

Suffolk Guild of Ringers

Belfry Advisory Committee

Minutes of meeting held at Laxfield on Tuesday 6th September 2022

Present - C Davies (chair), C McArthur (Sec), M Steggles, J Taylor, A Moulton, C Birkby, M Rolph.

Apologies – Z Gray, W&C Girling, K Salter, C Nunn.

Prior to the meeting we had rung on the refurbished bells at Laxfield and found them to be a fine ring. Thanks to them for hospitality and facilities provided.

Previous minutes – Meeting held at Preston St Mary – 11th August 2021, signed and agreed with minor corrections. A long interval between meetings because of Covid and no grant applications.

Grant Applications – A application has been received from Westhorpe St Margaret. Full details have been lodged with the chair of BAC and will involve a largely new ring of six below the existing frame, with Taylors as the preferred bellhanger. The total for the project is £154,119.60 including a 10% contingency. However, after BAC help etc they could potentially save £6935, and the meeting therefore proposed a grant of 5% at £5000. This will go to management, and we understand the parish have bellringers about to start learning at other towers in the vicinity.

Health and Safety – There is still a need to have some basic documents on the website linked to BAC. As D Salters work is no longer available, *C McArthur to talk to Essex Assoc or Taylors* for copies of documents they currently use.

Technical Advisors Report – Much work has been ongoing by our two advisors including inspections of North Suffolk bells, accompanied by C Davies. Cracked bells at Worlingworth and Monk Soham have been reported to the respective churchwardens in view of the concerns about occasional ringing.

Northeast district activity - *Darshan*: Sorting Elkem chimes. *Dunwich*: Maintenance on single bell for chiming. *Iken*: Inspection at parish request and no issues found. *Blythburgh*: Pulleys refurbished by C Davies & J Flatters to improve go and excessive noise.

Northwest district activity – *Hopton*: Odd struckness adjustments resulted in considerable improvement. *Bardwell*: Improvements in odd struckness and sorting three stays. Haughley: All loose clappers tightened. *Chevington*: Frame tightened. *Oakley*: Stay replacements.

Southeast district activity – *Little Bealings*: refurbishment of wheels and chiming resumption. *Framlingham*: Maintenance and rope replacements. *Ipswich St Elms*: Assisting

Nicholson's and bells being lowered to make safe for electrical chiming. *Crettingham*: Stay replacement.

Southwest district activity – *St Gregory's Sudbury*. BAC extensively provided support to Taylors for several weeks for the refurbished eight, in the existing frame that has been repainted by locals. Test ring was very successful, and a local band is delighted with the result. *St Peters Sudbury*: Discussions about modifications to the church layout and the lack of trap door facility for any future bell removal. *Hemingstone*: Three chimers currently unsafe and unringable, to be restored as a BAC project. *Coombs*: Assistance to Taylors reinstalling four very old bells in the top of the tower with electrical chiming. A full circle ring of ten is the second phase, that is currently being planned and financed. *Stowmarket*: BAC members on standby to assist Nicholson's in February 2023, with reinstallation for a ring of ten. *Troston* refurbished bells are to be fully funded by a local benefactor and BAC assistance is not required or in respect of funding. Starting shortly.

AOB – Grant extensions agreed for Stowmarket, Coombs and Fornham St Martin. Three years is that timescale.

Next meeting – Likely to be Barham on 10th January 2023.

Addendum attached: is Chairman's report to Guild Management committee 23 October 2022.