

Suffolk Guild of Ringers

Minutes of Belfry Advisory Committee Meeting held on Friday 9 June 2000 at 10 Mitre Close Woolpit

Present: R Clouston MBE, N Whittell, A Moulton, J Peirera, B Wakefield, D Salter, C McArthur, R Coe, W Girling.

Apologies: J Colman, G Pipe, C Nunn, S Harrison, D Webb.

Matters Arising: R Coe reported that **Haughley** bells are to be removed from the tower at the end of June and will go to Eayre & Smith to have crown staples removed and new modern clappers fitted. A brick ring beam is to be installed in the tower while the bells are away. A revised drawing detailing the method of holding the frame down has not yet been received from the engineer. C McArthur asked about **Easton**. A Moulton said that the bells are sitting on the frame but the frame itself needs tying down to the new steelwork which has been installed and the Parish have not raised enough money yet to complete the job which should involve new headstocks.

District Reports

North East: R Clouston said that at **Chediston** Parish had been advised against chiming bells by tying ropes to clappers. A Moulton asked about **Westhall** and R Clouston said that the welded treble was back in the tower but he had no other information. D Salter reported that **South Elmham St Cross** would be checked and tightened prior to a peal attempt in July. W Girling said that **Covehithe** had been tightened and checked and one rope replaced prior to a recent peal.

North West: W Girling reported as follows - **Wyverstone** engineer attended to assess tower. 3 bells rung full circle - first time for many years - following routine maintenance and report and bells can be rung from time to time. **Cotton** routine maintenance carried out, first floor in tower has decayed to such an extent that bells will soon become inaccessible because it will not be safe to cross this floor. Parish will be advised. **Old Newton** new set of ropes now fitted **Stowmarket** working sound flaps operated from ringing chamber now fitted to south and east louvres and report to be submitted to PCC in due course setting out specifications for new steel 10 bell frame lower in tower. **Westhorpe** report by A Moulton on potential restoration. **West Stow** W Girling has temporarily repaired rotten slider run on 4th - new slider run to be fitted in due course. **Bardwell** Churchwarden advised on general condition of installation which will only allow very occasional ringing.

South East: **Hacheston** R Clouston and C McArthur reported that installation now in final stages of commissioning from bellhangers. Back 3 bells clapper badly and A Moulton has reported on reasons. Hayward Mills are taking steps to resolve. Service bell has now been turned and does not strike on badly worn part of soundbow. R Clouston would prefer better access to treble pit. **Stonham Aspal** engineer/architect has attended re crack in wall of intermediate chamber which has widened, front 6 only being rung until problems resolved.

J Pereira asked whether there was any information on **East Bergholt** and R Clouston said that he has heard that platforms for ringers to stand on are being fitted, apparently the bells are being rung again and the embargo has been lifted.

South West: **Monks Eleigh** N Whittell reported that the weight holes have been filled on ringing chamber floor and the gallery rail raised to comply with regulations. Some papers received on a potential restoration, augmentation and grant request for **Elmsett** were discussed and are with A Moulton to study prior to the GMC Meeting on 17 June. B Wakefield asked whether we should be considering the grant application when a proposed ring beam has still to be designed and installed. The members felt that this should not hold up the

application. **Boxford** measurements by A Moulton have revealed that there are problems with the clapper of the 7th making the bell very slow and difficult to strike. Measurements have also been taken from the other bells.

Technical Adviser: A Moulton mentioned a request from GMC for wording to add to **grant conditions** that grant will not be paid unless **frame support beam pockets** are filled in with cement. He will have ready for GMC on 17 June. R Clouston said that he was now in favour of filling in these pockets as has been traditionally carried out for many years (report refers) he said that we do need to be on our guard for all future installations though. R Clouston reported that at **Iken** (funded by Millennium Commission and Guild not involved) he had been asked for a final Certificate. He attended and found a top frame cill wedged to the tower wall to prevent excess movement of the frame. He is not at all happy with certain aspects of the work.

Any other business: A Moulton asked if the Guild would fund the buying of some **nylon pulley wheels** (20 for approximately £400) and D Salter suggested this could be paid from the Restoration Fund and recovered from Churches where fitted. W Girling said that J Colman had offered to get these pulley wheels made quite cheaply and also fitted with shafts and ball races and suggested that this possibility should be looked at first and prices compared. (There is a need for regular replacement of pulleys and a stock would be useful to the team) It was agreed to compare costs first.

W Girling reported on the proposed **Guild Seminar on Maintenance** to be held on 21st October 2000 at Stowmarket and the GMC can now be updated on the format.

Next Meeting: Friday 13 October 2000 at 7.30p.m. 54 Old Street, Haughley by the kind invitation of R Coe.

The meeting closed at 9.45p.m.

Winston S. Girling
Convenor