

**The Bedfordshire Association of Church Bell Ringers
Draft Minutes of Annual General Meeting
Saturday 15 May 2021 by Zoom Videoconference**

1. President's welcome

The President, Sue Silver welcomed everyone to the meeting, which because of the C19 Pandemic, had to be held by Zoom again. She looked forward to the time when meetings could be face to face again.

2. Apologies for absence

Jacque Albon, Rosemary Buckle, Humphrey Chetwynd-Talbot, Bob and Elizabeth Churchill, Alan Davies, Barbara Dunn, Felicity Evans, Vernon Green, Jean Heaslip, Tim Hele, Martin Major, Mary Mann, Tony Sharp, David Shaw.

3. Members who have died since the last AGM (held in November 2020)

We held a time of silence to remember:

Heather Waters – former member Arlesey, Nov 2020 (obituary in 2020 annual report)

Marion Ridgway – former member Oakley, Dec 2020 (obituary in 2020 annual report)

Martin Heaslip – member Oakley, April 2021

Peter Culverwell – former member Biddenham, May 2021

Richard Hillson, John Loveless and Stephen Stanford spoke about Peter Culverwell. John Loveless spoke about Martin Heaslip.

4. Minutes of the 2020 AGM, held on 28 November by Zoom

The Minutes of the 2020 AGM were taken as read and were adopted on a vote by Zoom Poll (For 90%, Against 0%, Abstention 10%) proposed by Linda Garton, seconded by Paul Chandler and signed as a correct record.

5. Matters arising for items not on the agenda

Sue mentioned item 12(a) Any Other Business – Annual Report and Richard Hillson's suggestion that the 2020 Annual Report shouldn't be produced. This was discussed by the General Committee at the December meeting and it was agreed that, for several compelling reasons, the report should be produced and printed as usual.

6. 2020 accounts

The Honorary Treasurer, Tim Blunt said that, because of the pandemic, some expected expenditure hadn't happened and there was a £278 surplus. This puts us in a relatively healthy position.

Richard Hillson raised some queries (the Independent Examiners report on page 10 was dated 3 April 2020 and not 2021, and on page 12, grants of £5000 to Kempston and £345 to Goldington from the Bedford BRF had been omitted. These were both errors in the Annual Report production and not accounting errors.

The accounts were accepted on a vote by Zoom Poll (For 90%, Against 0%, Abstention 10%) proposed by Simon Stranks, seconded by Beth Overfield.

Sue thanked Tim and Trevor Groom, Independent Examiner, for their work on the accounts and Chris Williams as Association Gift Aid coordinator.

7. 2020 Report

The Honorary Secretary, Terry Brown mentioned, in addition to those mentioned previously for the accounts, the following corrections:

Page 26 – Flitwick - Michael Buckingham and Alan Davies are actually members from Westoning tower on page 28.

Page 44 Points from the peals – John Loveless rang 5 not 4 peals in 2020.

Sue thanked Terry for her work to produce the Report.

The 2020 Annual Report was adopted by a vote by Zoom Poll (For 89%, Against 0%, Abstention 11%) on a proposal by Sue Silver, seconded by Angela Newberry.

8. Elections

a) Officers

Sue said that she was standing down as President after 11 years and Honorary Secretary Terry Brown wished to stand down after being in post for 10 years.

Office	Name	Proposed	Seconded	Vote
President	Linda Garton	Terry Brown	Alan Shepherd	Elected unopposed
Vice President	Sue Silver	Linda Garton	Philippa Whittington	Elected unopposed
Honorary Secretary	No one proposed			Post vacant
Honorary Treasurer	Tim Blunt	Angela Newberry	Philippa Whittington	Elected unopposed
Honorary Peal Secretary	Richard Horne	Sarah Ward	Frank Rivett	Elected unopposed
Honorary Librarian	Pat Albon	Angela Newberry	Sarah Ward	Elected unopposed
Hon. Independent Examiner	Trevor Groom	Frank Rivett	Terry Brown	Elected unopposed
BRF Committee Chair	Stephen Stanford	Sarah Ward	Sue Matthews	Elected unopposed

Linda Garton expressed her thanks at being elected President and to Sue for her time and work during her 11 years as President; she said she definitely wouldn't be serving as long as Sue had!

Sue thanked Pat Albon for his work as Vice President and for standing aside to let her be nominated for the role.

Sue also thanked Terry for all the work she had done for the Association during her time as Honorary Secretary. No one was nominated on the role but Philippa Whittington agreed to take on membership admin and Terry said would continue helping Tony Sharp with website content.

Linda said that a person to help with admin support and to be Association point of contact is crucial.

There was a discussion about the implications of not having an Honorary Secretary in relation to Trustee status and rule requirements. This will be considered by the General Committee.

Sue also thanked Stephen Stanford for helping to store the library contents; Rosemary Drewery, Safeguarding Officer, and Tony Sharp, Webmaster, who are appointed by the General Committee; and Pat Albon and Steve Stanford for dealing with the technical queries that had been raised whilst we have no formal Technical Advisor.

b) New members election

Name	Tower	Proposed	Seconded	Vote
Susan Ashman	Eversholt	Elizabeth Churchill	Bob Churchill	Unanimous
Chris Jones	Eversholt	Elizabeth Churchill	Bob Churchill	Unanimous

9. Ringing Recovery Project

Linda gave an update on the Ringing Recovery Project and the context of the Government's road map out of pandemic lockdown and Central Council's guidelines.

She recommended the Association of Ringing Teachers (ART) 'ringing recovery' toolbox as a really useful source of good information for getting back to ringing. It's available to all whether involved with or a fan of ART or not! The BACBR Website has been signposting to ART and Central Council resources, notably the 'Planning for Recovery' document – a checklist of things to consider with hotlinks to existing resources.

Two well attended and successful workshops have been held with Association members following a survey sent to 80 towers with 3 or more bells with a named contact. The survey was completed by 63 towers giving an amazing 79% response rate! The survey was done in conjunction with the Bishop of Bedford asking the clergy to support this initiative.

The workshop attendees:

- Identified the main issues and concerns arising from the survey.
- Prioritised these issues and concerns as short, medium or long term.
- Came up with lots of ideas to help resolve these issues.
- Defined a 'vision for the future' of ringing in Bedfordshire in 10 years' time.
- Helped to formulate an action plan of the most worthwhile ideas, over the short, medium and long term in 5 main categories:
 - Getting back to reigning post Covid
 - Retain existing ringers
 - Increase the number of ringers
 - Encourage greater cooperation (between ringers, towers, Districts Associations and the Church)
 - Improve communications

The first 2 being the areas to start with from now to the end of the year and into 2022.

Linda finished by saying that everyone has a role to play taking this forward.

10. 2022 Subscription rates

Sue said that the General Committee propose to leave subscription rates for Resident and Associate Members unchanged for 2022, as: Resident Members over 19 = £10. Resident Members under 19 and Associate Members = £2.50. Non-resident member subscription remains at £0.

11. Future Events

Sue said that these events are still likely to be impacted by the ongoing pandemic.

- **Association inter District 6 bell striking competition for St Peters Cup 2021, Saturday 18 September, Bedford District to host.**

Sue thought that there wouldn't be time to have District competitions in time for September. She wondered if each District could just nominate two teams? Linda wondered if a social event with an open competition could be the answer. It was pointed out that location would be important as locals won't be used to hearing a lot of ringing for a while and it would be important to raise awareness of the event. It was agreed to hold the date.

- **Melville Cup for young ringers** – Sue thought that this wouldn't be able to be held this year as there aren't enough young ringers around at the moment.

- **Ringling World National Youth Contest** – now scheduled for Saturday 11 September in Worcester. Sue doesn't think that we have the numbers to raise a team for this year's competition. Philippa said that some adult helpers may still not be ready to travel and mix by then and we'd be better off spending time to rebuild and consolidate a team and prepare them for next year. There was agreement with this approach although Chris Williams said that the details of the 2021 event should still be sent to the youngsters so that they could go to join in the activities if they wanted.
- **Ridgman trophy** – no details have been received, its unlikely to go ahead.

12. Any other business

- a) Alan asked if there was any further news about the young ringer's event scheduled to be held in Exeter. Sue said no details had been received.
- b) Stephen Stanford mentioned that approval had been given by the Bedford St Pauls PCC for a project to rehang the 12 bells on one level in a 14 bell frame the cost £340k. It will involve work on the bells, infrastructure and sound control. Its early days but Steve expects a Committee to be formed to start fund raising, there is the backing of a Trust. Quotes have been received and full structural survey has been done. Steve hopes that the Association can support the project in due course.
- c) Stephen Stanford also mentioned developments at Marston Mortaine where the PCC would like to go ahead with a project to rehang the five bells for full circle ringing. Again, early days but they do have quotes. The church has a lot of historical aspects and there will undoubtedly be some complications to sort out the heritage aspects.
- d) Stephen Stanford also congratulated four people- Alex, Melissa and Jonathan Nash and Pat Albon - who had completed a long-term project to ring their first peal on 12 bells at St Pauls Bedford in January 2020, saying that this was a great achievement.

13. Date and Place of 2022 AGM

Saturday 21 May 2022, Biggleswade District to host at Campton.

Sue concluded the meeting by thanking everyone who had helped and supported her over her years as President.