



MINUTES of the General Committee Meeting

Held in Lounge Room at Downswood Community Centre, Chiltern Close, Maidstone, ME15 8XG
on Saturday 26th April 2025, 10:05-12:24

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: 8 (*including 2 online shown in italics*).
7 from Central committee: *quorum was reached*

Kent County Association of Change Ringers General Committee 2025-2026

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

1	Chairman	Neil Jones	NJ
2	Secretary	Joanne Pohl	JP
3	Treasurer	Peter Joyce	PJ
4	Membership Secretary	Doug Davis	DD
5	Safeguarding Officer	Emma Jarvis	EJ
6	Training Officer	Sue Bassett	SB
7	Youth Officer	<i>Jen Thomas</i>	<i>JT</i>
8	Bell Restoration Officer	Brian Butcher	BB
9	Ashford Rep	Brian Butcher	BB
10	Canterbury Rep	Malcolm Barden	MB
11	Lewisham Rep	Peter Norwood or Svetlana Sokolova	PN or SS
12	Maidstone Rep	Doug Davis	DD
13	Rochester Rep	Steve Fitton or Alison Gerrish	SF or AG
14	Tonbridge Rep	Tessa Worthington or Caroline Levy Cooper	TW or CLC

Other Elected Officers (who can attend General Committee on request)

Health & Safety Officer	<i>Becky Winter</i>	<i>BW</i>
Librarian	Phillippa Rooke	PR
Peal Secretary	Phillip Barnes	PB
Quarter Peal Secretary	Anthony Leeves	AL
Handbook Editor	Doug Davis	DD
Webmaster	Doug Davis	DD
Publicity Officer		
CC Rep 1	Neil Jones	NJ
CC Rep 2	David Holdridge	DH
CC Rep 3	Sue Bassett	SB
CC Rep 4	Chris Bassett	CB
CC Rep 5		

Item

Action

- 1 **Welcome, Apologies for Absence and any substitutions** – Chairman NJ welcomed all to the meeting and apologies were noted from: Sue Bassett (Training Officer), Doug Davis (Handbook editor / Membership secretary / Webmaster / Maidstone District), Brian Butcher (Bell Restoration Officer / Ashford Rep), Caroline Levy Cooper (Tonbridge Rep)
- 2 **Minutes of meeting held on 22 February 2025** – The [draft Minutes](#) had been circulated and were agreed by those present. The Minutes were signed by the Chairman. JP
- 3 **Matters arising**
 - 3.1 a) **BRF Charity Objects change** – PJ, NJ
At the EGM on 21 April 2025, a few members expressed concerns over the legality of the change in wording of BRF Rule 2, specifically over the removal of reference to 'religious' events and churches.

- b) The National Council for Voluntary Organisations offer pro bono advice (30 minutes), but given the sensitivities of the matter, it was proposed that the KCACR seek paid-for legal advice. All present were in agreement.

3.2 Association Rules amendment – NJ

- a) Chairman NJ provided an update on next steps, following the AGM on 21 April 2025. He confirmed the Rules amendment had been agreed, and the new Rules are in place.
- b) JP to arrange to have these uploaded to the website.

JP

3.3 Role description for Publicity Officer – NJ

- a) It had been agreed at the AGM that a clearer role description for the Publicity Officer was needed, and Tom Winter (TW), who'd had the role for the past three years, joined the General Committee meeting to take part in an initial discussion on what this role description could look like.
- b) TW shared that in the past year, he only had incoming requests from members asking to use the pull-up banners, and one request for the logo to be used. TW hadn't known what the expectations on him were, and Librarian Philippa Rooke (PR) stated that the rest of Association also didn't have a consistent idea of role of the Publicity Officer, either.
- c) The General Secretary JP shared that while in the past the Publicity Officer role seemed focused on publicising events for members to take part in, it was her view that an 'internal communication' focused purpose of the Publicity Officer role in the Association, for example of events and competitions, was somewhat redundant. Given that we're in an age where members can use email, texts and the website (to read about upcoming competitions and events), as well as social media (to share and learn about the outcomes and winners of competitions), the role needed to perhaps be geared towards external audiences, to maintain good public relations, liaise with the media to promote bellringing generally and the KCACR specifically, and to also target people that could be potential new recruits.
- d) Chairman NJ agreed that it was important that somebody on the General Committee is allocated publicity work, for external promotion of the KCACR, as internally, the network is quite good.
- e) A discussion followed, and Chairman NJ agreed it would be good to find other sources of promotion. Youth Officer Jen Thomas (JT) said it would be ideal if the Publicity Officer could make contact with the various papers, magazines, websites, radio stations locally and to grow a relationship with them.
- f) Canterbury Rep Malcolm Barden (MB) stated that there was agreement from the General Committee to promote ringing to the 'outside world', and it would be good to have some 'ready-made' publicity materials.
- g) NJ shared that the big priority for publicity coming up is the Ringing Discovery Day on 2 August; TW said he was happy to take it on board. JP stated that Stephanie Runting had also expressed interest in helping out with publicity; and TW said he would be happy to work with her.
- h) Since the Publicity Officer would need to be elected by the membership at the AGM, TW said he would be willing to help with publicity in the interim. NJ proposed that in the meantime, if TW and SR are happy to work together, and get the display materials sorted quickly, they could be co-opted to the General

Committee for this year. The General Committee agreed this would be a fair approach, while we scope out the role.

i) JP/NJ to contact SR to let her know of this approach.

JP

j) JP and NJ to develop first draft of Publicity Officer role description.

JP /
NJ

3.4 H&S – BW

a) The General Committee discussed the H&S risk assessment with Becky Winter (BW), who stated she has an updated risk assessment that has been used by Boxley.

b) NJ also shared that there is also a risk assessment on the KCACR website, which had been adopted by CCCBR.

c) BW to send JP and NJ the risk assessment she has, to be discussed at the next General Committee meeting and compared to the one on the KCACR website.

BW
&
JP

d) BW not aware of any H&S issues.

e) BW stated she had received a couple of risk assessments from JT for Kent Young Ringers (KYR) outings, which had all been good.

4 **Safeguarding Updates & GDPR**

4.1 KYR Membership – EJ

a) Safeguarding Officer Emma Jarvis (EJ) had asked DD to change the membership system, so anyone who is aged 25 or under and joins as a new member, can opt in to having their details shared with the Youth Officer.

b) DD has advised that this cannot be done and so it will remain at under 18 years.

4.2 Safeguarding Policy and Statement: (enclosed) – EJ

a) At the February 2025 General Committee meeting, Treasurer PJ queried what training will be needed “as appropriate” to role – the policy document doesn’t specify what training is needed.

b) EJ has added a link into the document, linking to the KCACR website page which specifies the training requirements for all members according to their role, and also add a line to remind members to check these requirements with their Parish Safeguarding Officer.

4.3 Safeguarding Rules and Procedures document – EJ

a) As discussed at the February General Committee meeting:

1. Phone numbers have been removed and replaced with email addresses.

2. Safeguarding Notice order has been amended to: Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO), then Diocesan Safeguarding Office (DSO), then Safeguarding Officer, and General Secretary removed.

3. Regarding timings of Training and Driving (2am – 6pm training, or 2am – 6am driving):

EJ contacted the CCCBR Safeguarding Team; it should read “2am to 6am” for the section on training. In the section on driving, any reference to time should be removed, as the stipulation applies for any time frame.

The wording now reads:

1. Where driving takes place weekly, more than three times in any month ~~or between 2am and 6pm~~, the driver must have passed an Enhanced DBS and Childrens Barred List Check with copy on file.
2. Otherwise at least two adults with no personal connection to the driver, preferably of either sex, must be present, other than in emergency.
 - b) It was suggested that this rule should not be applicable to non-society events; EJ confirmed these procedures are applicable only to society events (ie KYR).
 - c) EJ asked if this resolved the queries highlighted in the February General Committee meeting; those present agreed it does.
 - d) EJ to update the Safeguarding Rules and Procedures document and send to DD to upload to the website.

EJ

4.4 Presentation to SERTM

- a) EJ was asked by Ruth Campbell, Rochester Diocesan Training officer, to do a presentation to South East Regional Trainers Meeting (SERTM) on 16 April. EJ spoke about KCACR, its membership, our link to the CCCBR, the Code for Ringing, the KYR and what they do.
- b) EJ highlighted to the attendees at SERTAM the inconsistencies in Safeguarding across Dioceses, and the lack of understanding due to lack of training among incumbents.
- c) EJ stressed bellringing is an ancient tradition and we need to keep it alive, and shared a bit on what is being done for recruitment, teaching and social events.
- d) JT highlighted there is still some lack of understanding among ringers that every KCACR member should do basic safeguarding training as a minimum, ideally safeguarding foundation training.

4.5 Identifying Domestic Abuse training

- a) MB asked if anyone else has been asked to do 'Identifying Domestic Abuse' training.
- b) NJ said Rochester Cathedral requires all volunteers to do that training. Some locations require it, especially those with a lot of volunteers, but not all locations.
- c) EJ confirmed that every year after being elected, she sends to Diocesan safeguarding teams the page on DBS and training website, regarding the training requirements of ringers. She will do so again, and ask if any amendments are needed.

5 **Finance & Grant applications**

5.1 Treasurer's Report – PJ

- a) PJ highlighted significant fund movements since the February General Committee meeting:
- b) The General Fund had seen expenditure for printing of the Handbooks (£1,186), annual insurance (£1,643), and equipment (£429).

- c) The Subscription fund had received £393 for 2025 subscriptions. £20,000 had been transferred to a 35-day liquidity account.
- d) The Training Fund had had outgoings of £927.37 for ART Training and Officer expenses.
- e) The Bell Restoration Fund (BRF) had £15,000 transferred to a 35-day liquidity account. A £3,000 grant had been made to Boxley. Anticipated expenditure includes:
 - i. Tonbridge £10,000
 - ii. Loose £1,000
 - iii. Penshurst £10,000 (maybe late summer?)
 - iv. The Rochester Grant offer of £20,000 has now expired.
- f) CCLA had earned interest of £984.34.
- g) £3,000 had been transferred from the General Training Fund to KYR Training (an accounting exercise).
- h) Following the AGM decision (for allocation of subscription income to be split 10% to the BRF, 40% to the Training Fund, and 50% to the General Fund), subscription income for 2024 of £14,231.25 will be allocated:
 - i. General Fund (50%): £7,115.63
 - ii. Training Fund (40%): £5,693.50
 - iii. BRF (10%): £1,423.12
- i) Following the AGM decision to reduce the allocation to the BRF, and in the light of anticipated expenditures, £10,000 is being transferred out of the BRF 95-day liquidity account, back to the 'working' BRF account.

5.2 Ringling Day 2025 budget – NJ

- a) The Ringling Day in August will require publicity banners, stickers, leaflets, and the mini-ring will need public liability insurance – all of this would cost at least £600 to begin with.
- b) NJ proposed initial grant of £1000, which PJ agreed to.
- c) Librarian PR recommended anything printed not be date-specific, so as to be used at future events, which NJ and the General Committee agreed with.
- d) MB suggested that since the Association doesn't have a budget for promotion, at some stage it would be sensible to set some money aside, from the General Fund, which the Committee was amendable to.
- e) JT requested getting A-frame / sandwich boards, which could then also be repurposed for KYR events; the General Committee were in agreement with this suggestion.

5.3 Travel reimbursement – JP/PJ

- a) At the February 2025 General Committee meeting, JP queried if we can offer travel reimbursement for members to travel to support this event. Treasurer PJ confirmed that parking and ART fees had previously been reimbursed, but not travel / mileage (apart from travel for KYR).
- b) PJ agreed to discussion at a future meeting, regarding the reimbursement of travel expenses.

- c) PJ reflected that while a 'hardship fund' exists to support KYR, perhaps a similar, more general 'hardship fund' could be used to support ringers who need it, to attend events like this. It was suggested this could be done discreetly, and/or perhaps for travel over a certain number of miles.
- d) Chairman NJ remarked that the expenses policy doesn't cover reasonable expenses by members for Association events, and a review of the expenses policy should be done at the next meeting, to include considering a 'hardship fund'.

JP /
PJ

5.4 Training fund request – simulator sensors – Alexander Runting (St John's Sidcup)

- a) St John's are exploring the costs of installation of 6 simulator sensors; the tower would potentially be put forward to be a teaching centre with these installed. The sensors will cost between £600 and £650.
- b) The Training Fund is indeed the correct fund to potentially fund this.
- c) JP to ask AR to put in a formal request to PJ.

5.5 Funding request: sound control – Alexander Runting (St John's Sidcup)

- a) St John's are exploring a proposed sound control project, potentially through Taylors, which may cost in the region of £5,000. Unsure on exact figures for now. The query from St John's is, what fund could they apply to, for assistance with funding? Further discussions with the church are still needed.
- b) After some discussion by the present Committee members, it was decided that JP to let AR know that the GenComm needs more detail; please send detail to JP and BB. If it involves the building, could be funded by the BRF.

JP

JP

5.6 Training fund request – Mereworth mobile belfry hire – SB

- a) The Training Fund has received an application from Mereworth for a £250 grant to cover the hire cost, for a mobile belfry from the Mobile Belfry Trust at the Mereworth 2025 Summer Fete. SB recommended a 25% contribution in this case, and any future requests to be considered individually. The General Committee was asked to consider whether this would be a good use of the Training Fund or set an unsustainable precedent.
- b) There was some discussion around the need for publicity for the KCACR/bell ringing generally in the public domain, but whether larger events should be prioritised, such as the County Show.
- c) PJ to check if we get a free/discounted use from the Mobile Belfry Trust, as the KCACR is a donor.
- d) If the Association does contribute to the hire, PJ suggested it come out of General Fund.
- e) After some discussion, it was agreed that as a principle the KCACR will consider requests for grants such as these, and – to ensure costs are controlled – to cap these grants. MB suggested that grants to towers for costs for publicity and events be capped at an annual amount, for example £1,000 per year in total, and the General Committee was in agreement. NJ

PJ

also raised the point that if an application comes in and the annual cap has been reached, whether this would be a nominal limit or a definite limit. MB suggest we run this for a year, and revisit.

- f) Librarian PR suggested a grant to Mereworth of £100, and those present were in agreement. JP to advise SB. JP
- g) Treasurer PJ suggested the need for a document, to share with members what funding is available that can be applied for. PJ/JP

6 Publicity

- 6.1 Stephanie Runting (SR) had expressed an interest in working on publicity for the Association; NJ to speak to ask her to arrange display boards for Ringing Discovery Day. NJ

7 Annual Reviews & Insurance Renewals – Policies, Rules and Guidelines

7.1 Annual insurances – JP

- a) JP advised that these have been renewed. No changes to insurance covers, and only slight increases in premium costs.
- b) TW queried the insurance coverage for ringers over 75.
- c) The KCACR's personal accident insurance covers ringers up to age 80, with some exclusions for those aged 75 and over:
 - i. 75 – 79 year olds are exempt from items 7 – 13, which include permanent total disablement, temporary part disablement, paraplegia, quadriplegia, etc.
 - ii. 80 year-olds are exempt from items 2-13, which includes loss of limbs, eyes, speech and hearing. Also a limit on item 1, which is accidental death - £1000. Maximum sum for everyone else is 5 x their gross annual salary. However, 80 year-olds do get medical expenses and funeral expenses.
- d) JP to check whether the Public Liability insurance has an age limit. JP
- e) JP queried whether members need to be made aware of this; the General Committee members present felt it's up to members to check insurance on the KCACR website, and to self-insure further.

8 Feedback from Events

- 8.1 Young Ringers Inter-district Striking Contest (01/03/2025) – at Otford and towers around. Youth Officer report was noted; the ringing went well.

9 Forthcoming Events

- 9.1 21 June – Association 8-bell Competition & Festival of Ringing – St Peter & St Paul Bromley (Lewisham District). Method: Double Norwich Court Bob Major. Judges: Stu Aitken + one other from Guildford Guild.
- 9.2 2 August – Ringing Discovery Day –10am-4pm – St Margaret's Rochester. All confident ringers encouraged to help teach / assist.
- 9.3 13 September – Essex Trophy competition – Carisbrooke on the Isle of Wight, hosted by W&P Guild.
- 9.4 27 September – Association 6-Bell Competitions (Call Change & Striking) – Maidstone District (Barming), 9.45am draw.

9.5 7 March 2026 – KYR Inter-District Striking Competition – Ashford district; Tower TBC

10 Reports

10.1 The Youth Officer's report was noted.

10.2 Librarian

- a) Librarian PR shared that some bell restoration paperwork from the late David Cawley had been passed on to her by Brian Butcher, who had informed her there were another three filing cabinets' worth in Milton Regis tower. This new intake highlighted the need for a digital catalogue to capture all items in the library.
- b) NJ asked whether there was a need for a team to help. PR said no, not in terms of assessing the paperwork, as Hazel Basford has offered to help PR look at what is at Milton Regis. PR reiterated the idea shared at the AGM, of keep resources in situ, but to document these centrally.

11 Any Other Business

11.1 Contact details for the new CCCBR Recruitment Portal – NJ

- a) CCCBR are setting up a portal for Ringing 2030, to take the pressure off ART. This will be a portal where people interested in ringing, can look up details of towers and ringing teachers local to them, to help them get into bellringing.
- b) KCACR is asked to provide a list of contacts in the county (though not an exhaustive list).
- c) NJ suggested we submit details of District Ringing Masters, and if anyone who is ART accredited would like to go onto that list. The General Committee in attendance was in agreement.
- d) JP to ask District Secretaries (District Reps in CC) to advise:
 - i. who in their district is happy to be a contact person on the portal to help introduce interested parties to teachers in their area,
 - ii. whether they would nominate themselves to be on the portal
 - iii. whether their Ringing Masters would be happy to be listed on this portal; and
 - iv. if anyone in their district who is ART-accredited would be happy to go onto the portal.
- e) Replies needed by 16th May.

JP

11.2 Business Continuity – JP

- a) In a bid to future-proof the KCACR, JP requested the General Committee members draw up:
 - i. Short job descriptions for their roles
 - ii. 'How To' documents for tasks they carry out
- b) It was noted that these would help with recruiting new people to the General Committee, as some members imagine the roles on the committee to be more onerous than they really are.
- c) EJ suggested the job descriptions should be quite short and quite broad, so that people can make the role their own. NJ added that there will be some things that need to be done as the role holder, but there are other things that can be flexible. General Committee was in agreement.

JP /
Com
mittee

11.3 ART course in Thanet – MB

- a) MB shared that Thanet towers have developed their own training hub, and have offered to host ART courses, but had felt that this offer had not been taken up.
- b) MB had fed back to them the reassurance that there is no aversion to doing a course in Thanet, it's simply a matter of location/geography, rather than any other reason.
- c) MB said SB had explained that they can arrange to host an ART course, which they are now doing: a course is taking place at St. Laurence in Thanet on 16 August and is now fully subscribed.

11.4 Rules – MB

- a) MB queried whether it was still the intention to make it easier for rules to be changed by the General Committee.
- b) NJ stated that the General Committee doesn't have the right, due to the type of Association we are (unincorporated volunteer association), to change the rules as a committee – so we do have to involve members in changes. However, this process has been streamlined, and we can call EGMs more quickly, and can advertise rule changes up to 8 weeks prior to the AGM, because rather than Rule Changes needing to be submitted to October ADMs, we have up to 8 weeks prior to AGM or EGM to change Rules.

11.5 General Committee meeting location

- a) PJ queried whether the location (Downswood Community Centre, Maidstone) was still workable for the committee.
- b) Those present confirmed that it was.
- c) Additionally, JP reminded the General Committee that there is also a virtual meeting options for those unable to travel to Maidstone, which had indeed been used during today's meeting.

11.6 Accounting software – PJ

- a) The accounting software being used by the Treasurer, which is used by churches and councils, is having its support withdrawn.
- b) A £15/month subscription is now payable.
- c) The General Committee members in attendance were in agreement that this fee should be paid.

13 Date of next meeting – 26/07/2025

- a) Thereafter: 22/11/2025, 28/02/2026.
- b) The venue for the General Committee meetings will be Downswood Community Centre, Chiltern Close, Maidstone, ME15 8XG.

The meeting closed at 12:24

SIGNED as a true record byon 26 July 2025
Neil Jones, Chairman of the KCACR