

Notes from R&T Committee 19/11/2023

Present: Maureen Gardiner, Joshua Watkins, Jenny Scase, Mark Ogden, Pauline Brown, Philip Gorrod, Sue Child, Katharine Salter

Apologies: None

Agreement of minutes of last meeting: Minutes agreed with the addition of Jenny's apologies which were given to Katharine in advance. Thanks to Maureen for taking the minutes.

Action Points from last meeting:

Cleared:

- Katharine to write to Kate Gill about R&T support for the Blythburgh application

Outstanding:

- Philip agreed to review the grant condition originally drafted by him and present a possible revision
 - o Update Philip has done some drafting but actually grant conditions require a more in depth overhaul. Alan Moulton has suggested to GMC removing the training condition as part of the pre-approval process, but this was not passed. R&T agreed that the point of the training condition was to prevent restoration projects where the bells would not be rung, and that this meant training a recruitment had to be part of the wider restoration plan.
- Golden Bottle – each member to explore possible further simulator sites
 - o Update - R&T members have considered this and the SW will ask at their ADM next Saturday
- Maureen to follow up Stretham availability for far west NW towers - carried forward
- Katharine - R&T to discuss how to apply and perhaps pilot the Ely ringer support system - carried forward

Matters Arising:

Maureen raised the challenge of supporting new ringers, she has just assisted at an open day run at Haughley to recruit new ringers, this generated 10 potential new recruits. There are 2 ringers from neighbouring towers who have completed ART module 1 and Maureen will mentor them whilst they teach. But it raised the wider question of resource being spread very thinly.

The committee discussed more widely the need for more teachers, based on the steady stream of recruits, and to encourage competent ringers to come forward to do the ART courses. There seemed to be some folklore about how good a ringer you need to be to teach and the committee will encourage more people to come forward.

Purchase of 4 additional sensors and leads to expand the Felixstowe simulator from 4 to 8 bells, the committee agreed this in principle, the money to come out of the Golden Bottle fund, subject to not exceeding the original budget (Mark believes it is unlikely to). Mark provided feedback that for future installations money might be better invested in a brand new entry level laptop rather than a second hand one, as this has created issues.

Grant Application

The committee had received early notification of the St Mary le Tower training bells grant application in order to assess if the training condition of the application was met. This would enable the application to be considered by BAC at their January meeting and be put to GMC in February.

There was debate over which fund this may come out of, but this is outside the jurisdiction of this committee and the question at stake was did the application meet the grant condition in respect of training, whether there was an active band and if there was a teaching plan.

The committee agreed that the application met the training condition and noted that the installation could not come soon enough, interest was expressed in using the facility.

Philip noted that this could set a precedent for an installation in a silent tower where training bells could provide a teaching aid and a way of bells being rung where there were none.

Joshua noted that as the St Mary le Tower installation is upstairs it will benefit from being able to leave the kit connected as it is not accessible to the public accessing the building.

NW Update

New Ringing Master is Joshua Watkins and R&T rep is Maureen Gardiner, their new chairman is Neal Dodge, all their district posts are filled.

Maureen supported the Haughty open day, they are just working out how to make the follow up happen.

All teaching initiatives are still active and productive. Westhorpe bells are due back early 24, the band has just gained 3 additional new recruits, Sylvie Fawcett is overseeing the tuition.

Maureen is concerned about the void left at Bacton now Carl Melville has moved away and Winston is no longer able to support a practice. In part the issue is that there are no ringers resident in Bacton, for the time being the practice has ceased.

Horringer are hosting a week, with the Vestry Ring, during December to recruit new learners.

SW Update

Pauline had nothing new to report, ringing and teaching is running on as usual

NE Update

The Centenary Certificates have gone down very well.

The Sole Bay Teaching Hub, running on Saturday mornings, is now 8 months in, 32 people have visited, 17 learners have benefited from the hub, most learning from scratch, but some have been people keen to improve their skills. They have been ringing rounds and call changes and Plain Hunt. The neighbouring towers are used and there is a good progression route from learning through to Cambridge Surprise Minor. Sue is thinking

about recruiting a new tranche of learners for April 24. Both Philip and Sue are now setting up theory sessions on a different day of the week.

8 bell ringing is an issue, they struggle to get people together to ring on 8, Philip is looking at setting up monthly 8 bell practices rotating around the district.

SE Update

The Bellsashen ART teaching hub has just been announced covering the Ashbocking, Barham and Henley area, and are running multiple practices at these locations.

District practices as well attended and the district had an effective outing despite being threatened by floods.

The Ipswich area is a thriving hotbed of learners and teaching, Framingham, Badingham and Bennington are picking up.

8 bell ringing is also a challenge, people go to Debenham practice to do this, but this provides the challenge of having to cover ringing from Bob Robles upwards, with a number of people with a huge range of skills.

Monthly 8 bell practices are being set up **Mark, who is leading on this? I didn't catch what you said**, starting from January at Ufford.

Tuddenham are now ringing rounds and can self correct when they experience handling difficulties.

Mark is looking to set up a Young Ringers event before Christmas, immediately following the end of term, he doesn't yet have enough interested parties and asked R&T, members to make sure that if their young ringers were interested they made contact.

AOB

Katharine asked members what we want to do in 2024. Do we want to run more ART courses? And do we want to consider training days? Possibly with a social afterwards?

Maureen and Mark are attending a hybrid M2 course in Norwich next week, they will provide feedback to the committee. But the committee feels that there is value in running another 2 M1 course and potentially 2 M2 courses (1 basic and 1 advanced) during 2024.

We discussed training events and it was noted that there was demand for

- Basic conducting
- Maintenance
- Handbells

Actions:

Carried forward:

- Maureen to follow up Stretham availability for far west NW towers
- Katharine - R&T to discuss how to apply and perhaps pilot the Ely ringer support system

New:

- Mark to obtain a price for 4 sensors and leads for Felixstowe simulator
- Katharine to advise Kate Gill and the Chairman of BAC, Chris Davies, that R&T committee is satisfied that the St Mary le Tower grant application meets the training condition.
- Katharine to suggest dates for 2024 R&T meetings, following the last 2 ADMs when the committee members are known.
- Maureen and Mark to provide feedback to the committee following attendance at a hybrid M2 course in Norwich on 25th November
- Katharine to share need to maintenance course with Chairman of BAC and establish if they will take this on