



Peterborough Diocesan Guild of Church Bellringers

Guild Spring Meeting

11th April 2026 at Braunston

Minutes

1. **Welcome:** The meeting began at 18:00 with Steward, John Beresford in the chair. He asked for approval from the meeting for him to take the chair, as the President was absent and the rules indicate that the Master should chair in the President's absence. The Master had had enough to do with the contest and results and the meeting agreed for John to proceed. He welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2. **Apologies for absence:** Jenny Ball, Chris & Margaret Bulleid, Chris FitzGerald, Sally & Daniel Counsell, Jane Marsh, Andrew Gunstone, Alistair Dondaldon.
3. **Vote of Thanks:** Helena Thorpe proposed the vote of thanks to the incumbent, the Revd Jenni Duffi for the use of the bells at Braunston & Brooke and to the Rutland branch for making the arrangements; to Ringing Master Jim Bence for the competition arrangements, to the judges for agreeing to judge the contest; and to Braunston for the use of the village hall and all those involved in putting on the most excellent tea. The Lord Lieutenant of Rutland, Susannah Fish, was thanked for adding a touch of glamour to the occasion and presenting the prizes. The meeting expressed its appreciation in the usual manner.
4. **Bell Fund:** The Steward gave an update on works at Badby and Corby, where works have been concluded. There were two grant applications.
 - a. **Weekly** for repairs to the cracked frame and rope guides with work cost of £11.5k a grant of £1,150 was proposed by John Beresford, seconded by Riuchard Allton.
 - b. **Yardley Hastings** for refurbishment to fittings and clappers with work cost of £6k a grant of £600 was proposed by John Beresford and seconded by Brenda Dixon.

Both proposals were approved by the meeting. The Steward noted that the unallocated bell fund is now £46k and that fundraising should be encouraged. Jonathan Stuart asked about the fund levels. Previously the fund had been at ~ 100k and was considered too large, grants were increased and the fund was run down, now there is a call to raise funds. The Steward replied that that was correct and that the lower fund level had resulted in lower grants being offered, there is a balance to be struck between the fund level and the grants being offered. The Fund would not want to be in a situation where it could not offer a grant to a project because of lack of funds. The Guild wants to keep the fund healthy and able to support projects. It is better to start fundraising than to not be able to support activity. A question was asked about VAT, the Steward was aware

of the issues and implications and that would potentially impact on costs and grants if VAT cannot be reclaimed.

5. **Annual report status.** The meeting was made aware of the annual report status, which is usually distributed at the Spring Meeting. The Secretary reported that the Report Editor, Nick Watts, had stood down. The Secretary and Webmaster were producing the report for this year. It had been delayed and aimed to be available in time for the AGM in June.
6. **Newsletter.** Jonathan Stuart, the Newsletter editor, informed the meeting that the April edition of the Newsletter was available and was being distributed. He also said that he was standing down as Newsletter Editor as he was moving away, and a replacement was required.
7. **Notices:**
 - a. AGM 13th June Irchester for ringing, service, tea & AGM.
 - b. 10 bells
 - i. May 9th 10 bell Cathedral
 - ii. July 11th 8 bell Welford
 - iii. September 12th 10 bell Towcester
 - c. Summer Festival: 12th September Brackley
8. **The 100 club draw** was held. The winners were Jim White, Sue Webster, Harry Curtis and Rushden Tower.
9. **AOB** The only item was to remind the meeting of the officers that are standing down and the vacancies that exist at Guild level. All were encouraged to seek out likely volunteers.
10. The meeting was closed at 18:14.

Appendix: List of those present:

Top Table: Steward John Beresford, Secretary Helen Allton,