

# Guild Rules

Last amended 19<sup>th</sup> November 2016

## 1. Name

The Guild shall be known as the **Southwell and Nottingham Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers**.

## 2. Objects

It shall aim to be of service to the Church in the Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham ('The Diocese') by:

- a. Ringing for divine service.
- b. Recruiting and training ringers.
- c. Encouraging the art of change ringing.
- d. Helping ringers improve their standard of ringing.
- e. Assistance in the care and restoration of bells and their fittings.

## 3. Membership

Membership of the Guild shall be in one of the following categories:

- a. Honorary President.
- b. Honorary Vice President.
- c. Honorary Life Members.
- d. Resident Ringing Members.
- e. Non Resident Life Members.

## 4. Qualifications for membership

Qualifications for membership of the Guild shall be as follows:

- a. **Honorary President** – the Lord Bishop of the Diocese shall be invited to accept the office of President at all times. Should the Lord Bishop decline the invitation, the President shall be elected at the Guild Annual General Meeting.
- b. **Honorary Vice Presidents** – membership may be conferred on any person who has a close affinity with the Guild. Each district shall at their A.G.M. review the names of Honorary Vice Presidents, elected by, or resident within that district and delete the names of any such members who have ceased to take an active interest in the affairs of the Guild.
- c. **Honorary Life Members** – life membership may be conferred on any member in recognition of outstanding service to the Guild, and shall be on the recommendation of the District Committees and at the discretion of the Guild General Committee.
- d. **Resident Ringing Members** – shall be elected from ringers who reside within the Diocese and who can ring a bell competently in rounds. Ringers who reside outside the Diocese but ring regularly for Sunday service within the Diocese may, at the discretion of the district concerned, be elected resident ringing members.
- e. **Non Resident Life Members** – shall be elected from ringers who reside outside the Diocese and have attained the standard required of resident ringing members. These members shall not have voting rights within the Guild or be permitted to hold any office within the Guild. Resident ringing members who leave the Diocese shall automatically be transferred to the list of Non Resident Life Members, providing they have paid at least one year's subscription. Non Resident Life Members who move within the Diocese shall automatically be transferred to the list of Resident Ringing Members and become liable to the rules governing Resident Ringing Members.

## 5. Election of members

All new members as defined in Rule 4 shall be proposed, seconded and elected at any official Guild or district meeting, the only exception to this rule being,

- a. Non Resident Life Members may be proposed, seconded and elected prior to a peal attempt, providing the peal band contains at least two resident ringing members, and
- b. Members of the Nottingham Universities elected under the group membership scheme shall be deemed to have been proposed, seconded and elected by submission of their names to the Nottingham District Secretary before the District A.G.M.

Membership for resident ringing members shall be exercised through only one district.

## 6. Subscriptions

The subscriptions for membership of the Guild shall be as follows:

- a. **Honorary President** – the Honorary President shall not be required to pay a subscription.
- b. **Honorary Vice Presidents** – Honorary Vice Presidents shall not be required to pay an annual subscription but shall be encouraged to make an annual donation to the Guild.
- c. **Honorary Life Members** – Honorary Life Members shall not be required to pay an annual subscription but may do so at their own discretion.
- d. **Resident Ringing Members** – Resident Ringing Members shall pay an annual subscription that is current at that time. Junior Resident and unattached Ringing Members who are eighteen years and under on the 1st day of January, when the subscription shall become due, shall pay an annual subscription of not less than 25% of the adult annual subscription. Members of Nottingham Universities elected under the group membership scheme shall be entitled to all the benefits of resident ringing members upon payment of the equivalent of 20 adult subscriptions.
- e. **Non Resident Life Members** – Non Resident Life Members shall, at the time of their election, pay one adult annual subscription.

First subscriptions are due on election and annual subscriptions are due in advance on the first day of January each year. A member whose subscription is in arrears by more than twelve months shall not be allowed to vote at any official Guild meeting. A member shall be given fourteen days' written notice to pay the outstanding subscription and in default of payment their name shall be deleted from the list of Guild members.

The subscription of members elected after the first day of October each year shall cover the remainder of that year and the whole of the next year. All subscriptions shall be credited to the Guild general account, with the exception of the Non Resident Life Members' subscriptions, which shall be credited to the Bell Fund account.

All new resident ringing members shall be entitled to receive a copy of these rules, on payment of the initial subscription.

## 7. Management

- a. **Guild** – the management of the Guild shall be vested in the General Committee, elected from the Honorary Life Members and Resident Ringing Members of the Guild.
- b. **District** – the management of each District shall be vested in the District Committee, elected from the Honorary Life Members and Resident Ringing members of the District.

## 8. Committees

- a. **Guild** – the Guild committee shall consist of the following:
  - a. Chairman.
  - b. Vice Chairman.
  - c. Honorary Treasurer.
  - d. Honorary General Secretary.
  - e. Education Officer.
  - f. Honorary Peal Secretary.
  - g. Honorary Bell Repair Committee Secretary.
  - h. Report Editor.
  - i. Central Council Representatives.
  - j. Chairman from each district.
  - k. Secretary/Treasurer from each district.
  - l. Committee Member from each district.
  - m. Honorary Guild Librarian.
  - n. Guild Ringing Master.
  - o. Public Relations Officer.
  - p. Web Editor.
- b. **District** – the District Committees shall consist of the following:
  - a. Chairman.
  - b. Secretary/Treasurer.
  - c. Bell Repair Committee Member.
  - d. Ringing Master.
  - e. Assistant Ringing Master.
  - f. District Committee Member.
- c. **Peal** – the Peal Committee shall consist of the Honorary Peal Secretary and one other member.
- d. **Bell Repair** – the Bell Repair Committee shall consist of the Hon Bell Repair Committee Secretary, the six District Representatives and up to four Committee members elected by the Guild.
- e. **Investment Committee** – the Investment Committee shall consist of the Guild Chairman, Honorary Treasurer and two Trustees.
- f. **Education Committee** – The Education Committee shall consist of the Education Officer, who shall normally chair any meetings of the Education Committee, the Guild Ringing Master, up to two representatives nominated by each and every District, and any others the Education Committee may choose to co-opt. The remit of the committee shall be to make recommendations on and to organise training, recruitment and other education events within the Guild.

## 9. Meetings

- a. **Annual General Meeting** – the Annual General Meeting of the Guild shall be held at Southwell on the third Saturday in May each year. In the event of Southwell not being available, the venue shall be fixed at the Annual Committee Meeting. The A.G.M. shall be the final decision making body of the Guild. The meeting shall elect all Guild officers, appoint two Independent Examiners and set subscriptions and peal fees for the following year, commencing on the first of January.

Members shall be elected to fill the following offices: Chairman, Vice Chairman, Honorary Treasurer, Honorary General Secretary, Education Officer, Peal Committee (2), Bell Repair Committee Secretary, Bell Repair Committee (4), Report Editor,

Central Council Representatives, Guild Ringing Master, two Trustees, two Independent Examiners, Honorary Guild Librarian, Public Relations Officer and Web Editor.

All General Meetings of the Guild must be advertised in the "Ringing World" at least two weeks prior to the meeting. Twenty members shall form a quorum.

- b. **Half Yearly Meetings** – a General Meeting of the Guild shall be held in rotation round the districts in November each year.
- c. **Guild General Committee** – the Committee shall meet on the second Saturday in March each year and on all other occasions when required. The Committee is to be responsible for the following: to co-ordinate all Guild activities, to prepare and publish an Annual Report, to prepare and publish the Annual Accounts as approved by the Independent Examiners, to convene sub-committees as required, to budget annually for the Guild activities in the forthcoming year, to recommend the level of subscription and peal fees, to recommend any other method of raising funds and to organise the General Meeting of the Guild.

Should a vacancy occur on the committee in the interim, the committee shall have the power to fill the vacancy by the appointment of a qualified member.

Five members of the committee shall form a quorum.

- d. **Districts** – there shall be six districts known as Bingham, Mansfield, Newark, North Notts, Nottingham and South Notts.

Each district shall hold an Annual General Meeting prior to the 7th day of February each year, for the purpose of receiving a report and annual accounts for the previous year, electing officers and arranging a programme of activities for the ensuing year.

Members shall be eligible to vote or stand for office only in the district through which they exercise their membership in accordance with Rule 5.

The following officers shall be elected annually: Chairman, Secretary/Treasurer, Bell Repair Committee member, District Committee member, Ringing Master and Assistant Ringing Masters as required.

The District Secretary/Treasurer shall collect all subscriptions due from district members and remit to the Guild Honorary Treasurer, after the deduction of any expenses in running the district. A statement of district accounts shall be prepared for submission to the District Annual General Meeting and to the Guild Honorary Treasurer.

A directory of towers, correspondents, members, practice nights and ringing times shall be maintained for submission to the report editor by the 7th day of February each year.

Any alteration of District boundaries shall require the agreement of the districts, incumbents and ringers concerned and shall be submitted to the Guild Committee for final ratification.

All Annual General Meetings of the Districts must be advertised in the "Ringing World" at least 14 days prior to the date of the meeting. Subsequent meetings throughout the year may or may not be advertised, as decided by the District Committees.

## **10. Guild officers**

All Guild officers shall retire annually at the Guild Annual General Meeting but shall be eligible for re-election unless notice of retirement has been given to the Honorary General Secretary prior to the date of the Guild Committee meeting in March each year.

Nominations for Guild office shall be made in writing to the Guild General Secretary, duly proposed and seconded, at least 14 days prior to the Guild Committee Meeting in March each year. In the event of no nomination being received for any Guild office, the present holder of that office, if willing, shall continue in that office. If the present holder is unwilling to hold office for another term and no further nomination has been received, the Guild Committee may make nominations. If more than the required number of nominations are received for any Guild office, election shall be by ballot, the successful candidate(s) being the one(s) with the highest number of votes.

## **11. Expenses**

The following expenses shall be paid, subject to approval by the Annual General Meeting, out of Guild funds:

- a. the cost of printing the Annual Report and any other publications authorised by the Guild committee.
- b. the expenses associated with the Guild General Meetings and Guild committee meetings.
- c. stationery, postage, telephone, notice of meetings and any other incidental expenses.
- d. insurance of Guild property and Personal and Public Liability Insurance.
- e. Central Council fees and reimbursement of a representative's expenses in attending each Council meeting, not exceeding the second class return railway fare and a subsistence allowance to be determined by the Guild Committee.
- f. The cost of Internet and other services in connection with the Web Site, not exceeding a maximum to be determined by the Guild Committee.
- g. contributions to the cost of organising education events not exceeding a maximum to be determined by the Guild Committee

## **12. Peals**

All true peals of 5000 changes and upwards rung for the Guild shall be recorded in the Annual Report, providing all those taking part are members, it complies with the Central Council Decisions and the composition is forwarded to the Hon Peal Secretary.

Each ringer taking part in such peals shall contribute a peal fee. These fees shall be collected by the conductor and paid to the honorary peal secretary promptly. The amount of the fee shall be decided by the Guild Annual General Meeting from time to time, after due notice as defined in Rule 15 has been given.

The Honorary Peal Secretary shall be responsible for:

- a. Recording all peals.
- b. Recording the compositions used for peals on seven or more bells, if not previously rung for the Guild, or its peal number if rung previously.
- c. Collecting the names, addresses and subscriptions of any Non Resident Life Members elected in the belfry.
- d. Collecting the peal fees.
- e. Preparing an Annual Report for presentation to the Guild Committee meeting in March and its subsequent publication in the Annual Report.

Monies collected in (c) and (d) above shall be passed to the Guild Honorary Treasurer and the names under (c) to the Report Editor.

### **13. Central Council**

The Guild shall be represented on the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers and shall undertake to abide by the Rules and Decisions of the Council.

Nominations for the office of Central Council Representative shall be signed by two members of the Guild and sent to the Honorary Guild secretary 14 days before the Guild Committee Meeting in March, in the year in which the representative(s) are elected.

### **14. Bell Fund**

Members of the Guild are also members of **The Southwell and Nottingham Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers Bell Fund**. The Guild will support the Fund and the responsibility for raising income for the Fund shall rest with the Guild Committee. This committee shall have the power to raise funds. In doing so, this committee must not undertake any substantial permanent trading activity and they must comply with any relevant statutory regulations.

### **15. Alteration of Rules**

No alteration or addition shall be made to these rules, except at the Guild Annual General Meeting or a Guild Special General Meeting.

A Guild Special General Meeting may be called by either the Guild Committee, or requested in writing to the Honorary General Secretary by at least 20 members.

Notices of such alterations and the date and place of the Guild meeting at which they are to be proposed shall be published in the printed version of the 'Ringing World', at least one calendar month before the meeting date and the text of such alterations to be published on the Guild website.

Alterations to the rules shall require a two thirds majority of those members present and eligible to vote.

No alteration or addition shall be made to the rules which shall have the effect of the Bell Fund ceasing to be a charity at law.

### **16. Dissolution of the Guild**

A decision to dissolve the Guild may be taken only at a Guild General Meeting, under the same conditions for notices and voting as those prescribed in Rule 15 above.

The net assets of the Guild shall then be disposed of either or between both of the following:

- a. Any successor, charitable body or bodies with similar objects, covering all or part of the same geographical area.
- b. Such charitable Bell Funds as the Guild may select.