

The Central Council of Church Bell Ringers

Minutes of the 125th Annual Meeting held at Nottingham Trent University on Saturday 3rd September 2022 at 2 pm.

Present

Fellows: Alan Frost, David Kelly.

Ex-officio: Mary Bone, Alison Everett, Alan Glover, Tim Jackson, Simon Linford, Christopher Ridley, Fergus Stracey, Paul Wotton*.

Affiliated Societies:

Ancient Society of College Youths: Richard Allton, Tom Hinks, Colin Newman, Andrew Wilby.

Australian & New Zealand Assn: Peter Harrison, David Smith.

Bath & Wells Dio. Assn: Michael Hansford, Matthew Higby, Charles Pipe-Wolferstan.

Bedfordshire Assn: Patrick Albon, Linda Garton, Richard Horne.

Beverley & District Society: Rosina Baxter, James Blackburn.

Cambridge Univ. Guild: David Richards, Richard Smith.

Carlisle Dio. Guild: Christine de Cordova, Duncan Walker.

Chester Dio. Guild: Carole Hallam, David Jones, Tom Nestor, Peter Wilkinson.

Coventry Dio. Guild: Annie Hall, John Newbold, Tracey Newbold*, Joy Pluckrose.

Derby Dio. Assn: Glen Fiddy, Gill Hughes.

Devon Association: Tim Jones.

Devonshire Guild: Lynette Costello, Lynne Hughes, James Kirkcaldy, Alena Wardle.

Durham & Newcastle Dio. Assn: Howard Smith, Barbara Wheeler.

Durham University Society: Phil Hughes.

East Derbys & West Notts Association: Edward Sterland.

Ely Dio. Assn: Philip Bailey, Sue Marsden, Daniel Stevens.

Essex Assn: Fred Bone, Paul Bray, Vicki Chapman, Martin Jones.

Gloucester & Bristol Dio. Assn: Mark Davies, Simon Edwards, Derek Harbottle, Richard While.

Guildford Dio. Guild: Jackie Roberts.

Hereford Diocesan Guild: Anthony Ellis, Abi Pugh*.

Hertford County Assn: Stuart Brant, Tony Crowther, Geoff Horritt, Margaret Horritt.

Irish Assn: Don McLean.

Kent County Assn: Phillip Barnes, Doug Davis, Dickon Love.

Ladies Guild: Allison Devine*, Rhiannon Pugh*, Elizabeth Smith*.

Lancashire Assn: Ernie de Legh-Runciman#, Cate Gardner, Beth Ingham, Andrew Kayll.

Leeds University Society: Tristan Lockheart*.

Leicester Dio. Guild: Carol Franklin, Steve Millington, Arthur Rees.

Lichfield & Walsall Archd. Society: Stephen Askew, Stuart Hutchieson, David Towell.

Lincoln Dio. Guild: Philip Green, Christopher Sharp, Christopher Turner.

Liverpool Universities Society: Martyn Bristow.

Llandaff & Monmouth Dio. Assn: Helen Phillips*, Matthew Turner.

Middlesex County Assn & London Dio. Guild: Sonia Field, Adrian Udal, Clyde Whittaker.

National Police Guild: John Cousins.

North American Guild: Eileen Butler, Beverly Faber, Christian Haller.

North Wales Assn: Antony Diserens, Beverly Furniss.

Norwich Dio. Assn: Raymond Harwood.

Oxford Dio. Guild: John Harrison, Lucy Hopkins Till, Graham John, Alan Marchbank, Tim Pett.

Oxford Society: Dorothy Hall.

Oxford University Society: Craig Robertson.

Peterborough Dio. Guild: Simon Dixon, Nick Elks.

Guild of St Agatha: Anne Bray.

St Martin's Guild: Richard Andrew, James Ramsbottom.

Salisbury Dio. Guild: Vicki Rowse.

Scottish Assn: Tina Stoecklin.

Shropshire Assn: E Ann Williams.

Society of Royal Cumberland Youths: John Loveless, Ian Roulstone, Jane Wilkinson.

South African Guild: James Champion.

Southwell and Nottingham Dio. Guild: Jim Crabtree, Chris Glenton*, Graham Hayward*, Anne Sladen#.

Suffolk Guild: Chris Birkby, Cath Colman, Neal Dodge.

Surrey Assn: Kate Flavell, Paul Flavell, Noel Gibbin, Jason Hughes.

Sussex County Assn: Sue Gadd, David Kirkcaldy, Rob Lane, Philip Pawley*, Stephanie Pendlebury.

Truro Dio. Guild: Robert Perry.

Univ. Bristol Society: Imogen Brooke, Patrick Wheeler.

Veronese Assn: David Roskelly.

Welsh Colleges Society: Poppy Wheeler*.

Winchester & Portsmouth Dio. Guild: Michael Hopkins Till, Allan Yalden.

Worcestershire & Districts Assn: Kathryn Cocks, Alison Hodge, James Mort, Chris Tennant.

Yorkshire Assn: Elva Ainsworth, Barrie Dove, Simon Plows, Elaine Scott, Peter Scott.

Registered Small Societies:

Guild of Railway Ringers: Jim Benner*.

[* — new member; # — returning member]

The Barrow and District Society, Guild of Clerical Ringers, Dorset County Association, East Grinstead and District Guild, Four Shires Guild, North Staffordshire Association, St David's Diocesan Guild, Swansea and Brecon Diocesan Guild and the University of London Society were not represented. The Lilliputters Guild of Ringers (Registered Small Society) was also not represented.

The Chair was taken by the President, Simon Linford, who welcomed all members to the meeting, the first in-person meeting of the Council since 2019. The President advised members wishing to speak on the procedure and reminded them to give their name and that of the society they represented. He reminded members of the Council's Rules which required payment of affiliation fees and notification of membership numbers to be made six weeks before the meeting. He regretted that in two cases this had not been done and informed members that those affected had been contacted and had agreed not to participate actively in the meeting. He informed members that the proceedings were being recorded. The President regretted that live-streaming of the meeting had not been possible.

1. Opening Prayer

Robert Perry, Truro Diocesan Guild, led members in prayer.

2. Applications to affiliate

The Secretary, Mary Bone, reported that an application had been received from the Welsh Colleges Society. A letter signed by the Master and General Secretary confirmed a membership of over 75; that the purpose of the Society is to promote the ringing of bells; and that the Society undertook to abide by the Council's Rules and Decisions. Peter Scott asked if the Society's safeguarding arrangements had been reviewed. The Secretary noted that the provisions approved in 2020 applied to those applying to register as Small Societies; they did not apply to existing affiliated societies or those applying to affiliate. Poppy Wheeler, Welsh Colleges Society, confirmed that the Society has safeguarding policies in operation. The application to affiliate was approved nem con. The President welcomed Poppy to the meeting as the representative for the Society; he added that three generations of the Wheeler family were now present as representative members.

3. Welcome to new members

The President gave a warm welcome to new and returning members (indicated by * and # respectively in the list of those present).

4. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Alan Regin (Ex-officio, Steward of the Rolls of Honour), David Mattingley and Allen Nunley (Ex-officio, Stewards of the Fred E Dukes International Bell Fund), David Bleby (ANZAB), Rhona McEune (Barrow & District Society), David Parfrey (Bath & Wells Diocesan Assn), Revd Jon Rose (Clerical Guild), Andrew and Susan Hall (Derby Diocesan Assn), Joanne Tucker (Devon Assn), Paul Seaman (Ely Diocesan Assn), Helen Bridgman (Essex Assn), Chris Povey (Four Shires Guild), John Couperthwaite (Guildford Diocesan Guild), Michael Pomeroy (Irish Assn), Caroline Stockmann and Jen Thomas (Kent County Assn), Sam Brook (Lancashire Assn), Lianne Brooks (Leicester Diocesan Guild), Robert Lewis (Middlesex

County Assn & London Diocesan Guild), Katie Wright (Norwich Diocesan Assn), Jane Sibson (Peterborough Diocesan Guild), Robert Crighton, Anthony Lovell-Wood and Julian Newman (Salisbury Diocesan Guild), Ruth Marshall (Scottish Assn), Paul Lewis (Shropshire Assn), Derek Sibson (Society of Royal Cumberland Youths), David Katz (Swansea & Brecon Diocesan Guild), Ian Self and Hayley Young (Truro Diocesan Guild), Anne Hughes (University of London Society), Michele Giovanni Cambareri (Veronese Assn), Michael Church (Winchester & Portsmouth Diocesan Guild) and Molly Smith (Lilliputters Guild).

5. In Memoriam

The Secretary read the names of the following members and former members who had died since the last meeting: Bryan Castle (Salisbury DG 1981–1983); David Salter (Suffolk Guild 1994–2014); A Doreen Edwards (Chester DG 1963–1966); Anthony (Tony) Peake (Gloucester & Bristol DA 1969–1978); William (Bill) Butler (Oxford DG 1957–1960 and 1966–2012, Life Member 2012–2018, Fellow 2018–2021); James Shepard (London County Assn 1978–1987); Alan Baldock (Sussex County Assn 1978–2014, Additional Member 2014–2018); Bruce Butler (North American Guild 2005–2022); Beverley Winter (Coventry DG 1984–2005); Prof George Williams (North American Guild 2011–2014); Revd Dr John Baldwin (Oxford DG 1972–1975, Llandaff & Monmouth DA 1975–1995, Life Member 1995–2018, Fellow 2018–2022; Vice-President 1984–1987, President 1987–1990); Tom Page (Guildford DG 1969–1981); Rachael Rodway (Carlisle DG 1993–2002); George Francis (Sussex County Assn 1968–1976); Margaret Chapman (Winchester & Portsmouth DG 1960–1961); Allan Keen (Dorset County Assn 2002–2007); and William (Mick) Exton (Southwell DG 1963–1984). The Revd Canon Tony Ellis (Hereford DG) led members in prayer.

(The minutes, reports and accounts were published with the Central Council Meeting Papers on 5th August 2022. The relevant page numbers are shown against each item.)

6. Minutes of the 2021 Annual Meeting (pp6–10)

The Secretary reported that E Ann Williams had been a new member last year and the relevant symbol should be shown by her name, and that an error in the attendance figures in the version of the Minutes circulated in January had since been corrected. She had also been informed that Cath Colman was a returning member.

The President sought leave of the meeting to sign the Minutes and this was granted on a general 'aye'. The President then signed the Minutes as an accurate record of the 2021 annual meeting.

The President reminded members to declare any relevant conflicts of interest and to treat each other with courtesy during debate as all members were volunteers.

7. Matters arising from the Minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda

No member wished to raise any matter.

8. Annual Trustees' Report for 2021 (pp11–13)

The President introduced the formal annual report of the Council to the Charity Commission for 2021 and noted that it had been approved by the Trustees on 28 July 2022. He invited the Secretary to comment on and update the report. The Secretary reported on changes to the membership figures in paragraph 7: there were now 2 Fellows, 13 Ex-officio members, 67 affiliated societies with 181 representative members and 17 vacancies, and two registered small societies. The North American Guild was now only entitled to three members. She urged societies to elect members to fill the vacancies: the Executive wished to be held to account and wanted members who would participate and contribute to the Council's strategic direction and work.

Geoff Horritt queried the statement that reducing the size of the Council would make meetings more efficient: a reduction in the number of representatives would not necessarily reduce the time spent in the annual meeting. Geoff asked who the Council Executive had consulted. The President replied that this referred to the earlier round of consultations held in late 2020.

The President proposed that the members receive and adopt the Annual Trustees' Report; this was seconded by Paul Flavell and approved nem con (one abstention).

9. Accounts for 2021 (pp14–15)

The Treasurer, Fergus Stracey, presented the Accounts. He noted that the Independent Examiner had issued an unqualified report. The Accounts had been approved by the Trustees on 28 July 2022. He thanked the Independent Examiner, Caroline Stockmann, for her work; he additionally thanked Ian Self (Library), Beryl Norris (Publications) and John Harrison (publicity leaflets) for their contributions. The Treasurer reported that the Council had total assets of £459,104 at 31 December 2021. The General Fund again recorded a surplus as the usual major expenditure on the annual meeting was not incurred. Publications made a loss of £1,687 as sales continued to be affected by the suspension of ringing during the pandemic and the Library also incurred a small deficit for the year. The Bell Restoration Fund paid out 12 grants. One grant was returned to the Fred E Dukes Fund as the scheme was abandoned. The Treasurer noted that the Council currently benefited as a charity from Microsoft not charging for part of the hosting costs for the website etc.

Alison Hodge commented on note 6: was revaluation of the Library at 20 year intervals still appropriate? Many insurance companies required more frequent revaluations. Alison also referred to note 12 and urged the Publications group to review the storage costs and consider print on demand. Fred Bone subsequently noted that the change in revaluation frequency of the Library had been made in 2019. Nick Elks quer-

ied the size of the Council's total funds. Both the Treasurer and President stated that the Forward Plan included proposals for expenditure from the reserves while noting the distinction between the various restricted, designated and undesignated funds. Lynette Costello asked about the status of the Ringing Remembers grant (note 8.2). The President and Treasurer responded that this balance was held as an unrestricted item within general funds; the intention was to spend this on public relations, recruitment and marketing initiatives.

The 2021 Accounts were received and adopted unanimously on the proposal of Fergus Stracey, seconded by Sue Marsden.

10. Annual Report of the Executive and Workgroups for 2021 to May 2022 (pp16–39)

The President introduced this item and requested questions and comments. There would be a further opportunity for discussion at items 11 and 12. The sections would be considered in the order as printed.

On the **Executive** report, Annie Hall referred to the statement on collaboration with the Association of Ringing Teachers (ART) on the Survival and Recovery project. She requested that the contribution of the recovery champions should be recorded. The President thanked Annie for her remarks. In response to Simon Dixon, the President said that plans for the Old Black Lion site in Northampton would be discussed at item 12 (Forward Plan).

The President proposed adoption of the report of the Executive and workgroups for 2021. This was seconded by Linda Garton and approved.

11. Executive and Workgroup updates for May–August 2021

The President noted that the Executive update would be taken at item 12. He considered that these updates formed an important part of the meeting and welcomed questions and comments.

Stewardship & Management: Alison Hodge, workgroup leader, highlighted work on an online document to replace the *Manual of Belfry Maintenance*. This was one of a future series of online documents which would replace out-of-date information, could be updated easily and quickly, and could include videos. She welcomed comments and constructive criticism on these initiatives. Alison also urged members to encourage applications for the 2023 Westley award for tower bell maintenance; the award was for those new to steeple-keeping and applications from outside England or the UK would be welcomed. Philip Green declared an interest as printer of Council publications; he stated that demand for printed books had increased in recent years and that both printed and online publications were needed (applause). Philip's remarks were endorsed by others. Jim Crabtree stressed the importance of up-to-date and accurate information. Tina Stoecklin asked the workgroup to consider print on demand and noted the benefit to non-UK ringers of online publica-

tions. Alison Hodge confirmed that the online document would include a printing option; the new documents would be online-only in the first instance. She concluded by saying that the workgroup's priority was to update information in its range of publications.

Volunteer & Leadership: the workgroup leader, Paul Wotton, opened his remarks by mentioning the group's recent Mission and Activities paper (<https://cccbr.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/VL-WG-Mission-and-Activities-2022-V1.0.pdf>). He referred to the North West Course which had been held successfully in August; plans were in-hand for a 2023 Course and the group were also investigating the possibility of other residential courses to fill gaps in provision in other regions. The workgroup had been asked by the Council Executive to work on a striking and listening project; a team would be formed to work on this. Paul displayed a slide showing the revised structure of the workgroup; there would be a particular focus on recruitment and retention, the return of lapsed ringers, education and leadership. The group intended to work closely with other workgroups, ART and the Young Change Ringers Association (YCRA). Paul recognised that many of the tasks involved local work at association and tower level. Paul Flavell asked if the number of experienced ringers failing to return to ringing after the Covid pandemic had affected matters as their skills had not been passed on. The workgroup leader undertook to study this aspect. Anne Sladen commented on the unattractiveness of many ringing chambers and the importance of first impressions to potential recruits. Alison Hodge, Stewardship & Management, pointed out that this was an area where groups could work together. There were many tasks in towers which did not require an expert ringer and could involve all ringers. Alison added that towers should also check the safety of old electrical equipment. Tristan Lockheart requested further information on the number of leaders in ringing; was this a local problem or a general issue showing the vulnerability of ringing? Ed Sterland remarked that investigations and consultations should involve all ringing societies and not be limited to the Council's affiliated societies.

Young Ringers – Universities & Colleges: Ian Roulstone, workgroup leader, introduced his report by stating that university ringing was still affected by the pandemic; he expected much greater activity in the year ahead. The YCRA was encouraging young ringers to join university and college societies and would be present at the Roadshow on 4 September. An ART course to train young ringers as teachers before they attended university would be held shortly. There was a major need for better communication throughout the Exercise so that young ringers preparing for college were aware of the opportunities for ringing. Daniel Stevens referred to increases in college tuition fees which deterred many young people from applying to university or college; the workgroup should focus on young adult ringers in general. Ian Roulstone accepted this comment and noted joint work with the Schools & Youth Groups work-

group. Tristan Lockheart stated that the UniversityRinging.org website was out-of-date. He suggested that successful university societies should actively assist others by mentoring nearby societies. Ian thanked Jacqui Brown for her work on the UniversityRinging.org website and FaceBook page.

Young Ringers – Schools & Youth Groups: the workgroup leader, Colin Newman, reported progress on producing a video showing a youth group visiting a tower; this would be available on the Central Council's YouTube channel. The Bluebells Challenge for Guides had been relaunched and the ART course for young ringers arranged. The group were completing lesson plans for Years 5 and 7. There would be further contact and engagement with the Scouts. Colin was also keen to ensure that all the documentation produced was uploaded to the website and updated as necessary. There were no questions.

Historical & Archive: Chris Ridley, workgroup leader, asked members to make a correction to the group's report on p37 of the meeting papers: the entry reporting the death of Roger James Palmer should be removed. He apologised for this error. Chris referred to the strategy document on the future of the Library which had been circulated; a new home and a new Steward were needed for the collection. He emphasised that the Library formed the unique collection of books and ephemera on ringing. Some rationalisation of the holdings (e.g. the removal of reprinted editions) would be possible to reduce the amount of space needed slightly. Chris referred to the earlier remarks on insurance and valuation (item 9): the price of older books, especially those which had been digitised, varies, thus making a valuation for insurance purposes difficult. The situation had also been affected by the recent death of Roger Barnes of Church Green Books, who had conducted the last valuation. Chris noted that, as well as a new Library Steward, the workgroup also sought to recruit a new Steward for the Carter Ringing Machines collection, and volunteers to work on oral histories and other recordings and on other projects mentioned in the report. The Library also wished to fill gaps in its collection of society annual reports. Chris responded to queries on the physical size of the Library and on different methods of reaching a valuation. Neal Dodge requested advice for societies wishing to digitise their annual reports. Alison Hodge commented that the Worcestershire & Districts Association had decided not to insure unique items in its library holdings; she emphasised the need for secure storage arrangements for rare items. Chris Ridley confirmed that record offices would only accept a limited number of items as donations.

Public Relations: the workgroup leader, Vicki Chapman, reported on successful ringing to mark HM the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations in June. Allison Devine had joined the workgroup and Vicki hoped for further recruits after meeting members earlier in the day. The President had been interviewed by BBC radio on plans for the national ringing centre in Northampton, and Neal Dodge had been inter-

viewed by Talk TV. The workgroup had finalised the filming schedule for the videos which were being prepared. Vicki also mentioned a proposal for an international Bell Festival on New Year's Day and ringing for the 10th anniversary of the Commonwealth Charter in March 2023. The workgroup had been approached for assistance with a musical composition project inspired by Sir John Betjeman's *Summoned by Bells*. There were no questions.

Technical & Taxonomy: Graham John, workgroup leader, referred to the diagram of workgroup services and projects (p30 of the meeting papers). Graham reminded members that the Executive had appointed Tina Stoecklin as the new leader for the workgroup (see note of the Executive meeting of 27 August 2022). He would continue to be involved in projects and would maintain the methods library and Complib. David Kelly commented on the delay in updating the Dove database and on the quality of some changes: the team's priorities should be to update entries on ringing peals of bells and to implement updates in chronological order. Dickon Love, Dove Steward, explained the expansion of the database following agreement with the Church Buildings Council and noted that far more updates were now being received. The Dove team were constantly working to improve the accuracy of the database and Dickon paid tribute to the work of the team. Jane Wilkinson urged the Dove team to follow the late John Baldwin's emphasis on accuracy in the national bells register. Paul Flavell asked about measures to secure the future of Complib data. Mark Davies thanked Graham John for all his work in making Complib the definitive collection of compositions. Graham responded that the aim was to make a comprehensive collection which would also include historical compositions. John Harrison asked a further question about securing resources for the future, especially those maintained by private individuals. Graham replied that a team had been formed to work on this issue: the workgroup understood the importance of service continuity and he would welcome offers of assistance. Will Bosworth, editor of *The Ringing World*, requested further information on the new website on Doubles variations and calls. Graham thanked Peter Hinton for all his work on this resource and noted that some additional work was needed before wider publicity could be given to it.

Senior Stakeholder Liaison: the President thanked Mark Regan, previous workgroup leader, for his work. Discussions continued with a potential successor to Mark as workgroup leader. Jason Hughes asked whether there had been any progress in gaining recognition of ringing as a performing art by the Arts Council; the President replied that this was under review. Adrian Udal drew attention to the comment in the report (p28 of the meeting papers) that the Church of England would struggle to survive; the President commented that this was Mark Regan's own view.

The President thanked all the workgroup leaders and members for their work as volunteers for ringing and the Central Council.

12. Forward Plan for 2023

The President introduced this item, mandated by the new Rules adopted in 2018 (rule 6.1 b) (3)). He focused his remarks on the challenges facing ringing which had been brought into sharp focus by the pandemic of 2020–21. Trends in ringing, particularly the lack of younger recruits, had been ignored and many towers, branches and even associations were now struggling as older ringers retired and were not replaced. The President emphasised that ringing is in competition with other attractions and how it was described, branded and marketed needed to change. He then spoke on Ringing 2030, branding and marketing, a bid to the National Heritage Lottery Fund to take bells into schools, mobile belfries, the proposed National Ringing Centre, and the Central Council's finances, stressing that action on these initiatives needed to be co-ordinated. He also mentioned a pilot national call change competition to be held at Moseley in June 2023. The President stated that the November meeting of the Council's Executive and workgroup leaders would focus on Ringing 2030: current young ringers would not necessarily support the current structures of branches and associations, and a direct membership organisation might be part of the future. He spoke further on the Council's finances and organisation: affiliation fee income was insufficient to fund necessary projects and the Council's reserves would be used; however, the future funding model should be addressed. Other issues included the need for more volunteers, particularly for an events management team, work on reducing the size of the Council, and new blood as existing trustees and workgroup leaders came to the end of their periods in office. The President noted that he would only serve until the next annual meeting in 2023.

The following points were made in the extensive discussion after the President's remarks: what was the future role of ringing centres; the need to share information on how ringing "works"; the size of the Council should be reduced to produce a more effective body; that non-representatives can be engaged in the Council's work; that the Council is seen as undemocratic; that those representatives who do not speak are still interested and engaged; and that the compelling vision in the 2017 CRAG report appeared to have been "parked". There was further discussion on the link between ringing and the Church of England, with the church seen as a toxic brand amongst some potential recruits.

The President thanked members for their contributions to the debate.

13. Financial update 2022 and outline General Fund budget for 2023

The Treasurer introduced this item, mandated under the new Rules, and referred members to p40 of the meeting papers. He confirmed that the Council now had two Registered Small Societies. The Treasurer expected that the North West residential course would break even; the Council had made a grant to fund the purchase of simulators. The Treasurer drew attention to work on the branding project with the Yellow-

yoyo consultancy which had been approved by the Executive in August. He noted that donors to Mobile Belfry 2.0 would need to complete the relevant declarations for the Council to recover Gift Aid. Income had also been received via Amazon Smile. The outline budget for 2023 was provided for information; underspent project expenditure in 2022 would be rolled forward to 2023. The Treasurer stated that the Council would incur expenditure from its reserves but would maintain the level of reserves set by the Trustees (note 5.1 (I) to the Trustees' Report). Mark Davies asked how much had been received via Amazon Smile and the Treasurer responded that some £80 had been received in 2021 which had been credited to the Bell Restoration Fund.

14. Election of Trustees

Secretary: the President invited nominations from the floor as no nominations had been received in advance. Ernie de Legh-Runciman was proposed by Beverley Furniss and seconded by Cate Gardner. There being no further nominations, the President declared Ernie elected.

Ordinary Trustees: two nominations had been received for the two positions. Catherine Lane had been proposed by John Harrison and seconded by Alan Marchbank; Beverly Faber had been proposed by Kate Flavell and seconded by Eileen Butler. The President declared them elected.

15. Election of Independent Examiners

Caroline Stockmann had been proposed by Fred Bone and seconded by Doug Davis. The President invited further nominations from the floor as the Rules allowed for two Examiners. Duncan Walker was proposed by James Blackburn and seconded by Lynne Hughes. The President declared Caroline and Duncan elected.

16. Governance Review

The President invited Phillip Barnes, Executive Member and Trustee, to speak to this item. Phillip reminded members of the text of Standing Order G1 which required a review every three years to assess whether the Rules, Standing Orders and governance continue to be effective and aligned with best practice. The review conducted in 2021–22 had concentrated on the Council's governance and controls, its funding, and a technical review of the Rules and Standing Orders. The review and consultation on funding had resulted in Motion A, while the technical review of the Rules and Standing Orders resulted in Motion B. The Executive had decided to use the Charity Governance Code (www.charity-governancecode.org/en/pdf). The Code required a review of 7 main areas: organisational purpose; leadership; integrity; decision-making, risk and control; board effectiveness; equality, diversity and inclusion; and openness and accountability. As previously reported to members, pairs of trustees had each worked on two of these areas. Their work resulted in over 50 potential recommendations, some of which were more for ringing generally rather than being spe-

cific to the Council. The new Executive would continue to study these recommendations with a view to prioritising and making proportionate changes; for instance, earlier action was required on financial control policy, review of risk register, agenda management, succession planning and volunteer recruitment, and managing the risk of future joint projects. A code of conduct was also under consideration. Phillip confirmed that the final results of the review will be published to members. Fred Bone asked if the success of the Registered Small Societies scheme had been included in the review as required by the motion approved on 5 September 2020. Phillip agreed that this should be included. The President thanked Phillip Barnes for all his work on this.

17. Motions

(A) The President, Simon Linford (Ex-Officio member), proposed:

That Standing Order F1.1 be amended to read

The Annual Subscription for each Affiliated Society shall be £0.20 per member of that Society based on its Society Membership, subject to a minimum of £40 and a maximum of £400 per annum per Affiliated Society.

The President recalled that an earlier attempt to change the basis of the affiliation fee had been lost in 2007. However, recent consultations had shown general support for this idea and had led the Executive to prepare the current motion. The proposal would be revenue-neutral. The motion was seconded by David Kirkcaldy (Sussex County Association).

John Harrison (Oxford Diocesan Guild) proposed that the motion be amended to read:

The Annual Subscription for each Affiliated Society shall be £0.20 per member of that Society based on its Society Membership.

John welcomed the move to a fairer basis for assessing affiliation fees but stated that the Oxford Diocesan Guild, the only society which would be affected by the maximum £400 fee, should not receive special treatment. Alan Marchbank (Oxford Diocesan Guild) seconded the amendment.

The amendment was supported by both Tristan Lockheart, Leeds University Society, and James Champion, South African Guild. The President confirmed that passing the amendment would lead to a reduction in the Council's income.

The amendment was put to the vote and approved nem con (one abstention).

David Roskelly (Veronese Association) proposed a further amendment:

That the Executive be required to amend Standing Order S1 on Society Membership to accommodate the Veronese Association, with the required change(s) coming into effect before the 2023 subscription year.

David reminded members that the Veronese Association was one of the larger affiliated soci-

eties. Its members practised full-circle ringing. The Association valued its membership of the Central Council but much Council activity was not relevant to Italian ringers and implementation of the motion as currently worded would probably lead to withdrawal from the Council. He argued that the Veronese Association was a special case and it was possible that there might be further special cases in future. Andrew Wilby warned that declared membership numbers could be expected to decline and the amount per ringer would need to increase. Fred Bone (Essex Association) seconded the amendment and it was approved nem con (one abstention).

In response to Charles Pipe-Wolferstan, the President noted that a society's membership was defined according to Standing Order S1.1 and the Rules established the number of representatives to which a society was entitled.

The motion as amended above was put to the vote and approved nem con (one abstention).

(B) Phillip Barnes (Kent County Association) proposed:

That the Council notes the conclusions and recommendations of the Report to the Executive of the Technical Reviewer dated 19th May, 2022 (the "Technical Review Report"), commissioned as part of the 2022 governance review and thanks David Bleby for his work.

That with effect from the close of the 125th Annual Meeting of the Council held on 3rd September, 2022 the Council's Rules shall be amended in accordance with the recommendations of the Technical Review Report, by applying the revised wordings set out in Annexures 1 and 3 to that Report.

That the Council approves the amendments to its Standing Orders recommended by the Technical Review Report as set out in Annexures 1 and 4 to that Report.

Phillip reminded members that the proposed changes had arisen from a technical review of the Council's Rules and Standing Orders after four years of operation. A number of issues had been raised by members, as well as by members of the Executive. Phillip thanked those who had contributed to the process. He stated that there was no intention to change the intention of any of the existing Rules and Standing Orders, merely to improve clarity about their application. The motion was seconded by Ian Roulstone (Society of Royal Cumberland Youths).

The motion was put to the vote and approved nem con (6 abstentions). The President thanked David Bleby, Phillip Barnes and Clyde Whittaker for their work on this.

18. Future meetings

Neal Dodge, Suffolk Guild, spoke about the initial arrangements for the 2023 annual meeting which would be held in Ipswich. Chris Tennant asked if the meeting date could be moved away from school holidays. Philip Green reminded the meeting that members had voted previously to retain the late Spring Bank Holiday date. The

President stated that the Executive would look at the date question again. Tristan Lockheart requested a range of accommodation options to encourage younger members to attend.

Attendance

The Secretary reported on attendance at the meeting as set out in the table below and thanked Stephen Franklin for compiling the attendance records.

19. Any Other Business

(a) The Secretary thanked Fred Bone for again typesetting the annual meeting papers.

(b) The Secretary urged members to notify any changes in their contact details promptly and to check that their association contact was receiving Council emails.

(c) The Secretary noted that the nomination deadline in 2023 would be six weeks before the meeting. Nominations would be required for President, Deputy President and one or two Independent Examiners.

(d) The Secretary reminded members of the procedure now in force since the adoption of the new Rules in 2018: an annual membership return was required and this plus the formal notification of a society's membership numbers and payment of the affiliation fee must be received six weeks before the meeting. She urged members to ensure that their guild officers were aware of the changes introduced by Motion A. The Secretary apologised to those societies which had been asked to supply their membership numbers when they had in fact already done so.

(e) David Smith recorded the Council's appreciation of all the work done by Tim Hine as leader of the Volunteer & Leadership workgroup since 2018, and previously as chairman of the Education Committee, until he stood down early in 2022 (applause).

(f) The President recorded the Council's thanks to Graham John for his work as leader of the Technical & Taxonomy workgroup (applause).

(g) Alison Hodge asked if the Minutes of the 2020 and 2021 annual meetings, held by video conference, had been signed. The President confirmed that this had been done.

(h) Kate Flavell thanked the President for his work in arranging the meeting and for his conduct of the meeting (applause).

Votes of Thanks

The President thanked the Deputy President, Jim Crabtree (Southwell & Nottingham DG) and all those involved in arranging the Council's meeting in Nottingham, the incumbents and tower captains of the towers made available on Friday and those hosting Sunday Service ringing, and all those assisting with the Roadshow the next day.

The President presented gifts to the retiring Trustees, Alison Everett and David Smith, and to the retiring Secretary, Mary Bone. The Secretary thanked her predecessor, Ian Oram, and all past and present officers, Executive members, *Ringling World* editors and Council members

who had assisted her during her 13 years in office (applause).

There being no further business, the President declared the meeting closed at 6 pm.

Summary of Attendance

Voting Societies	Representative Members	
	Present	Absent
Fully represented	30	76
Partly represented	28	64
Not represented	9	—
	67	140
	41	
Small Societies	Members	
	Present	Absent
Fully represented	1	1
Partly represented	1	—
	2	1
	1	1
Fellows	2	—
Ex-officio Members	8	5
	151	47