

# Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers—Chipping Norton Branch

## Draft Minutes of the 2024 AGM

Held at St. Peters Church, Hook Norton - Sat 2 March 2024

**The meeting opened at 16:35 with the following attending:** Michael Haynes, Geoffrey Stretton, Chris Mundy, Tony Crabtree, Christine Harris, Ken Wakefield, Mike Brooks, Joy Brooks, Nicki Unwin, Dan Austin, Keith Abbott, Jonathan Muller, Mick Austin, David Salter, Helen Burchell & Sally Austin.

### 1. Chairmans Welcome

David opened the meeting by welcoming all present and a vote of thanks to the Hook Norton band for organising everything including refreshments, Jonathan Muller for playing the organ and to Rev Janet Faulk for the use of the church. David also welcomed two Guild Officers present - Chris Mundy (Deputy Master) & Tony Crabtree (Guild Steward for CN Branch).

**2. Apologies were received from:** Keith Mitchell, Christine Seers, Peter Kenrick, Peter Harris, Christine Stevens, Cathy Elliott, Alison Minson, John Collett, Mandy Gasson-Sheilds, Gayle Woods & Sue Checkley.

### 3. Minutes of the 2023 AGM

Helen Burchell proposed the minutes be accepted as a true record. This was seconded by Ken Wakefield and all voted in favour.

### 4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

### 5. Chairmans Report

David thanked everyone for their support during his first year as branch chairman. He thanked the Officers of the Branch for their work and commitment in the running of this branch. In particular he was grateful to Geoffrey Stretton for stepping up and taking on the role of secretary partway through last year. This is in addition to his work as Branch Treasurer.

Looking back over the year it was very pleasing to see how well the branch responded to hosting the ODG 6 bell competition, and David thanked everyone involved with the organisation. He particular wished to thank Hook Norton for not only entering a band but then going on to win the raising and lowering competition.

It's also been gratifying to see a number of initiatives within the branch aimed at attracting new ringers. Whilst membership of the branch has been in decline it's encouraging to see that trend is now reversing and this follows a number of recruitment drives from across the branch.

### 6. Claire Tarrant Award

Four nominations had been received which were duly discussed at a Branch Committee Meeting. The winning candidate being decided on by a series of votes. The unanimous winner was Ken Wakefield of Spelsbury. David Salter read out a supporting statement with the reasons why those who proposed Ken thought he was worthy of the award. Ken was awarded with the shield.

## **7. Ringing Masters Report**

Branch practices continue to be well attended. This year a 'method of the month' was introduced. Please give feedback on how you think this is going.

We also held the January and February practice on a Saturday morning followed by a drink and bite to eat in the local pub. Again, this format was well received although next year we should look at more suitably priced pubs!

In terms of priorities for the branch David highlighted two areas we need to focus on:

- a. Recruitment, and all towers should be actively seeking new ringers, if they feel able to.
- b. Improvement in striking capabilities. This isn't always easy to achieve but good striking is the quality aspect of what we do and should be at the forefront of our minds whenever we ring.

## **8. Treasurers Report**

Geoffrey Stretton gave a good report on the Branch Accounts (attached).

As in previous years it was proposed by Sally Austin that £100 be donated to the ODG Bell fund. This was seconded by Chris Harris. Carried unanimously.

Our Treasurer requested he be granted £30/year to cover miscellaneous branch expenses. This will simplify the administration of the treasurers' duties. This was proposed by David Salter and seconded by Jonathan Muller. Carried unanimously.

There were no other questions about the accounts, and these were proposed by Dan Austin as a true record, seconded by Mick Austin. Carried unanimously.

## **9. Membership**

New Members elected in the last year were Jon Alsop, Claire Chipchase, Tracey Hutchings – all from Chadlington. Also, Laura Cooper from Shipton. All were elected in May 2023.

New members elected at this AGM were Alan Fraser (Charlbury), proposed by Mike Summers and seconded by Denise Summers. Carried unanimously.

Also, Amanda Williams (Chipping Norton), proposed by Christine Harris and seconded by David Salter. Carried unanimously.

There was some confusion over the proposed election of Elliott Appadoo-Summers from Charlbury as it was thought he had been elected at last year's AGM. However, it appears he had not paid last year's subs and as there was no one from Charlbury to clarify the situation he will be considered for election at a future branch meeting.

Re-elected members were Cathy Elliott (Chipping Norton) and Andrew Hutchings (Chadlington).

**Obituaries** – We remember Wendy Sumners a former Chipping Norton ringer, who died in Sept 2023.

## **10. Review of Branch Rules**

The existing Rules states:

“All posts should be open for election each AGM. It was agreed that no branch officer may continue in the same role for longer than three years” - 7 March 2020 AGM.

This rule had been adopted in the hope that it would encourage members to take on a Branch Officers position on the understanding that they would only hold it for 3 years.

The proposal put to the meeting by the Chairman was to amend this rule to allow for flexibility in cases where no volunteer had come forward.

The amended rule to read as follows: -

“All posts should be open for election at each AGM. No branch officer should continue in the same post for longer than three years. However, if no volunteer is forthcoming then the incumbent may be re-elected provided they are willing to do so”.

This proposal was seconded by Mike Brooks and carried by the meeting.

## 11. Election of Officers

The Chairman, Treasurer & Web Master, who have all been in post for less than 3 years are willing to stand again, there being no other nominations.

The following 4 positions of Branch Officer are either vacant or the current officer has come to an end of his 3 years term and so volunteers need to be nominated for the following posts:

**Branch Secretary.** As no one had come forward to take on this role the current temporary Branch Secretary Geoffrey Stretton agree to continue his temporary tenure.

**Ringling Master/Training Officer** As no one had come forward to take on this role David Salter agreed to continue in the role for a further year.

**Deputy Ringling Master.** As no one had come forward to take on this role, Dan Austin agreed to continue in the role for a further year.

**Branch Representative.** As no one else had volunteered for the role David Salter had put himself forward. He was duly proposed by Dan Austin and seconded by Keith Abbott. Carried unanimously.

## 12. Guild Speaker – Chris Mundy – ODG Deputy Master gave a talk on how the Guild intend to streamline membership data in the future using a software tool called Membermojo. Phase 1 will be implemented in January 2025 and will involve collecting all members names and email addresses. Members can choose how much or how little guild news and information they wish to receive.

Chris thanked the branch for hosting the 6 bell competition last year.

It was noted that the current editor for the ODD BOB newsletter is standing down and the guild needs someone to take up this important role.

Tony Crabtree also spoke about the forthcoming Belfry course which is to be held at Church Enstone on 27<sup>th</sup> April.

### **13. Future meetings and Events**

- a. Branch Outing** - Dan Austin will consider making arrangements for an outing sometime in the year.
- b. Sponsored Leap Year Ring** – The general agreement was that notice of this event came too late for it to be properly organised.
- c. Having a mid-year Branch Meeting** – There was no appetite shown from the floor to have an additional Summer/Autumn meeting.

### **14. AOB**

Keith Abbott asked about branch organised courses for specific methods. David Salter agreed to consider this with other branch officers at the next committee meeting.

Next years AGM will be held 1<sup>st</sup> March 2025. It is expected that this will be at **Burford**.

There being no further business the chairman closed the meeting at 17:22