

Sonning Deanery Branch – Responsibilities and tasks of officers

The responsibilities and tasks of the main officers are listed below. They are subject to the following caveats:

- 1 **Deputies** – With the exception of Ringing Master, only one role is listed for each area of responsibility. From time to time the Branch may create additional, assistant roles. Where this occurs the responsibility for the function being performed rests with the primary role but the work needed to do it may be divided between the two roles in whatever way they consider effective.
- 2 **Delegation** – In some cases the work of different roles overlaps. This is particularly so with membership information, which is used by the Secretary, Treasurer and Web/Postmaster. The primary responsibility for managing the membership information and ensuring its accuracy and completeness rests with one role (in this case the Treasurer). Some of the tasks may be delegated to one of the other involved roles by agreement.
- 3 **Shared responsibilities** – In addition to their specific responsibilities and tasks, all officers share in the responsibility for working together to ensure the Branch's wellbeing.

Chairman

The Chairman has overall responsibility for the long term health and effective working of the Branch. Many of the tasks needed to run the Branch will be delegated to officers but it is the Chairman's job to ensure that the right things get done and to initiate change if things are not working for the overall benefit of members.

- 1 Support and where appropriate co-ordinate the activities of other officers
- 2 Maintain an awareness of the needs, aspirations and feelings of the members
- 3 Review from time to time the way the Branch operates and, in conjunction with the other officers, consider changes that would more effectively foster the objectives of the Guild
- 4 Chair General Meetings and Business meetings, The AGM is held on the 3rd Saturday in February and the Business meeting on the 3rd Saturday in November
- 5 Maintain an awareness of any external developments that could affect the working of the Branch
- 6 Undertake any other activity in the interests of the Branch, as he or she sees fit
- 7 Ensure that other officers are aware of each other's work and collaborate when appropriate
- 8 Convene meetings of the officers as required in furtherance of the above.

Secretary (See also: ODG guide for branch secretaries: odg.org.uk/main/rules/branch_secretary_guide_2011.pdf)

The Secretary is responsible for all communication, record keeping and administration not performed directly by another officer.

- 1 Take minutes of General Meetings and Business Meetings, write them up and circulate them to appropriate participants in a timely fashion, and keep them for approval at a subsequent meeting. If not able to be present at any meeting, ensure that another suitable person will take the minutes and that they are written up and circulated.
- 2 Ensure copies of the approved minutes are sent to the Guild Librarian.
- 3 Ensure that up to date information is held about the towers of the Branch (for example, ringing times, tower captains, tower correspondents, telephone numbers, etc.) and that it is fed in a timely way to all relevant users of the information (currently the Branch Webmaster for the tower list on the website, and the Branch Postmaster for tower e-mail aliases).
- 4 Assist the Treasurer to maintain up to date information about Branch members. Ensure that changes to membership information that are known to the Secretary are fed in a timely way to all relevant users (currently e-mail changes to the Branch Postmaster for the members e-mail list, and new members or change of status: new/deceased/resigned/moved away to the Branch Treasurer, Branch Postmaster and the Guild Membership Secretary).
- 5 Plan the year's schedule of events. Draw up a draft list of venues and times and negotiate with tower correspondents to check that the chosen towers (and halls where appropriate) will be available. (Branch events are usually on the 3rd Saturday of each month, but a date can be changed if there is good reason: AGM in February, 6-bell competition in April¹, Business meeting in November, and Branch Practices.) Aim to rotate events between all Branch towers, to achieve a balance between different numbers of bells and times of day.
- 6 Send timely notices and reminders of all Branch events to all relevant places. (Currently the Branch webmaster – draft plan + updates, the Guild webmaster – when dates are confirmed, members e-mail list – reminder shortly beforehand, Branch towers – advance notice, papers, etc for striking competitions and meetings, Guild officers – meetings)
- 7 Forward information received from the Guild or elsewhere, to the most appropriate recipients within the Branch, usually a mix of: Branch officers, Branch towers or Branch members.
- 8 Attend Guild General Committee meetings (two per year, in March & November).

¹ The joint 8-ball competition, organised alternately with Reading Branch, is now on the 1st Saturday in February.

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- 9 Attend the Guild Secretaries' meeting.
- 10 Write a brief update of branch activities for each issue of Odd Bob, preferably with pictures, focusing on items of interest.
- 11 Write an annual summary report of each year's activities within the Branch, for inclusion in the Guild Report. At the same time, ensure that complete and correct information for the previous calendar year on all Branch officers, towers and members is with the Guild Report Editor. (The summary report can serve as the Secretary's Report submitted to the Branch at the AGM.)
- 12 Deal with any correspondence to and from the Branch ensuring that it gets to/from the relevant person(s) in a timely manner.
- 13 Ensure that all historical/archive records and correspondence of the Branch are safely held. Either hold them in person where this is practical or consult the Guild Librarian in case the Guild Library might be a more suitable location. Wherever they are held, ensure that a record is kept of everything and where it is.

Treasurer

The Treasurer manages the Branch's finances and the current Branch membership information.

- 1 Keep accounts and appropriate records of all financial transactions of the Branch during the year.
- 2 Ensure all debtors pay up and creditors are paid.
- 3 Monitor Branch income and expenditure during the year. Alert the officers to any risk (e.g. of going into debt or the need for any other policy actions related to finance). Provide a financial update at Branch meetings between AGMs.
- 4 Arrange for the accounts to be independently examined each year so that final accounts can be presented to the AGM.
- 5 Produce an annual report on Branch finances for presentation at the AGM.
- 6 Maintain a file of current information on members (for example, name, membership status, tower affiliation, contact information if appropriate) in order to determine the Branch income and Guild contribution. Ensure that the contribution is paid before the required date (currently the end of March).
- 7 Update the file of current information on members (for example when new members join later in the year) and ensure that both the Branch Secretary and Branch Postmaster know of the changes. Send the Branch Secretary a copy of the file of information on members at the end of the calendar year (used by the Secretary to update the Guild Annual Report).

Ringing Master

The Ringing Master is responsible for all aspects of ringing organised by the Branch.

- 1 Ensure that all Branch Practices are run in ways that benefit those present, promote good striking and encourage broadened method repertoires, in accordance with Guild objectives.
- 2 Work with the Deputy Ringing Master to achieve the above objective and share the task of running practices with him/her in an appropriate way. If neither is available to run a practice, ensure that another suitably competent officer or member will be available to do so. (For example, running the daytime practices requires someone who can be available during the day.)
- 3 Together with the Deputy Ringing Master, maintain contact with Branch bands in order to understand the state of ringing within the Branch and the extent to which Branch activities help enhance it, or could be changed to help enhance it.
- 4 Organise Branch striking competitions. Invite suitable judges and arrange for stewards on the day. Ensure that entries are requested in good time, and manage the conduct of the event on the day.
- 5 Ensure that appropriate information about Branch ringing events is supplied to members and/or bands. (The information may be included in regular messages from the Secretary, but the Ringing Master is responsible for ensuring that it is appropriate to the objectives and/or focus of individual events.)
- 6 Provide an annual report to the Branch Secretary for the AGM.

Deputy Ringing Master

The Deputy Ringing Master works with and supports the Ringing Master.

- 1 Share the workload of the Ringing Master by running the ringing at agreed events.
- 2 Undertake specific tasks (e.g. organising events) as agreed with the Ringing Master in his/her duties.
- 3 Support the Ringing Master in his/her other responsibilities, e.g. helping to assess the needs of the Branch.
- 4 Be prepared to take over from the Ringing Master in the event that he/she becomes unavailable.

Branch Representative (to the Guild)

The representatives² are responsible for maintaining the connection between the Guild (central) and the Branch.

- 1 Attend Guild General Committee meetings. Where appropriate play an active part and represent the views and/or needs of the Branch.
- 2 Report back to the Branch (routinely at a subsequent Branch meeting but if urgent then to the officers direct) after each meeting.
- 3 Where appropriate draw issues raised in Guild meetings to the attention of members (via the mailing list and/or through articles for the Branch Newsletter).
- 4 Ensure awareness of topics that will or may be discussed at the Guild Committee meetings, and how they may affect Branch members.
- 5 Where appropriate canvass the views of the Branch (members and/or officers) on topics above.
- 6 Provide an annual report to the Branch Secretary for the AGM.

Newsletter Editor

The Newsletter editor is responsible for regular production of the Branch Newsletter.

- 1 Aim to produce the Newsletter to the agreed schedule – currently Winter (Jan), Spring (Apr), Summer (Jul), Autumn (Nov).
- 2 Solicit contributions from officers and members well before each edition is due.
- 3 Edit the Newsletter to the agreed size and format (currently 4 A4 sides with colour pictures). If there is too much or too little material, take appropriate action. (If necessary consult other officers.)
- 4 Arrange printing of the required number of hard copies (currently 1 per tower + Branch Secretary + 2 copies for Guild Librarian).
- 5 Provide the PDF file of the Newsletter to the webmaster to upload to the Branch website.
- 6 Circulate a message to members with the web link of the latest edition.

Bookstall Officer

The Bookstall Officer is responsible for providing appropriate publications for members to inspect/buy at Branch events.

- 1 Maintain a stock of suitable publications (more than one where justified by interest and the level of sales).
- 2 Keep an eye open for appropriate new publications and acquire them.
- 3 Notify the branch webmaster of new acquisitions and/or old publications no longer available (to update the list on the website).
- 4 Take the bookstall to Branch events (or arrange for someone else to do so) and encourage members to browse.
- 5 Sell books as required.
- 6 Keep records of sales and purchases and provide an annual report to the Branch Secretary for the AGM.
- 7 Keep a record of cash flow, and transfer money to the Treasurer when appropriate.
- 8 Periodically review the stock holding and sales to determine whether any changes of policy are needed.
- 9 [Possible new responsibility – Arrange for the bookstall to remain with a Branch tower between practices, ensuring that books and cash are properly accounted for.]

Training Officer

The Training Officer is responsible for the provision of training for Branch members over and above routine practices, etc. The Training Officer should work closely with the Ringing Master to ensure that their complementary roles work effectively together.

- 1 Assess training needs of Branch members. (This may be done by any combination of: periodic requests for members to declare the types of training that they would like, regular contact with branch members and tower captains to discuss their needs, receiving specific requests from members.)
- 2 Where sufficient demand for a course or courses has been identified, arrange for them to be run. Either run them personally or delegate running them to a suitable tutor.
- 3 If courses on specific topics are offered, provide appropriate information on their status, for the website and/or newsletter as appropriate.
- 4 Periodically review the courses offered and the effectiveness of Branch training overall. Make any appropriate changes (if necessary consulting the Ringing Masters and other officers).

² Guild rules prescribe two for a branch of our size.

- 5 Where appropriate ensure that the Branch is represented at external events such as Guild Training Meetings, either attending in person or encouraging someone else interested to attend.
- 6 Provide an annual report to the Branch Secretary for the AGM.

Webmaster (currently combined with Postmaster)

The Webmaster is responsible for the Branch website.

- 1 Make updates when required to keep the directory pages (officers and towers) accurate and up to date .
- 2 Extend the Diary page when each year's plan becomes available. Mark any provisional information as such. Make any corrections as soon as they are notified.
- 3 Where appropriate embed links in the diary to other related pages (e.g. tower information for event venues or Guild website for Guild events).
- 4 Upload new documents as required, and link them to appropriate index pages. (Normally this includes meeting papers and newsletters.) Replace any documents with updated versions when required (e.g. rule changes).
- 5 Upload information and/or pictures about Branch events (e.g. courses or competitions) to suitable locations, with appropriate index links to them.
- 6 Update the training pages as requested by the Training Officer.
- 7 Maintain the home page (mainly adding links to new items, removing links to old news, and updating 'Date updated').
- 8 Periodically review the 'static' parts of the website (e.g. history, external links) to ensure they are still appropriate. If necessary update or augment them.
- 9 Respond to any reports of problems with use of the website. Investigate the cause, if necessary make changes, and keep the person who reported the problem informed.
- 10 Provide an annual report to the Branch Secretary for the AGM.

Postmaster (currently combined with Webmaster)

The Postmaster is responsible for managing electronic communications in the Branch. The job does not require special skills but does require more detailed knowledge than in this description.

- 1 Update names / e-mail addresses for the *Members* list when received.
- 2 If messages to a member bounce (or a member does not receive messages) investigate and take appropriate action.
- 3 When officers change, or tower contacts change, (or when they change e-mail address) contact the Guild Server Administrator to update the relevant generic address. (The *Officers* and *Towers* lists use generic addresses so should not need changing, but old personal addresses as 'allowed poster' to these lists may need removing.)
- 4 When any list holds a message for moderation, check the reason and take appropriate action.
- 5 Liaise with the Guild Server Administrator if there are any problems with list or server operation.

Youth Officer

The Youth Officer is responsible for ensuring that the needs of young ringers within the Branch are catered for and that their views are appropriately represented. There is no fixed age criterion but the holder should ideally be (relatively) young. If the post is held by someone under 18 then slightly different arrangements may be required to satisfy legal requirements and a suitable adult should provide appropriate support and guidance, as agreed with the nominated young officer.

- 1 Maintain, a list of Branch ringers under the age of 22.
- 2 Maintain contact with the above group using any media appropriate for the group.
- 3 Promote and develop youth activity within the Branch, taking account of the ideas and needs of the group.
- 4 Work with the other Branch Officers to ensure that practices and other events are appropriately scheduled.
- 5 Run Youth Practices, calling on the Branch Ringing Masters for assistance and advice as required.
- 6 Actively encourage youth members to participate in the full range of Branch activities.
- 7 Organise a youth team to enter any appropriate competitions.