



## MINUTES of the General Committee Meeting

Held in Lounge Room at Downswood Community Centre, Chiltern Close, Maidstone,  
ME15 8XG on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2025, 10:00-12:39

MEMBERS PRESENT: 10 committee members (representing 14 roles), and one elected officer (*including 2 online shown in italics*).

*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	Jen Thomas	JT
8	Bell Restoration Officer	<i>Brian Butcher</i>	BB
9	Ashford Rep	Brian Butcher	BB
10	Canterbury Rep	Isobel Legg	IL
11	Lewisham Rep	Peter Norwood and Svetlana Sokolova	PN or SS
12	Maidstone Rep	Doug Davis	DD
13	Rochester Rep	Steve Fitton and Alison Gerrish	SF or AG
14	Tonbridge Rep	Caroline Levy-Cooper and Katie Malpass	CLC or KM

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

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

#### Item

#### Action

- Welcome, Apologies for Absence and any substitutions** – Chairman NJ welcomed all to the meeting, especially Isobel Legg and Katie Malpass, who join the committee as Reps for their respective Districts.

Chairman NJ noted the General Committee members joining online, and apologies were noted from Caroline Levy-Cooper, Sue Bassett and Chris Bassett.

- Minutes of meeting held on 26 July 2025** – The draft Minutes had been circulated and were agreed by those present. The Minutes were signed by the Chairman.

### 3 Matters arising

- 3.1 BRF Charity Objects change – PJ, NJ
- a) NJ has written to Jim Clifford, charities expert recommended by Caroline Stockmann, to engage him for advice regarding proposed BRF Charity Objects change. Jim has not been well, so NJ will contact him in February. NJ
  - b) PJ had had a conversation with Phil Barnes (Chair at the time of the potential donation at Marden, that had prompted the proposed change to the BRF Objects) but PB couldn't recall the details; this may have been during the time of David Grimwood's chairmanship. PJ
  - c) IL had shared a classified ad for low-cost legal help, in the Church Times, with JP. PJ said we had tried the low-cost route, which was around £4K - £5K. Nevertheless, JP would share the details with PJ, to be investigated. JP/PJ
- 3.2 Role description for officers – NJ, JP
- a) General Secretary role description submitted by JP was noted.
  - b) District Youth Co-Ordinator – JT queried whether that role description should have 'safeguarding training as appropriate to the role', and EJ confirmed it should. EJ to look into the wording for this role description, and will liaise with Rochester Diocesan Safeguarding Officer. EJ/JT
  - c) It was agreed that 'completing safeguarding training as appropriate to the role' should be in every role description.
  - d) District Rep role for Canterbury had been developed by MB, and shared with IL. JP to circulate to the committee for awareness. JP
  - e) It was agreed to publish the role descriptions on the website.
  - f) JP to follow up getting role descriptions for Membership Secretary, Training Officer, Bell Restoration Officer, District Reps, and the other elected officers. JP
- 3.3 CCCBR AGM, Ringing World AGM and Roadshow – NJ, DH, SB, CB
- a) Report from CC Reps (NJ, DH, SB, CB) from the RW AGM, CCCBR AGM and Roadshow was noted.
  - b) NJ noted that CC Reps can sign up to become members of the CC Board, and be part of the RW AGM.
  - c) At the RW AGM, the decline in subscriptions of the publication was of concern; this has been declining for a number of years. RW trying to decrease the decline, or maintain subscription number. RW asked associations to make new members aware of the publication and encouraged to take up subscriptions.
  - d) DH, SB and CB report on CC AGM was noted, which included a number of groups who held sessions around the AGM.
- 3.4 Call Change Competition rules – NJ
- a) These are due for review in February.
  - b) NJ noted comments from the judge at the last competition, who felt 10 minutes' ringing per team was too long.
  - c) NJ had received valid comments from a member that the rules should include the ringing of certain changes; it was felt that by including some required changes, it keeps an element of challenge.
  - d) Proposed revisions to be circulated by NJ ahead of the February meeting. It was agreed that competition rules previously suspended, will be removed in the proposed revisions. The intention is to keep the competition as open as possible, to encourage more entrants. The rules might also include guidance on what the judges should consider. NJ

#### 4 Safeguarding Updates & GDPR

- 4.1
- a) Updates to information on safeguarding on our website, that were outstanding, have been done; this information on the website was correct at the time of publication but now updated following feedback from the Dioceses.
  - b) EJ is hosting a drop-in session for Rochester Diocese on Tuesday, 2 December, 7:30pm, on the topic of safeguarding in ringing. Parishes have been invited to send a representative to this session.

#### 5 Health & Safety

- 5.1 a) No Health & Safety issues were reported to the GenSec.

#### 6 Finance & Grant applications

- 6.1 Treasurer's Report – PJ summarised the treasurer's report.
- a) The BRF has received £50,000 from the estate of Mary Andrews from Bexley.
  - b) JT noted that certain expenses were paid for by the General Fund, and should have been paid from the KYR Fund; PJ to amend. PJ
  - c) Since the report was written, Skipton Building Society interest has been received. PJ noted that interest rates are declining.
- 6.2 Training Fund application – Simbell simulator at Boxley – DD
- a) Boxley have applied for funding to support the installation of a Simbell Simulator. The total cost was £465.
  - b) As a small parish church with a small tower fund, support from the Association would be a big help. NJ noted the Simbell Simulator is a valuable tool that enables more training; it is good for teaching new ringers, helping ringers learn methods, and for teaching listening skills.
  - c) PJ asked if this installation would benefit the Association, and DD confirmed it would – Maidstone are trying to set up a Maidstone District training hub, and Boxley could be one of the towers in that hub, and it could be opened up for the wider Association to use too.
  - d) NJ said the value of the hubs is being shown in Thanet, Wealden and at Milton Regis; more 'hub' activity in the West of the Association's geographical area would be good.
  - e) BB proposed we pay the full amount, out of the Training Fund; NJ seconded and the GenComm agreed.
- 6.3 Expenses policy review and Summary of available reimbursements – PJ
- a) The committee noted documents:
    - a. Reimbursable expenses (currently reimbursable) – a summary (not a policy)
    - b. Proposed revisions to Expenses Policy
    - c. BRF Guidelines for Grant Applications and Practical Assistance
    - d. KCACR Training Fund Guidelines
  - a) Proposed revisions to the KCACR Expenses Policy include: simplified mileage rates, inclusion of charges like Dart Charge, and clarified language on AGM expenses.
  - b) We do have a hardship fund for KYR, but not for adults. The proposed revisions currently say "Other hardship payments - These will be decided on a case by case basis by the Principal Officers". PJ asked if the GenComm were content to leave it to

the Principal Officers, or the Committee; timeliness of decisions and confidentiality is an issue. GenComm agreed to Principal Officers taking these decisions.

- c) BRF Guidelines: proposal to add an item 10: Phil Barnes suggested the wording "In exceptional circumstances, grants can be made from the General Fund with the approval of the General Committee". GenComm agreed.
- d) KCACR Training Fund Guidelines: Item 4 to clarify "for items covered in these guidelines". GenComm agreed.
- e) IL raised that the BRF form doesn't seem to apply to secular towers (eg Quex Park). NJ said the BRF Form is due to be reviewed. BB noted the increasing numbers of secular towers, eg Little Chart. NJ suggested a second version of the BRF request form was needed for these towers (with 'church' / 'parochial' references removed); GenComm in agreement; JP to table it for the February agenda.

JP / NJ

#### 6.4 Great Mongeham application – BB

- a) BRF grant application from Great Mongeham for some small works, to the sum of £2064.
- b) BB suggested a grant of £310 (15%), and the GenComm was in agreement.

#### 6.5 Stalisfield – BB

- c) BB and JP had received a query for a grant for one bell.
- d) Stalisfield have been informed it is not usual for the KCACR to fund single bell rings.

### **7 Ringing Discovery Day**

#### 7.1 Update on training of new ringers – NJ

- a) The 2025 Ringing Discovery Day was held on 2 August, and included demonstrations of tower ringing and handbell ringing. Members of the public were able – under the instruction of ART trainers – to have a go at ringing. The Jubi-peal in the church yard drew a lot of attention, especially from young people; though it took a long time to erect.
- b) There were about 60 visitors to St Margaret's, 12 expressions of interest in learning to ring were received, and the following Saturday an 'introduction to ringing' session was held at Rochester Cathedral. Most mastered the backstroke, and some mastered the handstroke too. A further 4 sessions were arranged in September and October, with the help of ART M1 tutors. Of the 12 who expressed interest, 2 have pursued ringing.
- c) Feedback received showed that the ART Learning Hub was invaluable in teaching.
- d) It was felt the Ringing Discovery Day was successful: there are now 3 learners at Rochester Cathedral who have achieved the M1 due to ringing school, and the two recruited at the Discovery Day are nearly at M1 standard.
- e) NJ had hoped for a higher attendance, but the venue was a little too far away from high street. It had been chosen due to its ground floor ring, but distance from areas of high footfall posed a challenge.
- f) If a Ringing Discovery Day is held in 2026, it wouldn't be in the Rochester District. This year, we'd tried to find a tower with a ground floor ring in an area of high population in Kent, with the ground floor ring making logistics of getting participants into the ringing chamber easier, and the ringing more visible.

- g) A discussion on the venue for the next Discovery Day followed, with some agreement on flexibility on requiring a ground floor ring.
- h) JT queried the timing of such a Ringing Discovery Day, and that school holidays may not be ideal. There was some agreement (NJ noted that this year, we had to go for a date in school holidays due to church availability).
- i) The GenComm expressed their thanks to NJ for all his efforts in organising the Ringing Discovery Day, which took a huge amount of work.
- j) The committee would consider potential suitable venues for a Ringing Discovery Day in 2026. All

## 8 Publicity (general)

- 8.1 Update on public-facing Facebook page for the KCACR – JP
- a) The Admins running this page are JP, NJ, and DD.
  - b) JP working on editing a video filmed at Canterbury, with reactions from members who got to ring at Canterbury Cathedral for the first time.
  - c) JP to share a story on website, to go to members, asking them to please share content for the public-facing FB page; but to please do so responsibly and get consent from people before they are photographed, videoed or recorded. JP
  - d) JP had had a query from someone (non-member) who had appeared in a video of a KCACR member's YouTube page, without giving their consent. The video was filmed at a tower not within the county. JP had tried to contact the member to get the video removed, with no reply as yet. JP to advise EJ. JP

## 9 Annual Reviews & Insurance Renewals – Policies, Rules and Guidelines

- 9.1 a) See item 6.2 – Expenses policy

## 10 Feedback from Events

- 10.1 13 September – Essex Trophy competition – held at W&P at All Saints, Basingstoke.
- a) The Association didn't take part, as we were advised too late the venue had changed from Isle of Wight to Basingstoke.
  - b) Sussex won the Essex trophy.
- 10.2 27 September – Association 6-Bell Competitions (Call Change & Striking) – Maidstone District (Barming).
- a) Canterbury won Striking competition.
  - b) Only 3 districts took part in the Striking Competition, and IL suggested that Districts can ask a tower to represent them, if no band is formed for their Districts; DD confirmed these are already in the Striking Competition rules; IL noted then perhaps more encouragement needed; GenComm agreed.
  - c) 5 took part in Call Change Competition, Bredgar won.
- 10.3
- a) JP noted that perhaps members are less keen on competitions and more keen on opportunities to ring in different towers.
  - b) DD noted that most Saturdays there are towers open for District practices – but people don't seem keen to 'cross borders' of Districts, but they are most welcome. GenComm agreed more publicity needed. JP

## 11 Forthcoming Events

- 11.1 7 March 2026 – KYR Inter-District Striking Competition – Ashford district; Tower TBC.

- a) JT has asked Kingsnorth to be the contest tower; and asked open ringing, tea and results to be at Ashford.

11.2 Association 8-bell competition:

- a) In 2026, the National 12-bell is on 20<sup>th</sup> June, so proposing Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> June for Association.
- b) To be hosted by Maidstone.
- c) Method: Middlesex Bob Triples.

11.3 Proposed dates for the GenComm meetings for 2026:

- a) NJ proposed:
  - a. Last Saturday in April (25<sup>th</sup> April 2026)
  - b. Last Saturday in July (25<sup>th</sup> July 2026)
  - c. Last Saturday in November (28<sup>th</sup> November 2026)
  - d. Last Saturday in February (27<sup>th</sup> February 2027)

11.4 AGM – Easter Monday, 6 April

- a) This will be held in Ashford district; they are aware and have been sent the AGM checklist by JP.

11.5 Steeple Keeping training – BB

- a) BB shared there's a large demand for Steeple Keeping training (maintenance).
- b) BB has arranged a course at Kingsnorth near Ashford, taking place on 10th January.

## 12 Reports

12.1 Training Officer Report

- a) Training officer report from SB noted.
- b) Regular training hubs have continued at Milton Regis, Lamberhurst, St. Laurence & St. Peter's in Thanet. Tonbridge District runs third Saturday Training mornings and Janice Byrne often teaches at Speldhurst.
- c) Neil Jones and Steve Fitton have received ART M2F Accreditation and are bringing on a novice band at Gillingham.
- d) An ART M1 course is being planned by Neil Jones in the Rochester District.
- e) Districts are to please encourage ringers to contact SB if they wish to discuss the accreditation process, how hubs could operate in their area or receive advice on how to set up an ART course.

12.2 Youth Officer – JT gave a verbal report

- a) KCACR 6-bell Call Change Contest at Barming took place on Saturday 27th September: Our KYR team was placed 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- b) Handbell quarter peal: Many thanks to Lottie and Mark Elvers for ringing a quarter peal of Plain Bob Minimus on the Barlow Bells, extents counted by Lottie, on the 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the death of Tom Barlow.
- c) Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> October: a quarter peal of Plain Bob Doubles was rung at Aylesford.
- d) Saturday 8th November: three Young Ringers got to ring at St Mary le Bow for the Lady Mayor's Procession. All 3 rang Rounds and Call Changes on 12, Plain Hunt x 11 and 2 rang Grandsire Cinques.

## 13 Any Other Business

13.1 AGM / Officers

- a) EJ raised the issue that at the next AGM, we could lose Chairman, GenSec and Treasurer; and what this would mean for the Committee and the Association.
- b) It was noted that without the 3 principal officers, we KCACR make grants, and the business of the committee would stall.
- c) DD said publishing role descriptions on the website is a good start, to making members aware of what the roles entail and to demystify the expectations. JP to publish the role descriptions already received:
  - Chairman
  - General Secretary
  - Treasurer
  - Safeguarding officer
  - Youth Officer
  - District Youth Co-ordinator
  - Publicity Officer
  - District Rep – Canterbury
- d) Once these were published, JP to do a story on the website to share the role descriptions.
- e) It was noted and agreed that this needs to be raised at the January District meetings.

JP

JP

JP

District  
Reps:  
BB  
IL  
PN / SS  
DD  
SF / AG  
CLC /  
KM

13.2 KYR Expenses – JT

- a) JT shared the KYR Expenses for 2025.
- b) 2025 proposed budget was £5,272.50; savings have been made on overnight stays. Actual spend thus far is £2,852.78.
- c) JT has booked Premier Inn Nottingham in advance, for RWNYC (we only pay on the day: this rate is only £20 more than advance booking, which buys more flexibility in case of needing to cancel.)

13.3 Certificates – IL

- a) IL raised that Canterbury District has certificates from DD with Vice President and District Chairman as signatories. This certificate had been amended to enhance the pictures.
- b) NJ noted that one district doesn't have resident VPs to sign certificates, and DD said one district doesn't have a District Chairman.
- c) It was agreed that a VP signature is important, and Association Chair signature as it's membership of the Association (not a District).
- d) DD suggested using digital signatures to ease the administrative burden.
- e) It was agreed by the GenComm that if any District wants printed certificates, please contact DD as Membership secretary, who will send hard copies to a VP to sign and send to requesting District.

All

13.4 Jubi-Peal – NJ

- a) The Jubi-Peal is needing some work: headstocks are starting to rot away, and the wheels are problematic.
- b) NJ suggested JP's idea of submitting it to the BBC show, The Repair Shop. The GenComm agreed to approaching the BBC.
- c) Failing that, other options for repair would be investigated – eg local repair service providers.

**14 Confidential items**

**15 Date of next meeting – 28/02/2026.**

The meeting closed at 12:39

SIGNED as a true record by .....on 28 February 2026

Neil Jones, Chairman of the KCACR