

**Document A**  
**Association Rules**  
**TO BE PROPOSED AT AGM, 18 May 2024**

**1. Name and Objects**

The Association shall be called 'The Bedfordshire Association of Church Bell Ringers' ("the Association").

Its objects shall be to serve the Church within the area of the Association by:

- i. promoting the ringing of bells for church services and on other appropriate occasions.
- ii. encouraging the recruitment, training and development of ringers and advancing the art of change ringing.
- iii. supporting the care, maintenance, improvement and restoration of bells within the area of the Association.
- iv. furthering an appreciation of bells and bell ringing amongst the general public.

**2. Management**

The management of the Association shall be vested in a Management Committee consisting of a President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, a Ringing Master, a Public Relations and Communications (PR and Comms) Officer, and a Bells and Towers Officer, all of whom shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting and serve for one year. The members of the Management Committee shall be the Trustees of the Association. The number of Central Council Representatives permitted by the Central Council shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting and serve for three years. The Management Committee may appoint specialists, as required, to carry out certain roles. In their roles, specialists will not be members of the Management Committee. Any officer shall be eligible for re-election. Each year the Management Committee must appoint two of its members to be Bank Signatories. The Management Committee shall have the power to co-opt if a position becomes vacant during the year. To form a quorum, there shall be a minimum of four Management Committee members.

**3. Workgroups**

The activities of the Association will be supported by workgroups, convened by and responsible to the Management Committee and meeting as required throughout the year. Terms of reference shall be provided for each workgroup.

**4. Review of Governance**

The Management Committee shall undertake a review of Governance every 5 years, or as required.

**5. Membership**

***Register of Members***

A register of members shall be kept. The contents and control of the register shall be the responsibility of the Management Committee. Personal information will be held in accordance with the Data Protection legislation applicable in England.

***Definition of Membership Criteria***

Ringling: Be able to ring rounds competently.

Residency: Either ring for Sunday Service at a tower within the Association boundary or reside within the Association boundary. The Association boundary is defined as those parishes which lie within the geographical county of Bedfordshire including the parish of Eaton Socon in Cambridgeshire.

### **Definition of Membership Categories**

a) Resident Member:

- must meet both the Ringing and Residency criteria.
- may be elected at any business meeting of the Association provided the proposer and seconder hold Voting Member status (as defined in Rule 6).
- may be elected prior to a peal attempt, provided the proposer and seconder hold Voting Member status **and** the election is ratified at a business meeting of the Association within three months of the peal attempt.

b) Non-Resident Member:

- must meet the Ringing criteria **but not** the Residency criteria.
- may be elected at any business meeting of the Association provided the proposer and seconder hold Voting Member status.
- may be elected prior to a peal attempt, provided the proposer and seconder hold Voting Member status **and** the election is ratified at a business meeting of the Association within three months of the peal attempt.
- must transfer to Resident Membership if they subsequently meet the Residency criteria.

c) Life Member – those who were elected as Ringing Member (Resident, Life), a previous category which was closed to new subscribers as from 18 May 2013, or who transferred to Ringing Member (Non-Resident Life) Membership.

d) Honorary Life Member:

- is reserved for any person who has given outstanding service to the Association.
- may only be elected at an Association Annual General Meeting, provided that notice of the nomination is given, in writing, to the Secretary by 31st January prior to the Annual General Meeting. The nomination proposer and seconder must hold Voting Member status.

e) Associate Member:

- any person who wishes to support the Association and its Objects
- is not eligible for membership categories a to d
- may be elected at any business meeting of the Association provided the proposer and seconder hold Voting Member status.
- may transfer from Associate to Resident membership but an election must take place at any business meeting of the Association and the proposer and seconder must hold Voting Member status.

### **General**

It is the responsibility of each member to notify the Membership Secretary of any alteration to their entry in the Register of Members.

## **6. Election and Voting**

Only Resident Members, Life Members and Honorary Life Members shall have power of voting on matters connected with the Association. Such members shall be referred to as Voting Members. A Voting Member is entitled to speak and vote at any business meeting of the Association. Only Voting Members shall be eligible for election to any official position (as defined in Rule 2). Voting will take place by show of hands or secret ballot as directed by the chairman of the meeting.

Voting on the following Association matters shall be approved by an absolute majority: rule changes, finance, charitable status, election to Association office, membership and other items at the discretion of the chairman of the meeting. All other proposals shall be approved by a working majority.

An 'Absolute Majority' is defined as a majority of all Voting Members who are present and eligible to vote at a business meeting of the Association.

A 'Working Majority' is defined as a majority of those Voting Members who are present, eligible and cast a vote at a business meeting of the Association.

## **7. Subscription**

The subscription of each member (who is liable to pay an annual subscription) shall be due on January 1st and shall be paid before the Association Annual General Meeting in each year. Membership shall cease as from 1st January, if the subscription is not paid within the specified time period. The appropriate subscription for a new member shall be payable upon election. The subscription level for each membership category and its effective date (as defined below) shall be recommended by the Management Committee and approved at an Association Annual General Meeting. If the Association Annual General Meeting rejects the recommended subscription levels, the existing subscription levels will then remain in force until such time as the Management Committee make further recommendations which are accepted by the Annual General Meeting.

### ***Definition of Subscription Levels for Each Membership Category***

#### a) Resident Member

There shall be two classes of Resident Member: (i) Age under 19, (ii) Age 19 and over. The age requirement shall be determined by the member's age at the 1st January in each year. Each member shall pay an annual subscription.

#### b) Non-Resident Member

Each member shall pay a single payment on election. A Resident Member who has paid five or more consecutive annual subscriptions may transfer to Non-Resident membership without further payment; otherwise the transfer may be made by payment of a single fee. Such transfers shall be deemed to begin on 1st January after the date of transfer.

#### c) Life Member

Exempt from subscription payments.

#### d) Honorary Life Member

Exempt from subscription payments.

#### e) Associate Member

Each member shall pay an annual payment.

A table giving subscription rates for each membership category shall be published in the Annual Report.

## **8. Peals**

All peals rung by the Association shall be recorded in the Annual Report, provided that all those taking part are Resident Members, Life Members, Non-Resident Members or Honorary Life Members. Full details of the peal including the composition, together with the peal fee shall be given to the Peal Secretary by the conductor within four weeks or not later than the 14th January

in the following year, whichever date is earlier. It is the responsibility of the conductor to ensure compliance with these rules. The peal fee and its effective date shall be set by the Management Committee and published in the Annual Report.

### **9. Annual Report**

A report shall be published annually before the Association Annual General Meeting, containing a list of officers, the Association rules, Workgroup reports, statements of accounts, peals rung during the year, other announcements as the Management Committee shall find necessary and a list of members.

The list of members shall be compiled as follows:

- a) Honorary Life Members, Resident Members, Life Members and Associate Members annually
- b) Any transfer between membership category in the year of transfer
- c) Non-Resident Members in the year of election.

Each member listed in the Annual Report shall be entitled to a copy of the Annual Report; others may purchase copies if available. The fee shall be set by the Management Committee and published in the Annual Report.

### **10. Meetings**

The time and date of the Association Annual General Meeting shall be fixed by the previous Association Annual General Meeting. At least three additional business meetings shall be arranged throughout the year by the Management Committee.

### **11. Accounts**

The Management Committee must:

- Authorise opening and closing all Association bank accounts, and
- Review all bank accounts regularly to make sure that charges and/or interest rates are competitive.

The Treasurer and the appointed Bank Signatories shall be the only signatories to the Association's bank accounts and any two of these shall authorise payments and withdrawals. Any two of these three must authorise payments and/or withdrawals.

An Independent Examiner shall be appointed at the Association Annual General Meeting to examine the accounts of the Association at the end of each financial year.

### **12. Rule Alteration**

All alterations or additions to the Rules shall be made at the Association Annual General Meeting and notice of any alterations or additions shall be given in writing to the Secretary in full, at least 14 days previous to such a meeting.

### **13. Affiliation**

The Association shall be affiliated to the Central Council of church Bellringers and shall abide by the Rules and Decisions thereof.

### **14. Interpretation of Rules**

The interpretation of these Rules, and matters not covered by them, shall be finally decided by the Management Committee

## **15. Dissolution of the Association**

If the Trustees decide that it is necessary, or advisable, to dissolve the Association, they must present a resolution to a General Meeting called for this purpose. The resolution must be agreed by at least a two-thirds majority of those present and voting. The resolution may give instructions for the disposal of any assets remaining after satisfying any outstanding debts and liabilities.

The assets must not be distributed to Association members; they shall be given, or transferred to, a charitable institution(s) that has objects similar to all, or some, of the Association's objects, as the Association may agree. If this is not possible, the assets may be given or transferred to some other charitable purpose.