

Website archive copy of the rules applied from 10 May 2014 – 11 May 2019

TITLE

1 The title of the Association shall be "The Surrey Association of Church Bell Ringers".

DEFINITIONS

2 In these rules the following expressions shall have the following meanings:-

a "the County" shall mean the County of Surrey as recognised in 1880;

b "Ordinary Resolution" and "Special Resolution" shall mean a motion passed by a simple majority and a three-quarters majority respectively of those members voting and entitled to vote at the meeting at which it is moved;

c reference to "meetings of the Association" and, where the context admits, to "the Association" shall mean "the Association in General Meeting" and shall not extend to meetings of a District;

d "the Council" shall mean the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers;

e words importing the masculine gender shall, where the context so admits, also import the feminine gender.

OBJECTS

3 The objects of the Association shall be:-

a to promote, advance, maintain and support the ringing of bells for services;

b the recognition of bellringers as church workers;

c to facilitate and assist in the instruction and practice of both the art and science of change-ringing;

d to institute schemes for, supply information as to, and to assist in, the provision, repair, maintenance or transfer of church bells and their fittings and necessary apparatus including equipment for sound control measures whether through the administration of the Belfry Repair Fund or otherwise;

e to promote fellowship and harmony among bellringers generally including organising social meetings and making gifts on behalf of the Association and to promote goodwill and understanding between bellringers and the general public;

f in construing and of the paragraphs (a) to (e) of this Rule, no paragraph shall be deemed to be predominant and no object shall be deemed to be subsidiary to another;

g to commission, print, publish, and distribute and/or sell, in any part of the world, literature relating to all or any of the above objects and to the history of bells and bellringing;

h to do all such other lawful things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of any of the above objects and in particular (but without raising any loan save with the authority of a Special Resolution of the Association) to expend monies on or in furtherance of any of the above objects. Such monies may be expended on the authority of an Ordinary Resolution of the General Committee or (if part of the funds of a District) of its District Committee and in such case the members from time to time of such committees acting in good faith shall not be responsible for loss.

AREA

4 Pursuit of the objects shall be conducted usually within the County but shall not be limited thereto.

5 The County shall be divided into such number of Districts with such boundaries as the Association by Ordinary Resolution shall decide from time to time.

MEMBERSHIP

6 The Association shall be divided into resident ringing members, honorary life members and non-resident members.

7 A resident ringing member shall be entitled to vote at all meetings of the Association and of the District to which for the time being he is attached. He shall pay such annual subscription as shall be fixed for the time being by Special Resolution of the Association provided that while he shall not have attained the age of seventeen years, still receiving unpaid full time education or shall have attained the age of 60 years, he shall pay a lower, concessionary annual subscription as shall be fixed for the time being by Special Resolution of the Association.

8 An honorary life member shall be entitled to vote at all meetings of the Association and its Districts. He shall pay no subscription.

9 A non-resident member shall have no vote and shall on or before election pay such subscription as from time to time be fixed by Special Resolution of the Association.

VOTING

10 Votes may be cast in person only.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

11 Subscriptions for non-resident members shall be paid to the General Secretary. All subscriptions due from a resident ringing member shall be paid to the District Secretary for the District to which he is attached at the time of payment. Secretaries shall offer receipts for subscriptions received by them. The percentage of subscriptions received in each year by District Secretaries that is determined from time to time by the General Committee shall be remitted to the General Secretary out of the funds of the Districts by 31st December in each year.

12 A resident ringing member shall commence to be liable for his annual subscription (whether legally demanded or not) on 1st January in each year. Membership is continuous, but may be terminated by either; a the member (or his representative) giving notice to the General Secretary or the appropriate District Secretary, or

b if the appropriate District Secretary is aware that the member has ceased to be eligible as a resident ringing member, or has ceased to be a ringer, he may also give notice to the ringer (or his representative) and provided no objection is raised within 28 days of such notice being given, membership shall cease. In cases where notice of termination of membership is received or given on or before 31st January, liability for the subscription for the current year shall be waived, or

c a resident ringing member whose subscription for any year remains unpaid at the end of the calendar year shall cease to be a member. A person whose membership of the Association has ceased under this Rule shall be eligible for re-election.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS

13 A resident ringing member or non-resident member may be elected by Ordinary Resolution of the Association or of a District (or before an attempt for a peal which it is intended to ring for the Association provided that before all such elections in relation to any one peal attempt three members of the band who are to ring in such peal attempt are resident ringing members and/or honorary life members or at an Association training event and such election is ratified within twelve months by Ordinary Resolution of the Association or of a District). The proposer of a member shall not be a non-resident member. If the subscription due upon election is not paid within three months of the meeting at which the election or ratification occurs, membership shall be deemed to be null and void. However, the subscription of any resident member elected on or after 1st October shall run to 31st December of the following year.

14 Any person resident or ringing frequently for Sunday Service within the County may be elected as a resident ringing member and shall be attached to that District within the boundaries of which he so rings or is resident for the time being (and if eligible for more than one District to that which he may select from time to time by written notice to the General Secretary).

15 Compounding members at the adoption of these Rules shall become non-resident members. Any person ineligible as a resident ringing member may be elected a non-resident member. A non-resident member becoming eligible as a resident ringing member shall (after the adoption of these Rules) thereupon cease to be a non-resident member until he ceases to be so eligible, save that a ringer who is resident in the county or a bone-fide Sunday Service ringer in the county may be elected a non-resident member if he is resident in or a bone-fide Sunday Service ringer at a church in the Diocese of Guildford.

16 Before any member is proposed for election by Ordinary Resolution of the Association or of a District the General or District Secretary must receive a completed membership form from the applicant (this applies equally to members whose election is being ratified following election before a peal or at a training day). The chairman of the meeting at which the election of a member is made or ratified shall ensure an application has been received before accepting the proposal.

16a Following receipt of a completed membership form the General or District Secretary should write to the applicant and their sponsor advising them of the meeting they will be proposed at and inviting them to attend.

16b Following election by Ordinary Resolution of the Association or of a District the General or District

Secretary should contact the member personally at the earliest opportunity welcoming them and providing them with details of the Association including current subscription rates, calendar of events and methods of communication.

17 The General Secretary shall convert into a non-resident member any resident ringing member who is not liable for an unpaid subscription, if such a member has ceased to be eligible as a resident ringing member, upon notification by the member or his representative to the General Secretary or to the appropriate District Secretary.

18 An honorary life member shall be :-

a a life member of the Association before the adoption of these Rules, or

b any person who is elected by the Association by an Ordinary Resolution that he be elected an honorary life member for either

i service to the Ringing Exercise,

ii service to the Association, or

iii completing at least thirty years as a resident ringing member.

19 The General Committee may by letter invite any member to resign within a time specified in such letter and in default of such resignation the General Secretary shall propose a motion for a Special Resolution that such member be expelled at an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Association convened by the General Master to be held within eight weeks of the expiry of the time specified in such letter. When notice of such meeting is given the General Secretary shall inform the member in question of the nature of the complaints against him. At such meeting the member shall be allowed to speak against the motion.

OFFICERS

20 The Association by Ordinary Resolution shall appoint any person as President of the Association for a term not exceeding five years. This rule shall not prevent any person being re-elected for a further term or terms of years.

21 An honorary life member may by Special Resolution of the Association be appointed a Vice-President of the Association to hold office for life. The Bishops of Southwark, Guildford, Croydon, Kingston-upon-Thames and Woolwich shall, ex-officio, be Vice-Presidents of the Association.

22 The Association annually by Ordinary Resolution shall appoint any person as Independent Examiner to independently examine the accounts of the Districts and of the Association. He may not hold an office which confers membership of the General Committee.

23 The Association shall be affiliated to the Council and Representatives shall be elected in accordance with the Council's constitution for the time being. The Association shall recognise and abide by the rulings of the Council and shall pay the reasonable travelling and incidental expenses of such Representatives in attending the meetings of the Council.

24 The General Officers (in order of seniority and their responsibilities) shall be a General Master (who shall, inter alia, be the Chairman at the business meetings of the Association and of the General Committee and shall organise ringing meetings of the Association), a General Secretary (who shall, inter alia, act as Treasurer of the Association, conduct all correspondence on behalf of the Association and the General Committee and maintain a register of members and their respective classes), an Assistant General Secretary (who shall, inter alia, take minutes of business meetings of the Association and the General Committee and perform all such other functions as the General Secretary may delegate to him from time to time), a Belfry Repair Fund Secretary (who shall, inter alia, coordinate the belfry repair activities of the Association including keeping accounts and compliance with the requirements of the Charity Commission), a Training Officer (who shall, inter alia, coordinate training within the Association), and a Communications Officer (who shall, inter alia, advise the General Committee on matters relating to member and public communication, edit the Association's newsletter and coordinate the Association's online presence).

25 District Officers shall be a District Master, a District Secretary, an Assistant District Secretary (who shall perform the same functions for their District as the corresponding General Officers perform for the Association respectively) and three District Committee Members.

26 Only a resident ringing member or honorary life member is eligible as General Officer or District Officer. No member may be General Master for more than three consecutive years. A resident ringing member is only eligible as a District Officer for the District to which he is attached for the time being.

27 No member may be elected to more than one General and one District post at any one time. Officers shall be elected in order of seniority. Newly elected officers come into office at the close of the meeting at which they are elected, save for a Master who comes into office immediately upon election.

28 The General Officers shall be elected annually by Ordinary Resolution at the Annual General Meeting. District Officers shall be elected annually by Ordinary Resolution at their District's Annual District Meeting. Casual vacancies among Officers may be filled by Ordinary Resolution of the relevant District Committee or, in the case of a General Officer, of the General Committee.

COMMITTEES

29 A District Committee shall consist of the District Officers for the District of whom three shall form a quorum. The General Committee shall consist of the members of all District Committees and the General Officers of whom seven shall form a quorum.

30 A Committee meeting shall be convened forthwith upon the request of any member thereof to the appropriate Secretary who shall give at least three days notice of such meeting to all members of that Committee. The power of the Committee is unlimited within the Rules and objects of the Association. It may delegate such power to whom it thinks fit and may revoke such power provided that any such revocation shall have no effect until received by the delegate and shall be void in so far as it purports to be of retrospective effect.

MEETINGS

31 The General Secretary and each District Secretary shall produce accounts annually to the Independent Examiner and seek the approval thereto of a meeting of the General Committee (and of the Annual General Meeting) and of the District Committee (and the Annual District Meeting) respectively.

32 The appropriate Committee shall arrange the times, dates and venues of all meetings of the District or of the Association and shall have power to alter such arrangements save that the date of the Annual General Meeting shall be held on a Saturday in May and an Annual District Meeting shall be held by each District on a Saturday in January or February.

33 An Extraordinary General Meeting of the Association or of a District shall be convened within 42 days of the receipt by the appropriate Secretary of the instruction of the appropriate Master, or of the written requests of at least 12 members (other than non-resident members) who shall in the case of such requests in respect of a District be attached to that District.

34 No business shall be transacted at a meeting of the Association or at an Annual District Meeting unless a quorum of members entitled to vote at such meeting is present. A quorum shall be twenty in the case of a meeting of the Association and ten in the case of an Annual District Meeting.

35 The resident ringing members and/or honorary life members frequenting a particular tower shall cause their District Secretary to be told of a tower correspondent to receive postal and/or email notices of meetings. All notices will also be placed on the Association's website. Accidental omission to give any (but not all) such notices shall not invalidate the meeting concerned.

36 At least 14 clear days notice and 28 clear days notice shall be given of Annual Meetings and Extraordinary General Meetings respectively.

CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

37 Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the law of England and Wales and the General Committee may prepare standing orders in accordance therewith for the guidance of chairmen.

38 If the appropriate master is at any time absent from a meeting it shall forthwith proceed by Ordinary Resolution to elect a member to act as chairman in the Master's absence. Such election is to be conducted by the appropriate Secretary or other member, on a show of hands.

39 Save as otherwise provided in these Rules, a proposal for a motion must be made in writing to reach the appropriate Secretary at least 28 clear days before the meeting at which such motion is to be voted upon. All motions require a seconder before being put to the meeting. Alterations, additions or deletions to the Rules or any matter directly concerning finance (save for the adoption of the accounts) may only be effected by Special Resolution. Notwithstanding the foregoing the meeting may by Special Resolution agree to discuss and to vote upon a motion received within less than the stipulated notice.

40 All motions for the election of Vice-Presidents, an Independent Examiner, Council Representatives and General Officers shall be proposed either orally at an Annual District Meeting or in accordance with the immediately preceding Rule. Motions for the election of District Officers shall be proposed either orally at the Nomination Meeting or in accordance with the immediately preceding Rule.

41 If no motion is proposed for the election of any member to an office (other than that of Vice-President) the chairman of the meeting in his discretion may accept the proposal of one or more motions for the election of members to that office notwithstanding the immediately preceding Rule.

42 If the motion for the election of an officer is contested, the resolution of the meeting shall be decided by secret ballot. The chairman shall appoint such tellers to conduct the ballot as are willing to do so and who shall if possible not be members of the Association. A motion proposed and seconded for the election of a member to an office for which no other member has been moved shall be declared duly carried by the chairman of the meeting without voting.

43 Any other business is to be restricted to discussion and the raising and answer of queries.

44 No notice need be given of motions for the adoption of minutes, reports or accounts or for the election of members.

MISCELLANEOUS

45 A peal recognised as having been rung for the Association is liable to be expunged from the records of the Association by the General Committee unless details of the composition thereof have been notified to the General Secretary if requested. Peals may be credited to the Association only if all those ringers taking part are members of the Association.

45A Peals failing to comply with Rule 45 may be accepted by the General Committee as rung for the Association. The conductor or organiser of such a peal should write to the General Secretary explaining the circumstances of the non-compliance and explaining why the Association should accept the peal. Should the General Committee reject such a peal, the conductor or organiser shall have the right of appeal to the Annual General Meeting.

46 The Association by Special Resolution may dissolve and provide for the disposal of its net assets, provided always that except when such dissolution is with a view to reconstruction or amalgamation, the Belfry Repair Fund shall be administered by the Council.

LIBRARY

47 The Association shall maintain a library and the General Committee shall be responsible for the annual appointment of a Librarian and instructing him in the proper administration of the Library and providing for the housing and adequate insurance of the Library.

BELFRY REPAIR FUND

48 The Association shall hold a Belfry Repair Fund, to be administered by the General Committee through the Belfry Repair Fund Secretary. The Fund shall be registered as a charity. The General Committee shall have the same unrestricted power of investment of the Fund as if it were absolutely entitled thereto and when acting in good faith shall not be responsible for loss.

49 The General Committee may in its absolute discretion make a grant out of either the capital or income of the Belfry Repair Fund for or towards the cost of bells, their fittings or repairs thereto or any structural, mechanical or sound control work for the proper functioning of bells ringing full circle provided always that the bell or bells concerned are located within the County.

50 The Belfry Repair Fund Secretary shall maintain account of the Belfry Repair Fund distinguishing monies in the Fund from all other monies held in the name of the Association. Collections shall be taken for the Fund at every meeting of the Association and at every business meeting of the Districts, such monies as are collected shall be passed to the Belfry Repair Fund Secretary.

(Surrey Association Belfry Repair Fund: Registered Charity Number - 260561)

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