



Maidstone District

# The Kent County Association of Change Ringers

## Maidstone District

**Master: David Grimwood**  
**Secretary: Betsy Piercey**  
<https://kcaocr.org.uk>

## Minutes

### Annual District Meeting

Saturday 10 October 2020 at 3.00 pm  
by Zoom Webinar

**The Master welcomed everyone to the Meeting and outlined the way the Meeting would be conducted on Zoom**

**Panellists:**

David Grimwood, District Master, Betsy Piercey, District Secretary, Mark Elvers, Communications Officer

**Attendees:**

Mark Elvers (Maidstone St Michael & All Angels), Terry Barnard, District Ringing Master (Aylesford), Liz Barnes, District Treasurer/Membership Secretary (Wrotham), Chris Bassett District Representative (Staplehurst), Phillip Barnes, Association Chairman (Wrotham), Joy Barnard (East Malling), Roy Barclay (Staplehurst), Sue Bassett (Staplehurst), Michele Clement (Wrotham), Graham Cuthbert (Harrietsham), Simon Davies (Wrotham), Colin Finnis (Barming), Elizabeth Harland (Ightham), David Jones (Hunton), Cathy Kingham (Staplehurst)

**2020/ADM01 Apologies for absence were received from:**  
Dot Hooker (Otham), Richard Young (Yalding)

**2020/ADM02 Minutes and any matters arising from previous meetings:**

**a) Minutes for QMA 11 January 2020 Mereworth**

The minutes as circulated (proposed by Terry Barnard, seconded by Sue Bassett) were approved unanimously and signed by the Master.

**b) Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

**2020/ADM03 Election of new members:**

There were no new members proposed at the meeting.

**2020/ADM04 District Officer Reports (*appended*)**

- 1) Master's Report
- 2) Ringing Master's Report
- 3) Secretary's Report
- 4) Treasurer/Membership Secretary's Report
- 5) Youth Co-ordinator's Report
- 6) Communications Officer's Report
- 7) District Representative's Report
- 8) 120 Club Co-ordinator's Report

The Master thanked all the Officers for their work and was particularly impressed by the Youth Co-ordinator's Report and the success of the Young Ringers.

Acceptance of the Reports was proposed by Terry Barnard, seconded by Cathy Kingham, and approved unanimously.

**2020/ADM05 Election of District Officers:**

- 1) **Master: David Grimwood**  
Proposed by: Dr Phillip Barnes, seconded by: Mal Williams
- 2) **Secretary: Betsy Piercey**  
Proposed by: Terry Barnard, seconded by: Roy Barclay
- 3) **Ringing Master: Terry Barnard**  
Proposed by David Grimwood, seconded by Betsy Piercey
- 4) **Deputy Ringing Master: Colin Finnis**  
Proposed by David Grimwood, seconded by Chris Bassett
- 5) **Treasurer/Membership Secretary: Elizabeth Barnes**  
Proposed by Malwyn Williams, seconded by Chris Bassett
- 6) **District Representative: Chris Bassett**  
Proposed by Dr Phillip Barnes, seconded by Mal Williams
- 7) **Youth Co-ordinator: Shona Clark**  
Proposed by Terry Barnard, seconded by Betsy Piercey
- 8) **Communications Officer: Mark Elvers**  
Proposed by Joy Barnard, seconded by Terry Barnard
- 9) **120 Club Promoter: Malwyn Williams**  
Proposed by Dr Phillip Barnes, seconded by Chris Bassett
- 10) **Joy Barnard** agreed to continue as District Co-ordinator of KCACR clothing sales.

**There were no other nominations and all Officers were elected unanimously.** The Master thanked the Officers for their support and encouragement.

**2020/ADM06 KCACR General Committee Meeting 25 July 2020**

- 1) The Meeting was informed of the General Committee's Proposal to change **Rule 9(i) of the Rules of the Association** at the AGM 2021 as below:  
  
"9(i) Representatives of the Association on the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers shall be elected **triennially** from current Practising Members ~~, such election to take place at the~~ at each Annual General Meeting of the Association ~~approximately 12 months before the first meeting of each session of the Council~~. The number of representatives so elected shall be as currently prescribed by the Central Council."
- 2) The Meeting was informed by the Master of the **Proposal to register the Association as a charity**, to include the Bell Restoration Fund (which already has charitable status). The wording of the motion circulated with the Agenda for this Meeting states specifically that the whole Association would be registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). The Master read a letter to the Meeting from the Association Chairman dated 7 October 2020 (*appended*). This explained that it was originally thought appropriate to register as a CIO, but on further reflection it seems that an 'unincorporated Charitable Association' structure may be more appropriate to the Association. He added that as an unincorporated Charitable Association it would be easier to convert up to a CIO (should it be appropriate in future) rather than step back from a CIO to a Charitable Association. He then read to the Meeting the following **proposed Charitable Objects** that would enable the Association to become a charity:

The Objects of the Kent County Association of Change Ringers are to promote the practice, heritage, appreciation and continuing development of bell ringing in the English tradition, as a unique performing art for the public benefit of both Church and community, particularly within the historic County of Kent.

This will be achieved in particular, but not exclusively, by:

- encouraging a high standard of ringing for Church services, public and national events;
- providing opportunities for the mutual support and encouragement of bell ringers;
- the provision of training and support for bell ringers;
- the provision of grants assistance and practical support for bell maintenance and restoration;
- raising awareness of the art and heritage of bell ringing with the non-ringing public

The Association Chairman explained the thinking behind the Objects which included greater inclusivity and a clear indication that the objective was to benefit the church and the wider community. Responding to a query by Terry Barnard as to the rationale of seeking charitable status, he explained that the ability to claim Gift Aid was one of the main reasons, especially in these times of low interest rates, and that it would open access to additional funding sources for large projects and would additionally provide a stronger, more accountable and efficient structure. The Association Chairman confirmed that some other Associations are already registered as charities, for instance Sussex County Association of Change Ringers and The Essex Association of Change Ringers. Consultations with Members on the Proposal will take place well before the Association AGM, at which Members will be able to vote on it.

- 3) **2021 Subscription Renewals Process** – full details of the individual online subscription renewal arrangements, to begin on 1 January 2021, will be circulated to Members nearer the time. It was confirmed there will still be a facility for group renewals.

**2020/ADM07 Forthcoming events in the next Quarter**

The Meeting was informed that District Practices, District Quarterly and Tower Captains' Meetings could only be resumed when Covid-19 restrictions permitted. The District Carol Service for 2020 has had to be cancelled.

**2020/ADM08 Calendar for 2021/22**

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, it was agreed that as soon as circumstances permit, the Secretary should contact towers in the chronological order that they appear on the 2020/21 calendar, commencing with Yalding, to see if and when they are able and willing to host an event. The Association Chairman anticipated more in the way of local implementation of ringing restrictions in future. The Master commented that some towers might be able to ring sooner than others due to individual tower conditions.

**2020/ADM09 Any other business**

- a) The Association Chairman thanked the Master and all Officers for 'keeping the ship afloat' in these difficult times.
- b) Simon Davies suggested the Ringing Master might like to liaise with him to assess the viability of using 'Ringing Room' as a district vehicle and he invited the Ringing Master to attend a virtual online Monday night practice.
- c) Terry Barnard informed Members that Tom Barlow had terminal cancer and asked Members to keep the family in their thoughts and prayers. (Sadly, Tom passed away on 15 October 2020.)
- d) Regarding the 120 Club wins, Liz Barnes asked if anyone was able to contact Albert Gordon and Leslie Shillingford to give them their winnings. Terry Barnard volunteered to get Albert's winnings to him.

**2020/ADM10 Vote of thanks**

The Master thanked all Tower Captains for what they were achieving and said the survey of tower captains showed positive results. He thanked Betsy (Secretary) for all the paperwork, Doug (Association Webmaster) for setting everything up, and Mark (Communications Officer) for manning the equipment and ensuring everything ran smoothly.

There being no further business the Master closed the Meeting at 3.55 pm.

Betsy Piercey  
District Secretary  
21 October 2020

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Signed as a true record by the Master

on

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

## Maidstone District Master's Annual Report September 2020

At the beginning of 2020, we were on course for holding an ART course about teaching change ringing, following on from the one on teaching handling last year. Unfortunately, the pandemic interfered with our best laid plans, and everything will be on hold for the foreseeable future. When general ringing is possible, it is likely that ART tutors will be overwhelmed by demand, so we might have a long wait.

In the meantime, my hope is that we can mount a recruitment campaign as a district, working in local clusters of towers to support one another not only in the teaching but also in the recruitment process itself. The ten-point plan developed by ART and the CCCBR provides an excellent template for us. The challenge will be when to start preparations and launch the campaign.

I want to applaud the patience and perseverance of the district's tower captains, holding local bands together in different ways while maintaining your enthusiasm for ringing. A survey in September revealed determined efforts to have bells ringing again, although some towers are currently unable to carry out the necessary checks on the bells, and others are not keen to ring on less than four bells. It is hard in these circumstances, but evidence shows a positive commitment that will see us through.

It was great to see that three young handbell ringers visited and rang for Tom Barlow. Probably the district's keenest ringer who has supported and encouraged so many of us over many years, the frustration of not being able to ring at this time must be extreme. We all wish you the very best, Tom.

David Grimwood, Master

## **Ringling Master's Report 2020**

To say this year has been unusual would be a bit of an understatement!

It started well with good attendances at the practice at Wrotham in November 2019, the Quarterly meeting at Mereworth in January and the practice at Aylesford in February. We had our usual mix of abilities in those attending and rang everything from rounds and call changes, through Grandsire, plain bob and Stedman, up to surprise minor and major. We were even able to ring Double Norwich Court Bob Major at Aylesford which was the first time in a few years.

The Carol Service for 2019 was held at Loose where we had the opportunity to ring their three bells and support Margaret Fitzgerald in getting the band up and running again. We had an enjoyable time with excellent refreshments and an uplifting service.

We also held our District 6-bell competition at Hunton in March which has been reported on by Betsy in her District Secretary Report, as I was absent from that event, ringing a peal at Horton Kirby. And then everything changed!!!!

The national lockdown hit us in those first few days after the 6-bell competition and we have been trying to resurrect our ringing ever since. Some churches have managed to resume some Sunday service ringing, albeit in a rather curtailed format. And although we are able to ring for weddings and funerals, practice is currently not on the menu. And just as we were beginning to think there might be some further easing of restrictions which might allow other ringing, we are now in the throes of a second wave of COVID-19 which is deeply worrying.

Let us hope that the future is brighter than the dark days we have endured.

Terry Barnard

District Ringing Master

## Secretary's Report 2020

Sadly, I have to report the deaths since last year's ADM of Maidstone District Members Allen Collins and Peter Borer and former Maidstone District Member Melvyn Hiller. Please see their Obituaries in the 2020 Handbook.

During the period from last year's ADM to 'Covid-19 Lockdown' in mid-March, District events continued to be well supported by ringers. Attendance numbers varied, the highest being 37 at the DQM at Mereworth in January 2020. Due to Lockdown, it was only possible to hold two District Practices and one District Quarterly Meeting (which included a well-attended Tower Captains Meeting).

The District Carol Service at Loose was disappointingly sparsely attended. However, the efforts of Margaret Fitzgerald and the incumbent Rev. Steve Price in providing generous refreshments and an uplifting and thought-provoking Service and address were much appreciated by all those present. Thanks also to all those providing the readings and music.

Regrettably, this year's Carol Service, due to be held at West Farleigh, has had to be cancelled due to ongoing restrictions. Many thanks to Brian Butcher, Bell Restoration Officer, and Stephen Norman at West Farleigh, for their efforts to bring the bells back into 'full-circle' use, which were halted by Lockdown. We hope these efforts can be re-started at some point next year and we look forward to enjoying the 2021 Carol Service at a venue to be decided.

Many thanks to St Mary, Hunton, especially Jeff and Lola, for hosting the District 6-bell Call Change and Method Striking Competitions on 14 March and providing the generous refreshments. It was our last event before Lockdown.

The Call Change was won by Staplehurst and the Method by Boughton Monchelsea. The shield for the team with the most ringers who had not rung in the competition before was awarded to Yalding. Thanks to all teams who took part. We are also grateful to our Judges, Laura and Jamie, for giving us their time.

Some limited ringing has presently recommenced at a few towers in the District but due to the unpredictability of the spread of the virus it is impossible to say if this can expand or if it will be curtailed in future.

I would like to thank the church authorities and correspondents at the towers where events took place and the ringers for hosting and providing us with excellent refreshments. I would also like to thank those towers who agreed to host events which were regrettably cancelled. Hopefully we may be able to visit when it is possible to arrange a programme of events for 2021/22.

Betsy Piercey

## TREASURER AND MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT 2020

Thank you to all those who once again paid this year's subscriptions on time allowing me to get everything to the Association Treasurer before the end of February.

### **Membership**

Our total membership for this year has dropped slightly again this year and with no District Quarterly meetings since January we have only welcomed 4 new members this year.

We currently have a total of 235 members made up of:

186 adults @ £15 = £2790  
11 over 80s  
13 juniors @ £7.50 = £97.50  
18 life members  
7 associate members = £15

making a total subscription income of **£2902.50** from 206 paying members.

This compares with a total membership for 2019 of 254 with subscription income of £1498 from 200 paying members.

### **Bell Restoration Fund**

Many towers have again made generous donations to the Association's BRF totalling **£590.75**.

108 shares in the District's **120 Club** were sold this year and the proceeds, once the remaining prizes have been paid out will add at least a further **£1260** to the BRF.

### **Training Fund**

With the cessation of District Events from March, donations to the training fund have been somewhat depleted this year but amount to **£35.21**.

Thank you all for supporting the Association in what has certainly been the strangest year in my (almost) 50 years of ringing! I hope very much that we will all be back ringing and meeting up again soon.

Liz Barnes  
Treasurer and Membership Secretary



## Youth Co-ordinator Report 2020

The Maidstone District had continued to provide venues for the KYR practices, up until ringing ceased (in mid-March), due to the current Covid-19 pandemic. Thank you to all of these towers for allowing our Young Ringers to practice on your bells. It certainly helps them progress by getting out and about and experience ringing different bells.

November 2nd 2019 saw 3 Young Ringers from The Maidstone District join with 3 Young Ringers from the Rochester District to enter a team into the Kent Inter-District Striking Competition at Sturry. Maidstone Districts Young Ringers, Liam Corette, Emily Corette and Callum Clark participated in the competition for the first time and did exceptionally well being placed 2nd out of the 5 teams that took part! A very well done to them and the 3 Young Ringers from The Rochester District. During this afternoon they were also able to enjoy other activities which included ringing on The Maypole mini ring, handbells, a ring at St Stephens, Canterbury followed by Pizza! Fun was had by all. Maybe next year the Maidstone District can enter a full team!!!

Between November 2019 and March 2020 the usual Kent Young Ringers Practices took place including the Monthly Saturday Practices, squad practices For SEECOM and RWNYS and also an outing to The Bromley area in January. Unfortunately due to Covid - 19 all competitions this year had to be cancelled therefore KYR trips away also cancelled. A lot of hard work and effort had gone into arranging these events by Jen Thomas (Association Youth Officer) and the Young Ringers selected for the squad had been practicing hard! (1 possibly 2 of these ringers are from the Maidstone District). Thankyou to Jen for all her hard work in organising the never ending opportunities that our Kent Young Ringers have.

On March 8th 2020, 5 District Young Ringers: Liam (East Malling), Emily (East Malling), Callum (Aylesford), Finlay (Barming), and Scott (Barming) met at Barming for a practice with the help of a few adults. They progressed from Rounds and Call Changes to Plain Hunt on 5, Plain Hunt On 6, Plain courses of Bob Doubles, Unaffected touch of Bob Doubles ( first for Scott), plain course of Grandsire Doubles And lowering in Peal ( First for Finlay). Well done to all that took part. It was hoped to arrange another practice, but due to the current pandemic it hasn't been possible.

March 14th 2020 saw Maidstone Districts' 6 Bell competition take place at Hunton, just before lockdown was announced. Three of our Young Ringers took part in a team and came 2nd. Congratulations to them on this achievement.

Lockdown may have stopped us ringing Church Bells but one of our Young Ringers took this opportunity and learnt to ring handbells. After only a couple of hours of tuition from Dan Jarvis, Callum Clark achieved his first Quarter Peal of Plain Bob Minor on handbells. He has since rung another 2 Handbell Quarter Peals of Plain Bob Minor AND a handbell Peal of Plain Bob Minor!! Well done Callum. Thank you to Dan Jarvis for all the time and effort he has given Callum, enabling him to ring handbells and achieve 3 Quarter Peals and 1 Peal over the summer! Also the other helpers who participated and made it possible.

Maidstone District Young Ringers achievements over the last year:

Victoria Higgs (Marden)

- \* 1st Minimus Quarter Peal (treble)
- \* 1st Quarter Peal covering

Tom Adam (Marden)

- \* 1st Quarter peal Plain Bob Doubles with 768 cover (six)

Callum Clark (Aylesford)

- \* 1st Quarter Peal of Triples inside
- \* 1st Quarter Peal of minor inside
- \* 1st Quarter Peal of surprise inside
- \* 1st Quarter Peal of Major (treble)
- \* 1st Quarter Peal covering to triples
- \* 1st Quarter Peal on handbells
- \* 1st Peal on handbells

Charlotte Elvers (Maidstone, St Michaels)

Our youngest ringer in the district (aged 7)

75 Tolling with Backstroke start on 75th Anniversary of VJ Day. She stood the bell at exactly 75 strokes on the first attempt.

Our District Young Ringers have made great progress over the last year. Some have even made it into the "What's hot on bell board" section of the Ringing World! Did you spot them??

Shona Clark

## **Communications Officer's Report 2020**

As in previous years the communications officer role entails updating the Maidstone District section of the KCACR website including posting details of forthcoming events such as district practices. With bell ringing being on hold for much of the year there have not been many events to publicise! Hopefully we can get back to ringing again before too long. I am happy to stand again as Communications Officer for the coming year.

Mark Elvers

## KCACR - MAIDSTONE DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT 2020

Since my election last October I have attended all four General Committee Meetings – 2 in person and 2 “virtual” via “Zoom”. Due to the lack of District Quarterly meetings I was only able to feedback information directly to members at the January meeting. All other information has then been fed back to our District Secretary.

Full minutes and “Salient Points” from General Committee Meetings can be found on the KCACR website under Resources. See <https://kcacr.org.uk/association/resources/>

I give below a summary of the most important items that were discussed.

### **From GC meeting 22<sup>nd</sup> February:**

Idea that district meeting dates could alternate away from their “regular” slots to free up more Saturdays for training or other events.

### **From GC meeting 2<sup>nd</sup> May:**

The subscription renewal procedure for 2021 will change – District Secretaries have full details.

### **From GC meeting 25<sup>th</sup> July:**

The KCACR is moving towards a Charity Status – this is being led by our District Master.

A training program is being developed but all is on hold (due to Covid) until further notice – this is being led by our District Master.

### **Rule Change:**

The General Committee has proposed the following Rule Change at 2021 AGM to align with the new working practices of the Central Council:

To amend Rule 9 (i) which currently reads:

“9. (i) Representatives of the Association on the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers shall be elected triennially from current Practising Members, such election to take place at the Annual General Meeting of the Association approximately 12 months before the first meeting of each session of the Council. The number of representatives so elected shall be as currently prescribed by the Central Council.

to read as follows:

“9.(i) Representatives of the Association on the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers shall be elected **triennially** from current Practising Members, ~~such election to take place at the at~~ **each** Annual General Meeting of the Association ~~approximately 12 months before the first meeting of each session of the Council.~~ The number of representatives so elected shall be as currently prescribed by the Central Council.”

### **2021 KCACR AGM:**

The 2021 AGM was programmed to take place in the Maidstone District. However due to the cancellation of the 2020 AGM in the Lewisham District the General Committee decided to hold the 2021 AGM on 5<sup>th</sup> April in the Lewisham District (again Covid permitting). As a result the 2022 AGM will be held in the Maidstone District.

Chris Bassett  
Maidstone District Rep.

## **120 Club Report 2020**

The 2019 -club carried over 20 unsold shares out of the 130 that were available. Even after having 6 new members Join. Carrying this shortfall into 2020 year it was decided to reduce the shares available down to the club's original total of 120 shares and to have three prizes. To fall in line with club rules.

At the start of the 2020 year 15 shares were not taken up from invites to re-join. 11 new share numbers with new members were welcomed to the club by the promoter.

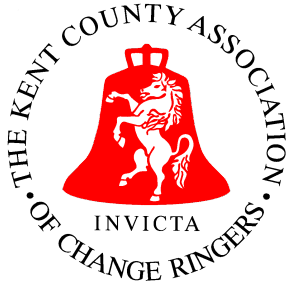
Towers and members of the K.C.A.C.R were invited to assist in selling membership to the Club by taking away with them membership forms from the early 2020 January meeting, so that the good work could continue raising funds for Bell Restoration. The Club that started in 1999 when a one-off wedding fee was around or just under £10. With current fees around £20, and the increase in the costs of Bell restoration, it was important that we updated to continue to raise funds over the cost of inflation as we do. No additional membership came in from towers.

Following the world life changing situation that forced ringing and meetings to cease in March 2020 the 120 club draws are undertaken by a computer Random Number generator. Winners are posted to the District website and payments whenever possible into winner's bank accounts. The Monthly draw can be seen on the District Facebook page.

The 2021 Club year will certainly be a challenge if the Club is to continue.

Mal Williams

120Club promoter MD



Chairman: Dr Phillip Barnes

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October 7<sup>th</sup> 2020

Dear member

I am writing to update you with some news about the Association's plans to register as a charity.

Notice has been given of a proposal to the 2021 Annual General Meeting the aim of which is to register the whole Association as a charity and to merge it with the Bell Restoration Fund, which is already a charitable fund.

The wording of the motion states specifically that the Association will be registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (one of a number of potential structures for a charity) and we have received a number of queries and feedback since notice of the motion was given.

As a result the principal officers together with David Grimwood, who had led the work for the General Committee, have revisited the precise forms of charity structure that are possible to see which seems best suited to the Association's current needs and which will mean the least change in how the Association runs on a day to day basis.

There are two structures that the KCACR might adopt: a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) or an unincorporated Charitable Association. Both forms allow the KCACR to register for Gift Aid, to apply its funds not only for Bell Restoration but also for other charitable works in connection with ringing including training and development of ringers and to elect Trustees thus increasing accountability to members and our communities and churches.

The principal difference is that incorporation would give the KCACR a separate legal status as a "corporate body", which in itself provides some individual protection for trustees and would allow it to employ staff or own premises (e.g. as a training centre or headquarters). While these features have some attractions they come with a more rigid set of legal requirements which would mean some quite significant changes to how the KCACR is run and even which of our officers are elected and which are appointed.

On balance, we are coming to the view that the Association should aim to register as a Charitable Association rather than as a CIO. The financial benefits are the same and the enhanced governance and accountability from having elected charity Trustees are the same. It would however have less effect on our day to day running than becoming a CIO. Should we ever wish to expand our activities in a way that the benefits of incorporation outweighed the downsides then we could apply to convert to a CIO structure.

With best wishes.

Phillip Barnes  
Chairman