Guild Representative Report Bicester Branch February 2022

# **The Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers**

For information on the Guild, see the Guild website: <http://odg.org.uk/>

Publications from the Guild:

Odd Bob – Printed May and November - Next Issue May 2022 – now available on Guild website

Latest at [ODD BOB - Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers (odg.org.uk)](https://odg.org.uk/publications/odd-bob/)

Annual Report – next issue available March 2022

**Subscriptions 2022** – kept as previous year, £8 per ringer

**Learning & Development Workgroup**

It is intended to hold the Radley Course (09/04/22) and the Michaelmas and Steeple

Aston courses during 2022 as long as circumstances do not deteriorate significantly.

[Radley Course - Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers (odg.org.uk)](https://odg.org.uk/event/radley-course/)

Consideration has been given to the future of Guild courses in general and what restructuring might take place including the possibilities of blending practical and online learning

They have heard encouraging reports of the work of ‘Recovery Champions’ within our branches and elsewhere, and of a gradual progression to a ‘new normal’.

It is disappointing that so few have taken advantage of the opportunity to borrow one of the sets of eBells purchased by the Guild for their benefit.

For those of you who do not know what eBells are, information including a handy video can be found at this link: [https://ebells.co.uk/](https://emea01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Febells.co.uk%2F&data=04%7C01%7C%7C50b89013ae2d465b3bf108d95f04b636%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C637645296107360270%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=cMWhdZFex5rP7qwRH3I4lRXK1B6MkQD%2BkSh%2BZtGFCGQ%3D&reserved=0) and for their companion software package Handbell Stadium here: [https://handbellstadium.org/](https://emea01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fhandbellstadium.org%2F&data=04%7C01%7C%7C50b89013ae2d465b3bf108d95f04b636%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C637645296107360270%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=7mXFSu90xjE5Gi5uRgdpCy%2BuUkRe5qXIGLeNOBA7kEo%3D&reserved=0)

If you are interested in borrowing a set of these bells in exchange for a small returnable deposit, please contact the Guild Treasurer, Stuart Gibson via email at [treasurer@odg.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@odg.org.uk)

Two squads of Young Ringers from the Guild’s area participated at Worcester in the RWNYC on 11th September 2021. The ODG band were adjudged clear winners of the method ringing section, retaining the Whitechapel Trophy that they won over two years ago in Liverpool. Huge congratulations to them

The Young Change Ringers Association was launched at the RWNYC. For an annual subscription of £15, members will have access to four events during the year and other benefits. All of those eligible are encouraged to take full advantage of this.

**Towers and Belfries Sub-Committee Report**

Tributes were paid to the late Keith Vernon who contributed so much to the sub-committee.

The next course is a rope splicing and rope management course on 26th February at Radley

Hopefully those of you who want to go have already booked your places, details at

[Rope Splicing and Management Course - Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers (odg.org.uk)](https://odg.org.uk/event/rope-splicing-and-management-course/)

Reminder; There are many good splicing videos on YouTube (as well as some not so good…).

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gb-6YwA2e2Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gb-6YwA2e2Y%20) is instructive.

If you would like to host a course, either for the Guild or locally, for the Branch, please get in touch with the T&B committee.

The T&B page of the ODG website [Towers and Belfries - Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers (odg.org.uk)](https://odg.org.uk/guild-organisation/sub-committees/towers-and-belfy-committee/) has more new material since the last report and many useful links. More

material is being loaded all the time. You will also find contact details and the services offered by our

members.

They would still like more members. We have three counties with 450+ towers so we are spread quite thinly! You don’t have to be experienced but you do need to be interested in learning and gaining from the expertise of the other members.

The Tower Maintenance Award (TMA) is still active, despite the pandemic. Towers are encouraged

to ask for an inspection. There is a full TMA report in the November Odd Bob.

There have also been many “return to ringing” inspections done on behalf of or with the local ringers.

**Report of Finance and General Purposes Sub-committee**

The F E Robinson silver bowl which has been bequeathed to us is now in the Guild’s possession. Charles Morrish is currently making a box to hold it.

The Master has purchased a tablecloth which will be available for Guild and Branch activities and is particularly suitable for events attracting the general public.

All subscriptions are to be left at the pre-pandemic levels. An increase in the mileage rate for officers from 14p per mile to 20p has been approved.

The Guild treasurer was given the authority to purchase a limited number of CO2 monitors if requested by Branches or towers. These assist in identifying the extent that Covid might spread within an enclosed space dependent upon ventilation.

Investigations by the Server Manager (Richard Stanworth) into an alternative host company for the Guild computer server, which might provide a cheaper option whilst still giving us the same facilities are still ongoing

The new Webmaster (Andrew Goldthorpe) reported that he has set up a new diary system and is looking to enhance the appearance of the site.

He has added to the website a full tower list for the Guild. He asked that Branches should check it for completeness and accuracy.

Stuart Gibson reported that we are awaiting a demonstration of a possible membership database, hopefully early next year.

There had been no progress on the Guild registering as a charity.

**Central Council Representatives’ Report**

A Full report from the Central Council Representatives was made to the Gen Comm meeting. It is reproduced on the back of this report.

**Safeguarding Update**

Following extensive discussions between the CCCBR and the C of E National Safeguarding Team, there have been changes to the training requirements for tower captains. You can read about this in greater detail in the last two issues of the Ringing World (14 and 21 January). The first of those articles is below.

Specific details must be agreed with the Diocese associated with each territorial association and the Oxford Diocese have now agreed that most tower captains in the ODG will only need to complete the online training modules (Basic Awareness and Foundation) which can be accessed through the safeguarding tab on the C of E website. Tower captains who have a significant influence on safeguarding in their church community e.g. those who teach a lot of youngsters will also need to complete the Leadership course with the Oxford Diocese. These can be booked through the Diocesan website.

The CCCBR and the C of E both recommend that all ringers should complete the Basic Awareness course.

Training should be updated on a three yearly basis. Those who have completed their old-style C0 and C1 training less than three years ago can wait until the three years have elapsed.

# **Ringing Day for 400th anniversary of Oxford Botanic Garden – details tbc**

Katie Lane has heard from the Oxford Botanic Garden who are celebrating their 400th anniversary. They are asking for ringing throughout Oxfordshire on Friday 15th July 2022 in association with the Oxford Society. Katie has asked for support throughout the county and to be advised on what is being planned.

**Diary Of Events 2022**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Rope Splicing & Maintenance Course | Radley | Saturday 26th February |
| March General Committee and Bell Fund AGM | Chiltern Branch | Saturday 12th March |
| Radley Course | Radley | Saturday 9th April |
| *St George’s Day* |  | *Saturday 23rd April* |
| Ringing Day | Sonning Deanery Branch | Monday 2nd May |
| AGM and Eight-Bell Striking Competition | Reading Branch | Saturday 21st May |
| *The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee* |  | *Thursday 2nd to Sunday 5th June* |
| Oxford Botanic Garden 400th anniversary |  | Friday 15th July |
| Michaelmas Course | EBSB and neighbouring branches | Saturday 24th September? |
| Six-Bell Striking Competition | Newbury Branch | Saturday 1st October |
| Steeple Aston Course | Steeple Aston | Saturday 29th October? |
| November General Committee | VOWH Branch | Saturday 26th November |
| Ten-Bell Striking Competition | VOWH Branch | Saturday 26th November |

**Central Council Representatives’ Report**

These reports include just some of the interesting/important points from both meetings. Fuller reports

of both the CC Meeting and the Ringing World Ltd AGM can be found in Ringing World no.5759,

10September 2021. The original workgroup reports are available online at cccbr.org.uk-2021 Annual

Meeting-Meeting Papers.

There is no longer the automatic expectation that CC Representatives serve on workgroups as had

been the case with the committees. This is because anyone may apply to join a workgroup now, thus

enabling the Council to benefit from the skills of those who have most to offer. However, several of

our ODG reps. have continued to be involved in workgroups this year: John Harrison-Historical

&Archive, Lucy Hopkins Till-Volunteering & Leadership, Graham John (Leader) and Tim Pett (Dove

Steward)-Technical and Taxonomy.

This year’s meeting of the CENTRAL COUNCIL OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS was held on

Saturday 4th September, online, using Zoom.

**Safeguarding**

The Safeguarding Officers reported that guidelines had been produced for online ringing. They also

called upon the ringing community at large to reject even low-level bullying on social media, by

supporting victims and challenging perpetrators.

**Support Services**

The *Performance Analysis* Report recorded that, predictably, the total of peals rung in 2020 was

significantly affected by the lockdown ban on ringing. Nonetheless, the ODG was the leading

affiliated society for both tower and handbell peals. Major was overall more popular than peals on

other numbers and Surprise was most popular for both Major and Minor peals. This is the first year

that data from BellBoard has been used to analyse quarter peals, providing very useful information

regarding grass-roots ringing. Naturally there were fewer quarter peals rung too. Somerset and

Gloucester and Bristol rang most, and Doubles and Minor were the most popular.

The report from *Publications* noted that, as expected, income from sales was sharply down and no

new titles were published during the year.

**Stewards**

The *Bell Restoration Fund Grants Panel* received 37 applications for grants.

**Workgroups**

During the year, the *Communications & Marketing* Workgroup had been investigating initiatives to

promote bell ringing to a wider audience and also improve communications amongst ringers.

A new *Public Relations* Workgroup was established in 2021 to promote the Central Council and bell

ringing to both the ringing community and the general public. It will have close dealings with the

media and had a prominent role after the death of HRH the Duke of Edinburgh. The group

encouraged ringing for COP26 and, amongst other things, is promoting ringing for the Queen’s

forthcoming Jubilee.

The *Senior Stakeholder Liaison* Workgroup had a significant role in the last year, interpreting the

Government legislation and C of E guidance into guidance for ringing. The Central Council now has

direct communication at a high level in the C of E and, likewise, it is the first port of call for the C of

E with regard to bell ringing issues.

In the past year, the *Stewardship & Management* Workgroup had a significant part to play in

providing guidance to towers as churches were closed and then again, as they were gradually

reopened. It also responded to a wide range of enquiries during the pandemic. The workgroup is busy

putting more comprehensive information online, relating to Tower Infrastructure, Tower Operation

and Major Projects.

The *Technical & Taxonomy* Workgroup reported that despite tower bell restrictions, 683 new methods

were named. Much work has also been done on creating the new Dove database.

The *Volunteering & Leadership* Workgroup has been developing and promoting a Recruitment and

Retention workshop which had already been produced by ART. A Northwest residential course is

planned for summer 2022 and an online Question and Answer Forum is in the pipeline. The

workgroup was also involved in writing materials for the online toolbox of the joint CC and ART

Survival and Recovery Group. Work is ongoing to create a new list of Ringing Centres.

The goal of the new *Young Ringers*-*Schools & Youth* Workgroup is to establish new long-term

sources of recruits from schools and youth groups. An encouraging development is that there has been

cooperation with the Senior Stakeholder Liaison Workgroup to produce lesson plans for Years 5,6 and

7, in all subjects, with ringing as a common thread. The group is also working with the Scout and

Guide movements to reintroduce ringing badges. Work is nearing completion on ringing as part of the

Duke of Edinburgh Award and the group is also in contact with Young Farmers and the Girls/Boys

Brigade.

The *Young Ringers* -*Universities & Colleges* has taken under their aegis the website for students to

find out what is on and where, in terms of university and college ringing. This has also been updated.

The workgroup is also encouraging specialist 6th Form maths schools to exploit the theory of change

ringing as part of an enrichment programme.

The *Historical & Archive* Workgroup is planning to start recording details of peal boards. The Library

has been particularly busy in the past year.

**Forward Plan for 2022**

The President spoke of the continued effort to combat the spread of Covid 19 in towers through

ventilation and CO2 monitors. He also referred to the task ahead of aiding ringing recovery and

commencing a major coordinated recruitment campaign. Other items mentioned were the plans for the

National Ringing Centre in Northampton, the new mobile belfry, the direct membership organisation

for Young Change Ringers, Ringing Forums and the Cast of 1000 to support aspiring Surprise ringers.

**Financial Update**

The General Fund balance brought forward at the end of December 2020 was £166,146 and there was

expected to be an approximate £4,000 loss over the course of 2021.

**Next Year’s Meeting**

This will be at Trent University, Nottingham on Saturday 3rd September. There will be training

sessions, a Roadshow and social events; anyone may attend.

At the RINGING WORLD LTD AGM, the Finance Director predictably reported that performance

donations, a major source of income, had been severely reduced by the pandemic, resulting in their

largest ever deficit of £28,748. The rate of subscription non-renewals has also increased. The

Chairman, Paul Jopp, reported that there were only 2436 subscribers to the Ringing World at the

beginning of September 2021. Various changes have been implemented which should save

approximately £14000 per annum and also improve efficiency.