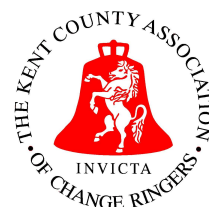




## THE KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF CHANGE RINGERS



### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

18<sup>th</sup> April 2022 from 2 p.m. at St. Nicholas Church, Chislehurst.

1. **Welcome by the Chairman** – Phillip Barnes welcomed the 52 members who had signed the Attendance Register and others who may be listening and watching online. He commented how uplifting the Church Service had been which had given us much to think about and raised practical thoughts on volunteering for a strong return to ringing. The presentation of the Peal Board in memory of Mark Jones by Lucy was very poignant. The Chairman hoped that this AGM (in the flesh after two years behind screens) would be a good meeting with volunteers coming forward for the vacant posts, without whom the Association wouldn't last long.
2. **Apologies for Absence** – Sue Atkinson, Roy & Sallyann Barclay, Jacqui Barlow, Brian Butcher, Lucile Corby, Margaret Funnell, Margaret Fitzgerald, Stanley and Ann Jenner, David & Pam Manger, David Robinson, Marina Robinson, Jim Rooke, Debra Say, Caroline Stockmann, Diana, Tim & Sven Wraight.
3. **Minutes of the 2021 AGM** held online on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2021 were proposed for adoption by Cathy Cheeseman, seconded by Charles Sinden and adopted nem con.
4. **Matters arising from the Minutes** – None.
5. **General Secretary's Report** – All of the Officers' reports were taken as read at this meeting and had been published in the 2022 Handbook. Sue Bassett had nothing to add to her report at pages 21-22 in the 2022 Handbook. The Chairman commented that it had been a pleasure to work with the General Secretary over the past four years.
6. **Treasurer's Report** – Maureen Poole spoke to her report at pages 9-12 in the 2022 Handbook and commented that there had been little activity during the past year and that subscription income had reduced. She highlighted several items of General expenditure, Handbooks, Insurances renewals, officers' & Website expenses, the John Barnes Memorial Plaque and repayment of a cancelled KYR trip. The Training Fund had purchased £700 equipment to assist with training and the Kent Young Ringers' Fund had enabled the booking of accommodation at the National Youth Contest, T shirts and travel. The Bell Restoration Fund had received reduced income from ringers due to less activity last year and 120 Clubs. Grants had been made to Farnborough £4,500 and Ightham, with grant offers to Meopham £1,600 and Rochester £20,000. No queries on the accounts were raised so the Treasurer proposed their adoption. Seconded by Adam Moore and carried nem con.  
  
Angela Clark asked whether members could advertise in the Handbook at a discounted rate. The Chairman commented that advertising income helped to defray the cost of the Handbooks.
7. **To agree the Practising Member's Subscription 2021** – The Treasurer proposed that this remain unchanged at £15. This proposal was seconded by Doug Davis and carried nem con.
8. **Allocation of Subscription Funds** – The Treasurer had recommended this be split 50% to General Fund, 25% to BRF and 25% to the Training Fund. Phil Barnes proposed acceptance from the Chair and members agreed by voting nem con.

9. **Election of an Independent Examiner** (Rule 6i) – The Treasurer proposed that Steven Marsh be appointed Independent Examiner for the 2022 accounts. This was seconded by Jo Horton and carried nem con.
10. **Matters relating to the Association Rules** (current rules in Handbook 2022). Full details of the proposed changes had been printed at the end of the meeting Agenda and each proposal was introduced verbally in turn, to enable members to understand fully the need for these proposals.
- 10.1 Rule 4(i) – David Grimwood explained the background to the proposal to include Handbell ringers as practising members of the Association. Some concerns were discussed. On balance it was considered important to be welcoming as an Association and if a Handbell ringing member later wished to learn to ring a tower bell then this would be no different than accepting a new learner into a tower. The words shown in red were proposed by David Grimwood, seconded by Marilyn Barden and agreed by the meeting:- 4.(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.
- 10.2 Rule 10(i) – Following last year’s decision to reduce Peal Fees to zero as they were a disincentive to ringing and the number and cost of printing peals had reduced considerably, the Chairman explained the proposal to exclude “appropriate peal fees together with” and to delete (ii) entirely. After discussion it was agreed that the remaining paragraph would be numbered 10. and to read as follows:- “Rule 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 details of the 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.” The proposal was put by Phil Barnes, seconded by Dickon Love and carried nem con.
- 10.3 Vote to suspend Rule 15(ii) – After a short discussion and agreement to limit such suspension to the next item of business only, the vote to suspend Rule 15(ii) to enable urgent Rule additions to be considered, was proposed by Phil Barnes, seconded by Doug Davis and approved nem con.
- 10.4 Vote to adopt additions for Safeguarding and Conduct – The Chairman explained the need for the following proposed additions to the rules. He had also, earlier this year, provided a written paper outlining the reasoning behind the need for these proposals and how the Association runs as an Unincorporated Society in Law with no legal entity. How the Association functions is described in the rules and it currently has no mechanism to expel a member if this became necessary. The proposed new rules would enable the General Committee to deal with serious issues such as a member signing the sex offender’s register or misappropriating the Association’s name. After a slight amendment of four-fifths to three quarters in paragraphs 14(iv) & (v) was accepted by the Chairman, Phil Barnes proposed their adoption, seconded by Neil Jones. After further discussions and clarification as to the practicalities of implementing these new rules, members voted nem con to adopt the wording as follows:-

**ADD TO RULE 4:**

(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.

**INSERT AFTER RULE 13:**

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.

**RENUMBER:** Rules 14 and 15 to become Rules 15 and 16 respectively.

Following adoption, further recommendations were made by Stuart Palin that the General Committee should consider changing the (new) Rule 16 (about changing the rules/notice period) and to provide guidance on the implementation and interpretation of Rule 14. Phil Barnes agreed to work with the General Committee on this in future.

**Temporary Adjournment of the meeting** - The Chairman thanked everyone for their good nature and sensitivity on dealing with the preceding matters. He then proposed a short adjournment of the meeting for a 15 minute comfort break. The meeting continued thereafter.

11. **Peal Secretary's Report** – Phillip Barnes proposed adoption, seconded by David Grimwood and carried nem con the report at Page 70 of the 2022 Handbook.
12. **Quarter Peal Secretary's Report** – Anthony Leeves' Report at Page 67 of the 2022 Handbook was noted without comment.

13. **Officers' Reports** – The following reports were printed on pages 22-24 of the 2022 Handbook and were taken as read.
- 13.1 Bell Restoration – Report noted without comment. Stuart Palin asked about the remit of the General Committee (or sub-group) to look at the BRF rules in the light of the Church of England looking at its estate and potential redundant churches. He asked if its remit could look more widely to react independently of the CofE. The Chairman responded that the current remit was to focus on improved investments, to enable a better rate of return than low interest deposit accounts. The Charitable purpose of the BRF is for the advancement of religion so we need to consider whether to invest in churches that may become redundant in future, brutal this may be.
- 13.2 Publicity – Report noted without comment.
- 13.3 Training – Report noted without comment.
- 13.4 Young Ringers – Report noted without comment. Jen Thomas thanked all the churches that had enabled practises by the Young Ringers for the National Youth competition. She emphasised her thanks to the Association for funds to enable young ringers to take part in training events. She considered that over 90% of Kent Young Ringers over the past 5 years were still ringing at universities and around the country, enthusiastically, due to the Kent “grounding”. The meeting gave Jen Thomas great applause for all her hard work with the Kent Young Ringers.
- 13.5 Librarian – Whilst no formal report had been submitted by the retiring Librarian, Hazel Basford had sent a farewell message which was read out by the General Secretary, as follows:-

“It has been an honour to have had the job of caring for the archives of the Association and I will probably miss them! I believe that it is an important collection, reflecting not only the history of our Association but also some aspects of the history of ringing in Kent extending back beyond 1880.

I am very pleased that Philippa has agreed to take on the role. I am sure she will do an excellent job. She is certain to bring new energy to the role and the archives will benefit from that. I would like to thank all the members and towers who have entrusted their records to the Association's care; and those who have helped and encouraged me. As my parting message - one that I have repeated often over the years, - I would encourage Districts and Towers to keep in mind that important records of ringing and ringers may lie unrecognised in towers, especially where there may not now be an active band. We should do all we can to ensure that the contribution of past ringers can be acknowledged for we not only stand by their ropes, we stand on their shoulders.”

There followed a round of applause by the meeting in gratitude for and appreciation of the service provided by Hazel Basford over the past 30+ years.

14. **Election of Officers**
- 14.1 Chairman – Two nominations were received from the floor of the meeting; Neil Jones proposed by Marilyn Barden, seconded by Cathy Cheeseman and Dickon Love proposed by Mike Little, seconded by Jo Horton. Two tellers, Malcolm Barden and Alison Gerrish were appointed. After the candidates waited outside, each member cast one vote by a show of hands. The two tellers agreed the votes as 22 votes for Neil Jones, 13 votes for Dickon Love. On their return to the meeting, the Chairman announced Neil Jones as his duly elected successor.
- 14.2 General Secretary – Susan Bassett (proposed & seconded in advance) was elected unopposed.
- 14.3 Treasurer – Peter Joyce (proposed & seconded in advance) was elected unopposed.
- 14.4 Peal Secretary – Phillip Barnes (proposed & seconded in advance) was elected unopposed.
- 14.5 Librarian – Philippa Rooke (proposed & seconded in advance) was elected unopposed.
- 14.6 Bell Restoration – Brian Butcher (proposed & seconded in advance) was elected unopposed.
- 14.7 Training – Rupert Cheeseman (proposed & seconded in advance) was elected unopposed.
- 14.8 Youth – Jen Thomas (proposed & seconded in advance) was elected unopposed.
- 14.9 Central Council Representatives x 5

- 14.9.1 Phillip Barnes (proposed & seconded in advance) was elected unopposed.
- 14.9.2 Doug Davis (proposed & seconded in advance) was elected unopposed.
- 14.9.3 Jen Thomas (proposed & seconded in advance) was elected unopposed.
- 14.9.4 Caroline Stockmann (proposed & seconded in advance) was elected unopposed.
- 14.9.5 Dickon Love was proposed from the floor by Stuart Palin, seconded by Marilyn Barden and elected nem con.

- 14.10 Handbook Editor – Doug Davis (proposed & seconded in advance) was elected unopposed.
- 14.11 Health & Safety – Becky Winter was proposed from the floor by Doug Davis, seconded by David Grimwood and elected unopposed.
- 14.12 Publicity – No nominations were received so the post remained vacant.
- 14.13 Quarter Peal Secretary – Anthony Leeves (proposed & seconded in advance) was elected unopposed.
- 14.14 Safeguarding – Emma Jarvis (proposed & seconded in advance) was elected unopposed. The Chairman expressed personal thanks to Emma for her huge support during recent “trying times”.
- 14.15 Webmaster – Doug Davis (proposed & seconded in advance) was elected unopposed.

- 15. **Members achieving 75 and 50 years’ membership** – The Chairman had pleasure in being able to present the certificates, in person, to those members able to attend the meeting. The remaining Certificates would be posted or handed to District Representatives for later presentation.

75<sup>th</sup> The Reverend Doctor Peter Newing and Lucile Corby – Elected in 1947

50 <sup>th</sup> Sallyann Barclay	David J Dearnley	Noel Grabham	Stuart Palin
Jacqueline M Barlow	Enid Dixon	Graham AC John	John Paramor
Elizabeth Barnes	Jill Grabham	Mike Little	Arthur Vidgeon

The remaining 50<sup>th</sup> Certificates from 2021 were presented to Angela Wilkins who also accepted one on behalf of her brother Nicholas.

## 16. **Forthcoming Events**

- 16.1 Festival of Ringing and Association 8-Bell Competition – 18/06/2022 at Goudhurst. The Chairman thanked the Tonbridge District for the arrangements they were making which would include a hog roast and ringing in various towers around Goudhurst. He encouraged members to attend.
- 16.2 Association 6-bell Call Change & Change Ringing Competition – 10/09/2022 at Saltwood. The Chairman emphasised his hope that Districts would be able to field two bands each. Call Changes could be struck really well (referenced the skill of Devon Call Change Bands) and more accessible to early ringers. Open or closed handstroke leads would be acceptable.
- 16.3 Essex Trophy 2022 – 24/09/2022 at St Mary, Bletchingly. Plain course of Yorkshire Royal.
- 16.4 Association Choral Evensong of Remembrance – 06/11/2022 at Rochester Cathedral. 3.15pm. The Chairman commented that the extremely successful 2021 service had been well received and KCACR had been invited by the Cathedral authorities to make this an annual event.

## 17. **Any Other Business**


- 17.1 Clothing Sales – Cathy Cheeseman had printed details of the KCACR Clothing sales for members to pick up. Full details were also available on the KCACR Website at [Clothing – Kent County Association of Change Ringers \(kcacr.org.uk\)](https://www.kcacr.org.uk/Clothing-Kent-County-Association-of-Change-Ringers)
- 17.2 6-bell Striking Competition Question – Rupert Cheeseman raised questions about the aim of the Association Call Change Competition combined with the Change Ringing Competition. The Chairman commented that striking competitions were about championing good striking amongst all ringers. The reason for not having the same band in both competitions was to encourage the largest amount of the best strikers in the Association to take part. If Districts had concerns then these could be raised at General Committee by the District Representatives. 2022 was the first combined competition, so changes could be made in future if it proved unsuccessful.
- 17.3 Post AGM Ringing – Details of post-AGM ringing at Chislehurst, Chelsfield and Bickley were given.

## 18. **Vote of Thanks**

- 18.1 Lewisham District – The General Secretary thanked the organisers for today’s arrangements, the excellent service, refreshments, ringing and meeting arrangements.
- 18.2 Retiring Officers – The General Secretary thanked all the retiring officers for their work, support and commitment to the running of the Association. Gardening tokens were presented to each.
- 18.3 Retiring Chairman – Phil Barnes rounded off the meeting by commenting that there was much to be positive about within the Association and its support of ringing. Putting aside any current concerns, he emphasised the need to embrace change for the future. We are no longer in the 1970’s when ringing was extremely active generally, more so than now and with less restrictions. Within current safeguarding guidelines, we need to value our young ringers and lots of people are making a huge effort to support them. We also need to trust our young ringers to help become part of the leadership, because it’s their future not ours.
- The Chairman also commented that any Association is absolutely a success or not, due to its volunteers in leadership and activities within bands, Districts and the Association, whether it’s in a helper role at a training event – this is just as important as being in a formal leadership role. It is of concern that an increasing number of Districts have been unable to fill officer vacancies over recent years. The volunteering theme of today’s Service was very pertinent and to reference Hazel Basford’s words, we do indeed stand on the shoulders of past ringers. Phil Barnes encouraged everyone to “get in there” and provide support to ringing locally, within Districts, to the Association, its newly-elected officers and particularly the Chairman. Phil Barnes then presented the Chairman’s badge of office to Neil Jones.

The meeting was declared closed at 4.30 p.m.

SIGNED by the Chairman as a true record as adopted by members at the AGM held on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2023

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Neil Jones, Chairman