

Suffolk Guild of Ringers

Belfry Advisory Committee – Minutes

Meeting at 19.00hrs – Hintlesham Parish Church 6th October 2023

Thanks to Neville for arranging the venue and the inspection of the new bell fittings.

These minutes are to be read in conjunction with the chairman's report to management (30 Oct.) that contains considerable detail on specific towers.

Apologies – W and C Girling, P Lock, K Mossop.

Attendees – C Davies (Chair), C McArthur (Sec.), M Steggles, J Taylor, A Moulton, C Birkby, J Flatters, N Whittell.

1. Minutes of meeting at Stowmarket 13/6/23 agreed and signed by chairman.
2. No matters arising.
3. Management Feedback – Blythburgh grant still awaiting R and T sign off and will be progressed at next management meeting. Suggestions have been made that grant awarded at 5% during a reduced grant period may now be offered 10% if the scheme is still progressing.
4. No grant applications received for consideration at this meeting.
5. Health and Safety – The generic risk assessment has been uploaded onto the BAC part of guild website. This is for use on many occasions involving bell work, including routine maintenance. It has been supplied by a major bell hanger and will be updated routinely. Thanks to C Garner for helping with implementation.
6. Technical Advisors Reports – Bramford has had stay improvement work. Jed is working with locals at Lakenheath on a scheme to install new bearings and gudgeons. Copdock new frame planned and locals progressing well with a scheme shortly. Combs PCC has become a little more supportive of the new ten bell installation, but it is some way off. Fornham St Martin is starting next weekend and BAC will help remove the bells, although Nicholsons are the principal contractor, with A Moulton leading locally on behalf of the parish. Stowmarket is now complete after ancillary works and is a fine ring of ten, although sound level adjustments will be undertaken next year after they settle in. Felsham are considering a rehang and Drinkstone are fund raising actively and will start a scheme soon. Blaxhall have been in discussions about a potential rehang but this is very early stages. It should be noted that the guild lifting tackle has been recertified recently although it is only for use when technical advisors are present.
7. NE District - Nothing to report.

8. NW District – Hoxne scheme is progressing, and local ringers being taught by other local towers. Bells likely to come from Bangor via Keltic trust. Westhorpe now at Taylors and being assessed for bell condition and potential replacements.
9. SE District – Framsden to have floor strengthening work by BAC in the spring to allow eight bell ringing. Framlingham stay repairs and general maintenance. St Mary le Tower new training bells, order placed. Gosbeck single bell inspection for safety check, all satisfactory.
10. SW District – Bures repairs to tenor clapper. Hintlesham all have new ball bearings but pulley blocks to be refurbished as somewhat worn.
11. Training – It was noted that Central Council maintenance training took place in September in Ipswich and our guild will follow this up in the spring with a further event at possibly Framlingham.
12. Chairman reported Worlingworth have given a donation following bell work on site last year.
13. AOB – A discussion took place regarding constructing frame wall pockets, and potential pitfalls linked to the need for full insurance cover. All agreed it should only be undertaken when bell hangers are present, or Technical Advisors are leading a project on behalf of a PCC. It is a problematic area and in the past instances of near misses have occurred. It was however agreed that this topic was complex but those present did raise concerns that wall and masonry fall was a serious matter when constructing pockets.
14. Next meeting - Stowmarket 30th January 2024 at 19.00 hrs. (please note Hintlesham meeting above was the first meeting when recording attendance under our new rules)