

## **Witney Ringing Society AGM**

**Winchester Room, St Mary's, Witney**

**22nd March 2022 @ 18.15**

**Present:** Rev. Toby Wright, Jeremy Lasman, Ian Meyrick, Andrew Goldthorpe, Hazel Howarth, Carol McRobbie, Dana Josephson, Ruth Leatherdale, Matt Porter, Rachel Mackenzie, Amy Thomas, Debra Scrimshaw, Dave Shellard, Heather Horner.

### **1. Apologies:** Dan Neal

Introductions were made by everyone present.

Heather introduced herself as South Leigh Tower Captain and looked forward to making notes on how a ringers' AGM was run. Andy acknowledged what a great support the South Leigh ringers were to Witney.

### **2. Approval of Minutes of the last meeting – 26th March 2019**

Minutes of the Previous Meeting were proposed for acceptance by Hazel and seconded by Dave.

### **3. Matters Arising:**

Toby was to speak to the Electrician about the outside lights. This was done and it was confirmed all were working.

#### **Safeguarding**

The Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers have recommended all ringers do the basic awareness safeguarding course which can be done online and takes about a half hour. It was queried whether it was just those in safeguarding and leadership roles who needed to do it, but The Guild recommended every ringer should undertake at least the basic awareness training.

Toby acknowledged The Church had previously got safeguarding very wrong so wanted to ensure they do what was right. He felt all post holders should complete the course as it was not a great hardship, everyone could do it, though he would not insist that they do. It was felt this made sense as roles change.

The Tower Captain and Deputy have renewed their DBS certificates. The Tower Captain has completed two ringer training courses, as well as the safeguarding leadership course. There must be one DBS certified person in the Tower when teaching.

The course may be able to be completed as a group face to face but is available online as each person must register so that a record can be kept.

**Action:** Andy to speak to Alison to see if she is willing or able to offer a face-to-face course at St Mary's to which other towers can be invited.

#### **Tower Clock, Carillion, and Bell Fund**

Andy had previously circulated the costs involved for the proposed refurbishment of the bells.

The bell funds have been seriously depleted and hence the need for separate funding.

It is hoped to raise enough funds to increase the tower to 10 bells. There is not a 10-bell tower in the branch but there are sufficient experienced ringers to ring 10 bells in the branch and it should also prove a draw to out of branch ringers. Having 10 bells may increase interest and Witney could be a training hub.

It was suggested that one bell could be a community bell as a memorial to Covid times, both those lost and those who recovered.

The clock and Carillion are the responsibility of the town council so the council should provide the funds for their repair. It was suggested that if there are sufficient surplus funds from the fundraising initiative, they could be used to repair these.

We are looking to raise £50,000 over 2 years, which was felt to be reasonable and feasible.

**Action:** Andy to contact the Town Council to ask about these repairs.

It was acknowledged that Witney Parish was a wealthy parish. However much of the funding is restricted to specific purposes and can only be used as such. However, the Church needs to raise £2 million to repair the floor and the heating. They have a responsibility to pass the building on in a good state of repair. Therefore, the parish cannot support the bell fund.

There was some concern about a clash of funding and possible questions as to why there was a need for two separate fundraising initiatives. These are two separate issues and can be publicised as such. It was hoped there would not be an issue over the two separate funds.

It was felt that the community bell was emotive and would appeal to those people not interested in the Church building. It would also have a lasting historical significance.

The Church may be able to offer advice on where to go for funding, but that the bells are not its top priority, but they may attract funds that the Church cannot. Funds to places of worship can claim back the VAT, the bell fund would have to go through the Church and then be transferred back.

Andy asked Toby if he thought it appropriate to mention the bell fundraising at the memorial service on Sunday. Toby felt this would be acceptable, particularly considering the Community bell. He thought a flyer would be helpful to launch it but that he would mention it and offered to take details of anyone interested and to pass these on.

Hazel said we would need a separate account for the fundraising money as it needs to be more accountable.

**Action:** Toby to mention at service

Ian Meyrick left at this point.

#### **4. Tower Captain's Report**

Taken as read.

#### **5. Ringing Master's Report**

Taken as read.

#### **6. Steeple Keeper's Report**

Taken as read.

## 7. Treasurer's Report:

The bell funds have been seriously depleted by recent works and no income.

There was nothing to report for year ending Jan 2021 as there was no income and no weddings.

There was a generous donation of £400 which paid for four new ropes.

In the following year there was a major refurbishment of the bells which depleted the funds. There was a generous donation of £600 which was paid direct to the DCC who covered the extra costs and reclaimed the VAT.

The bell fund now stands at less than £1,000.

In November the bank account was changed from HSBC to Nat West as Nat West did not charge if a member had their own current account there. The two banks have different ways of working.

### Witney Ringing Society – Treasurer's Report to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2021

	Income & Expenditure to 31st January 2021				
DATE	Item	Income	Item	Expenditure	Balance
Jan-20					£2,895.71
	Donations	£400.00	Temperature scanner	£35.99	
<b>31st Jan 2021</b>					£3259.72

*Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, ringing was largely suspended and hence, expenditure and income was limited.*

*The donation was made towards the refurbishment of the bells.*

### Witney Ringing Society – Treasurer's Report to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022

	Income & Expenditure to 31st January 2022				
DATE	Item	Income	Item	Expenditure	Balance
Jan-21					£3259.72
			Face Masks	£43.50	
			Bells Refurb	£1851.92	
	Subscriptions	£80.00			
<b>31st Jan 2022</b>		£80.00		£1895.42	£1444.30

*The major expenditure was due to the refurbishment of the bells over the summer months.*

*It should be noted that the income from subscriptions will be paid out to ODGBR in due course.*

*It was necessary to change our account to a different bank. HSBC introduced charging of £5 per month for community accounts, but we were able to arrange an account with NatWest free of charge (for the time being!) The change was enacted in November 2021.*

Andy thanked Hazel for all her hard work.

## **8. Election of Officers**

Tower Captain: Andrew Goldthorpe. Re-elected by Rev. Wright.

Deputy Tower Captain: Carol McRobbie. Proposed by Andy, seconded by Ruth.

Steeple Keeper: Andrew Goldthorpe. Re-elected by Rev. Wright.

Assistant Steeple Keeper: Dana Josephson. Andy proposed, Dave seconded. Andy thanked Dana for all his help with the refurbishment. It could not have been done without his invaluable help.

Ringling Master: Matthew Porter. Proposed by Ruth, Dana seconded.

Assistant Ringling Master: Ruth. Proposed by Dana, Carol seconded.

Secretary, Safeguarding Officer AND Health and Safety Officer: Carol McRobbie. Andy proposed, seconded by Amy.

Social Secretary: Carol McRobbie. Proposed Ruth, Andy seconded.

Treasurer: Hazel Howarth. Andy proposed, Carol seconded.

Publicity Officer: Carol proposed Ruth and Amy offered to help but it was felt better to wait till the fundraising had been launched and was up and running.

## **9. Ringing Events**

The Jubilee is 4/5<sup>th</sup> June. Toby would like the bells rung on the 5<sup>th</sup>.

The beer festival is the 5<sup>th</sup> June.

The Church clean is April 16<sup>th</sup>. The tower clean is proposed for same day, then coffee and doughnuts in the Winchester Room at 11am

**AOB** There was no other business

**Date of Next Meeting** TBC

Toby closed the meeting at 7:45pm. He said how much he was looking forward to the supper on Friday and that as soon as was able he would like to welcome everyone at The Manse.