

Minutes of Belfry Advisory Committee – 17th September 2013 (draft)

Venue - Redgrave Nr Diss : Thanks to C Davies for his hospitality.

Present - J Stevens (chair), C McArthur (secretary), C Davies, C Nunn, J Flatters, J Taylor, M Croucher, C Girling.

Apologies – W Girling and A Moulton.

The meeting started at 7.30 with a short talk by J Flatters about “hang of bells”. All found this new short talk format very informative, regarding the development of bells and their fittings. It was agreed to continue this with other topics on future occasions. Other members of the Suffolk Guild could also attend as lay members if they wish and it would be publicised in “what’s on”. J Taylor would organise this input.

Minutes – Those from the meeting of 14th May 2013 were agreed and signed as a true record.

Technical Advisors Report-

This last period has been fairly busy.

20 May. Copdock. Chris and I checked the tower following strengthening work and gave the installation the once over. We recommended that a rope guide be installed.

20 May. Hopton. I inspected the sound management work so far done and discussed the next stage. I have since designed sound doors for them and hope that they now also realise that sound barriers have to be completely sealed for them to work effectively.

27 May. Ringsfield tower inspection following their Quinquennial. There is work to be done. I recommended that they install rope guides in the ringing chamber and flapper boards in the sound room. They are applying for a faculty for this work.

28 May. Falkenham. Tower inspection. Corrected some oddstruckness.

30 May. Norman Tower. Counting the bells for the Guild Grant Inspection and assisting with the striking.

30 May. Chevington tower inspection. Report suggested urgent need to rehang these bells.

3 & 4 June. CBC Bell Advisor's Conference York. Report by Mark Regin in Ringing World.

11 June. Horringer to discuss with their committee, Alan Moulton and Ruth Sugget their plans for a re-hang.

13 June. Brome. Check over following reports that clapper was stuck on the 3rd. Rope needed splicing on treble, nothing else found.

13 June. Palgrave. Inspection of installation. Removed a couple of clappers with sticking crown staples.

17 June. Woolpit grant inspection and advice on sound management.

25 June. Palgrave. Return of clappers, setting up striking and other minor works.

8 July. Metfield inspection.

8 July. Wissett. Rattle on tenor found to be loose clapper, just after inspection by paid contractor.

11 July. Sibton Tower inspection following Quinquennial (Architect reluctant to ascend tower).

13 July. Bredfield. Visit after concerns over treble. Suggested enlarging the hole in sound room floor. All clappers needed rebushing. Two sliders needed replacing.

24 July. Ilkeshall St Andrew. Tower inspection. Three builders declined to climb tower. Report gave suggestions to make tower safe to ring. Chiming only at present as louvres braced from wooden frame.

24 July. Halesworth. Discussing sound management. Drawings for faculty application completed.

19 August. Clopton. Inspection of foundation beams on padstones. Recommendation of remedial work where one beam did not sit flat.

23 August. Clopton. Inspecting grouting in progress and facing with flints and lime mortar.

District Reports

North East

Little to report although Jonathan commented that sound and clock issues remain at Stadbroke and will be addressed eventually, but not as an immediate issue.

North West

All ringing at Cotton has had to be stopped because of frame deterioration. Wickham Skeith has had new rope top ends fitted. Stowmarket have had a new tie rod fitted, that had proved to be most difficult to remove. Thornum Magna and Eye have both had new ropes fitted. Thelnetham have had new pulley boxes made by C Davies, with materials supported by a guild grant. These were on display in Redgrave porch before the meeting. At Tostock a new tenor rope fitted. Wetherden has had a clock and bell put in, and this installation was facilitated by guild members. Redgrave has ongoing discussions on the layout of the 3 new bells in relation to the existing six. Structural engineers have agreed that having bells above the existing ring is not desirable, but the scheme cannot progress until a decision is agreed by all parties this autumn. Finance including a legacy is in place for work to start. Thurlow has a reported loose tenor clapper; this will be looked at before the next meeting. Thurston have ongoing issues with the substandard grouting in of the foundation beams.

South East

Offton clappers have been rebushed. Clopton now has a rehung ring of six installed by Nicholson's, helped by guild members throughout the project. A test ring for the grant approval is to be arranged, but first impressions are very encouraging. Easton still has minor problems on the No. 3 and it is to be sorted in due course by CM/JS

AOB

Jonathan attended the CBC conference in York on behalf of the guild and found it very useful. Amongst the topics discussed were Lottery grants and the requirement for English Heritage to have an independent view of the project and a power of veto. Also discussed were the beneficial merits of taking out cast in crown staples during rehangs, despite historical issues about them remaining in place. Recent amendments to legislation have resulted in less bell thefts across the country, but preventive measures such as smart water and taking out bells on the ground floors of churches, are highly recommended.

Next Meeting - Thursday 6th February 2014 St Mathews, Ipswich

It is proposed that the next meeting will be held at 19.00 and we hope to ring beforehand and hold the meeting in the church subsequently.