

THE KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF CHANGE RINGERS - LEWISHAM DISTRICT

Minutes of the Business Meeting held in the Meeting Room at St Mary, Hayes on Saturday 7th January 2022

24 members were in attendance

1. **Apologies for absence** were received from Jim and Philippa Rooke, Debra Say, Sue Cameron, Rob Hodgetts, Debbie Runting and Lizzie Hardy.
2. The **minutes** of the last meeting were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.
3. The news of the **death** of Ros Farmer from Footh Cray just before Christmas was received with sadness. Her funeral is planned for 31st January at Footh Cray and ringing is being arranged. Tributes to Ros were paid by Graham Long and Jan Odell and a silence was kept in her memory.
4. Max Ganesh and Nink Sampson, both from Crayford, were warmly welcomed as **new members** by the Chairman. They were Proposed and Assessed as Competent by Rupert Cheeseman, and seconded by Liz Morris.
5. The **120 club draw** for January was held. The Administrators were pleased to announce that prizes are now able to be paid electronically. They asked members to renew as soon as possible for next year.
6. A comprehensive **County Rep update** had been provided by Debra Say and was presented to the meeting by the Chairman in her absence:
 - a. A County Festival of Ringing is planned for 17th June 2023 in the Ashford District, to include the inter-District 8-bell striking competition. A mini-ring and other activities will be there.
 - b. The position of Association Publicity Officer remains unfilled.
 - c. The proposal to hold an Association Dinner has received little interest so the idea has been dropped.
 - d. The 2023 County AGM will be held on Easter Monday 10th April, probably at Wrotham.
 - e. Association Inter-District 6-Bell Competitions are to be held on 30th September 2023 in the Canterbury District. Feedback was requested on the format as follows:

Background

The 10th Sept date planned for 2022 had to be postponed following the death of Queen Elizabeth II. The revised date in October lacked support and the competitions were ultimately cancelled. A discussion took place at the County Committee meeting in November around the future of these competitions and feedback is requested from members before a decision is made regarding the 2023 competitions.

Matters to consider include (but are not limited to):

- *What is the purpose of the competitions?*
- *Are the objectives of inclusivity and high performance contradictory?*
- *Should the competitions encourage greater participation/engagement, or high achievement?*
- *Are learners put off or intimidated by more experienced ringers?*

The future:

What do we want as a District for these competitions? E.g. a novice call-change competition, an 'elite' call change competition (or both), and perhaps a selected district band to ring in the Inter-District Striking Competition rather than an individual tower?

The general feeling of the meeting was that the County inter-District 8-bell competition and the Tower 6-bell County competition worked in their current format and there was little appetite to change them, although Graham Long wondered if the 6-bell competition could be organised at District level rather than by the District being represented by the winning local band.

There was less enthusiasm for a County Call Change competition as the current structure appears to work well:

- a District call-change competition – for less experienced local bands
- a District 6-bell method competition with the winners going on to a County Final – for more experienced local bands
- a County 8-bell competition with a selected District-wide band – to encourage the best District-level ringing

James Hardy urged members to see good ringing and experienced ringers as something to aspire to, not to be intimidated by.

It was agreed to seek any further feedback from towers by email, which the Ringing Masters will do in their next monthly update.

7. Any Other Business

- a. Debbie Runting asked for any articles for the next District Newsletter to be sent to her.
- b. Edward Gormley announced that he is working on a book detailing the history of the bells at St Mary's Lewisham as part of a fundraising initiative to refurbish the bells there. The meeting wished him well in its publication.
- c. Rupert Cheeseman reminded members to renew their Association membership and pay their subscriptions online – Rupert is available to assist with any problems or questions.
- d. Graham Long noted that the new shorter format Business Meetings no longer featured a church service and asked if there could be plans to reintroduce one. The Ringing Masters responded that attendance at services had been very low for some time now, and that they hoped that by only having one at the AGM that attendance at that one could be improved. As this was the first of the new format meetings, they asked that members form views after the first one or two and give feedback. They promised to revisit this question before the end of the year and change the format again if there was an appetite to do so.
- e. Peter and Liz Morris asked about plans for recruitment and the availability of any promotional material. The CCCBR website and the County Training display boards were highlighted, along with the upcoming national "Ring for the King" recruitment campaign. There were some local recruitment campaigns planned in churches and schools, but both the Training Officer and Ringing Masters agreed that Recruitment and Retention of ringers over the next few years is critical, as the ringing landscape is likely to change dramatically over that time.