

Minutes of Belfry Advisory Committee.

Suffolk Guild of Ringers

Meeting held at Yaxley – Tuesday, 3rd October, 2017 19.30 hrs.

Present - W Girling (Chair) C McArthur (Sec.) C Davies, C Girling, N Whittell, D Salter, M Steggles, J Taylor.

Apologies – C Nunn, J Spiller, P Rose, D Rose, J Stevens, A Moulton.

Also present by invitation – T Scase (Guild Ringing Master) G. Flatters, Zoe Wright.

Winston welcomed all after a short ring at Yaxley and stated that Zoe Wright from Yaxley had expressed a wish to join the Committee. This was accepted by all present. Prop. WG, seconded CM.

- 1) Minutes of the previous Meeting held at Cretingham on 12/6/17 were agreed and signed.
- 2) Management Committee feedback from WG was that our grant recommendations had been accepted by the GMC as follows: £10,000 Lt. Cornard; £4,000 Cretingham and £1,250 Offton.
- 3) Grant Applications – Brandeston have applied for a grant to assist with removal and welding of cracked 4th bell. Cost £4,530 with VAT and self help removed. Bells now out of action because of the problems with the 4th and a great deal of help is being given by BAC Members to resolve things and to get the bells ringing again. As the cost of repairs is to be kept to a minimum DS proposed a grant of £1,000 be offered. This was seconded by NW and all agreed. K. Salter had approached the Guild for assistance with painting the metal bell frame and other work at St. Clements, Ipswich. Katherine is doing a great job on the Ipswich Historic Churches Trust and because St. Clements has been neglected, and also because these bells are a complete peal of Darby's and were also the Bowell flagship as far as Ipswich is concerned, it was felt that a special effort should be made to keep them ringing. A small grant of £500+ was requested to buy paint and other items to allow the Salter family to clean, do some maintenance and paint the bell frame. It was felt by the Committee that the Guild should encourage these efforts and support them. A grant offer of £500 was proposed by CD and seconded by MS. All agreed.
- 4) Training matters – CM and JS to organise training on tower maintenance in East Suffolk and to target locations where inadequate maintenance is taking place for want of appropriate knowledge.
- 5) Health and Safety – In view of the recent purchase by the Guild of a chain hoist it was felt appropriate that the safe operation should be discussed. At present only three Officers should lead and supervise use, namely Jed Flatters, Alan Moulton and Winston Girling. Appropriate training, instructions for use of the hoist would be passed to CM by JF for incorporation within a risk assessment. Taylors, Central Council (T & SC) risk assessments to be obtained for perusal on all bell hanging matters. CM would facilitate this and in due course some training linked to these BAC meetings will be organised.

The documentation can be lodged on the Guild Website under BAC. DS will examine the Guild Insurance cover and report back any areas of concern. It was felt that the Guild has to take safety very seriously indeed and would have the same responsibility to anyone using the hoist as would a firm. Generic risk assessments will be in place shortly, but site specific risk assessments should also be documented by the lead person on commencement of work. WG pointed out that any incidents occurring **must be immediately reported to the Chairman of the BAC**. Health and safety will always be a standing agenda item for the BAC in the future.

- 6) Technical Advisor – visited Redgrave to sort out a couple of sliders (bells and frame coming out starting 20th November for major restoration) Mendlesham – after seeing all six bells being rung full circle has reported on the installation and advised bells should not be rung until a major restoration can be carried out. Cotton – Alan Moulton has attended and steps being taken to install a steel plate under a suspect support beam in the intermediate chamber. This will be carried out by the BAC and until then the lower tier of six bells remains out of action. Wyverstone – three bells checked and tightened for wedding. Rung full circle but only suitable for limited ringing. Stowmarket – proposed restoration getting off the ground. Ten bell steel frame on present level to house existing back seven bells and three new lighter bells to be added to make a peal of ten. Donors have said that they will pay for one of the new bells and it is likely that the other new bells could attract donors as well. New independent floor to be fitted under the new bell frame and adjustable sound proofing to be installed as part of the restoration.
- 7) District Reports: **North East** - nothing to report **North West** - Chris Davies has carried out work to improve odd struckness. **South East** – Hollesley have had work done on the clappers with one being re-furbished by Taylors. Tatingstone had an inspection by DS and CM and meeting with tower captain planned to detail a number of issues. Ralph Earey has carried out some corrective work at Copdock. Cretingham work on going, bells expected back in November. Brandeston fourth badly cracked and cannot be rung. St. Lawrence have been tightened and inspected and more to be done. St Clements will have some maintenance work starting shortly. No progress at St. Mary at Quay. **South West** – Boxford clappers now back after work done and clappers have been adjusted. Little Cornard progressing well and order for restoration placed with Taylors. NW hopes to do work on Hintlesham after Christmas (weddings right up until Christmas) St. Gregory's Sudbury has a problem with bearing drop on one of the bells which will be dealt with in due course. This is a design fault with the Warner self lubricating plain bearings!
- 8) Any other business – DS stated that the National Bells Register needs updating and he asked all members to check accuracy and enhancements for towers in their vicinity. CM will send this out to all in due course.
- 9) Next Meeting – Wednesday, 7th February 2018 in Cretingham Bell PH with a ring on the new six if possible. Agenda items to CM or WG by 1st February, please.