

Document B
Association Rules
TO BE PROPOSED AT AGM, 18 May 2024
(Proposed changes highlighted)

KEY:

~~Wording to be deleted~~

Wording to be added

New rules

Renumbering of current rules

Notes (Not part of rules)

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. ~~F~~ furthering an appreciation of bells and bell ringing amongst the general public.

~~There shall be three districts within the Association, namely the Bedford, Biggleswade and Luton Districts.~~

2. Management

(Currently rule 4)

The management of the Association shall be vested in a ~~General~~ **Management** Committee consisting of a President, a Vice-President, an Honorary ~~a~~ **Secretary**, an Honorary ~~a~~ **Treasurer**, a **Ringling Master**, a **Public Relations and Communications (PR and Comms) Officer**, and a **Bells and Towers Officer**, a Technical Advisor an Honorary Librarian, an Honorary Peal Secretary, and the Central Council Representatives. ~~, the three District Secretaries, two members of each District Committee and those Honorary Life Members elected.~~ The President, Vice-President, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer, Honorary Librarian, Honorary Peal Secretary and Honorary Life Members **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 ~~General~~ **Management** Committee may appoint specialists, as required, to carry out certain roles. ~~, for example Technical Advisor, and Safeguarding Co-ordinator and Web Master.~~ In their roles, specialists will not be members of the ~~General~~ **Management** Committee. Any officer ~~or Honorary Life Member~~ shall be eligible for re-election. Each year the ~~General~~ **Management** Committee must appoint two of its members to be Bank Trustees. The ~~General~~ **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** ~~six~~ **General Management** Committee members. ~~A quorum must have at least one of the following officers: President, Vice President, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer.~~

3. Workgroups

(New rule)

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

(New rule)

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

5. Roles and Responsibilities

(Current rule 5. To be deleted)

Please note: Roles and responsibilities will be included in Terms of Reference for each workgroup

The Honorary Secretary shall be responsible for recording the activities of the Association as a whole, the preparation of the Annual Report and membership records. The Honorary Treasurer shall be responsible for the recording of finances of the Association. The Honorary Peal Secretary shall record details of all peals rung by the Association and shall ensure that the rules of the Association and of the Central Council have been observed. The Technical Adviser shall assist and advise in all matters concerning bells and their fittings at churches within the Association boundary. The Safeguarding Co-ordinator shall be the focal point for all complaints, shall take the complaint seriously and pass it on in accordance with Diocesan guidelines. The Central Council Representatives shall attend meetings of the Council on instructions of the General Committee and represent the declared views of the Association.

5. Membership

(Currently rule 2)

Register of Members

A register of members shall be kept. The contents and control of the register shall be the responsibility of the General 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 Ringling and Residency criteria.
- may be elected at any business meeting of the Association public Association meeting or one of its Districts, 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 public Association meeting, or one of its Districts, within three months of the peal attempt.

b) Non-Resident Member:

- must meet the Ringling criteria **but not** the Residency criteria
- may be elected at any business meeting of the Association public Association meeting, or one of its Districts, 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 public Association meeting, or one of its Districts, 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 ~~Honorary~~ 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~~ ~~public Association meeting, or one of its Districts~~, 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~~ ~~public Association meeting, or one of its Districts~~ and the proposer and seconder must hold Voting Member status.

General

It is the responsibility of each members to notify the ~~appropriate Association officer~~ ~~Membership Secretary~~ of any alteration to their entry in the Register of Members.

6. Election and Voting

(Currently rule 3)

Only Resident Members, Life Members and Honorary Life Members shall have power of voting on matters connected with the Association ~~or one of its Districts~~. 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~~ ~~public meeting of the Association or one of its Districts~~. Only Voting Members shall be eligible for election to any official position (as defined in Rule 2 and Rule 6). 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 ~~(Association or District)~~. 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 ~~public~~ ~~business~~ meeting of the Association ~~or one of its Districts~~.

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

6. Districts

(Current rule 6. To be deleted)

~~Each District shall elect a District Committee, consisting of a Chairman, a Secretary, a Treasurer and other officers as they may find necessary. Each Treasurer shall collect the subscriptions of members and other monies payable to the Association's funds. Each District shall report annually on its activities and membership.~~

(Numbering of current rules 7-15 remain unchanged)

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 **General 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 **General 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 **Honorary** 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 **General 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, ~~the Committee's~~ **Workgroup** reports, statements of accounts, peals rung during the year, other announcements as the **General 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 ~~General~~ Management Committee and published in the Annual Report.

10. Meetings

The time and date of the Association Annual General Meeting ~~together with the District in which it is to be held~~ shall be fixed by the previous Association Annual General Meeting. ~~The General Committee shall have power to arrange other meetings of the Association when required. Each District shall hold an Annual District Meeting in January and monthly meetings when possible.~~ At least three additional business meetings shall be arranged throughout the year by the Management Committee.

11. Accounts

The ~~General~~ 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 ~~Honorary Treasurer and Bank Trustees must be signatories~~ and the appointed Bank Signatories shall be the only signatories to the Association's bank accounts. 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 ~~Honorary~~ 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 Bell Ringers 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 ~~General~~ 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 ~~have~~ 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.