



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE DEVON ASSOCIATION OF RINGERS COMMITTEE
THURSDAY 26 SEPTEMBER 2019 AT WHIDDON DOWN VILLAGE HALL

Present: James Steer, John Barnes, Rachel Avery, Graham Sharland, James Kerslake, Michael Adams, Ian Avery, John Dietz, Paul Hext, Barry Osbourne, Gerald Arscott, Keith Bavin, Margaret White and Mervyn Way.

1. Chairman's Welcome and Apologies for Absence

Chairman James Steer welcomed all members in attendance and opened the meeting at 19.33.

Apologies had been received from Clive Ward, Christine Ley, William Carew, Colin Adams, Julia Jarvis, James Kerslake, Lee Avery, Stuart Bennie, John Lock, Andrew Vincent and Adrian Walthoe.

2. Minutes of 20 June 2019 Committee Meeting

It was NOTED that Mervyn Way had tendered his apologies for the meeting and the minutes were amended to reflect this. It was RESOLVED to APPROVE the minutes and the Chair duly signed them as a true document.

3. Reports

a) Treasurers Report

It was NOTED that the Treasurer had sent his apologies and would circulate a copy of the latest accounts to committee members as soon as possible.

b) Publicity Officer Report

The secretary reported that the Open Tower event at Chagford would be run by Jon Bint. It will take place on Saturday 5 October 2019, commencing at 10.00.

c) Training Officer Report

The frame for the simulator bell is an ongoing issue, but it is hoped that Andrew Cleave has this in hand.

Action: James Steer to contact Andrew Cleave.

Graham Sharland reported that he had been involved in a few things regarding training but had nothing specific to report.

d) Devon Calls

In Colin Adams' absence, the secretary reported the following on his behalf:

Devon Calls: we are putting the finishing touches to the Oct/Nov edition. I anticipate the magazine will be circulated towards the end of October. We really need someone who is familiar with Microsoft Excel and who would be prepared to keep the address list or register up to date; this means also liaising regularly with the treasurer and me. James has kindly agreed to run off the address labels as a one off this time.

Microsoft Licence: I hope the committee will agree to renew the licence for publisher. It was good of Adrian to come to our assistance initially. James is doing an excellent job and I hope he will be able to continue.

Inserts: If the Association need any documents to be included with the magazine these will need to be with me by Friday 11th October.

e) Bell Advisor Post Update

Graham Sharland reported that he is trying to obtain information from the Guild but has nothing further to discuss.

It was NOTED that it was requested that a sub-committee be created to consider the position further. However, this would be an agenda item in February to report on any further progress. **Action: Agenda item for February.**

4. To note and discuss post holders for the forthcoming triennium

It was NOTED that Jo Tucker had come forward with an interest in taking the position of treasurer.

It was NOTED that Andrew Steer had come forward with an interest in taking the position of North competition secretary.

It was suggested that an honorarium could be considered should no one come forward for the secretary position. Consideration was given to this with concerns raised that this may set a bad precedent and consideration may have to be given to honorariums for all positions. However, without a secretary, it would be difficult for the Association to continue its work.

It was NOTED that this change may link to the requirement for a different type of membership. The Association remains a tower-based organisation, with a round figure of 100 towers affiliating. Should the subscriptions be increased to £20 or £25 per year, there would be the benefit of offering reimbursement to the secretary and to pay into the DCBRF.

It was suggested that the only towers benefitting from paying their subscriptions are competition teams. Ian Avery suggested that the Association needs to find ways of engaging with all towers and showing what it can do.

Keith Bavin PROPOSED that a letter be written to every tower to explain the advantages of affiliating, which includes training and the DCBRF (one thing that can benefit all towers). Additional information on the consideration of paying officers to encourage membership and the view to increase affiliation fees should also be included. This was SECONDED by Michael Adams and APPROVED. **Action: Letter to be sent. Agenda item for AGM.**

5. Trophy Refurbishment

It was NOTED that the 8-Bell Shield will require work next year as there is one empty plaque. It was suggested that a plate be added to the back, but this was generally not a favourable choice. A suggestion had been made for stands to be made for the two Ross Shields, with the stands having bands to accommodate new teams. It was NOTED that Ian Avery would create a stand prototype.

It was NOTED that the base of one of the 8-Bell trophies is broken. This needs attention and a new base is required. **Action: Ian Avery to make enquiries to have base fixed.**

6. AGM – Saturday 09 November 2019

The date of the AGM was NOTED. It was requested that any other items for the agenda should be provided to the secretary no later than Tuesday 8 October.

7. Competitions

2019 Review

In the South secretary's absence, the secretary reported the following on his behalf:

The 8-bell was a great success. We were blessed with excellent weather and thanks to John and his team, everything ran like clockwork. The service was humorous and well thought out and several people commented on the excellent tea provided.

The judging was also very consistent being unanimous in all but a couple of cases.

To begin with, things looked bleak in regard to entries but we were lucky to have 6 entries on the day. This included a first for Tiverton who we hope will be represented for many years to come. It was also great to see some new ringers competing for Kingsteignton B.

Hopefully next year we will have the return of Exeter Cathedral and Paignton which, combined with this year's entries (should they all enter) will lead to a well-supported competition.

Thank you to all those who have been supportive throughout the year. We look forward to 2020 which I think looks to be a positive year for the Association competitions with some new teams entering the 6 bell for the first time.

I have had no proposals for towers to host the Devon's yet. I have been working on a possible host tower so will let Rachel know if they are happy to be put forward. Any suggestions from other committee members would be gratefully received.

Thanks were extended to William for his work as South Secretary, with the 8-Bell being very successful.

2020 Update

An overview of towers put forward for 2020 competitions was provided:

8-Bell: Kingskerswell (invitation received) and Ugborough

North Qualifier: Burlescombe (invitation received) and Rackenford

South Qualifier: None

Novice: None

It was NOTED that additional towers would be required before the AGM.

8. Constitution Review

a) To consider an additional point regarding procedure for ring off situations

James Steer suggested that in the case of first and second, ring offs should take place, but lower placing position ties did not require one.

It was suggested that the decision should be discretionary as every time a situation with a ring off happens, it will be different.

It was suggested that when there is a tie, rise, queens and lower would be beneficial with a minimum time.

John Barnes PROPOSED that the decision for a ring off would be made on a case-by case basis, with officers and senior committee members deciding. This was SECONDED by Barry Osbourne and APPROVED.

Action: Point to be added to constitution.

b) To discuss the 'regular ringer' rule

Michael Adams suggested that ringers ring at many different places, and this rule is not fit for purpose any longer. John Dietz argued that some teams are discouraged to enter because teams are cherry-picked to win. James Steer stated that this is a rule that is not being applied anyway. If issues are seen on the day, then it is the committee's responsibility to deal with.

Graham Sharland stated that borrowing has become a blatant attempt to win and the spirit of competitions is lost. Teams can enter competitions throughout the year, but the rules of Devon Association competitions make it special which are being so diluted that the prestige has been lost.

It was NOTED that this rule is almost impossible to enforce as there is no definition of what a regular ringer is. Concerns were raised that scrapping the rule would encourage this behaviour, but there would need to be enough teams entering to make competitions viable.

John Barnes PROPOSED that the rule be removed, on the basis that it is unenforceable. This was SECONDED by Margaret White.

Keith Bavin PROPOSED that the rule remain in its current state. This was SECONDED by John Dietz (6:3:2 abstentions).

9. Correspondence

a) Request to consider financial support through draw funds to Taylors Bell Foundry, Loughborough

Concerns were raised that funds from the draw should only be for the DCBRF, however this would be considered at the AGM. **Action: Agenda item for AGM.**

10. Committee Members Reports

It was NOTED that Julia Jarvis had arranged for the Devon Association Lunch to take place at the Dartmoor Lodge on Sunday 3 November.

Mervyn Way reported that he would be standing down at the AGM.

John Barnes thanked everyone who supported the 8-Bell, which had been an excellent day.

James Steer wished to thank the committee for all of their help, but especially the secretary for her work.

11. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

It was NOTED that the AGM would be held at St Peters Church, North Tawton at 14.15.

The next committee meeting would be held on Thursday 20 February 2020 at Whiddon Down Village Hall.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 21.11.

Rachel Avery - Honorary Secretary