



MINUTES of the General Committee Meeting held at Downswood Community Centre, ME15 8XG
Saturday 29th July 2023 10:00-12:26

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT :- 10 (*including 1 online shown in italics*).

(Members shown in grey were either not present or attending but representing more than one post)

Chairman & CC Rep.	NJ	Neil Jones			
General Secretary	SB	Susan Bassett	CC Rep.	SR	Stephanie Runting
Treasurer	PJ	Peter Joyce	<u>District Reps.</u>		
Training Officer	RC	Rupert Cheeseman	Ashford	EN	Edward Neate
Youth Officer	JT	Jen Thomas	Canterbury	MB	Malcolm Barden
Bell Restoration Officer	BB	Brian Butcher	Lewisham	DS	Debra Say
CC Rep.	PB	Phil Barnes	Maidstone	DD	Doug Davis
CC Rep.	CS	<i>Caroline Stockmann</i>	Rochester	SF	Steve Fitton
CC Rep.	AR	Alexander Runting	Tonbridge	SN	Steve Newland

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE :- 3 (*including 1 online shown in italics*)

Handbook Editor	DD	Doug Davis	Quarter Peal Secretary	AL	Anthony Leeves
Health & Safety Officer	BW	<i>Becky Winter</i>	Publicity Officer	TW	Tom Winter
Librarian	PR	Philippa Rooke	Safeguarding Officer	EJ	Emma Jarvis
Peal Secretary	PB	Phil Barnes	Webmaster	DD	Doug Davis

2023/07/1 **Welcome, Apologies for Absence and Substitutions** – Chairman NJ welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were noted from Brian Butcher (Bell Restoration Officer), Phil Barnes (CC Rep/Peal Sec), Alexander & Stephanie Runting (CC Reps), Steve Newlands (Tonbridge Rep) and Rupert Cheeseman (Training Officer). There were no substitutions.

2023/07/2 **Minutes of meeting held on 29th April 2023** – The Minutes had been circulated and were agreed by those present. The Minutes were signed by the Chairman.

2023/07/3	Matters arising	ACTION
2023/07/3.1	2023/04/3.1 <u>eBells Loan Scheme Video</u> – No progress.	PB
2023/07/3.2	2023/04/12.1 <u>Mailchimp to Member Mojo</u> – DD reported that the new system had been set up and was ready to migrate the membership data over to it very soon. He would then advise members about the new system.	DD
2023/07/3.3	2023/04/6.3 <u>Succession Plan & Business Recovery Plan</u> – DD reported that nothing active had been done except the setting up of the Microsoft 365 free platform. This would have areas for secure document storage and photos from KYR. Password access would be needed and was on the list for DD to action. JT asked whether stored photos could be accessed through the website. NJ advised that access could be given to authorised persons. NJ commented that a solution for paper documents was needed as the Diocese had recommended storage for 60 years. EJ stated that Central Council (CC) would be looking at this but meanwhile KCACR needed to consider temporary safe storage whilst discussions ensue. A short-term plan would be easiest to digitise documents with restricted access on 365 and DD agreed to scan documents into the system. This was agreed a good way forward, beginning with	DD

Minutes ADOPTED on 25th November 2023

as far back as possible and moving forward. Agreed that JT should request back from helpers any working documents after an event for shredding. Meanwhile JT would keep paper documents as safely as possible (locked away or on her person). NJ suggested that an assistant Youth Officer post was considered to handle the documents.

JT

2023/07/4

Safeguarding Updates – EJ was congratulated on her new appointment to assist CC with Safeguarding and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) issues. NJ & EJ had been very busy liaising with Dioceses about the Leadership Course amongst other issues. Canterbury Safeguarding Team (CST) had advised that the course had been changed to omit reflection on psalm 91. The Basic Awareness course would include scenarios about ringing in future. EJ had researched another Association which offered local (in person) leadership courses for Tower Captains and other leaders as an extension of the Foundation Course.

Understood that CST was not keen to do this but was involved with CC & the National Safeguarding Team to look at “tailor-made” Leadership courses for ringers (as ringers actually out-number the clergy). EJ considered this was slight progress and that CST understood that ringers are not safeguarding adverse, but needed relevance to the position that ringers hold. A more positive relationship had been established and CST wished to involve KCACR more in future. However, actual changes are not yet on the horizon.

MB commented that the revised Leadership Course no longer required a written response to the three questions and the reflection is not necessarily religious based but the course remained a clumsy guessing game.

EJ commented that there remain differences of opinion amongst Dioceses/ Deans/Clergy over Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks not being needed by every ringer. It was very difficult to get consistency amongst the four different dioceses. The remit of the proposed Diocesan Audit of ringers in the autumn is not yet clear. EJ warned that great care was needed to ensure that KCACR is not made responsible for enforcement, which is the role of the Parish Safeguarding Officers (PSO) and incumbents.

On the issue of closed towers and local safeguarding training, an option is for PSO or incumbents to obtain materials for churches/towers to deliver a Basic Awareness course themselves and keep their own records. Only the person logged on would get the formal certificate and other attendees would need to be given local certificates. Dioceses do not have capacity to do “in-person” training themselves. EJ commented that in-person local training would be better received and advised ringers to ask for this. Feedback about this from towers in the Rochester and Canterbury Dioceses would be appreciated.

EJ reported that some outing organisers within Canterbury Diocese were being asked to prove that ringers had done training and had DBS Certificates. It was not known whether CST had advised PSOs to ask for this. SB commented that around the country, outing organisers were increasingly being asked by churches to provide evidence of Safeguarding Training and DBS checks for their outing attendees. JT commented that at the Ringing World National Youth Contest (RWNYC) the only requirements from the organisers were for the Leader and Assistant to be DBS checked and the names of others listed. EJ confirmed that she would continue dialogue with the Dioceses on these matters.

EJ

2023/07/5

2023/07/5.1

Finance & Grant applications

Treasurer’s report – Circulated and noted. PJ commented that he was aiming to improve presentation in future. There had been little activity apart from expenditure on a microphone, website, database, hall hire and archive storage. Noted that the weekly rental for storage had increased slightly. The £500 grant

	to Ightham had been paid. The biggest expenditure has been on the Training Account for the Kent Young Ringers attending the RWNKY in York.	
2023/07/5.2	<u>BRF Investment Account</u> – PJ was working through the paperwork with the Chairman and General Secretary to open the new Skipton Investment account.	PJ, NJ & SB
2023/07/5.3	<u>Brian Law Bequest</u> – PJ reported that once the Solicitors' fees and taxes had been paid, there were no funds remaining to make the bequest to KCACR.	
2023/07/5.4	<u>BRF Grant Applications</u> – None.	
2023/07/6	Feedback from Events	
2023/07/6.1	<u>Coronation of King Charles III</u> – 06/05/2023 NJ reported that 180 ringing performances on Bellboard were recorded with 130 attributed to KCACR. These included peals, quarters and general ringing. Approximately 100 young people between the ages of 6-24 years were also involved county-wide. NJ & JT considered this was a fantastic response and ringers did themselves proud.	
2023/07/6.2	<u>Festival of Ringing & Association 8-Bell Striking Competition</u> – 17/06/2023 NJ thanked the Ashford District for hosting the event at Lympe and congratulated Canterbury District on winning the competition. The single route for towers and local arrangements worked well and some ringers attended who were not involved in the actual competition. It was a good opportunity to talk to people and had a really friendly and well-managed vibe about it. NJ remarked that the Sussex Association had held an event on 22/07/2023 which included a whole day of ringing events concluding with a Ceilidh in the evening. Something to consider for Kent next year and to build on the Ashford District's friendly organisation. NJ advised that the National 12-bell competition had been moved to the same weekend as the KCACR 8-bell so do we move our date? After discussion, agreed to move the Association 8-Bell to 22 nd June 2024 in the Canterbury District.	
2023/07/6.3	<u>Ringling World National Youth Contest (RWNKY)</u> – 08/07/2023 JT had submitted a written report to be published on the Website. She commented that 25 teams from 23 Associations took part. They had a fabulously well-organised weekend which included a private coach to the first tower. KYR came third out of 17 teams and did really well with good feedback from the Judges. NJ commented that it was a joy to listen to outside. The team also rang at different towers around York including the Minster where the youngsters rang well on the very heavy bells to plain hunt and the youngest strapped the tenor. They also rang at Doncaster on the Sunday morning where the KYR were congratulated on their good striking. Next year's competition would be in London.	
2023/07/7	Association Archive – PR reported that the transfer of all items from Hazel into new storage had yet to be completed but she knew where all the elements were. The storage costs for the archive had cheekily increased by 19% to £11.40 per week but she was very thankful to have this facility. She continued to explore exactly what the archive contains and is conscious that there isn't very much available digitally. Districts had been requested to scan in Newsletters but this appears to have stopped in 2014. PR hoped to work on a system for digital storage going forward. Members generally asked her to check Minutes for their joining date. The Membership Database only had this if members knew when they had joined. Some Districts held such information themselves but not all. PR requested that if anyone knows of a tower which is closing and is holding ringing records, that she be contacted to archive them.	PR
2023/07/8	Training	
2023/07/8.1	<u>Training Plans</u> – It was noted that a successful M1 course had been run at Meopham on 13 th May 2023. Tonbridge District would be hosting an ART M1 course in October 2023.	

2023/07/8.2	<p><u>Training Teachers of new ringers</u> – SB had circulated ideas about how to progress ART M1 trained teachers towards greater experience and accreditation. NJ supported the standardised approach to teaching through official training which is also beneficial to both teacher and learner. Supporting one another's existing teaching hubs around the county might be a way forward to provide and share best practice. Teaching hubs would also be useful to teachers who need to practise their skills but didn't have any learners at the time, or learners who couldn't find a local ringer to teach them bell-handling. Frequent teaching sessions would be beneficial to all. JT commented that Loose had a lot of learners with one inexperienced teacher who needed support now on Monday afternoons. Teaching in hubs could also enable easier mentoring, ultimately leading onto more accreditations. Currently there were less than 10 accredited teachers in Kent but many more ringers had already undertaken the M1 course. If successful, the format could be applied to M2 teachers to bring on learners into call changes, plain hunt and basic methods. All agreed that it would be good for SB's ideas to be progressed under the umbrella of the Association.</p>	SB
2023/07/9	Annual Reviews of policies, rules and guidelines	
2023/07/9.1	<p><u>Volunteer Complaint and Grievance procedure and Code of Conduct</u> – Linked to the VC&G procedure there is a need to add a Code of Conduct. The Lincoln Association's Policy and the Central Council's Code for Ringing had been circulated. The latter was a much simpler document but did not clarify where the levels of transgression might lie and the process to deal with such. After much discussion, NJ agreed to draft out a Code of Conduct policy for KCACR based on the Lincoln Association's policy but made pertinent to Kent with several dioceses. Meanwhile it was agreed to readopt the VC&G document and look at it again in November alongside the draft Code of Conduct.</p>	NJ & SB
2023/07/9.2	<p><u>Amendment of Association Rules</u> – Although mentioned several times in the past, action was still required to shorten the length of time the current rules dictate for members to agree rule changes (current Rules 1(iv) and 16 refer). All agreed that the management of the Association is vested in the elected General Committee, which should have the power to adjust rules as it sees fit and in the best interests of the Association. A mechanism to receive quarterly meeting feedback to the General Committee with written member objections within 28 days from publication could be included. After much discussion DD agreed to draft and circulate a proposed rule change for sending to District Secretaries by 1st September and adoption at the 2024 AGM.</p>	DD & SB
2023/07/9.3	<p><u>Safeguarding Policy</u> – EJ commented that the current policy wording did not align with the Parish Safeguarding Policy, so there was still work to do on this. Meanwhile she proposed to reaccept the existing policy for now. Meanwhile JT & EJ had slightly amended the wording of the Parental Consent Form for 2023/24 and added tick-boxes for clarity. It was circulated to members during the meeting and a number of amendments were discussed. The new Parental Consent form was considered good and adopted with DD adding website links.</p>	EJ JT & DD
2023/07/9.4	<p><u>Risk Assessment & H&S issues</u> – BW had joined the meeting online. She had looked at the existing policy which included some good things but others could be improved. She had circulated a draft document that was based on a standard form used in the NHS which had a scoring matrix. She had liked the existing categories from the KCACR RA to prompt people into considering safety in ringing issues.</p> <p>NJ commented that the matrix enabled measurement of the level of risk and the impact of measures. BW advised that a log of all RAs should be kept by the H&S Officer. PR asked if a template could be added into the policy, showing the procedures all in one document. DD & BW agreed to do one for Boxley as an</p>	

	<p>example for people to follow. SB asked if a flow-chart of procedures could be added to show the actions required, who needs to be advised, check the document and any feedbacks from the event. BW advised that this could be added at the end of the RA. Understood that each tower should have an RA which would help to provide proof that safety measures had been put in place. Churches may have their own proforma but may not appreciate what ringing is about. It was thought that many Parish H&S Officers would be thankful if towers did their own RAs and gave a copy to the Parish. Whilst most towers would come under the umbrella of their own church, KCACR still needed its own RA for other events/mini-ring, etc., taking place outside of a church. The RA can always be added to and adapted for special events/outings such as the RWNYC, travel and hotel arrangements. NJ was happy to rejig the new document to fit the needs of the RWNYC next year.</p> <p>BW was asked to comment on the H&S Policy. She stated that as KCACR is not an employer, it was not obliged in law to have an H&S Policy, but it was considered best practice to have one. The legislation did not apply to volunteers so was difficult to draw up a policy, however health & safety was generally everyone's responsibility to look after each other. All considered that BW's draft policy was comprehensive and showed clearly that KCACR/ringers is/are endeavouring to follow best practice. BW offered to put the RA at the end of the H&S policy with some statements and guidance on procedure all in one document. On reflection it was agreed to keep the documents separate but have links from one to another on the website. BW agreed to amend the documents as discussed.</p> <p>BW left the meeting at this point and was thanked for her work on the policies.</p>	DD & BW
2023/07/9.5	<p><u>120 Club Guidelines</u> – SB reported that the Association Guidelines did not accord exactly with some District 120 Club guidelines, particularly in relation to where any proceeds from a deceased member's winnings would be applied. Agreed that the choices made by a ticket holder at purchase would take precedence over the Association guidelines.</p>	NJ
2023/07/9.6	<p><u>Ecclesiastical Insurance</u> – PJ reported that he had spoken with Ecclesiastical and understood that the cover was "bog standard" and considered appropriate for KCACR. Changes could be made if required but may affect the premium. Agreed to leave the cover as existing.</p>	BW
2023/07/9.7	<p><u>Personal Accident Policy</u> – DD would make the policy available behind the member login when the new Member Mojo system was completed. Agreed it should not be placed in public view on the website, in case of copyright issues.</p>	DD
2023/07/10	<p>Forthcoming Events</p>	
2023/07/10.1	<p><u>Central Council AGM & Roadshow 2023</u> -02/09/2023 in Ipswich.</p>	
2023/07/10.2	<p><u>Essex Trophy 2023</u> – 09/09/2023 St. Mary, Walthamstow. 09:45 draw. Grandsire Caters 2-3 courses. Details had been received. DD confirmed that he so far had half a team organised but hoped to complete this soon and begin practising.</p>	DD
2023/07/10.3	<p><u>Association 6-bell competitions</u> – 30/09/2023 at Monckton. MB confirmed that local arrangements were in hand but it was unclear how many to cater for. Refreshments with cake and biscuits would be available during the morning competition with a full bell-ringers' tea served during the afternoon at a locally agreed price. Attendees to bring their own lunch or local pubs would be advised. Local parking was good. Repairs to some flooring would be carried out shortly, but currently the toilet door did not shut properly. There is no set piece to learn for the call change competition – just 10 minutes ringing. Judges for both competitions were needed. JT considered that a Training Course for judges might be useful. Using a participant from each band to collectively judge the ringing might provide "on the job" training? Various people offered to approach suitable ringers outside Kent to act as judges. Two needed for each competition.</p>	

- 2023/07/10.4 Choral Evensong – 19/11/2023 Rochester Cathedral at 3.15 p.m. Wide publicity was needed to encourage good attendance. General ringing after the service. JT asked if refreshments might be available. NJ agreed to ask. NJ, TW & District publicity
- 2023/07/10.5 AGM 2024 – NJ reported that Rainham had been booked provisionally for 01/04/2024.
- 2023/07/11 **Reports**
- 2023/07/11.1 Youth Officer – A written report had been circulated in advance and was noted. JT added that a new film entitled “Discover Bell Ringing” by George Perrin (who did the original craft of bellringing in 2005) is complete and will be screened during the Central Council AGM. JT had seen a preview and considered it is really good. It features many young ringers and learners from Kent, Sussex and places further north, possibly Skipton and Barron. The film majors on encouraging people into find out more about learning to ring and has been very nicely done.
- 2023/07/11.2 Bell Restoration Officer – No report.
- 2023/07/11.3 Kent Mini-Ring – NJ reported that, unfortunately, Martin Hooker had withdrawn his offer to donate the mini-ring to KCACR. It was, though, still available for use. The KCACR trailer would be returned to the rented compound. NJ had also spoken with Roger Booth about the Charmborough Ring. He had concerns that in future electric vehicle range would be reduced when towing heavy trailers.
- 2023/07/12 **Any Other Business**
- 2023/07/12.1 Vice Presidents – MB asked whether newly appointed Bishops, Deans and Archdeacons were welcomed to KCACR and advised of their ex-officio link to the Association as Vice Presidents. SB confirmed that she checked annually for new appointments when sending out the new Handbooks to them, but did not write individually to each. No response had ever been received from any of them. MB requested that a letter of welcome be sent to the new Dean at Canterbury. It was noted that the Dean of Southwark was not listed amongst Vice Presidents in the Handbook. NJ requested that members let SB know when a new appointment had been made. SB
- 2023/07/12.2 Teaching assistance at Loose – JT reiterated her request for teachers to help an inexperienced teacher at Loose where there are many learners. The band is very keen to progress but help is needed on Monday afternoons 3.45-5.15 p.m. now that Margaret Fitzgerald has moved away.
- 2023/07/12.3 General Secretary successor – NJ reminded members that SB hoped to stand down at the 2024 AGM and that a successor needs to be found. As his own term of office would require him to stand down in 2025, it would be best to maintain some continuity “at the helm”. JT suggested that any proposed successor be invited to shadow SB and attend future General Committee meetings.
- 2023/07/13 **Date of next meeting** – 25th November 2023 in person, online and recorded. Future meetings 24/02/2024, 27/04/2024, 27/07/2024, 23/11/2024

The meeting closed at 12:26

SIGNED as a true record byon 25th November 2023
Neil Jones, Chairman to KCACR