



THE KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF CHANGE RINGERS



MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Easter Monday, 21st April 2025 at St Nicholas, Rectory Lane,
Sevenoaks TN13 1JA
2pm

Item

1. **Welcome by the Chairman** – Neil Jones welcomed 46 members to the meeting (with 7 members listening online).
 2. **Apologies for Absence** –
Stuart Palin, Tim Wraight, Diana Wraight, Jackie Barlow, Margaret Funnell, Gill Rapley, Chris Rapley, Donald Holden, Rosemary Holden, Val Cooper, Ellen Jones, Stan Jenner, Ann Jenner, Florence Hamp, Margaret Leadbeatter, Graham Cuthbert
 3. **Minutes of the EGM & AGM 2023** held on 1st April 2024, in the 2025 Handbook pages 17-20. Proposed for adoption, seconded and carried.
 4. **Minutes of the EGM** held on 22nd June 2024. Proposed for adoption, seconded and carried.
 5. **Matters arising**
 5. 1. Matters arising from the AGM minutes – none
 5. 2. Matters arising from the EGM minutes – none
 6. **Proposed changes to Association Rules** – as notified to Districts in October 2024.
 6. 1. The chairman reminded the members present that the proposed changes to the Rules for the Association had been circulated and discussed at the Annual District Meetings in October. The aim had been to make them clearer.
The chairman thanked members who had supported this process with comments and suggestions, particularly Chris Bassett and Stuart Palin, who had helped with checking the new draft Rules.
 6. 2. The chairman highlighted further drafting changes to the version of the Rules that had been circulated at the Annual District Meetings in October 2024:
 - a) In Rule 2.1, regarding President and Vice Presidents:
2.1 The Archbishop of Canterbury shall be invited to become President. Should the Archbishop of Canterbury decline this invitation, the General Committee shall invite the Bishop of Rochester to fulfil this position. **In the event of the Bishop of Rochester declining this invitation, the committee shall consider inviting the Bishop of Dover or one of the other suffragan Bishops ministering within the Dioceses of Canterbury or Rochester for the position of President.**
 - b) In Rule 3.2, Membership categories:
 - c. ii. An **Ordinary Member** whose subscription is not in arrears may, upon leaving the Association's area, opt to become a Non-Resident Life Member without further payment by notifying the Membership Secretary. On return to the Association's area Practising Membership may be resumed on payment of the appropriate subscription. Alternatively, that Member may continue to be an **Ordinary Member** living outside the area on continued payment of the appropriate subscription.
- *Note:** The phrase Ordinary Member has replaced the phrase Practising Member for clarity.
- c) In Rule 4.2, there was a clarification on who is allowed to vote in meetings in Districts – how membership is determined/ checked:
Original wording:

Only Practising Members who are recorded in the Handbook as a member of a tower in that District, shall be entitled to vote at meetings of the said District.

Replaced with:

Only Practising Members who are members of that District shall be entitled to vote at meetings of the said District. Membership of a District can be determined by affiliation recorded in the Handbook, the Membership Database or recent membership elections at that District's meetings.

- d) In Rule 7, Association Meetings – references to 'days' and 'weeks' were replaced with a number of weeks:

7.9 Upon receipt of a valid written request for an Extraordinary General Meeting, the General Secretary will convene the meeting not less than **4 weeks*** after receipt of the written request and within 8 weeks of receiving the request.

7.10 Notice of an Extraordinary General Meeting shall be published as soon as possible after receipt of the valid written request, and at least **3 weeks*** before the meeting, on the KCACR website and shall be notified to all District Secretaries. The Association will also attempt to notify by email all those Members who have consented to receive email communications from the Association.

***Note:** days converted to weeks for consistency throughout document.

- e) In 13.1, 13.6 and 13.7: 'three-quarters' replaced with '75%'.

6. 3. There was a query from the floor on why there was a need for a 'second in line' for the role of president. Peal Secretary Phil Barnes stated that when Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby took office, he initially did not automatically accept roles his predecessors had. He did decide to accept the role of President of the KCACR, but if that had not been the case – or in instances when there is no Archbishop of Canterbury in office, as is the case at this present time, the KCACR would have no President. This 'line of succession' avoids that situation.
6. 4. Doug Davis proposed the new amended Rules for the Association be adopted; the motion was seconded by Chris Bassett and Cathy Hall and was carried with none against and no abstentions.
7. **Chairman's and General Secretary's Report** – available on pages 21-22 of the KCACR 2025 Handbook. The report was taken as read.
8. 1. **Treasurer's Report** – Annual accounts 2024 available on pages 13-15 of the KCACR 2025 Handbook. The report was taken as read.
Treasurer PJ noted that the most significant change was that some funds had been moved to interest-bearing accounts.
8. 2. Malcolm Barden stated that in the published subscription income in the 2025 Handbook it was difficult to make comparison year on year the number of members of the Association, and asked whether there was anything that can be published. Membership Officer Doug Davis (DD) confirmed this could be included in Handbooks in future.
8. 3. The annual accounts were proposed for adoption by Sue Bassett (SB) and seconded by Rona Joiner, and carried with none against and no abstentions.
9. **To agree the Practising Member's Subscription 2026** –
The Treasurer's recommendation is for this to remain at £15 per adult member.
The Chairman raised the fact that at last year's Central Council AGM, it was agreed that the annual affiliation fee is to rise to 40p per member for 2025 and £1.00 per member from 2026. He reflected that the KCACR is in a good position as our fees are on the higher end, compared to other associations, and he also stated that the Association is in a position to absorb the CCCBR fee increase this year.
Phil Barnes proposed, and Cathy Hall and Caroline Stockman seconded the motion, which was carried with none against and no abstentions.

10. 1. Allocation of Subscription Funds

The Treasurer's recommendation was that 50% went to the General Fund, 25% to the Bell Restoration Fund (BRF) and 25% to the Training Fund.

10. 2. DD suggested that since: the BRF is very healthy; there's not a lot of movement of funds in general; there will likely be lower maintenance costs needed given the number of rings of bells will likely decrease; the increased future need to focus on training, recruitment and retention; does the BRF need to receive quite so much of our annual income?

This led to some agreement and discussion amongst the members present.

Caroline Stockman suggested the Association needed a Training Plan, to which some members stated there was a Training Officer's report in the 2025 Handbook. The Chairman said a big focus for the Association in the coming years will be Ringing 2030, a project with Central Council to spearhead a push on recruitment and training. He added that we are pushing ART (Association of Ringing Teachers) training in the KCACR: In 2024, we had 28 people complete the course, with two more courses coming up, and a waiting list.

DD stated that his concern with moving funds into the BRF was that once in the BRF, excess funds can't be moved out for other purposes. Treasurer PJ confirmed this, whereas excess funds in the Training Fund or General Fund can however later be moved to the BRF.

10. 3. Youth Officer Jen Thomas suggested a split of 10% to the BRF, 40% to the Training Fund, and 50% to the General Fund, for this year.

DD seconded this proposal, and it was unanimously passed.

10. 4. The Chairman reminded the members present that the fund allocation is agreed on an annual basis at the AGM, and that we would be doing the same for the next year, in 2026.

11. Election of an Independent Examiner (Rule 6i)

The Treasurer proposed Stephen Marsh, Jo Horton seconded. This was carried with none voting against, and no abstentions.

12. 1. Peal Secretary's Report – available on pages 64-75 of the KCACR 2025 Handbook. The report was taken as read.

12. 2. Peal Secretary Phil Barnes encouraged more members to try full peals. In 2014, two-thirds of bells in peals had been rung by resident members; and in 2024 that figure was only 43%. Last year, only 71 resident members rang any peals.

PB asked that any members interested in ringing peals, to please get in touch with him.

13. Quarter Peal Secretary's Report – available on pages 60-63 of the KCACR 2025 Handbook. The report was taken as read.

14. Officers' reports

14. 1. Bell Restoration – available on page 23 of the KCACR 2025 Handbook.

Bell Restoration Officer Brian Butcher was asked about the latest situation at Penshurst – he confirmed that the bells are out of action and are being rehung. Youth Officer JT said it would be 7 months before they'd be up again.

14. 2. Publicity

No Publicity Report had been received.

14. 3. Training

a) Training Officer Sue Bassett summarised the ART training courses and hub activities that had taken place during 2024. She emphasised that her role was to supplement the training events organised in most Districts and to act as a central point of contact for those whose training needs required additional support. It was heartening to see an upsurge of interest in structured training for teachers and progress by learners undertaking focussed training in hubs. Members should see the KCACR Training Page for details of hub events.

b) SB reported that the ART M1 training day on 10th May was fully booked with a waiting list. ART M2F course on 14th June at Dover had 4 spare places and she advised booking asap. Post meeting another ART M1 course at St. Laurence in Thanet on 16th August was opened for bookings.

- c) The Training Officer does not have the monopoly on organising training - Towers can organise their own courses direct with ART for their own convenience. SB asked that attendees advise the Training Officer when they've been trained, as ART will not share personal details with KCACR (due to GDPR).
- d) ART M1 courses (teaching bell-handling) can be hosted by any tower with bells silenced. ART M2 courses (steps beyond bell-handling to plain hunt & first methods) require the use of a simulator. SB reminded members that the £30 course fee for an ART course, can be re-claimed from the Training Fund on application to the KCACR Treasurer (after attending the course).
- e) The Chairman commented that there is no obligation for those attending ART courses to join ART as a member, but it did provide a number of benefits (e.g., access to training materials, online courses, advice, accreditation, newsletters, new recruit referrals).
- f) Competent teachers will be very much needed to support the Ringing 2030 project. KCACR had been tasked by the Central Council to recruit and train 100 new ringers this year. Help will be needed from members to support this initiative which will begin this summer.

14. 4. Youth Officer – available on page 22 of the KCACR 2025 Handbook.

- a) Youth Officer Jen Thomas shared that Oscar Brooks-Wilkins rang his first peal at Farnborough.
- b) Caroline Stockman gave a vote of thanks to JT for her efforts and dedication to Kent Young Ringers.

15 Election of Officers

- a) The following officers were all proposed, seconded and elected unopposed as shown.

General Committee role	Nominee	Proposer	Second
Chairman	Neil Jones	Marilyn Barden	Adam Moore
General Secretary	Joanne Pohl	Peter Joyce	Doug Davis
Treasurer	Peter Joyce	Joanne Pohl	Neil Jones
Membership Secretary	Doug Davis	Fiona Mallion	Tom Winter
Safeguarding	Emma Jarvis	Ann Jenner	Mark Elvers
Training Officer	Sue Bassett	Joanne Pohl	Jen Thomas
Youth Officer	Jen Thomas	Charlotte Elvers	Daniel Oates and Oscar Brooks-Wilkins
Bell Restoration Officer	Brian G Butcher	P. Charles Sinden	Annie Anderson

- 15. 1.**
- a) Chairman NJ highlighted the fact that unofficially, the term of the Chairman is three years, so his term ends today. He consents for a fourth term, but feels that for the health of the KCACR, having a new chairman regularly is important.
 - b) NJ underlined that the KCACR Chairman can take the role in whatever direction they feel is necessary or are passionate about. A new chairman has the opportunity to unearth or develop other areas of bellringing or the Association, that remain uncharted.
 - c) Cathy Hall asked for an approximate minimum amount of time needed for the role of Chairman; NJ and PB agreed this was hard to quantify. General Secretary JP offered that the estimated time needed for the General Secretary role is around 1 hour per week in the 3-4 weeks leading up to the quarterly General Committee meetings, and similar for the AGM.
 - d) PJ agreed to do one more year as Treasurer.
 - e) Marilyn Barden thanked Safeguarding Officer Emma Jarvis for all she has done as Safeguarding Officer.

f) The following officers were all proposed, seconded and elected unopposed as shown.

Other officers:	Nominee	Proposer	Seconded
Health & Safety	Becky Winter	Doug Davis	Tim Ford
Librarian	Philippa Rooke	Alex Britton	Judith Bagshaw
Peal Secretary	Phillip Barnes	Peter Joyce	Stuart Cox
Quarter Peal Secretary	Anthony Leeves	Emma Tamkin	Eric Roughley
Handbook Editor	Doug Davis	Tom Winter	Nick Rolfe
Webmaster	Doug Davis	Nick Rolfe	Fiona Mallion

- 15. 2.**
- a) DD said Becky Winter had indicated to him that she was happy to remain as H&S Officer.
 - b) Librarian Philippa Rooke reminded members that she welcomes any acquisitions for the library, and if anyone knows of any resource that is important to the heritage of the KCACR, but is too large to be moved, it doesn't have to be put in storage – it can remain in situ, and details of it can be put in the library.
 - c) Quarter Peal Secretary Anthony Leeves shared that he is currently working to 1951, to capture details of Quarter Peals, using what's published in the Ringing World.
 - d) Handbook Editor: DD agreed to take on the role again, but stated this would be his 9th year. Chairman NJ reminded the present members that the Handbook information is reliant on members letting the Handbook editor know who is ringing in our towers.
 - e) Webmaster: again, this would be DD's 9th year in the role, he is happy for someone else to take it on, but agreed to take on the role for another year.

	Nominee	Proposer	Seconded
Publicity Officer	Tom Winter	Doug Davis	Becky Winter

- 15. 3.**
- a) There was a discussion on the role of Publicity Officer, and there was consensus that there is not enough clarity on the nature of the role, its purpose, or a job description.
 - b) Canterbury Rep Malcolm Barden proposed we leave the position vacant for the time being, while the General Committee explores a possible role purpose / job description, before opening the role up more widely. This motion was seconded by JT, and was carried with no votes against and no abstentions.

	Nominee	Proposer	Seconded
Central Council Rep 1	Neil Jones	Joanne Pohl	Cathy Hall
Central Council Rep 2	David Holdridge	Cathy Hall	Neil Jones
Central Council Rep 3	Sue Bassett	Cathy Kingham	Pam Manger
Central Council Rep 4	Chris Bassett	Cathy Kingham	Pam Manger
Central Council Rep 5	Vacant		

- 15. 4.** The Chairman stated that anyone interested in being a Central Council (CC) Rep, needs to keep the first weekend in September free, for the CC AGM.

16 **Presentation of 50-years' Membership Certificates** – presented to: Phil Barnes, Chris Ford (in absentia), Shirley Marshall (in absentia)

17. Forthcoming events

- 17. 1.** 21 June – Association 8-bell Competition & Festival of Ringing. Venue: St Peter and St Paul Bromley (Lewisham District). Method: Double Norwich Court Bob Major. Judges: Stu Aitken plus one other from Guildford Guild.
- 17. 2.** 2 August – Ringing Discovery Day –10am-4pm, St Margaret's Rochester.
Ringing Discovery Day – Chairman called for ringers and teachers to get involved. This initial recruitment day is to be followed by more intensive training sessions in September and October.
- 17. 3.** 27 September – Association 6-Bell Competitions (Call Change & Striking), Maidstone District (Barming), 9.45am draw.
- 17. 4.** 16 November – Choral Evensong (Canterbury Cathedral, TBC)

Canterbury Cathedral has indicated they could host us again, but not every year. The possibility of having a future choral evensong at a parish church in 2026 was discussed. Any towers based at parish churches that could be possible venues are to please contact NJ or JP.

17. 5. 7 March 2026 – KYR Inter-District Striking Competition. Venue: Ashford district (Tower TBC).

18. Any Other Business

18. 1. Membership numbers

- b) The Chairman NJ presented a graph of membership numbers from 2000 which showed a decline in membership in recent years – he added it would be good to either increase, or slow the decrease of membership.
- c) Ringing 2030 project will hopefully contribute positively to this.

18. 2. Central Council recruitment portal – NJ

- a) Chairman NJ shared that the Central Council for Church Bell Ringers is looking to create a recruitment portal, and asking for help from Associations. The portal will create a network of contacts at local level.
- b) DD said that CC are talking to ART; previously Ring for the King and WWI events overwhelmed ART, hence the need for this portal.
- c) JP will be sending out a request shortly for towers where there are Ringing masters of Districts, who can make a good introduction to ringing, to get in touch with CC.

18. 3. Bell Sunday, 18 May – service in churches

- a) Angela Wilkins (AW) queried why so little had been done to promote Bell Sunday to churches by the CCCBR and KCACR.
- b) Chairman NJ said the date for Bell Sunday was only published on the CCCBR on 9 April, which is short notice for a church to alter its service plans, when worship is planned weeks or months ahead of time. Usually, Bell Sunday is the nearest Sunday to St Dunstan's Day, so it's not a 'set' Sunday and virtually impossible for churches to change their plans.
- c) Marilyn Barden shared that at Ash, they are doing a bellringing service on 26 May. These arrangements can be done locally, if church bell ringers engage with the local clergy.

18. 4. Health and Safety (H&S) H&S concerns

- a) AW highlighted that with 60% of ringers are over 60, some towers pose a H&S concern.
- b) Chairman NJ said it's down to the church in question to ensure the H&S measures are met. Ringers can ask that these are done. Churches do work to limited budgets however.
- c) MB shared that the H&S risk assessment template on CCCBR website had been used to do a risk assessment at a church, and the local PCC has put things right.
- d) Ben Legg queried whether Bell Restoration Fund (BRF) could be available for helping towers improve H&S, or is it just to be used on the bells themselves? Bell Restoration Officer BB confirmed that construction work in towers can be covered by the BRF, under BRF Rule 3.e).

18. 5. Contact for Seal Chart, St Lawrence, TN15 0LN

Jennifer Thomas highlighted that on page 58 of the KCACR 2025 handbook, her email address should be jennifermthomas58@gmail.com.

18. 6. AGM Lunch

- a) Catherine Lewis queried the possibility of having a lunch before the AGM.
- b) Caroline Stockman mentioned not all venues have the facilities for this.
- c) Chairman NJ added that due to the risks around food hygiene and food handling, there would be a number of certifications we'd need to be compliant with.
- d) Instead, the idea of a "communal packed lunch" before the AGM was suggested.

19. Vote of thanks

- a) The Chairman thanked Caroline Stockman, supported by the Sevenoaks ringers, for arranging the service, the ringing at St Nicholas, the refreshments, and hosting the AGM.

- b) He also thanked Emma Tamkin and Hamilton Woods for preparing the routes and towers for the ringing before and after the AGM.
- c) Finally, he also thanked Angus McLeay for leading the service earlier that day, and Peter Young the organist.

The meeting was declared closed at 4pm.

SIGNED by the Chairman as a true record, as adopted by members at the AGM 2026:

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Chairman