

KCACR RULES

(as adopted at the AGM held on 18th April 2022)

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. Its aims shall be
 - the establishment, maintenance and encouragement of service ringing in the churches in its area
 - the recognition of ringers as church workers
 - the proper care and use of bells and belfries
 - the cultivation of the art of change ringing
 - the safety and wellbeing of its Members
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.
3.
 - (i) The Archbishop of Canterbury shall be invited to become President and the Bishops, Deans and Archdeacons within the Association’s area shall be invited to become ex officio Vice Presidents.
 - (ii) Other Vice Presidents may, in recognition of outstanding services to the Association, be nominated by the General Committee for election for life. Their election must be approved by at least two thirds of the Members present and voting at an Annual General Meeting. Elected Vice Presidents shall enjoy Honorary Life Membership.
4. The Association shall consist of Practising, Associate, Honorary Life and Non-Resident Life Members. Practising and Honorary Life Members shall be eligible to vote at meetings of the Association.
 - (i) Practising Members

A Practising Member shall be deemed to be a person who can, without assistance, ring rounds and lower a tower bell. Or can ring a plain course on 6 or more handbells in a method in the traditional way, two in hand. Such competency shall be confirmed by an elected Association or District Officer.

 - (a) Practising Members shall be elected at a District Meeting or as authorised in Rule 11.
 - (b) The subscription for Practising Members for the year beginning 1 January shall be resolved each year at the previous Annual General Meeting.
 - (c) The amount to be allocated to the Association’s Bell Restoration Fund for the current year of operation shall be resolved at the Annual General Meeting.
 - (d) Subscriptions shall be due on 1 January. Any Practising or Associate Member whose subscription is unpaid by 30 September of the year in which it is due shall cease to be a member of the Association until the subscription for the year and any subsequent years is paid. Alternatively, such lapsed Members may be re-elected, in which case their membership shall be deemed to have started from the date of re-

election. The names of current Practising and Associate Members shall be printed in the Association Handbook.

- (e) Members 18 years and below shall pay 50% of the annual subscription.
 - (f) Members aged 80 years or over shall be entitled to free membership.
 - (g) Members joining the Association after 30 June in any year shall be entitled to pay only half that year's annual subscription.
- (ii) Associate Members
Non-ringers may be elected as Associate Members at a District meeting. They shall subscribe not less than one tenth of the subscription of a Practising Member. Associate Members shall not be able to vote at any meeting of the Association.
- (iii) Honorary Life Members
In recognition of services to ringing a person may be nominated by the General Committee for election as an Honorary Life Member. The election of an Honorary Life Member must be approved by at least two thirds of the Members present and voting at an Annual General Meeting. Honorary Life Members shall be recognised as Practising Members.
- (iv) Non-Resident Life Members
A ringer not residing in the Association's area may be elected as a Non-Resident Life Member on payment of a single subscription equal to 75% of the Practising Member Annual subscription.
- (a) Non-Resident Life Members may be elected at a District meeting or as authorised in Rule 11.
 - (b) A Practising Member whose subscription is not in arrears shall on leaving the Association's area have the option to become a Non-Resident Life member without further payment. On return to the Association's area Practising Membership may be resumed on payment of the appropriate subscription. Alternatively, they may continue to be a Practising Member on payment of the Practising Member annual subscription.
- (v) Any person whose name appears on the sex Offenders Register is not eligible to become or remain a member of the Kent County Association of Change Ringers.
- (vi) Members are expected to follow all such local guidance and safeguarding policies as required by any towers where they ring and to adhere to the Safeguarding Policies and Procedures of the Association and of the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers. Failure to do so, even in the context of non-KCACR ringing activities, may result in termination of membership.

5. Government of the Association shall be vested in a General Committee who, beside any other meetings, shall always meet in November or December, when the day and place of the Annual General Meeting shall be fixed. The General Committee shall consist of the following:

- Chairman
- Honorary General Secretary
- Honorary Treasurer
- Training Officer
- Youth Officer
- Bell Restoration Officer
- Central Council Representatives (3)
- One (1) representative from each District

In addition to the above the Publicity Officer shall be invited to attend General Committee meetings as an observer, to support the work of the General Committee.

The Chairman, Honorary General Secretary and Honorary Treasurer shall be deemed as necessary Officers. The General Committee shall have the power to co-opt further members if required to fulfil a specific task or provide a skill. Eight members shall form a quorum at any meeting of the General Committee.

6.

- (i) The Annual General Meeting of the Association shall take place between Easter and 31 July. At this meeting the Chairman, General Secretary, Treasurer, Peal Secretary, Librarian and any other necessary officers shall be elected. A Registered Auditor or Independent Examiner shall also be elected.
- (ii) At this meeting reports of proceedings and a Statement of Accounts shall be presented.
- (iii) An Extraordinary General Meeting of the Association shall be called by the General Secretary on receipt of a requisition signed by, either, at least twenty Practising Members from each of at least four different Districts, or at least 50 per cent of members of the General Committee. Notice of an Extraordinary General Meeting shall be given in *The Ringing World* and notified to all District Secretaries as soon as possible after receipt of the requisition, and at least 21 days before the meeting.
- (iv) No business shall be transacted at an Annual General Meeting or Extraordinary General Meeting unless a quorum of 25 Practising Members is present.

7.

- (i) The Association shall operate in six Districts as determined by the General Committee and known as the Ashford, Canterbury, Lewisham, Maidstone, Rochester and Tonbridge Districts. No tower shall be transferred from one District to another without the approval of the General Committee. Practising and Honorary Life Members resident within a District, or paying subscriptions through a tower in that District, shall be entitled to vote at meetings of that District.
- (ii) A meeting shall be held quarterly in each District to discuss Association business. A church service shall be arranged whenever possible.
- (iii) The quarterly meeting of each District immediately before the General Committee meeting in November or December shall be the Annual District Meeting, at which a District Secretary shall be elected. One District Representative to serve on the General Committee for the ensuing year shall also be elected. Other District officers may be elected at the discretion of District members. If a District committee is convened the District Secretary and District Representative shall be ex officio members of any such committee.
- (iv) All notices of motion for the agenda of the Annual General Meeting shall be forwarded to the General Secretary by 1 September of the year prior to the AGM. Upon receipt the General Secretary shall send details in writing to Districts for consideration at their Annual District Meetings.

8.

- (i) The District Secretaries (or other nominated District Officers where applicable) shall:

- Receive subscriptions in the Districts and remit them to the Association Treasurer.
 - Make annual reports to the General Secretary for presentation to the General Committee at the November or December meeting.
- (ii) The District Representatives shall:
- Inform District meetings of matters discussed and approved by the General Committee.
 - Bring appropriate District matters to the General Committee for discussion.
- 9.
- (i) Representatives of the Association on the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers shall be elected from current Practising Members at each Annual General Meeting of the Association. The number of representatives so elected shall be as currently prescribed by the Central Council.
- (ii) Reasonable travelling and hotel expenses (limited to two nights) shall be allowed to the Representatives attending the meeting.
10. Peals rung by bands made up entirely of Members of the Association shall be credited to the Association and printed in the Handbook only if the details of compositions on seven bells and above are received by the Peal Secretary within two months of the performance or by 15 January of the following year, whichever is the sooner.
11. Prior to starting for a peal and provided the majority of the band comprises Practising Members, those Practising Members may elect the remainder as Members of the Association. Persons resident within the Association's area shall be elected in this way as Practising Members and the election shall be subject to ratification at a meeting of the District in which the Member resides. Persons not resident within the Association's area may be elected as Non-Resident Life Members. Subscriptions and full relevant details of new Members shall be collected at the time of the election and passed to the Peal Secretary as detailed in Rule 10.
12. The Chairman, General Secretary and the Treasurer shall be the Trustees of the Association's General Fund. Any two of them may sign cheques drawn on the fund. The Trustees shall have the power to invest or otherwise deal with such sums as the General Committee of the Association may place in their hands in such manner as the General Committee or any subcommittee appointed for the purpose by the General Committee shall direct.
13. The Treasurer shall prepare a Balance Sheet as at 31 December in each year and an Income and Expenditure Account for the year ending on that date. These shall be examined by a Registered Auditor or Independent Examiner elected by the Members of the Association at the previous Annual General Meeting of the Association.
14. The procedures by which a member whose conduct has brought the Association into disrepute may be suspended or removed from either elected office or membership shall be as follows:

- (i) If in the unanimous opinion of all the principal officers (i.e., Association Chairman, Hon Secretary and Hon Treasurer) any Officer or other elected official of the Association is unfit to hold office or fails to carry out their duties to its satisfaction, they shall have the power to suspend the Officer immediately, advising the reasons for suspension, and confirming in writing within seven days. If the Officer is also one of the principal officers, then the remaining principal officers must be unanimous.
- (ii) If in the unanimous opinion of the principal officers a member has committed acts which have or are likely to damage the reputation of the Association, then their membership may be suspended with immediate effect, advising the reasons for suspension, and confirming in writing within seven days.
- (iii) All suspensions shall be reviewed and confirmed or rejected at a Meeting of the General Committee, which shall be convened within 2 months of the suspension, whose decision shall be final. Members and Officers who are suspended may lodge an appeal and shall be invited to the meeting and given the opportunity to make representation to the Committee either in person or through an intermediary (who shall not be a member of the Committee) prior to the Committee making their determination on termination or reinstatement. Membership or Office shall be terminated if not less than three quarters of the Committee members present vote in favour. Terminated members shall forfeit any payment made to the Association.

All suspensions, terminations and re-instatements shall be recorded in confidential Minutes of the General Committee.

- (iv) Terminated members may not seek re-election until at least three years after termination, or in the case of a custodial sentence three years after release, and then not until a formal application supported by at least two members has been considered by the General Committee and approved by not less than three quarters of the Committee members present. Those terminated members whose application to re-join has been approved must present themselves at a District Meeting for re-election and may not be re-elected under the terms of Rule 11 (i.e. by Belfry Election before a peal).
- (v) Where an officer or elected official has had their office terminated under these rules, they shall not be eligible to stand for election to office for at least two years after termination, and then not until a formal application supported by at least two members has been considered by the General Committee and approved by not less than three quarters of the Committee members present. The consideration should include a review of their conduct in relation to the original causes of concern.

15. In the event of the dissolution of the Association the assets of the Association shall be distributed equally among those churches which at the time of dissolution were in union with the Association for the charitable and religious purposes of the said churches.

16.

- (i) No alteration to these Rules shall be made except at an Annual General Meeting of the Association.
- (ii) Notice of any proposed alteration to these Rules must be received in writing by the General Secretary by 1 September before the Annual General Meeting at which the proposition is to be made. Upon receipt, the General Secretary shall give details in writing to all District Secretaries who shall read out the proposed alteration at the next Annual District Meeting.
- (iii) Drafting amendments may be accepted at the discretion of the Chairman of the Annual General Meeting.

- (iv) An amendment (other than a drafting amendment) to any proposed alteration to these Rules may be made at the Annual General Meeting at which the proposition is made. If the amendment is carried the vote on the amended proposition shall be taken at the following Annual General Meeting.
- (v) When a rule has been discussed and voted upon at an AGM it will not be discussed and voted on again for a minimum of three years unless proposed by either, at least twenty Practising Members in total from at least four different Districts, or at least fifteen members of the General Committee.