

Society of Cambridge Youths AGM

Monday 20th February 2017, 8pm in the Ringing Chamber with the President in the chair

AGENDA

Notice of a rule change was given prior to the meeting, primarily to change the word 'Auditor' to 'Independent Examiner'.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Claire Barlow, Dorothy Brooke, Steve Croxall, Alban Forster, Camilla Haggett, Frank King and June Mackay.

Phil Wilding arrived during item 5. Will Bosworth and Megan Corless arrived during item 7.

2. Minutes of AGM 2016

Proposed by George Unsworth, seconded by Richard A Smith. Accepted nem. con.

3. Matters Arising

AGM Item 4 - Fire safety

Robert Smyth, the Head Verger, has provided updated emergency contact information. Robert also sent a message saying that the Society should consider ways for emergency service personnel to determine who is in the tower in an emergency. John Binns says that we have never really cracked the in / out key fob marker system which was in use several years ago. A simpler possibility might be to have a light which can be switched on downstairs when the tower is occupied. John Binns also points out that Robert is taking more of a building management role and this is within his remit.

The meeting agrees that the officers should liaise with Robert to address this issue.

Liz Orme notes that information posters and risk assessments were removed several weeks ago and have not yet been replaced. The updated information will be placed on the noticeboard next week.

AGM Item 4 – Quark Peal Board

The status is the same as last year – the peal board may appear in due course. David Pipe is happy for someone else to take on the job.

AGM Item 4 – Hoover

Patrick Brooke kindly donated a Hoover which has been successfully used during this year.

AGM Item 8 – Clapper rebushing

Covered in item 8 this year.

4. Election of New Members

Courtney Spoerer is proposed by Jonathan Agg and seconded by Oliver Bardsley. John Binns asks if there is support for his election. There was a good show of hands and nobody voting against.

Courtney is welcomed as a member.

5. Safeguarding

John feels that we have made progress in safeguarding over the year. The church has a safeguarding team consisting of John Binns, Emma Dunn and Veronica McDouall. John confirms that all those required to have DBS checks for their teaching in the church have received them. There will be a new system coming in during this year which will involve compulsory training elements.

Cecilia Pipe mentions that there are several members of the tower who are DBS checked through their work. John confirms that DBS checks should be transferrable. Alison Brooke asks whether training would need to be done by everyone with DBS checks. David Richards says that training is not transferrable and our understanding is that it will be only those required to hold DBS checks who will be required to attend training.

David Richards says that attendance registers are recommended as current best practice and asks if we should adopt a register system at practices. George recommends that we wait and see what the new procedures are, rather than inventing elements in isolation. Alison Brooke says that there used to be a register of young people in the tower and that seems sensible. Barry says that he thinks that, if registers are required for communion, then it seems reasonable that they should be taken for bell-ringing. Furthermore, Barry is keen to make sure that ringing is seen to be operating to the same standards as all other areas of the church activity.

Phil Orme notes that the access route has been changed this year due to safeguarding concerns and asks whether there has been progress with the moveable screen in the Narthex. John Binns confirms that the church property committee is looking at a more permanent screen.

6. Master's Report [Jonathan Agg]

Jonathan Agg prepared a report which was circulated prior to the meeting. The time in the meeting was used to draw out some themes.

It is easier to run ringing when there are lots of people, so thanks are given for the continuing support. Sunday afternoons are kept alive by a small band of very dedicated ringers and Jonathan is interested in ideas for how to use it better, but for the time-being we will just carry on.

David Richards interjected that last year Will Bosworth had suggested a sign-up sheet might help and proposes that we should try this system. Jonathan agrees that we can try that for a few months.

Thanks go to Oliver, Jonathan Shanklin and Megan for the teaching this year. It is good to blend the teaching into the practice at 7pm to allow them the first steps to ring on 10 and 12. Thanks also go to the people who regularly turn up to make that possible.

Jonathan doesn't think that we ring the best things to improve as a band. We need to practise striking separately to learning methods. It's difficult to improve when there are mistakes. Several new exercises have been practised during the year, none of them appear to be the answer, but the search will continue. Progress into spliced maximus has been good by several people into the room.

As general points everyone should feel mandated to help others, for example, letting them know if they have missed a dodge. Conductors should feel they can produce comments if they think it will improve the ringing.

Planning for the 2018 12-bell will become a big task over the next year. We will kick off either with an EGM or a meeting in the near future. The band are asked to consider whether there is anything they can bring to the organisation.

As closing remarks, Jonathan says there should be more quarters to consolidate methods learnt on Monday nights, but otherwise there aren't planned to be any radical changes. We are lucky to ring on these fine bells on a regular basis.

John Binns invites any questions or comments. Phil Orme supports the idea of using CAS and, with due respect to the amount of work David Pipe already puts in, anything we can do to get quicker turnaround would be useful.

John Binns offers thanks for Jonathan running the ringing last year.

7. Treasurer's Report [George Unsworth]

a. Accounts

There was a loss of £6,401 during the year – mainly due to the St Clement's grant and the clapper rebushing. The interest on the 'high interest' account is now just 0.34%. Wedding donations are up, but box donations are down. Members are reminded to leave donations in the box.

Barry Johnson asked if the Faulkes fund could have been used to pay for the clapper rebushing. It was considered, but it would have been difficult to reclaim VAT if it were paid that way.

b. Statement from the Independent Examiner [Michael O'Callaghan]

Michael O'Callaghan believes that the Independent Examiner should produce a written report and, if returned again, will do so next year. He also notes that he will consider a rule change in addition to the one proposed for this meeting to further define the role of the Independent Examiner.

Phil Orme proposes the accounts and they are seconded by Richard A Smith. Accepted nem. com.

c. MCF Bell Fund

Frank has produced a report, but also sent his apologies to the meeting. The summary is that funds have built up from £40k to just over £70k.

Phil Orme asks for direction from the officers as to whether there is a formal programme for which the fund should be used. Liz Orme says that she thinks the fund should be used for appropriate expenditure. Patrick Brooke points out that the expenditure from the fund is the responsibility of the fund trustees, so we cannot decide to spend money, just whether to apply to the fund. Luke asks whether we would still get the same rate of interest if we did start drawing down from the fund on a regular basis.

George says that this is an almost unique situation amongst ringers and we should identify medium term aims which include promotion and teaching. John Binns says that if there are identifiable projects then we should approach the fund to support their development.

Alison Brooke asks what rules or guidelines cover expenditure from the fund. Liz Orme reads the relevant paragraph from the University Ordinances. This means that approaches to the fund must relate to the bells at Great St Mary's.

John Binns encourages the officers to make proposals for medium-term projects to the Society at a meeting (planned or informal).

Michael O'Callaghan asks whether dealing with the void is still on the cards – it's a major project which may benefit from finance.

8. Belfry Maintenance Officer's Report [Richard A Smith]

Thanks go to those who helped with the rebushing, especially June who transported them back from Loughborough and Jonathan who helped fit them. As approved last year, there is a new slider for the 10th.

Richard is very grateful to Oliver for sorting out the simulator – all 12 sensors are now working. Abel can now be run on a laptop (rather than the grey box).

No new ropes have been ordered in the last two years. The 12-bell is coming up in 16 months' time. Richard would like to order 12-new ropes, or possibly 12 new sallies and tails machine spliced onto existing tops. Tops tend to last well at GSM and whilst there is only a small financial saving from re-using them, it saves scrapping good rope.

If they were all new the budget would be about £2.2k. Given the re-use, we should expect it to be a little less.

Thinking about the Dyneema top on the tenor, opinion was initially split, but on balance it seems to be better and only costs £80 extra. The proposal is to go to Avon for the new ropes. There isn't much difference between Mendip and Avon in terms of quality, but Avon have been much more helpful. There is no great inclination to go back to Ellis – in fact, they probably couldn't deliver before the 2018 competition in any case.

It is noted that the tail end currently on the 11th is temporary. Richard would like to order two more tail ends as soon as possible and the cost is small. The aim to get them before April's peals.

Phil Orme asks if the Dyneema top on the tenor rope could be reused. Richard says that it's technically possible, but the logistics may not work. The ropes would need to be away for more than a couple of months. There is a question of whether we want to consider Dyneema tops on more than just the tenor. Barry asks if the Dyneema shows any sign of wear. The answer is that we're not entirely sure what the failure modes are, Dyneema only having been used for ringing for 5 years or so.

Phil Orme asks if there is merit in getting Taylors to inspect the bells just before the 12-bell. Richard Smith thinks that it is potentially a good idea and would cost a few hundred pounds.

Michael O'Callaghan asks how long would it take to get Avon ropes. Richard replies it took about three months last time. Michael also asks if the Society need to approve expenditure on ropes. The conclusion is that the Society does not explicitly need to authorise rope purchases.

Jonathan Agg and John Binns thank Richard for his work this year.

9. Election of Officers

Post	Nominee	Proposed	Seconded
<i>Belfry Maintenance Officer</i>	Richard A Smith	Phil Orme	June Mackay
<i>Independent Examiner</i>	Michael O'Callaghan	Catriona Shearer	June Mackay
<i>Master</i>	Jonathan Agg	George Unsworth	Luke Smith
<i>President</i>	Rev'd Dr John Binns	David Richards	Claire Barlow
<i>Secretary</i>	David Richards	Phil Orme	Robert Oakeshott
<i>Treasurer</i>	Phil Orme	George Unsworth	Oliver Bardsley

John Binns asks if the Society accept those nominations. There being a large majority in favour and none against, the nominees are declared as elected.

10. Amendment of Society Rules

Drafts of the rule change were made available before the meeting. The rule change is introduced by David Richards to say that the purpose is to make the rules reflect our current practices.

The change was proposed by Barry Johnson and seconded by George Unsworth. A two-thirds majority is required to change the rules of the Society. When presented for vote a large majority was in favour to the point that a count was not necessary. The new rules are deemed as adopted.

11. Report on St Clement's

Barry introduces the work from the last year. The conclusion is that there are no barriers to proceeding, but there needs to be a master plan agreed for the church which could happen within the next few months.

It is noted that the church has some money, the Russian Orthodox church are expected to bring in some money and an application will go to the Heritage Lottery Fund. A major decision is whether a heated floor will be installed, as it impacts many areas. The ultimate question is whether there is enough enthusiasm to take forward the idea of a ringing centre.

Phil Orme says that Barry has put a lot of effort into trying to find a location in Cambridge and this appears to be the best. We need a Ringing Centre in Cambridge and this seems like the best option. Jonathan Agg says that it is important to have a good set of bells to teach with.

John Binns says that future of St Clement's is a lot more secure than it has been for a number of years. There is a positive approach to the development of the church. Barry says that there are still tensions which could cause the whole project to fall apart.

Liz Orme asks whether there is a risk that the access to the bells could be restricted in the same way as has happened at St Andrew the Great. John Binns says that there is always a risk that churches could close, or access restrictions put in place. George says that it is different proposal if you are trying to put a new ring of bells in.

There will be a leasing arrangement between St Clement's and the Russian Orthodox church, who will want access to the church. John Binns says that it might be possible to duplicate something like the Michaelhouse arrangement. George says that if the church may close it will be difficult to raise funds.

Barry says that a leasing arrangement would be quite unusual. Will Bosworth says that the point is that it is supposed to be different and we should look at models of secular rings within church buildings. Barry says that it isn't going to be a secular ring. Michael says that St Andrew the Great was a different situation – St Clement's would hopefully be proud of their bells.

Liz Orme would welcome a risk assessment – what are the routes by which access could be impeded? Even if there are obvious routes by which access could be hampered, it is worth knowing that up front.

Alison Brooke asks what the size of congregation is. It is replied that the current congregation size is 20-30 people including the choir. It is noted that, whatever happens, the building won't be removed.

Alison also asks what diocesan policy is for small churches. John Binns says there is no policy which applies to it. The vicar is currently a non-stipendary role and so the church can only be closed by a decision of the PCC. There is no pastoral role for the surrounding area, however, it is a medieval building in the city centre and therefore will remain in place.

Barry says that the church has survived the last 30 years in much the same way it has been for the last 3-4 years. The ringing centre is one example of a change of use which brings life and activity back into the church. The idea for St Clement's is to try and get it open to the public 7 days a week and have it available to a variety of different uses.

Will asks if there has been an audit of other activities to see if any other uses conflict with a ringing centre. The only possible clash is Saturday evening vespers versus the Russian Orthodox Church.

Barry Johnson states that he is going to put time and money into the project.

John Binns summarises that there is no specific proposal at this meeting, but there is broad support.

12. Future events

Ridgman Trophy, 17th June 2017

The Ridgman Trophy competition is going to be hosted that morning. We have a temporary event notice for the event. There will be a request for volunteers to help out.

There are several open towers on the day of the Ridgman: Bene't's and St Andrew the Great are confirmed and St Edward King and Martyr may be available.

ITTS M1 Course, 29th April 2017

The presentation will be in Michaelhouse and the course will be given by Graham Nabb. It is primarily aimed at students, but there should be a good number of non-student places available.

National 12-bell competition 2018

There is a slight lull at the moment, but given the contest is on 23rd June 2018, Jonathan Agg proposes we should organise a meeting for those interested to help with arrangements for the event.

Society Dinner– 9th September 2017

Arrangements are in place to have the dinner at Wolfson College.

13. Any Other Business

No other business was raised.

The meeting was closed at 21:26pm

Those present:

Jonathan Agg, Harriet Armitage, Oliver Bardsley, John Binns, Sue Binns, Will Bosworth, Alison Brooke, Patrick Brooke, Megan Corless, Barry Johnson, Michael O'Callaghan, Elizabeth A Orme, Phillip M Orme, Alfred Pipe, Cecilia Pipe, David Pipe, Henry Pipe, David Richards, Ben Ricketts, Catriona Shearer, Luke Smith, Richard A Smith, Courtney Spoerer, George Unsworth, Phillip Wilding