



**Belfry Advisory Committee
Minutes of Meeting at St Matthew's, Ipswich
6 February 2014 at 7.30 pm**

Present

Jonathan Stevens (JJS) (Chairman), Nathan Coleman (NC), Chris Davies (CD), Carol Girling (CG), Winston Girling (WG), Alan Moulton (AM), Chris Nunn (CN), David Salter (DS), John Taylor (JT).

In attendance

Geoffrey Dearsley, Adrian Craddock

In attendance for talk

James Halsall, DAC Secretary

1. Welcome

JJS welcomed members, James Halsall, guests, and the speaker, Douglas Kent.

Prior to the meeting an interesting talk was given, on the perspective taken by The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) on bell frames in the view of their Technical Director, Douglas Kent. He presented a well argued, objective and justified view. He considered that not only the needs of all the various users and interested parties should be taken into account but also the value of the fabric; from the frame itself to that of the tower and the church, as well as wider historic preservation issues. This was followed by a useful question and answer session.

2. Apologies for absence

Martin Croucher, Chris McArthur, Neville Whittell.

3. Minutes of the 17 September 2013 meeting (previously circulated)

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

4. Matters arising from the minutes

None.

5. Correspondence

None.

6. Grant applications

Rattlesden Work here is ongoing and £4,000 has been offered in the past. The total cost of the work is £56,397 and a £6,000 grant offer was proposed by Chris Davies and this was seconded by David Salter. This was agreed.

Wickham Market Here the unsatisfactory headstocks are to be replaced, the clapping sorted, new pulleys fitted and a new sound management and working floor installed below the frame. The total expected cost is £24,636. A grant offer of £2,500 was agreed.

Halesworth The chosen contractor is Jonathan Stevens and he declared an interest.

The tower is one where the bells are particularly loud in the immediate vicinity which inhibits their use apart from ringing for services and normal practice nights. The planned cost of an exterior sound control system is £2,750. A grant offer of £500 was proposed by WG and seconded by JT and this was agreed.

Horringer This tower has at last agreed on a plan and is in the process of applying for a faculty. They intend to have all eight bells recast to Gillett and Johnson profiles and rehung in an all-new frame. The grant aided content of this project is around £110,000. After discussion, CG proposed £12,000, seconded by DS. AM proposed an amendment of £15,000 which was not carried. The proposed £12,000 was agreed.

7. Training matters

JJS offered to run a seminar on how to use the Guild's strike meter. It was decided to go to Earl Stonham as it has a mixture of canon retaining and ordinary headstocks with twizzle pins. JT to organise the venue at date to be agreed with JJS.

8. Post nominations for AGM

JJS stated that he would not be seeking re-election as either Chairman of the BAC or Hon Technical Advisor. He explained that these are two very different jobs and best taken by two different people. It would be good if two suitable candidates could be nominated from the BAC.

JJS reminded the BAC that the Chairman organises three meetings a year, reports to three GMC meetings a year, is on the Executive and writes, with the Technical Advisor, the report for the Guild Annual Report.

Following discussion it was agreed that WG would be nominated by the outgoing Chairman. The Technical Advisor has a more challenging role, from being the first port of call for anyone with a tower worry, to inspecting installations and writing reports for parishes, typically as part of their quinquennial inspection, and to guiding and being the quality control inspector on restoration projects.

The meeting asked JJS to approach Michael Rolph.

9. Online reports

JJS proposed that Ranald Clouston's reports should be published online. It was felt that this would require a considerable amount of time, not only in the time taken for scanning the documents but also in going through the individual files to retrieve the relevant information. Much of the material is held by the Suffolk Records Office and might need to be retrieved to enable digital copies to be made. It was suggested that these reports might only be available online to BAC members. A lot of discussion on how this could be reasonably achieved took place and no clear final decision was made. However it was considered that permission from Ranald's family should be sought, even if only out of courtesy, and to help ensure that copyright is not breached. AM was asked if he would see if he could obtain the consent from Ranald's family.

10. Technical Advisor's Report

JJS stated that this would be his last report to the BAC as Technical Advisor.

20 September 2013 **Huntingfield**. Essential maintenance; eg replacing bolt to headstock, freeing pulleys etc.

1 October **Metfield** made and fitted new stay.

5 October **Tattingstone**. Discussed on site best way to proceed for a complete restoration.

28 October **Huntingfield** with Architect, sharing design and need for additional rope guide.

9 November **Pettistree** splicing another rope. Hardy hemp and terylene not happy here.

16 November **Clopton** briefing Pete Raffell on work to belfry floor, beams, hatches, safety rails, ladders.

1 December **Sweffling** cleaned out old grease from bearings and oiling them.

10 December **Rattlesden** visited whilst frame being removed to discuss grant conditions. Subsequently sent sketch of sound barriers.
7 January 2014 **Halesworth** external sound survey.
14 January **Metfield** sound survey following complaints that the bells cannot be heard around the village.
22 January **Ipswich St Margaret** DAC meeting discussing the planned rehang and new ringing floor.
25 January **Gt Livermere** inspection. Report and sketch of ringing floor at 3m above tower floor submitted to parish.
25 January **Ampton** inspection.
25 January **Ingham** inspection. Tower ladder platform fixed securely to frame and to tower wall so knocking tower whenever bells rung.

11. District Reports

11.1 North East

None.

11.2 North West.

Regrave – steel support to roof is in place.

Thurston – the re-grouting is underway.

Ickworth St Mary – single bell to be rehung.

11.3 South East

None.

11.4 South West

None.

12. Any other business

Thanks to JT for getting the BAC on the Guild 'What's On'.
The latest Grant Conditions are now online.

13. Action List

- **JT to secure Earl Stonham for training seminar (strike meter)**
- **JJS to run training seminar (strike meter)**
- **JJS to ask Michael Rolph to stand as Technical Advisor**
- **JJS to organise speaker for next meeting**

13. Date and venue of next meeting

Wednesday 4 June 2014. Wissett. 7.00 pm tour of installation, 7.30 pm talk.

JS thanked everyone for attending and Adrian Craddock for taking the minutes.
The meeting was closed.

The speaker for the meeting on Wednesday 4 June 2014 is Brian Morton of The Morton Partnership on 'The Role of the Structural Engineer in a Bell Project'. If members wish to see the old Wissett timber frame displayed in nearby barn, contact Jonathan Stevens by 17 May 2014.

Went to Guilding
Chairman
4/6/4