

**MINUTES of the District Meeting held at Wethersfield on
Saturday 9th May 2015**

Present:	John Elliott (JE)	Master
	Vicki Elliott (VE)	Treasurer
	Linda Ranby (LR)	Secretary

Members Present: 11

The Master welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1 Apologies

Apologies were received from A Adams, K Champness, I Cresshull, P Cresshull, K Downs, M Downs, D Learmonth, V LeFèvre, B Meads, P Smith, A Taylor, J Thompson, M Wood and P Wood.

2(a) Minutes

The minutes of the Annual District Meeting held on 17th January 2015 were accepted as an accurate record.

Proposed: R Threadgold

Seconded: V Elliott

2(b) Matters Arising

Roy Threadgold (RT) said he would be arranging another meeting for handbell ringing in the Autumn.

3 Membership

Nominations for Membership

	<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Seconded</u>
<i>Re-joining member</i>		
Jean Lewis, Great Yeldham	David Osgood	Michael Brewster
<i>Friend to member</i>		
Philip Cornwell, Great Yeldham	V Turner	W Turner

The above were unanimously elected.

Four Membership Application Forms were submitted prior to the meeting for new members. Although three were incomplete, and none of the applicants attended the meeting.

JE proposed that new ringing members would not be elected in their absence (other Districts have this policy too). No other association takes on new members without seeing them first. All new members are invited to attend the meeting along with their proposer and seconder. They can show the Master their ringing ability and then be duly elected. They will need to be competent at rounds and call changes, although in the past this would have been method ringing. By having a level to meet they will also get a sense of attainment.

In the rare instance where the member is unable to get to a meeting, the Master or Deputy Master could visit their tower to assess their ringing. JE intends to get around to as many towers as possible during the year.

4 Communication

A number of towers in the Northern District have tower contacts that are non-bell ringers. LR gets messages from EACR Secretary which are to be passed down to the members. This is a waste of time if the message is not getting passed on. JE encouraged towers to make sure their correspondent is a bell ringer. There is also a Yahoo Group where notices are posted and anyone with email should sign up.

JE will be calling a meeting of all Northern District Tower Captains at Kelvedon later in 2015, hopefully attended by the Association Master, to discuss training, participating in district events and indeed the future of ringing within the district.

It was discussed at the February Committee Meeting that there would be a scheme put in place to assist with minor works within churches where urgent work is required to keep the bells going and funds were not available locally for such work. This was launched at the AGM on 4th May. Grant applications for minor works will be considered by the Grants Sub-committee and maximum grant likely to be offered would be £250. This does not, however, cover bell ropes as it is felt that these could be sourced from other towers.

Vicki Chapman announced at the AGM that she would not be standing as Secretary again next year.

Collecting money for subscriptions has been an onerous task this year. If the payment is not in by 30th April you are no longer a member. If you are not going to be at the Annual District Meeting in January to pay in person, please pop a cheque in the post to the District Treasurer, whose details can always be found in the back of the Annual Report. Remember if you are not a member, you have no insurance, no vote and also no ringing Peals or Quarter Peals for the Association.

5 Achievements

JE was pleased with the number of experienced ringers that ring quarter peals in such varied methods. There were also first quarters, where he remembered how terrified he was ringing his and indeed most people are to start with.

6 Education

JE explained that the Northern District Support Group (NDSG) has been set up to assist towers. There are 10 individuals to assist groups to learn, handle, or ring certain methods. The group is there to give support and advice to groups or individuals.

Alistair Donaldson used to have the 'Flying Squad' and this paid off. It is especially helpful if people don't have the confidence to go to other towers to get extra practice.

Any tower having difficulties should let one of the District Officers know and we will help.

Jonathan Thompson proposed that people teaching learners should be competent and confident. JE explained that John Harpole (JH) had called all the District Masters together to talk about the quality of teachers. These are people who give lots of free time to learners, but could actually be putting themselves and the learners in danger.

RT added the ITTS Scheme trains people to teach and the mentor says they have passed and can teach, but this does not mean they are capable.

JE would have further talks with JH as this is a very delicate situation.

7 Events

The 6-bell striking competition to be held at Belchamp St Paul's on 6th June welcomes teams for both methods and call changes. If there were not enough members at a tower to make up a team they could combine with a neighbouring tower. Young ringers should be encouraged to be competitive.

There was discussion about the Summer Event on 1st August. It was suggested by Kelly Thompson that we could have a 'Picnic in the park/church yard'. To include ringing, a family BBQ/fun afternoon. This would also be PR to encourage new members and perhaps have bouncy castle, football net and stalls. A suggested charge was £5.00 for adults and £2.50 for children. We would need to see how much interest there was before any expenditure paid out to organise it.

8 Any Other Business

JE would be arranging another Training Day in the summer to cover the Basics.

RT announced that Panfield was now an unringable tower. David Sloman said the bells are ok, but the tower is not.

Maurice Downs has been arranging a monthly 10-bell practice and thanked everyone for their support, but felt it was time to stand down and let someone younger run them instead. He will willingly give any assistance to whoever takes over.

RT asked if we could support Ashen, although not in our district. Ringers had learnt to ring at Ridgewell to be able to go and ring at Ashen. Maybe we could get them included in our district. Nigel Taylor was to visit them to see if there was any work that would ease the ringing.

Thanks was given to Wethersfield for hosting the meeting and the lovely tea, and to Sarah Pilgrim for the service and Alex Mackle for playing the organ.

The meeting was then declared closed and further ringing took place.

LR 18.05.2015

Signed

Dated