

# Trustees' Annual Report

---

The Trustees present their report and financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2014.

## **Charity**

The Suffolk Guild of Ringers was registered with the Charity Commission on 10 December 1975, registration number 266869. The Charity's registered address is Millbeck House, Harleston Green, Shelland, Stowmarket, IP14 3HU. It is governed under a constitution originally registered in 1977 and most recently revised in 2013.

## **Principal objectives**

The purpose of the Charity is to promote and encourage the practice of bellringing within the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, to recruit, train and encourage bellringers in the practice of their art; to cultivate the art of scientific change ringing; and to promote and advise on the preservation of bells in an efficient condition.

## **Trustees**

The Trustees during the period were A F Stanley, G E Slack, and A J Shedden.

## **Review of Progress and Achievements**

### **Bellringing**

It has been another busy year for ringing, restoration, and social activities and we welcome the progress made by learners and young ringers. More ringers have completed teaching training and this should stand us in good stead for recruitment and retention of ringers. The Guild had a high profile in marking the centenary of the start of World War I and in celebrating the centenary of the Diocese. A well-attended AGM incorporated a valuable fringe meeting with guest speakers on the use of handbells in teaching church bell ringing; and an open forum on the Future of Ringing which in turn has led to actions being taken by the General Management Committee to consider how best the Guild can contribute, both financially and practically.

### **Restoration activities**

Our main contribution was to Rattlesden where the restoration of the bells was completed. Smaller contributions were made to Stowmarket, Thurston and Thelnetham. Members of the Belfry Advisory Committee continue to give advice and support, both for routine maintenance and restoration projects.

## **Guild Finances**

### **Policies**

All money in the Guild's funds not required for day-to-day working purposes is invested or deposited by the Treasurer, as directed by the Guild Management Committee. Grants from the Restoration Fund are authorised by the Guild Management Committee but are only paid after completed work has been approved by the Guild Ringing Master and the Technical Adviser. Grants are normally only offered for work to restore bells and their fittings for full-circle ringing, but may include augmentation and other ancillary work associated with any such project.

## **General Fund**

Income to the General Fund decreased by 5% overall, although this conceals increases in some categories and decreases in others. The most notable change was a reduction in subscription income of 10%. Membership numbers have fallen and a further contributory factor is the increasing age profile of our members with more paying the senior rate or becoming free. We are grateful that many such members give a generous donation to the Restoration Fund in lieu of their subscription. Expenditure was virtually unchanged from 2013 although again there were increases and reductions. The Young Ringers raised sufficient funds for the Striking Competition to offset their costs and although this income and expenditure is included in the accounts, they virtually balanced out. Overall there was a small reduction in the General Fund of £162 which was anticipated in the budget for the year.

## **Restoration Fund**

The significant increase in Restoration Fund income from donations and interest reported last year has meant that income this year is down by 20%, especially as interest rates have deteriorated further. Grants made were relatively low again at less than £7,500 but after several years where requests for grants were small, grants of over £21,000 were approved in 2014. As a result, the sum available for allocation to new projects has decreased to £46,600.

## **Summary**

As anticipated, there was a small reduction in the General Fund balance in 2014 and the reduction in subscriptions is a cause for concern. It was encouraging to receive significant funding requests for restoration work after some years of declining activity.

A F Stanley  
Trustee & Chairman  
January 2015

G E Slack  
Trustee & Treasurer  
January 2015

A J Shedden  
Trustee & Secretary  
January 2015