



# The Kent County Association of Change Ringers

## Maidstone District

**Chairman: Elizabeth Barnes**  
**Secretary: Dr Emma Tilston**

[https://kcacr.org.uk/category/maidstone\\_news/](https://kcacr.org.uk/category/maidstone_news/)

Maidstone District

### Minutes

For the **Annual District Meeting** held on **Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2018 at Staplehurst at 17:50.**

25 members signed the attendance book.

**2018/ADM01 Apologies for absence were received from: -**  
Alison Gerrish (Aylesford); Margaret Leadbeatter and Robert Leach (Barming); John Wale (Bearsted); Margaret Fitzgerald (Boughton Monchelsea); Sue Payne (East Malling); Jane Higgs (Marden); Mal Williams (Otham); Sue Brooks (Snodland); Philip Barnes (Wrotham); Richard Young (Yalding).

**2018/ADM02 Minutes and any matters arising from previous meeting: -**  
a) 2018/QMC 14<sup>th</sup> July 2018, West Malling

The minutes were signed by the Chairman as a true record.

**2018/ADM03 Election of new members: -**  
Clive Burfoot and David Town, from Lenham were proposed by Laurence Bond and seconded by Jackie Blake. Both were duly elected. After relocating to Cornwall James Davis rejoined Maidstone District as an unattached member.

**C**  
**2018/ADM04 District officers' Reports: - Appended**

1. Master's Report
2. Assistant Masters' Report (circulated with the agenda).
3. Secretary's Report (circulated with the agenda).
4. Treasurer / Membership Secretary's Report (circulated with the agenda).
5. District Representatives' Report
6. Youth Officer's Report
7. Communications Officer's Report (circulated with the agenda).

**2018/ADM05 Election of District officers: -**

- 1.) Master**  
David Grimwood - Proposed by Emma Tilston, seconded by Terry Barnard.
- 2.) District Secretary**  
Betsy Piercey - Proposed by Emma Tilston, seconded by Terry Barnard.
- 3.) 2x Assistant Masters**  
Terry Barnard – Proposed by Chris Bassett, seconded by Robin Hughes.  
Darren Elphick – Proposed by Sue Bassett, seconded by Chris Bassett.
- 4.) Treasurer/Membership Secretary**  
Liz Barnes - Proposed by David Grimwood, seconded by Sue Bassett.
- 5.) District Representative**  
David Grimwood – Proposed by Emma Tilston, seconded by Liam Corette.
- 6.) Youth Coordinator**  
Shona Clark – Proposed by Emma Tilston, seconded by Liam Corette.

**7.) Communications Officer**

Mark Elvers – Proposed by Emma Tilston, seconded by Joy Barnard.

There being no other nominations, all officers were duly elected.

**8.) 120 Club, Books, Clothing**

The 120 Club Promotor is Mal Williams. Liz Barnes agreed to take on the role of coordinator.

Joy Barnard agreed to take on responsibility for the District bookstall and to coordinate KCACR clothing sales.

**2018/ADM06 KCACR proposed rule change: - Appended**

Liz Barnes read the documents provided by the Association giving members 6 months' notice of the vote which will take place at the 2019 Association AGM. A short discussion followed, in which the background was reiterated – the Association has run at a loss for the last two years and this is not a sustainable state of affairs. Chris Bassett summarised the membership fees charged by neighbouring and other territorial associations. A range of views about life membership were expressed. Jacqui Barlow encouraged those with strong views to attend the AGM and to share them with the Association.

**2018/ADM07 Forthcoming Events in the next Quarter: -**

- 1.) District Practice –10<sup>th</sup> November 2018, Otham.
- 2.) District Carol Service – 8<sup>th</sup> December 2018, Thurnham.
- 3.) District Quarterly meeting – 12<sup>th</sup> January 2018, Harrietsham.

**2018/ADM08 Calendar for 2019/20: - Appended**

**2018/ADM09 Any other business**

- 1.) The Association Treasurer, Margaret Funnell, will be standing down at the 2019 Annual General Meeting. It is very important, therefore, that anyone with an interest and/or abilities in the area of book keeping and accounts should please contact the County Treasurer as soon as possible, to find out what the job would entail. Margaret would be very pleased to help anyone who would like to know more about the job. Please contact treasurer@kcacr.org.uk or Tel: 01634 251285
- 2.) On behalf of Sue Brooks, Tower Captain at Snodland, Emma Tilston thanked all those who have rung for weddings at Snodland during the year.
- 3.) Liz Barnes reminded members about Ringing Remembers and WWI armistice centenary ringing. New recruits to replace the 1,400 ringers lost during WWI can be registered via 'Ringing Remembers' on the Central Council website. Details of the two armistice centenary ringing initiatives have been circulated to all towers during the year.
- 4.) David Grimwood reported that there had been a good response from Tower Captains, Ringing Masters and Instructors from Maidstone District with respect to attendance at the KCACR safe-guarding courses.
- 5.) Sue Bassett reminded members that KCACR subscriptions will be due at the end of the year. Prompt payment is appreciated. Hardcopies of the 2019 edition of the KCACR handbook will be free, but will only be issued to those who specifically request a copy.
- 6.) David Grimwood said that Ringing World Christmas cards and 2019 Calendars are now available via the Ringing World website:

**2018/ADM10 Vote of thanks**

Thomas Barlow proposed a vote of thanks to Liz Barnes (outgoing Master).  
James Davis proposed a vote of thanks to Emma Tilston (outgoing Secretary).  
Jacqui Barlow proposed a vote of thanks to Sue Bassett (outgoing Treasurer).

Roy Barclay proposed a vote of thanks to everyone else who has contributed to District events.

The Master proposed a vote of thanks to Staplehurst for the use of the bells and for the excellent tea provided.

There being no further business the Master closed the meeting at 19:00.

Emma Tilston  
Outgoing District Secretary  
3rd November 2018

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Signed as a true record by the Master  
on

(Date) \_\_\_\_\_

## Master's Report

The District has had another busy and productive year. Terry has described the ringing activities in his ringing master's report and Emma some of the social and other activities in her secretary's report. I would like to express thanks to the two of them for their hard work on behalf of the District during the past year – and also to the other members of the committee and all those who contributed to our afternoon of workshops in August.

I have enjoyed my tenure as Chairman and Master of such a friendly and buoyant district and hope that members continue to benefit from District activities.

Liz Barnes  
13 October 2018

## Assistant Masters' Report

Once again this year we've seen encouraging attendances at all the district events. Of necessity a lot of the ringing at these events has been rounds and call changes to cater for our less experienced ringers. But we have also rung more advanced methods, up to surprise major.

As with last year we purposely did not set any special methods as this has allowed each practice to cater better to those in attendance. It also meant that there was more time to devote to individual requests when any were forthcoming.

The District ringing competition at Ightham on 10 March was well attended with 5 teams for the call change competition and 3 for the method competition. Once again it was a very close contest which saw Staplehurst win the call change shield and, in a reversal of last year's result, Aylesford just pipped Staplehurst for the method competition by just 0.5%. The band from All Saints Maidstone won the shield for the band having the most ringers never to have previously rung in a striking competition. We were very grateful to Dan Jarvis and Catherine Heathcote of the Tonbridge District for judging the contest.

This year it was Maidstone District to host the County 8-bell competition. It was held on 30 June at Aylesford, and everyone who attended was treated to a wonderful sunny morning, to some excellent ringing and an exceedingly close contest. Once again the Maidstone District band came second with 34 faults, just behind the winners, Rochester District on 32 and just in front of Ashford District with 35.

The District summer event this year saw something of a departure from the usual barbeque and instead we ran a workshop afternoon at Staplehurst. The workshops covered bell maintenance and rope splicing, ringing up and down in peal and handling issues, method theory and conducting, and introduction to handbells. We ended the day with a very convivial evening at the Stilebridge Inn at Marden. All those who attended said it was very worthwhile and enjoyable. We were very grateful to Chris and Sue Bassett, Mike Birkbeck, James Sawle and Liz Barnes who all helped us with the workshops.

The County 6-bell competition this year was hosted by Rochester District at Upchurch on 22 September, with Aylesford representing the Maidstone District, having won the District competition in March. After some excellent ringing from all the entrants, Hadlow of the Tonbridge District were worthy winners for the second year in a row. Aylesford were a creditable 4<sup>th</sup>.

It is very pleasing that ringers have found district events to be both fun and useful occasions to meet other ringers, and gain the confidence to visit other towers. This is a function district events perform very well, and I hope this continues. We would always encourage any ringer, new or well-established, to visit other towers and other districts. Building up experience in this way greatly helps the development of individuals and of ringing in general.

We have enjoyed acting as your Ringing Masters and hope district practices continue to be a positive and fun experience for everyone.

Terry Barnard and Phil Barnes  
1 October 2018

## Secretary's Report

It is with sadness that the review of activities in Maidstone District since the 2017 ADM begins by reporting the following deaths of members: Jeanette Hadlow, associate member of Broomfield, who passed away on 17 October 2017. Although not a ringer, Jeanette loved the sound of church bells and in 2015 she donated a bell for the first phase of Broomfield's augmentation project. In the words of Chris Saunders (Tower Secretary) "Broomfield church has been blessed to have had the support of Jeanette.". Tony Wilson passed away on 19 November 2017 having been a regular Sunday and practice night ringer at Barming, and an active member of COOTS. Rosamunde Bell passed away overnight on 25/26 January 2018. Ros was formerly a ringer at Yalding and Watlington and is fondly remembered by many ringers in the District as "a lovely lady, full of joie de vivre". She had suffered with poor health for several years, and in 2015 moved to a care home near Stirling in Scotland, to be closer to her sister-in-law, Mandy. John Caley, formerly a ringer at Bearsted and regular practice night visitor at Hollingbourne, passed away peacefully on 20 September 2018. To quote Roy Barclay: "...indeed, very sad news. John was a great servant of the KCACR Maidstone District, serving as District Rep from October 1979 - October 1981, Press Officer in 1980 and then as an extremely efficient District Secretary from October 1981 - October 1985. May he Rest In Peace.". They will be sorely missed by those who knew them and we all mourn their passing.

Over the last 12 months we've elected 12 new members to the Association. Whilst this about half of the number elected in 2016/2017, it is just slightly less than the average of 15 for the period 2010 – 2018. District events continue to be well supported by ringers from 75% of active towers in the District. Attendance numbers remain buoyant, varying between 21 at Hunton and East Farleigh, and 37 at Linton and Lenham. As stated in the monthly e-mail notifications for District practices, there really is ringing for all irrespective of ability, and for many attendees District practices provide a regular opportunity for the less experienced to ring with a strong band and to see more advanced methods rung, as the Assistant Masters describe in their report.

After a gap of six years we held a Tower Captains' meeting before our quarterly meeting in January. This was very well attended with more than half of active towers in the District being represented. Topics discussed included the 'health status' of towers, how to progress the ringing at towers and the value of tower websites. As part of the District's contribution to the development of ringers, our summer activity was an afternoon of workshops hosted by Staplehurst. As reported by the Assistant Masters, the topics were typically those for which there is often little time available during weekly practices.

Behind the scenes implementation of the new data protection regulations (GDPR) has accounted for a sizeable proportion of the Secretary's work. As familiarity with the new regulations increases, for the benefit of my successors, I hope that the actions required to effect compliance will become less onerous. The arrangements for ringing's contribution to the commemorative events marking the forthcoming centenary of the First World War Armistice also provoked much traffic through the Secretary's e-mail account. Irrespective of the precise time at which individual rings will be rung, our bells will make an important contribution to the national soundtrack of the day, not least with respect to honouring the 14 members of the District who lost their lives during the course of the conflict.

As ever, organising the monthly practices is the other major undertaking for the District Secretary and a full programme of events has been planned for 2019/2020. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the ringers and church authorities with whom I've corresponded during the past year concerning District Practices, for their unfaltering support of the District's activities.

Dr Emma Tilston  
28 September 2018

## **Honorary Treasurer & Membership Secretary's Report**

The financial year runs January to December annually. The Interim Report overleaf has taken into account income and expenditure to 5<sup>th</sup> September 2018 with a projected sum for 120 Club prize expenditure, not including administration, postage or stationery costs (yet to be advised). The End of Year Report for 2018 will be published at the January 2019 Quarterly Meeting.

Generous donations continue to be received from some towers in respect of the Spliced Fund, but this income has been variable. Some churches remain popular for weddings but others have suffered competition from alternative venues (or other reasons), which impacts directly on the amounts received by the Association into the Belfry Repair Fund. Any donation from towers or members are welcome at any time by the Association and enables it to continue to support bell maintenance in Kent.

Another source of income for the Association is the 120 Club which continues to be very popular. I would like to thank Mal Williams for being such an excellent organiser and promoter of this lottery. He has been running the club since its inception and more than deserves special thanks for all his hard work to raise funds for the Belfry Repair Fund. I hope you will continue to support him into the future with the proposals to increase the share price as well as to raise significantly the prizes themselves.

The Training Fund was set up a couple of years ago in order to build up resources within the Association to assist those engaging in training, learning how to train others or to purchase equipment to support training endeavours. The £116.17 raised so far by this District this year arises entirely from 50% of the money put by members into the black money box at meetings. The other half goes to the host church for heat and light. In addition a charge is sometimes made by the host tower for refreshments.

Looking back through the Maidstone District accounts over past years, it becomes clear that our membership profile is changing and income to the Association has been reducing or remained static. For example the funds generated in 2013 were very similar to those of 2017 and for this year to date, a reduction of £445 is currently projected. The reduction in income could be due to increasing numbers of members reaching senior status and paying a reduced fee. Also, many seniors have attained 25+ years' membership, so no longer pay a subscription at all. This, unsurprisingly has a significant financial impact on income to the Association. I recommend that you read, discuss and understand the need for the new Membership Subscription proposals and vote at the Association AGM in 2019 for their implementation in 2020. When considered alongside other activities and club subscriptions, I hope you will agree that ringing would remain a very economical, interesting and social activity, even at the proposed new rate.

As Honorary Treasurer for the past 5 years and having now taken on the role of the Kent County Association General Secretary, I would like to stand down as District Treasurer. This role has been made easier over the years due to the efficiency of tower officers and internet banking. Thank you to all officers and members for your assistance and trust you will continue to be as helpful and efficient towards my successor.

Sue Bassett, Honorary Treasurer  
1st October 2018

# KCACR MAIDSTONE DISTRICT



## TREASURER'S INTERIM REPORT TO ANNUAL DISTRICT MEETING 13<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2018

Set out below is a summary of the Accounts for the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018 to 5<sup>th</sup> September 2018 (projected to 31/12/2018).

The End of Year Report for 2018 will be published at the January 2019 Quarterly Meeting.

### Expenditure

Administration	0.00
120 Club stationery & postage	00.00
120 Club Annual Licence	20.00
Fund Raising-120 Club (Note 2)	590.00
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>610.00</b>

### Income

Subscriptions	1,563.50
Donations to BRF	588.00
Training Fund (Note 1)	116.77
Fund Raising – 120 Club	1,240.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>3,508.27</b>
<b>SURPLUS</b>	<b>2,898.27</b>

### Transfers to the Association

Brought fwd at 01.01.18	163.75
Surplus at 01.10.2018	2,898.27
Subscriptions to County	-1,533.50
To County Training Fund	-116.77
To County BRF (Note 3)	-1,218.00
	<b>193.75</b>

### Funds held by Maidstone District

District Bank Account	76.67
County Administration Float	87.08
Subscriptions in advance	30.00
<b>PROJECTED Total to c/fwd</b>	<b>193.75</b>

### Spliced Fund Donations

<i>Bearsted</i>	153.00
<i>Nettlestead</i>	150.00
<i>Boxley</i>	100.00
<i>Staplehurst</i>	75.00
<i>Marden</i>	50.00
<i>Hunton</i>	30.00
<i>Yalding</i>	20.00
<i>Chart Sutton</i>	10.00
	<b>588.00</b>

### Subscriptions Detail

<i>Adult</i>	109	1,070.00
<i>Senior</i>	82	402.00
<i>Junior</i>	11	55.00
<i>New Life Member</i>	0	0.00
<i>Existing Life Member</i>	20	0.00
<i>25+ year Member</i>	35	0.00
<i>Associate Member</i>	2	6.00
<i>Advance Subscriptions</i>	3	30.00
	262	1,563.00

### Notes:

- (1) Training Fund – The Training Fund is available to give financial support to members of the Association (individuals, towers or Districts) for expenditure related to training costs (see County Website for details). Since April 2017 members' donations at meetings have been paid to the Training Fund.
- (2) 120 Club - This sum represents the projected expenditure if/when all the 120 Club prize cheques are presented. Uncashed cheques after the year end will be treated as donations to the KCACR BRF.
- (3) Belfry Repair Fund - Donations for the part-year January-September 2018 as follows:

Spliced Fund (Wedding Fees) Donations	588.00
120 Club (projected net profit)	630.00
	<b>1,218.00</b>

Sue Bassett, Honorary Treasurer  
1st October 2018

## **District Representatives' Report**

The most significant issue to arise at Association committee meetings over recent months concerns the financial status of the Association. To address the financial deficit a revised structure of membership fees is proposed, which will be dealt with as a separate item later in the meeting.

Phil Barnes and Daniel Brady  
13 October 2018

## **Youth Officer's Report**

Jen Thomas has done sterling work organising a very full programme for Kent Young Ringers (KYR). Young ringers from Maidstone District attended every practice and event in the Kent Young Ringers programme for 2017-2018, with the exception of the summer BBQ. Highlights included ringing at Canterbury Cathedral for Evensong and at Rochester Cathedral during the Christmas break, and the tour to Surrey and Sussex at the end of the Easter holidays. The later took in 10 towers, including 10-bell towers at Warnham and Lower Beeding and involved two nights' stay at Holmbury St Mary youth hostel. In the Association Youth Striking Contest the joint Canterbury-Maidstone band came a respectable fourth and young ringers from the district were reserves for KYR bands at both the South East England Youth Striking Contest (SEECON) in April at Warnham (East Sussex) and the Ringing World National Youth Contest (RWNYC) in July (London). One lucky Maidstone young ringer was awarded a Blue Peter badge for ringing with one of the presenters, but we'll have to wait and see if this footage is broadcast on Thursday 22nd November at 17:30 (BBC1) as part of Blue Peter's coverage of the RWNYC. The ringer concerned is already something of a media star, having been in photographs used for the report of the 2017 SEECON on the back page of the Ringing World (12th January 2018 issue). In addition to the opportunities to participate in competitions and to ring beyond their normal level of ability, often at interesting towers, KYR also ring quarter peals. During the tour on the way to SEECON one young ringer (aged 14) rang his first quarter peal on the treble at Newdigate in Surrey and it won't be long before other young ringers within the district have the opportunity to do likewise.

Jane Higgs  
13 October 2018

## **Communications Officer's Report**

In 2018, with the assistance of Doug Davis, we completed the move of the District's website to the Association website. When our stand-alone website was set up, we were one of the first districts to have an on-line presence and thanks are due to all those who set up the original website (Daniel Brady, Roy Barclay and many more). The Association website offers many advantages in terms of cost savings, and coordinated Association news, including weekly updates if you sign up for them. Please check it out and sign up: <https://kcacr.org.uk/>

The District is run for members, by members and please be thankful to those that carry the district for us and organise things like the summer activity. I thought the workshop format of the summer district event was a change that worked really well. A lot of work goes on behind the scenes and we must not take it for granted. Anyone that has a little time and can help with some tasks please let the committee know. If you don't have the time then the occasional well done goes a long way- (though I'd settle for a pint, some crisps and not mentioning my latest ringing faux pa). After my short tenure as Communications Officer, I will be standing down at the AGM.

Simon Davies  
1 October 2018



## KCACR proposed rule changes

Notification of proposed Rule Changes to District Secretaries who shall read out the proposed alteration at the next Annual District Meeting (in accordance with Rule 15).

### Rules of the Association

	<b>Existing Rule</b>	<b>Proposed alteration</b>
4.(e)	Members aged 65 years or over, Members 18 years and below and those Members in full time education shall pay 50% of the annual subscription.	Members aged 18 years and below shall pay 50% of the annual subscription.
4.(f)	Members aged 65 years or more with 25 years unbroken practising membership shall be entitled to free membership.	Delete entirely and replace with; Members aged 75-79 years shall pay 75% of the annual subscription. Members aged 80 years or over shall be entitled to free membership.
4.(h)	A member over the age of eighteen may at any time secure membership for life by paying a subscription equal to 15 times the current annual subscription. The proportion to be allocated to the Bell Restoration Fund shall be as prescribed by the General Committee in the year of payment.	A member over the age of eighteen may at any time secure membership for life by paying a subscription equal to 20 times the current annual subscription. The proportion to be allocated to the Bell Restoration Fund shall be as prescribed by the General Committee in the year of payment.
5	Eight members shall form a quorum at any meeting of the General Committee.	Six members shall form a quorum at any meeting of the General Committee.

## Background to 2019 Rule Change proposals

### A) Changes to subscription structure (concessionary rates and life membership)

For the last two years the Association has run at a loss where the expenses of the Association have exceeded subscription and other income. It was agreed at the 2018 AGM that none of the 2018 income would be transferred to the Bell Restoration or Training Funds in order to reduce the pressure on the Association's unrestricted reserves. It will be necessary, however, to address the situation from 2019 and this paper sets out the background to the proposed rule changes and the various options that were considered.

A combination of static (or in fact slightly reduced) income and increased expenditure has resulted in the Association making a loss each year from 2015 onwards.

#### Expenditure

The pattern of spending varies somewhat from year to year depending on circumstances but there are a number of items that the Committee had to note.

First, the decision of the 2018 AGM to preserve the right of all members (irrespective of subscription category) to receive a Handbook free of charge means that it would be imprudent to assume any cost saving in relation to the Handbook. The cost of the Handbook in 2017 amounted to 18% of **total** income raised that year (22% of subscription income). This was almost the same amount that was transferred into the Bell Restoration Fund.

Second, work on developing a mobile ring using the bells kindly donated by David Cawley has already incurred significant expense and is likely to incur more unless it is the subject of a separate fund-raising effort.

Third, general out of pocket expenses claimed by members in relation to Association work and the expenses incurred by our Central Council reps attending the CC Annual meeting have increased significantly. Over the years many people have not claimed expenses in relation to the work they do for the Association and many still don't. However, we cannot expect people to be out of pocket in supporting our hobby.

For many years (with a few exceptions) the Association has placed 50% of its subscription income into dedicated funds for Bell Restoration and more recently for training.

Therefore while the officers and committee will continue to scrutinise our expenditure carefully and keep it to the minimum needed to run the Association well we need to increase our income.

#### Income

In relation to subscription income the Table below shows members in the various subscription categories

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Adult	770	729	692	697	702
New Life	2	1	2	0	4
>65+25y	209	230	247	262	185
Junior	74	76	83	73	79
Student	15	17	17	6	5
Senior	372	367	378	413	424
<b>Total*</b>	<b>1442</b>	<b>1420</b>	<b>1419</b>	<b>1451</b>	<b>1399</b>
Paying Full	770	729	692	697	702
Paying Half	461	460	478	492	508
Paying Nothing	209	230	247	262	185
Paying Once	2	1	2	0	4

Changes in subscription categories 2013-17

\*Note that existing Life Members are not shown in this table since they do not and cannot contribute to subscription income.

We can see that while the overall membership has fallen slightly, the number paying a full subscription has fallen by 10% with a commensurate increase in senior members (who pay 50% of the normal subscription). Over the five-year period a further 16% of senior members took advantage of the concession that gives them free membership having attained 25 years continuous membership of the Association.

By way of comparison, in 1979 there were 631 Adult members paying a full subscription and only 54 Senior members eligible for a reduced subscription.

### **Options for change**

There are a number of issues in relation to expenditure which were outlined above that will be examined further but most are unlikely to have a significant impact. The members have made plain the fact that they consider a free copy of the Handbook to be an important membership benefit. Even if only half of members wished to receive the Handbook this would not reduce the cost by 50% but by a marginal amount due to the printers' pricing structure. The costs associated with developing the Mobile Belfry should not be unexpected, even though they are a significant pressure on the Association's general fund.

There are various options for increasing income or reducing expenditure:

Increasing income

1. An increase in the base subscription
2. Removal of some or all of the concessionary rates so that a greater proportion of members pay the full subscription
3. A combination of the above

Reducing developmental / charitable expenditure

1. No longer paying any subscription income into the Bell Restoration Fund
2. No longer paying any subscription income into the Training Fund
3. Both of the above

These options were modelled in detail in relation to their financial effect and debated at the General Committee meeting in July. The proposed rule changes reflect the final decisions of that meeting.

It was recognised that the demographic of our society and of ringing has changed significantly and a situation where about half of our members pay a reduced subscription or none at all while retaining all of the benefits is, regrettably, not sustainable. This is why we have to change the concessionary rates currently enjoyed by many members.

In terms of the benefits of membership, the level of insurance cover is reduced for older members. The proposed rule changes acknowledge this by retaining a somewhat reduced subscription for those whose insurance cover is lower.

Finally, the subscription for a new Life Member has been increased to 20 times the full annual subscription.

While the level of subscriptions is a simple matter for the AGM each year, the concessionary rates are enshrined in the Association rules, hence the need for rule changes.

In the interest of transparency, we are also giving advance notice that a proposal will be made to increase the basic annual subscription to £12. Both this increased subscription and the changes to concessionary rates are needed to address the financial issues facing the Association.

### **B) Change to Quorum for General Committee**

This rule change simply changes the quorum to reflect the smaller General Committee following the 2018 AGM. The new quorum of six is 40% of committee membership. (The old quorum of eight was only 24% of the previous committee of 34 members but would be over 50% of the new committee and unrealistically high.)

On behalf of the General Committee I commend these rule changes to you.

Phillip Barnes