



**Belfry Advisory Committee
Minutes of Meeting at All Saints', Barrow
16 June 2011 at 7.30 pm**

Members had the opportunity to ring before the meeting.

It was noted with disappointment the new position of the organ which precludes the ringers from seeing into the nave and makes it difficult to hear the bells when the organ is playing.

Present

Jonathan Stevens (JS) (Chairman), Richard Coe (RC), Chris Davies (CD), Carol Girling (CG), Winston Girling (WG), Chris McArthur (CMc), Chris Nunn (JP), John Taylor (JT),
Minute Secretary: Suzanne Stevens.

1. Welcome

JS welcomed everyone and thanked Chris Nunn for being so hospitable.

2. Apologies for absence

Martin Croucher, Alan Moulton, John Pereira, Michael Rolph, David Salter, Bruce Wakefield, Neville Whittell.

3. Minutes of the 10 February 2011 meeting (previously circulated)

The minutes were agreed and signed as a true record by the Chairman.

4. Matters arising from the minutes

- WG stated that the clock at Stowmarket is now electrically wound and working well.

5. New members

It was proposed by Winston Girling and seconded by John Taylor that Chris Davies become a member of the BAC. Chris was welcomed to the team by the Chairman.

6. Correspondence

None.

7. Steeple keepers' supper

JS reported that those who were there had a good time, and asked whether it was promoted enough, or whether people didn't see themselves as steeple keepers.

8. Technical Advisor's Report (JS)

March 6 - **Mendlesham** meeting with Anne and Father Phillip re bells. Measured frame movement and checked whether safe to ring.

20 March - Address public meeting at **Wissett** re noise complaint and action to reduce bell volume.

16 April - **Brundish** church. Inspect bells, fittings and frame. Chat to David Mulrenan about what action to take re welding/re-hang/ augmentation.

- 1 May - **Hopton** Dedication. Sound readings outside.
- 2 May - **Hollesley**. Splicing tailends and identify problem with third and recommend action.
- 5 May - **Eye** with St John Perry inspect installation measure frame movement. Advise on next jobs and sound management
- 6 May - **Aldeburgh** remove clappers
- 7 May - inspect and adjust some striking at **Stoke by Nayland** pre striking comp.
- 14 May - inspect and adjust striking at **Nayland** pre striking competition.
- 23 May - **Helmingham** help Neil Thomas and take measurements for sound management.
- 25 May - **Campsea Ashe** meeting with Rev Harry Edwards re remedial works and grant.
- 28 May - Replace **Aldeburgh** clappers and adjust. Tighten frame.
- 31 May - **Wickham Market** with Ray Lewis inspection and advice as to new headstocks, external sound, internal sound, maintenance safety.
- 3 June - **Kelsale** tighten seventh headstock and clapper.
- 8 June - **Southwell** Minster CBC Conference.
- 11 June - **Redgrave** inspection and review of future work.

9. District Reports

9.1 North East

See **Wissett, Brundish, Aldeburgh and Kelsale** in Technical Advisor's Report.

9.2 North West.

WG reported as follows:

- 24 Feb - **Stowmarket** – assist with fitting new wiring in clock chamber ready for clock to be fitted with electrical winding.
- 25 Feb **Wickham Skeith** – check and tighten clappers.
- 7 March **All Saints, Sudbury** – check bells and ropes prior to peal attempt later in year.
- 14 March **Thornham Magna** – check, oil, and tighten bells and frame prior to peal attempt.
- 11 Apr **Eye** – removed seized treble ground pulley.
- 18 Apr **Eye** – replaced treble pulley having stripped, freed and lubricated.
- 20 Apr **Eye** – similarly dealt with other seized or troublesome pulleys. Sorted problems with rope run and guides on 7th.

14 May - **Stowmarket** lifted 3rd bell and removed bearing races which had become noisy and were found to be badly worn.

16/17 May - **Stowmarket** assisted engineer with fitting electrical winding to clock.

20 May **Stowmarket** – removed peal boards and notices from clock weight chute.

23 May **All Saints, Sudbury** – attended with Neville Whittell, lifted tenor to assess and clean plain bearings.

26 May **Stowmarket** – removing all clock weights and equipment for storage, making good all floor voids and cleaning tower.

28 May **Stowmarket** – fitted 3rd bell with new bearings, Re-assembled and tested.

30 May **Bacton** – thoroughly cleaned ringing chamber following extensive work in Church.

6 June **Yaxley** – checked and tightened installation and carried out inspection for report on current condition of this ring.

8 June **Offton** – assisted with removal of all clappers for re-bushing and re-furbishment at Taylors.

WG said that he will return in the summer to **All Saints, Sudbury** as the tenor is not going better even after cleaning. He thinks the frame shifted slightly and the tenor as gone over one side. He will go back and decided on the way to deal. 6 & 7 go very well now.

At **Stowmarket** the 3rd goes very well now. There will be further work later. Taylors charged £196 for the bearings, sleeve etc. Ordered 6 but wouldn't have fitted as overall diameter less so everything would move. They will be used elsewhere.

JT remarked that the tenor at **Yaxley** used to be awful. WG and CG said that it was still awful – the frame must have rotted by the 5th. They tried to stabilise it but there is over ¼” movement. A metal beam was put in but it is unsupported on one side. It can't be sorted without major work. WG suggested putting it down from 8 to 6 in the Suffolk Guild Handbook. This was agreed.

Redgrave - CD reported that Albert Driver died in July 2010 and left the value of a third of his estate for the augmentation of Redgrave bells. Originally there were four options: Two new tenors, new treble and tenor, two new trebles, retain current six but rehang them. Peter Hayward of John Taylors is happy with all these options.

Brian Morton of the Morton Partnership has carried out a complete structural tower survey and approves all of the four proposed schemes. Graham Pledger of English Heritage has agreed that the frame must be retained but can be lower in the tower.

JJS as Technical Advisor had visited Redgrave and suggested that as a further option there could be three new bells; treble, tenor and flat 6th. This would give flexibility to ring an 8, a light 6, a heavy 6 or the original 6.

The Redgrave ringers will be trying the 9 bell arrangement at Felmingham, Norfolk in July. If they are happy with this, they will seek quotes from Whitechapel, John Taylors and Whites.

The timescales depend on how long it takes to complete the administration of Albert Driver's estate.

Cotton – WG spliced a new set of ropes as one had parted while some visiting ringers were there. There is a problem with the rope guide; plan to move lower guide so one is under another. May need pipes between the two.

Rougham – RC reported that he had put in new ground pulleys, new oak soles in rope chutes, and put 6” turned rope bosses under ceiling and stained them. Maurice Rose says that they go better.

Hinderclay – the 3rd is cracked. WG had suggested welding if Soundweld would do it. This was arranged; it has gone to Soundweld and will be returned in two weeks.

9.3 South East

CMc reported that the bells at **Helmingham** were out and had gone to the foundry. They couldn't preserve the frame but have kept the best joints for display in the church. The three days planned work grew to five and it is still not finished. They will be back in July to do the frame and bells should be back in August. Good PR in paper, expectations are that it will be a good ring.

Brandeston are getting rope guides from Taylors.

Charsfield. The five bell frame is interesting and may be of note. The bell is still in the porch. CMc will move it with a few friends.

Ipswich – The Big Ring was mentioned. The Technical Advisor had not been asked to check any bells.

Clopton had started their bell project and JJS is going there the day after this meeting (ie 17 June).

9.4 South West

St Peters, Sudbury – the headstock has gone to Taylors and a new one ordered. They will make an exact copy of the Whitechapel headstock with appropriate sized gudgeons. The previous ones were very undersized.

10. Church Buildings Council (CBC) Conference

JJS reported that it had been a very interesting day at Southwell. All the ringing societies' technical advisors and DAC bell advisors had been invited.

The Church Buildings Council talk reported that church lead worth £24 million had been stolen in the last five years. Bells on display get stolen; those in towers don't so the advice is not to keep bells on display unless security is tight.

(Members of the BAC discussed various places where bells are on display.)

Mark Regan spoke on what it was like to be a bell advisor and Chris Pickford gave an introduction to identification of wooden bell frames.

There were two tower visits 1) to see a restored four bell frame which had steel foundation beams inside it which worked well, and 2) a frame which had been raised and preserved. There was no way to inspect this as there was no easy access.

The next meeting is in Worcester next June. JJS is hoping to finish the sound study by then and hopes to have an opportunity to present a paper at that meeting.

He felt it was well worth going and provided a good networking opportunity.

11. Grant Conditions

JJS noted that at the CBC Conference a question was asked about CBC grants. 'What value do the grants have to the parish apart from cash?'

He wondered what the BAC's view was of that question. The BAC felt that there was immeasurable value in the advice and help that was available in addition to the cash.

WG wondered whether, post Gislingham, whether we should insist upon the peal condition or if it was rather draconian.

The condition is 'should be available'. It was felt that that the parish had a responsibility to the ringing society that was helping fund the project, and that peals help to tie the village in to the association.

It was noted that Gislingham had never had an official acknowledgement of their grant monies being returned, the cheque was simply presented. JJS will speak to Guild Officers about this oversight.

12. Grant Applications

- **Helmingham.** The costs of the project have gone up by £4,000. They need £17,000 which is being underwritten. JJS proposed from the chair that £400 should be given as a further grant. All agreed.
- **Hinderclay.** The project is a total of £2,200. WG proposed £200 grant seconded by CMc. Agreed.
- **Thurston** want to augment; one bell is needed. They have had a quote only from Whitechapel. WG proposed and JJS seconded that if they get a further two quotes they will be awarded a £500 grant.

These proposals will be taken to the GMC.

13. Update on work done in previous bell restorations (DS)

DS not present at the meeting.

14. Any other business

Ixworth Thorpe bell. CN asked to look at it.

15. Action List

- **CMc and others will move bell at Charsfield**
- **JJS will arrange for Gislingham to have acknowledgement of returned monies**
- **JJS will speak to Thurston about getting three quotes to enable them to receive a grant.**

16. Date and venue of next meeting

Thursday 22 September 2011. Reydon. 7.00 pm ringing, 7.30 pm meeting.

JS thanked everyone for attending.

The meeting closed at 9.07 pm.