

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD – SONNING DEANERY BRANCH

Annual General Meeting

Saturday 15th February 2020, St James, Finchampstead, 5.15pm

AGENDA

- a. Apologies for absence:
Received from: Jacquie Hazell;
- b. Death of members:
Laurie Hall – Arborfield; David Willis – formerly Sonning; Stan Scott - Easthampstead
- c. Approval of minutes of previous AGM (February 2019)
- d. Receipt of minutes of previous business meeting (November 2019)
- e. Matters arising from the minutes
- f. Officers reports (see separate document), questions and discussion
 - a. Secretary
 - b. Treasurer
 - c. Ringing Master
 - d. Training Officer
 - e. Branch Representatives
 - f. Bookstall Officer
 - g. Youth Officer
 - h. Webmaster/Postmaster
7. Election of new members
8. Election of Officers (= current holder), * = not seeking reelection
 - a. Chairman (John Harrison)
 - b. Secretary (Sue Portsmouth)*
 - c. Treasurer (Sue Davenport)
 - d. Ringing Master (Nigel Mellor)
 - e. Deputy Ringing Master (Steve Wells)*
 - f. Branch Representatives (Sue Davenport, Jacquie Hazell)
 - g. Newsletter Editor (Alison Clayton)
 - h. Bookstall Officer (Sue Portsmouth)
 - i. Training Officer (Vacant)
 - j. Youth Officer (Rob Needham)*
 - k. Webmaster/Postmaster (John Harrison)
 - l. Independent Examiner (Mike Davis)
9. Branch practices and events schedule (Secretary)
10. Branch striking competition results – award of 6-bell certificates
11. Any Other Business:
Mini outings

See over for notes

Notes to support the agenda

Under matters arising (item 5):

Social events – The Business meeting in November 2018 asked whether the Branch should organise social events, and there was a consensus at the 2019 AGM that it would be beneficial to do so. In the past there have been successful events including quizzes and skittles matches, but not in recent years. Taking this forward requires a co-ordinator – initially to assess the demand for various activities and then to put together a team to make something happen. No volunteer came forward at the meeting and the officers have so far failed to find anyone willing and able.

Recruitment – Following Arborfield's successful use of Facebook to advertise for recruits, we encouraged other bands to consider novel approaches to recruiting, and offered to provide advice if needed, but there was little response. Does that mean that all bands within the Branch are satisfied that their current approach delivers an adequate supply of suitable recruits?

Publicising ringing – The Branch has twice hired the Charmborough Ring as a show piece to help publicise ringing to the wider community. Despite a £150 grant from the Show organisers our net cost was nearly £200.

There was a strong feeling at last year's AGM that we ought to try to maintain the momentum created on the back of the national Ringing Remembers campaign by doing something over and above what 'in parish' publicity by individual bands, but to make any progress we either need more ideas or we need to reconsider a major event.

At the AGM we agreed to consider the possibility of mounting smaller attractions at fairs, markets, etc around the Branch, but so far we have not identified a sufficiently attractive offering that would justify the cost of a stall (typically £40-50).

In May we are planning press coverage of special ringing for the 75th anniversary of VE Day, which will require cooperation of bands sharing their plans with us ahead of time so we have a story with enough impact.

Investment in ringing & training – Last year's AGM strongly supported the idea of using surplus Branch funds to support investment in training and other beneficial uses in Branch towers, not just work on bells. The Guild will also contribute to investment in training facilities.

However a tower initiative is needed before the Branch can support it, so as well as knowing that money is available, bands need to understand what is possible and how it could benefit them. Ringers are used to making do with what they have, and it is easier to appreciate that something better is possible after experiencing it.

There was an article in the autumn newsletter, and there is some guidance on the Guild website. Is this enough, or would it be helpful to engage more actively with bands about what they could do?

Under AOB (item 11):

Mini outings – In some areas there are regular mini outings – a few towers, with not too much travelling and a pub lunch. In 2017 a survey of members suggested that there might be more support for shorter outings and in 2018 there was a successful half day outing. Would members value more mini outings?