

## Central Council Report for 2020

The Council meeting for 2020 was not held, as planned, in the City of Nottingham but was to be a virtual meeting held on zoom and attended by 158 people including myself and Chris Birkby two of your three representatives.

The first business of the meeting was to vote on acceptance of the Clerical Guild to affiliate to the Council, which was approved by 95%.

Simon Linford, chairing his first full Council meeting, kept the business flowing and injected a very relaxed style and the occasional note of humour.

I would encourage members to keep an eye on his bi-weekly blog published on the CC website which provides a concise and engaging look at what's going on in wider world of ringing and specifically the council, though no match for our own Richy's blog!

There are now 66 affiliated societies although the Society of Sherwood Youths have now disaffiliated.

The accounts were presented by the Treasurer, having been audited, the Council's total assets at the end of 2019 were valued at £435k, the General Fund and Publications having made small surpluses.

The presentation of the accounts was followed by the presentation of the Workgroup report.

Much of the Council's work is carried out by what used to be called Committees but have now been replaced with Workgroups. There are now 8 of these and between them they cover every aspect of ringing.

The first of these groups, the Stewardship and Management Workgroup has spent much of the year trying to get ringing through the Covid19 crisis. The most important item to come out of their report was the Westley Award for Tower Maintenance, which this year was present to Sue McClaughry from Calstock, Cornwall. The award is given to the person who shows the most commitment in developing and using their own skills and those of others in tower bell maintenance and has become involved in the past five years. It would be nice to see some nominations for Suffolk ringers in future years.

The Volunteering and Leadership Workgroup are presently focusing on making contact with lapsed ringers and have been publishing articles on education in the Ringing World.

The Universities Workgroup is a new group that has been set up to support younger ringers transition into university or further education.

Historic and Archive Workgroup, deals with historical records and the Central Council Library, which is housed at Worthen near Shrewsbury. The workgroup is responsible for the furthering the digital publication historical records.

Communications and Marketing. Sadly their plans for VE & VJ ringing and the associated promotion was halted by lockdown.

Senior Stakeholders, Involved mainly liaison between church bell ringers and the church of England. Particularly relevant during the Covid19 crisis.

Technical and Taxonomy. Dealing with method ringing, peal compositions and also responsible for maintaining the Dove database, Felstead, and the CC website amongst other IT assets.

Schools & Youth Group, responsible for dealing with the development of ringing amongst young people working alongside ART.

After all of the above workgroup leads had reported, the President of the Council Simon Linford looked forward to the rest of 2020 and coping with the restrictions placed, as with all other aspects of live, on ringing.

A motion to admit small ringing societies with a membership of less than 75 or 25 outside of the British Isles was also passed by a majority of 76% with some debate.

I am pleased that the meeting was able to happen but I missed the usual face to face contact that makes the weekend so valuable.

### **The Ringing World AGM.**

The AGM of the Ringing World took place just after the lunch break of the meeting chaired by the then Chairman of the Ringing World David Grimwood.

Although subscriptions were down slightly due to an accounting correction, sales of merchandise were good but income from advertising and donations were down. Continued investment in the business included the appointment of an Assistant Editor and a Digital Assistant.

The Editor was congratulated on keeping the journal a thought leader and for keeping people together during difficult times.

The main debate of the meeting was a on a motion to change the structure of the Ringing World to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) which would allow it to offer membership to a wider audience. Andrew Wilby suggested that the Trustees were not being honest with the membership over changes to the constitution and also the future of the paper. Overall the proposal felt a little unpolished compared to the very comprehensive presentation we were given in the main CC meeting on the small societies proposal. The motion to change the structure was defeated which I think was quite a surprise. Over the following months this lead to several disagreements amongst the board of the RW and ultimately the resignation of David Grimwood as chairman. Though thankfully this has now been resolved and several new members and a chairman has joined the Ringing World.

Both the next RW AGM and CC meeting will be held on Zoom again in September.

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