

THE KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF CHANGE RINGERS

LEWISHAM DISTRICT

Minutes of the Quarterly District Meeting, St Mary's, St Mary Cray 8th April 2017

30 people attended representing 10 towers, 2 unattached members and a Life member, non-resident.

1. Apologies for absence

Received from Esther Correia (Dartford), Lesley Barclay (Horton Kirby), Chris Goldsmith and Shelagh Norman (Greenwich), Jim and Lizzie Hardy (Beckenham), Ian Mills (Eltham) and Nick Wilkins (Chelsfield)

2. Minutes of last meeting (14th January 2017)

Unfortunately due to printing problems Rupert was unable to get the Newsletters printed prior to the meeting, however they had been posted on website and circulated via email prior to the meeting. There were two copies available at the meeting and an incorrect date was amended. Proposed: Mark Backhouse; Seconded: Rupert Cheeseman.

3. Matters Arising not covered elsewhere – Nil.

4. Proposed Rule change

At the October ADM Dr Phil Barnes spoke about a proposed rule change which related to the aims of the Association, to focus more on Ringing and Ringers.

The current aims have remained unchanged since 1880 and list five aims:-

- i. The establishment, maintenance and encouragement of service ringing in the churches in its area.
- ii. The recognition of ringers as church workers
- iii. The proper care and use of bells and belfries
- iv. The cultivation of the art of change ringing
- v. The safety and wellbeing of its Members

It is proposed to amend the aims of the KCACR to one overarching aim which reads:-

'The aim of the Association is to foster ringing in the historic county of Kent by promoting and protecting the interests of ringing and ringers'.

At the October ADM a discussion ensued around whether the church aspect of ringing puts some people off, some felt that their main reason for ringing was to glorify God. Others were concerned that the word 'bell' had been removed so the type of ringing could be ambiguous.

A full transcript regarding the proposed rule change was circulated around the district. It is now a stand-alone agenda item at this meeting having given people more time to think about it before it is voted on at the AGM on Easter Monday at Cranbrook.

Ringers had been encouraged to attend today's meeting to discuss views on pros and cons of the proposed change. The Chair explained that if anyone was unable to attend the County AGM, the Chair will be attending and would be happy to proffer concerns/views in an impartial manner on behalf of the District. However, anyone wishing to vote on the rule change can only do this in person at the AGM which any member is able to attend.

Comments from the meeting today were as follows:-

- There was no mention of 'church' or Change Ringing in the new aim. Could be a single bell or ellacombe chime. Is that the intention?
- There was a view that the church should be mentioned in it somewhere as it is in the Association Prayer.
- Could it be amended slightly to say "In churches and elsewhere"?
- What ringing does it refer to as there is no mention of church or ringing?
- How does this simplified version compare to aims of other associations?
- Surrey Assn's website doesn't actually mention church in its title.
- Does the omission of the word 'church' make it more inclusive?
- Is it to simplify it? What do the rules say? When read in context, do they make it clear that it is church change bell ringing?

- In the new Aim, nowhere is it mentioned the correct use of bells and belfries and maintenance of them.

The Chair read the first two rules from the handbook which do clearly mention churches and change ringing.

1. The Association shall be called “The Kent County Association of Change Ringers” and shall operate in the geographical county of Kent and that part of London formerly in the county of Kent. All towers in this area with three or more bells hung for full circle ringing shall be included in the annual Handbook and, unless information to the contrary has been received, will be considered to be in union with the Association.
2. The Association shall be affiliated to the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers and shall abide by its rules and decisions on matters relating to ringing.

At the end of the discussion it was agreed that the Chair would make a suggestion to propose an amendment to the rule change to include the phrase “in churches and elsewhere” when the rule change is discussed and subsequently voted on at the County AGM on Easter Monday.

5. Election of New Members

New Member	Tower	Proposed by	Seconded by
Emily Pruden	Chelsfield	Clare Pruden	Robert Pruden
		Witness to lowering	Philippa Rooke
Steve Haynes	Eynsford & Farningham	David Hilling	Jack Barker
		Witness to lowering	Sue Cameron
Mark Harris	Beckenham	Lizzie Hardy	James Hardy
		Witness to lowering	TBC
Dr Julie McDonnell	NRLM (Brede)	Alexander Britton	Sue Cameron

Emily was elected as a Junior Member. Steve Haynes was re-elected having been a member several years ago. Mark Harris, a Surprise ringer was elected pending witness to lowering to comply with the rules of the Assn. Dr Julie McDonnell was elected as a NRLM having been nominated prior to a Peal at Chiddingstone on 18th March 2017. Alex Britton explained briefly that Julie is suffering terminal cancer, leukaemia and founded the charity Strike Back against Blood Cancer last year. Since that time she has raised over £7million all through bell ringing. Various methods have been named after her and these methods raise money from ringers and from some very generous sponsors who have pledged money for various challenges and for every time one of these methods are rung. He encouraged everyone to support this if they could. Two days before this peal, Julie had received her latest dose of chemotherapy and was instructed to have a couple of days of bed rest, but Julie being Julie, rang a Peal – 3hrs on the end of a bell rope! Julie is due to feature in the Easter Sunday Songs of Praise.

6. KCACR report on the meeting held on 25th February 2017

- The 2016 accounts have been completed and now just need to be audited. An auditor is being sought to be appointed at the AGM.
- All ringers in the Association using social media should be asked to be mindful what they post online, as even private comments could be taken & picked up by the media
- The new website is being actively updated by some of the Districts, and the membership database is also being well used
- The Handbook is on track all bar a couple of outstanding items which are due to be with the Editor before 12th March 2017
- The meeting was reminded that we all need to ensure we follow the good practice of there being more than one person in the tower when work is being done
- The Kent Young Ringers are putting in their request enter the RWNYS in Birmingham this year, entry fee has been paid. Jen Thomas is also organising a band for the SE Youth Competition later in the year.
- All plans are in hand for the AGM at Cranbrook on Easter Monday, and the details are now on the website. The Handbook Editor is not seeking re-election.

- 33 responses were received from the Mobile Ring survey. In general, those who responded felt it was a good idea to have a mobile ring. Following some discussion, it was decided that the project will go ahead and further details will be presented at the AGM.
- Following a request for consideration, it was decided that the Association would not contribute towards the St. Paul's Cathedral fundraising effort
- Following a request for consideration, it was decided that the Association would not send an annual donation to the Ringing World at this time
- The Committee agreed that the Association would support the Central Council PR Committee's Armistice Day 2018 initiative, including a planned recruitment campaign using dedicated ringing schools across the County
- The County 8-bell Striking Competition 2017 will be held on Saturday 24th June, 9.45am draw, in the Lewisham District. Touch is a plain course of Yorkshire S Major
- The County 6-bell Striking Competition 2017 will be held on Saturday 23rd September, 9.45am draw, in the Maidstone District
- The General Committee meetings for 2017 will be held on 22nd April, 26th August and 25th November

7. Events Update and results

- Striking competition took place in March at Farningham with only three bands taking part which was disappointing. The competition was won by Chelsfield who will go on to represent the district in September's County competition. It was great to be able to base ourselves in the new church room especially as there were works going on in the church.
- A training Day had been held at St Mary Cray concentrating on the step up from plain hunt to method. It was a successful event, with a couple ringing their first blows in plain bob doubles. Others had a few issues with handling the bells and some dedicated assistance with this is planned to enable more progress to be made next time. It was requested that earlier notification of the event across the district and request for helpers may draw more success for future practices. It is hoped the next training event will take place in May/June time.

8. Upcoming district events

17/04/17 County AGM at Cranbrook.
 21/04/17 District Practice at Hayes
 13/05/17 District Practice at Lewisham
 09/06/17 District Practice at Foots Cray
 24/06/17 County 8 Bell Competition at Shoreham
 08/07/17 QDM at Bickley

The 8 bell competition is being held at Shoreham but it is a District responsibility not just down to Shoreham, so please consider offering to help out with things like refreshments.

- A venue for the October ADM is required

9. 120 club draw

	Prize	No	Name	Tower
1st	£20	14	Liz Brett	Erith CC
2nd	£10	63	Megan Smith	Cudham
3rd	£10	40	Lesley Barclay	Horton Kirby
4th	£5	77	Ian Mills	Eltham

Thanks were given to Rachel Backhouse for managing the 120 club which raised £507.26 last year. This is the last year that Rachel will be running the club as she and Mark will be moving out of the district to somewhere West of London, Berkshire area. This will be a massive loss to Erith CC and the District as both Mark and Rachel have been staunch supporters in supporting towers and the district attending virtually every meeting and practices. Offers from anyone willing to take over the 120 club as our only fundraising activity for the BRF are very welcome.

10. AOB

- Philippa Rooke asked for a show of hands as to how many of those present used any of the following means of communication.
- The County website.
- The County Facebook Page
- The Lewisham District email distribution list
- The County email distribution list
- Rupert Cheeseman thanked those who had contributed to the Newsletter and apologised again for them not being ready for this meeting. Every attempt will be made to distribute them along with the handbooks and membership cards as soon as possible after the County AGM. If anyone has contact with more than one tower please let Rupert or Sue Cameron know so the 'Ringers' Post' can be utilised where possible.
- Natalie Slator asked if any of the Lewisham District Towers had offered to host the ART Module I. Alex Fishburn said that Sidcup could possibly help.

11. Vote of Thanks

Rupert Cheeseman thanked Rev Paul Prentice for taking the service, Alex Fishburn for playing the organ, and of course the St Mary Cray band for providing very tasty refreshments and allowing us to ring their bells.

Next meeting will be Saturday 8th July 2017 at St George's, Bickley.