



Devon Association of Ringers Committee Meeting Minutes

Held at Whiddon Down Village Hall, Thursday 16th February 2017

Chairman's Welcome

Chairman James Steer welcomed all members to his inaugural committee meeting as chair at 19:30.

1. Apologies for Absence

Present were James Steer, Sam Massey, Sam Hext, Paul Hext, Keith Bavin, John Lock, Frank Pidgeon, Mervyn Way, Gerald Arscott, Julia Jarvis, David Trout, Dr James Kerslake, Stuart Bennie, Clive Ward, Scott Adams, John Dietz, Christine Ley, Ian Avery, Graham Sharland, Barry Osborne and Jonathan Bint.

Apologies for absence were received from: Margaret White, John Barnes, Lee Avery, Robert Brown, Colin Adams, Jerome Darke, Victoria Tucker, Andrew Vincent and Stephen Herniman.

2. Minutes of October 26th 2016 Committee Meeting

Two items were raised for amendment from the minutes of the previous meeting:

- Christine Ley pointed out that South Molton had been put forward as a tower for the Devon 8 Bell competition, but this had not been recorded in the minutes.
- Secondly, the minutes stated that the newly elected President would **visit** all Association towers during her year in office. This was incorrect, she stated that she would **contact** all Association towers and visit as many as she could during the year.
- These changes were agreed unanimously by the meeting and once amended, the chair signed as a true record.

3. Matters Arising

a.) 2024 Central Council Meeting

No update was received on the meeting of the Central Council of Church Bellringers Annual General Meeting weekend, to be held in Devon in 2024, as Robert Brown (one of our representatives on the Council) was away.

b.) Competition Rules and Secular Towers

The meeting was reminded that the proposal regarding a penalty for towers who ring under time was rejected at the AGM in November.

Further discussion ensued regarding whether a separate caller of the changes from the committee for “novice” teams would be permitted, to encourage more novice teams to enter the qualifying competitions. Arguments were put forward on both sides, resulting in the following proposal by Jonathan Bint:

“A nominated committee member, who has no affiliation with the team in question, may be permitted to call the changes for a novice team in the Novice or Qualifying competitions.”

Scott Adams seconded this and the motion passed with 18 in favour and 0 against – to be implemented in the 2017 competition schedule and rules.

It was felt that the rules should be reviewed in 12 months time by a subcommittee in advance of the constitution review date the following year.

4. Matters Arising from 2016 AGM

a.) Intermediate/Training Event

Jonathan Bint, Graham Sharland and Christine Ley outlined their ideas and visions for training throughout the county. It was felt that the greatest need is in rising and lowering training, and historical workshops in this regard have proved very popular, with Christine citing several towers she has contacted who would like workshops.

Jonathan Bint explained that a regular training event, eventually leading to an Intermediate Competition with rising and lowering judged separately in an encouraging manner, would be a useful addition to the Association’s programme of events.

Christine also would like to run a splicing workshop as this has been identified as a need countywide.

It was agreed that Christine, Graham and Jonathan would find suitable dates, times and venues to run the workshops and feedback progress at the next meeting.

b.) Charitable Status

Charitable status was brought up at the AGM and asked to be carried forward to the committee meeting. It was felt by the meeting that outside assistance on this matter would be beneficial and therefore Ian Avery, as Guild Liaison Officer, agreed to ask a member from the Guild of Devonshire Ringers to come and speak on this subject at the next meeting, as item 1 on the agenda for the next meeting.

c.) The Next Generation

Various committee members updated the meeting regarding projects around the county to encourage younger ringers. Sam Hext stated that his wife Jackie was running a bell ringing after school club at a 3-school federation where she works as a teacher. Ian Avery and Nigel Birt have been running a joint project in Kingsteignton schools too, and it was reminded that the Guild is running events at Exeter Cathedral School.

Scott Adams agreed to run a Quarterly Young Ringers Event, with wholehearted support from the meeting, for ringers of all abilities under 40.

Graham Sharland agreed to investigate the possibility of the Association purchasing a teaching aid/simulator, to be discussed at the next meeting on the return of the Treasurer.

5. Election of Officers – Vice-Chair

Sam Massey read the written proposal from Jereme Darke nominating Ian Avery be appointed as the next Vice-Chair and Chair of the South Devon Committee. All members were in favour and Ian agreed to take on the post.

6. Treasurer’s Report

Gerald Arscott read the Treasurer’s Report in the absence of John Barnes. John firstly wished to thank the secretary for the sympathy card as his mother had recently passed away.

He provided a list of towers to be circulated amongst the committee to chase those towers who had not paid affiliation fees. The only transactions since the AGM of note were the £60 annual Central Council membership fee and a payment of £633 from Curly Clements funeral. The chair thanked John in his absence for his hard work.

7. Publicity Officer’s Report

Graham Sharland read the Publicity Officer’s Report in the absence of Victoria Tucker. She has been busy with general day-to-day publicity matters, including ensuring the call for affiliation fees is up on the website, and organising a visit to Mendip Ropes. She informed the committee about the Strike Back Against Blood Cancer scheme and asked whether anyone is interested in participating, and informed the committee that she will be attending the Central Council’s ‘PR Matters’ event and would feedback at the next meeting. The chair thanked Victoria in her absence for her hard work.

8. Recruitment

Christine Ley outlined the work she has been doing to help towers with recruitment ideas, including posting on Facebook pages, ensuring towers appear on Google, producing guides for new captains, and encouraging lapsed ringers. She has contacted over 40 towers and is encouraged by the number that have learners. She asked if Victoria could design a Devon Association poster for her to give to towers to help encourage new recruits.

9. Correspondence

a.) Devon Calls Report

Colin Adams provided a report on Devon Calls. He asked the committee to consider that Dr Colin Barnes will at some point require a replacement. He also raised the issue of Devon Calls publicity cost. There were strong views amongst the committee that this should be published online to save costs, but it was also pointed out on balance that not all Association members have access to the Internet. Christine Ley proposed thus: “The current issue of Devon Calls should be published online and distributed by email in tandem with hard copies in the medium term, with a view to a phased reduction in the number of printed magazines.” Scott Adams seconded this. Five committee members abstained, but the rest were in favour of the motion.

The distribution was also discussed – it was suggested that those copies that are not willingly taken should be posted.

b.) Dodbrooke

The captain of Dodbrooke would like to propose that Association tower contact details be published online. Dr James Kerslake is currently revamping the website and explained that those towers that have email we be able to be contacted directly through the website, and further discussion was to be had regarding the publishing of telephone numbers online.

c.) Lymptone

Lymptone had contacted the Secretary to say that they did not feel that they were quite good enough to join the Association. The committee were saddened that they felt that towers had to be a certain standard to join (which is of course not the case). Christine Ley offered to contact Lymptone and explain that the Association is for towers of all abilities.

10. Competitions Update 2017

a.) Novice Competition Organiser

Julia Jarvis and Linda Steer kindly offered to run the Novice Competition this year at Burrington in the absence of the two Competition Secretaries and the Training Officer.

The Assistant Secretaries fed back positively regarding progress of the organisation of competitions, but Stuart (North Devon Competition Secretary) agreed to contact Ashwater to clarify the situation regarding their work being done on the bells prior to the competition.

11. Any other Business

The subject of moving the AGM around the county was brought up, as this had been rejected at the AGM. It was agreed that research would be taken throughout the county and brought up for further discussion at the next meeting.

Victoria Tucker would like to present Devon Association Appreciation Awards to two members, Gerald Herniman and Josie Barnes. This was passed unanimously.

12. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

Thursday 29th June at Whiddon Down Village Hall.

The chair declared the meeting closed at 21:22.

Mr Samuel C Massey

Hon. Secretary

Devon Association of Ringers

6th April 2017