a training course is 50% of the cost up to a maximum of £50. A 50% grant would be £12.50 each. Brian Newman proposed that a grant of £12.50 each be made to Liz and Ella Sheaf. This was seconded by Helen Stanworth and the motion was carried on a show of hands.

A grant of £12.50 each will be made to Liz and Ella Sheaf towards the cost of the training course.

Christmas Celebration

The Chairman announced a change of date: The Christmas Celebration this year will be held at Fenny Stratford on Saturday 10th December 2011.

Minutes of Business Meeting Held at Newport Pagnell 21st January 2012

A short business meeting was held for the election of three new members.

Election of New Members

One nomination had been received proposing the following three members:

Tower	Name	Proposed by	Seconded by
Leckhampstead	Beth King (re-election)	Richard Stanworth	Helen Stanworth
	Thelma Spragg (re-election)		
	Tom Taylor (re-election)		

All were elected without dissent.

7 a) Chairman's Report

Well here we are again at another AGM after what has been a very busy year for the branch, with the usual branch events and of course the Big Ring pull event just passed.

For all the effort put in this past year I must first thank all the officers, not forgetting those other members who have given freely of their time to help make it such a great year for the branch. I can only believe it bodes well for the future of our branch that so many have come forward this past year to take part in the events.

As you all know this is the time at which the branch elects the officers for the coming year, all the posts are open to anyone who wishes to stand, so do please think about standing, you've all shown that you care about what happens by coming forward to help with the various events.

I do know that three posts at least will need new people to fill them, being Guild Rep, RDL (Milton Keynes Deanery) and the In Touch editor. Hugh, Alan and Jonathan all wish to stand down to recharge their batteries and pursue other areas within ringing, in Alan's case his involvement with the Guild as a Guild officer, so please try to attend the Guild AGM to vote for him. Jonathan wishes to complete his role as project manager for the Big Ring Pull process without the extra responsibility of being editor. I would like to thank them again for all their work for the branch.

Brian Newman

7 b) Secretary's Report

Average attendance at Branch practices was down from 19 to 15, although numbers at the AGM and Autumn Meetings were unchanged from 2010. The joint practice at Towcester was very poorly supported, with just 3 branch members out of the total attendance of 15 from the two branches.

Ten new members were elected during the year but total membership of the branch decreased by three. At the end of the year there were 29 towers in the branch with members, the same number as the previous year.

The Officers have met formally on eight occasions during the year to deal with the business of running the branch and planning the Big Ring Pull. Additional informal meetings were held in connection with the Big Ring Pull and the various workstreams associated with it.

As part of the usual preparations for the Annual Report, tower information sheets were again sent out to all towers for which we have contact details, requesting that they check these details and correct any mistakes. Although some of these were sent out very late, which did not allow much time for return, the number of returns was much better than in previous years. Perhaps there is a lesson to be learned from this – don't give them too long to reply! If your tower has not yet returned the sheet, please do so, even if the details are correct. That way I can ensure that the branch records are kept up to date.

The summer social was the best supported since we began them five years ago. The format of combining it with the striking competition seems to work well provided that the bells are a ground floor ring with access from the church.

The Inter Branch competition in July reverted to the format of holding it in each branch in alternate years. We hosted the competition at Hanslope and were pleased to welcome former North Bucks residents Jon and Kay Chamberlain as judges. The Towcester branch won the competition by two sections to one, so they collected both the Jack Green Trophy for the overall competition and the George Holland Trophy for the Stedman Triples.

The Autumn Meeting was held at Old Wolverton with the Big Ring Pull the main item on the Agenda. We went to Fenny Stratford for the Christmas Celebration followed by the Fish and Chip Supper and quiz in the church hall. The service turned out to be a do it yourself affair following a mix up over a parson to conduct the service. The Fish and chips were good and hot as they came from the shop next door. Thanks again to Alan and the other officers who helped with the organization of this.

Helen Stanworth

7c) Treasurer's Report

Final Accounts for the branch and separate accounts for the Big Ring Pull project are shown at the back of this pack.

7d) Deanery Ringing Development Leader (Buckingham) Report

Much of the focus during the last year has been on the Big Ring Pull project which has meant that I have not done as much as I probably should have done within the Deanery.

It was during ringing at Beachampton for the Deanery Lent evensong there that it was clear that the bells were almost unringable due to the sliders sticking. The churchwardens had already had the bells inspected by Whites with regard to re-hanging them with new fittings in the existing frame. Assistance was offered with this project but the parish were able to go ahead on their own in the second half of the year. Following a request to ring for the Carol Service before Christmas a quarter peal was attempted but this had to be stopped when an unsupervised child ran into the ground floor belfry. It was clear that the 'go' of the bells had much improved, although the fitting of a rope guide and might be beneficial. Some sort of barrier is also needed to keep people out of the belfry during ringing.

The band at Lillingstone Lovell has seen their project to add a new treble bell come to fruition during the year, augmenting the ring to six. I represented the branch at a short dedication service held in July with a chance to try out the new bell. This was followed by a celebration barbecue to help raise the remaining funds needed to pay for the work. The new bell fits in well and provides us with another pleasant ring of six within the branch.

The ringers at Leckhampstead are keen to get the bells ringing again and I have offered to help them in the spring when they plan to resume practices. The recent re-election of members from Leckhampstead is a good sign.

There are still a number of silent, or almost silent, towers in the deanery where there is intermittent interest in getting the bells ringing again. These towers need to be encouraged in the coming year.

Richard Stanworth

7d) Deanery Ringing Development Leader (Milton Keynes) Report

This will be my last report as RDL for the Milton Keynes Deanery, as I do not wish to stand for re-election. I have decided that as Secretary of the Guild Bell Fund I want to put more effort into this job and promote the operation and benefits of this Charity across all Branches.

The last 12 months have been dominated by preparation for the Big Ring Pull, which is reported on elsewhere. I have been very impressed with the way the Branch has pulled together and raised the funds necessary for this initiative and also worked together so well in our big public day in CMK.. Thanks, I know a lot of you worked very hard to make it all happen.

Outside of the BRP we have conducted business as usual with Branch Practices being well attended and a good few new faces being seen. It is important we get feedback so please tell us if you want something to change or be done differently.

Fenny hosted the Christmas Celebration. It was very well attended and very enjoyable. With attendance like this we may need a slightly larger venue next time! That's a nice challenge to face.

Thanks to Old Wolverton for hosting the September meeting, we made a good fist of the hymns despite being unaccompanied and very much enjoyed ringing on these anti-clockwise bells.

The Broadway Campanile has been put to good use in the last few weeks as we have prepared for ringing on the Charmborough bells. It is hoped to have a regular practice very soon as "ringing on strings" adds a new dimension to bell handling.

Thanks to you all for supporting me over the past year and best wishes to the Branch Officers of the future.

Alan Marchbank

7d) Deanery Ringing Development Leader (Newport Pagnell) Report

Most Newport Deanery branch activity has concentrated this year on the Big Ring Pull Project with Newport Deanery members being highly involved in the project organisation. Newport Deanery bells are also active. The second of the teaching the teachers sessions at Olney kept us all busy as will the learner teaching sessions at Newport in March. In preparation for this, the branch has paid for the clapper

silencers and Abel simulator to be installed at Newport and we have already held successful practices using this.

Since speaking to the Deanery Synod about the Big Ring Pull, recruiting activity at Stoke and Weston has been a valuable experience but other churches seem to prefer to wait for the results at the moment. Current financial constraints seem against any new bell projects although this is a good time to formulate plans.

Remembering the purposes of the Ringing Development Leaders, while the Big Ring Pull should help with recruitment and raising the public awareness of ringing generally, those towers in the Deanery without bands and those that don't gain any new ringers need to be re-visited during 2012 to establish what can usefully be done to help. Also, some of our PCCs will need help with restoring unringable bells. So there is plenty still to do.

Doug Hird

7e) Guild Representatives Report

Normally we attend two General Committee Meetings during our term of office, the Spring and Autumn meetings. These are the two meetings that we can report on but, because of the change of date of our AGM this year, we will have attended another Spring meeting just before the AGM.

The Spring meeting was held at Great Brickhill and was attended by both representatives. This is normally the longer meeting as it is preceded by the AGM of the Guild Bell Fund, of which all members of the General Committee are trustees. The General Committee meeting also includes the election of new sub-committees to serve for the year. Richard was voted onto the Education sub-committee because of his involvement with the Steeple Aston training course. This was also the meeting at which our request for support from the Guild for the Big Ring Pull was presented and that the proposal for a grant of £600 was agreed to be put to the AGM in May. This was subsequently agreed by the AGM

The Autumn meeting was held at Clanfield in the Witney and Woodstock branch. The business of this meeting is generally to receive sub-committee reports on the year and to look forward to the next year. Unfortunately Richard was not able to attend due to family commitments. The draft budget presented for 2012 predicts a loss of over £1,000 largely due to the increase in independent examiners fees. There had been a sudden increase in the fees that the independent examiners proposed to charge, some £2,100 compared with the previous charge of £300 (which had been covered by a donation so there had been no cost to the Guild). In view of this increase an alternative independent examiner had been found whose charge would be £500 and this person was elected by the General Committee. Despite this the Treasurer did not feel that an increase in the subscription was necessary at this time, so it remains at £6.00. However in view of the effect that the increase in examiner fees will have on administration costs, the meeting agreed that the peal fee should rise to 50p per participant.

If permitted a verbal report on the Spring Meeting 2012 will be given at the AGM

Hugh will not be seeking re-election as a Guild Representative at the AGM. As Richard holds another post as well as Guild Rep, he is more than willing to give someone else a chance to be a representative.

Hugh Butler & Richard Stanworth

7 f) Archivist

It has been another year of steady data accumulation. Peals are being reconciled against the Felstead database and gaps are being filled and mistakes rectified. The addition of small items about ringing in the Newport area from the Bucks Standard has now reached the mid 1920s when the Fenny Stratford band was making good progress. Also, the Ringing World DVDs are proving a valuable new resource for the first half of the century.

The web site has gained a few new features. You can now see how many quarters and peals you have rung in North Bucks. Individual bell recordings are being added as they are recorded for use in Abel. I hope to be able to include some tonal analysis with these. There is a link to the Big Ring Pull site.

Archive material has been used in the preparation of the History of ringing module in the Big Ring Pull training course.

Doug Hird

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELLRINGERS - NORTH BUCKS BRANCH
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT - GENERAL FUND 2011

		£	£	EXPENDITURE	£	£
INCOME						
January	Balance brought forward:					
	Building Society Account	631.23				
	Cash in hand	10.92				
			642.15			
June	Building Society interest	0.04				
December	Building Society interest	0.14				
			0.18			
	2011 Guild Subscriptions 180 senior x £6.00	1,080.00				
	2011 Guild Subscriptions 13 junior x £4.50	58.50				
			1,138.50			772.00
	Guild Bell Fund donations		50.90			50.90
	Branch practice donations		71.40			20.00
	In Touch donations		137.00	Feb/May/Aug/Nov		191.11
	In Touch donation (Auditor's honorarium)		10.00			10.44
						201.55
				June-July		20.00
				October		25.00
December	Branch Xmas Celebration at Fenny Stratford		216.90	December		231.34
				December		100.00
				December		72.47
				December		35.00
						37.06
						10.00
<i>*Jan - Dec</i>	<i>Big Ring Pull income</i>		<i>4,018.70</i>	<i>Jan - Dec</i>		<i>1,459.39</i>
				December		
						684.77
						6.94
						691.71
						2,559.31
			6,285.73			6,285.73

**Summary information is shown for the Big Ring Pull as the funds lie within the same Building Society Account as the General Fund*

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELLRINGERS - NORTH BUCKS BRANCH
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT - BIG RING PULL 2011

INCOME		£	£	EXPENDITURE	£	£
June	Grant from The Ringing Foundation	1,000.00		May	D P Bagley - Abel Simulator	536.00
July	Grant from Oxford Diocesan Guild	600.00		August	D P Bagley - Multiple Computer Interface	97.00
			1,600.00			633.00
May - Nov	Wedding Fees from towers/individuals	891.00		August	Big Ring Pull Logo - artwork fee	50.00
Jan - Nov	Donations from towers/individuals	827.70		November	Big Ring Pull domain name registration	7.90
June	Big Ring Pull Quiz	200.00				
July	Coffee Morning	140.00		August	Clapper Tie materials - Olney & Newport	50.66
			2,058.70	August	Donation to Olney for 5/11/11 Teachers' Course	50.00
Aug-Oct	Teachers' Course Fees - 22/10/11		260.00	September	Downs Barn hire for 22/10/11 (inc damage deposit)	251.50
December	Return of Downs Barn damage deposit - 22/10/11		100.00	October	Teaching Unravelled' books x2	7.00
				November	Catering at Teachers' Courses - 22/10/11 & 5/11/11	305.33
				November	Downs Barn deposit for 25/2/2012	22.00
				November	Teachers' Course - tutor expenses	30.00
				December	Increase ODG public liability insurance to £5M	52.00
				December	Balance carried forward	
					Building Society Account	2,559.31
			4,018.70			4,018.70

For information - an income & expenditure forecast to the end of the training sessions in March is shown below:

Income - 1-Jan-12 to 11-Feb-12

Balance brought forward:

Building Society Account

Donations/Miscellaneous Sales

2,559.31

22.00

Expenditure - 1-Jan-12 to 11-Feb-12

BRP T Shirts

174.73

Hire of Downs Barn (excl. damage deposit)

94.00

Refreshments for training sessions & briefing

49.50

BRP Banners & A1 gloss posters

254.37

Leaflets, data forms, etc

227.35

Clip boards, badges, etc

47.43

847.38

Further Projected Expenditure

Hire of Charnborough Ring & driver expenses

265.00

Donation to Newport Pagnell for hosting course

200.00

Refreshments at Downs Barn/Newport Pagnell

85.00

Books for recruits

250.00

Expenses - Printing/postage/stationery

100.00

900.00

Ring fenced funds for further training

833.93

2,581.31

2,581.31