

Trustees Annual Report

This annual report has a threefold purpose. Firstly, it summarises what took place in the year. This aspect is covered more fully and in a timely manner in the Guild Magazine published quarterly. Secondly it acts as a repository for all the useful information needed about the Guild and as such serves as its handbook. Finally, but not of least importance, it satisfies the obligations placed on the trustees of a registered charity to make public our operation.

The four trustees are the elected officers of President, Secretary, Treasurer and Ringing Master and form the Executive Committee of the Guild. They also serve as the trustees of the separate Bell Repair Fund (BRF) charity. The close relationship between these two charities means that this one report covers the work of both and that separate meetings of each charity are not held.

2023, has had some real high points. The restoration at Bulkington and the augmentation at Burton Hastings have been completed and both rings are now greatly improved. Though the Guild's grants have made a big difference, we must thank the local ringers that have put in so much time and effort into getting these jobs completed. Well done!

In going around the Guild we see a lot of people supporting their own tower, and others, helping out with the training of ringers and also putting in time for the Guild. This is greatly appreciated and is what makes us "tick" as a Guild. Without volunteers such as these we cannot function as a Guild. Thank you.

The Working Party that is looking into how we operate is up and running and is starting to get to grips with what is indeed a large task. Our thanks go to all officers of the Guild and at a District level they do a lot of work, often unseen, and it is very much appreciated.

Guild membership, as measured by those paying subscriptions during the year, has stabilised over the last year, the total paying membership being 455 from 69 Guild towers. This is a slight increase on last year's total. Yet, puzzlingly, there are fewer towers represented by the membership. At the time of preparing the accounts the Guild's paying membership in 2023 was split thus:-

<u>District</u>	<u>Senior</u>	<u>Junior</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Towers</u>
Coventry District	104	4	108	18
Rugby District	78	5	83	14
Warwick District	241	13	254	37
Unattached	<u>10</u>	—	<u>10</u>	—
Totals	433	22	455	69

There are also 6 active life members resident within the Guild taking the resident membership to 461. Our thanks go again to Gerald Trevor and Freda Bennett for their invaluable help in the collecting and recording of your subscriptions over the last 12 months. If you have not paid your subscription for 2024 by the time you read this (adults £10; juniors £2) we would urge you to send the money to one of us as soon as possible.

This year the General Fund ended up with a surplus of nearly £770. We also benefited by a further donation of £1,600 from Linda, widow of the late John Illingworth, to be used specifically for the Guild youth team. It is hoped that the legacy of Jill Roberts (Sutton-under-Brailes) will be spent on training bells in 2024, the other £3,500 of this having been spent on the new treble bell at Burton Hastings. The Guild now therefore has reserves of nearly £30,000, of which over half is designated for expenditure on special projects. This is roughly equivalent to 5 years income which the Trustees will be monitoring during the year but which we regard as acceptable at present.

Thanks must go to David Bell for examining this year's Guild and Bell Repair Fund accounts, his fourth and final year in the role prior to his move to Yorkshire.

The Guild Bell Repair Fund income for the year surpassed £28,000, mainly due, of course, to income from the Phil Faulks Memorial Bell Repair Fund. Expenditure was £6,800 giving us a surplus of over £21,000 over the year. During the year we donated sums of money to 4 different churches for various improvements to their rings of bells, the highest amount of which was the £4,000 given to Burton Hastings for the augmentation to 6 bells. Grants were given to:

Ansley	500.00
Ryton on Dunsmore	1500.00
Tysoe	200.00
Burton Hastings	4000.00

Another 4 towers also benefited from the maintenance inspection scheme that we arranged with Taylor's of Loughborough. Much of the work done recently in the Guild on bell installations has come as a result of these inspections and they have picked up on some important points that might easily have been overlooked.

The Guild Bell Repair Fund now has reserves of nearly £75,000 but we have already committed nearly £72,000 towards 4 different projects. It is due almost entirely to the Phil Faulks Fund that we can make such commitments. The very nature of the Fund means that the donations it makes to churches vary from year to year according to repairs, maintenance issues, and enhancements that occur and qualify for support. The donations made from the Fund vary from a few hundred pounds to several thousand according to the work needed. In simple terms with over 100 towers with bells in the Guild the Fund at the end of 2023 is equivalent to just over £700 per tower. The Trustees regard the current level of reserves as adequate. They are being proactive in using the money effectively by donating to churches having bell maintenance reports whilst still being receptive to funding any maintenance needed on bells/fittings; and augmentations to existing rings.

Also, our thanks go to Simon Rogers. He has been Treasurer for 40 years and would welcome someone to take over the role.

The "Ring for the King" initiative, begun in 2022, gathered momentum in the spring of 2023, with local communities keen to take up the art of bellringing. Learners were recruited from many different villages including Alderminster and within the Ferncumbe Benefice (Hatton, Honiley and Rowington). Additional training sessions were run to prepare people to ring for the Coronation on 6th May. All towers were encouraged to ring over the Coronation weekend, and routes were planned throughout the Guild to ring the bells at towers without bands. Members then gathered together at Wellesbourne to celebrate in style. The bells were rung at over 90 towers across the Diocese, bringing communities together in celebration. A full list of those tower performances is in this report. New clothing lines were produced for the event and also plaques could be ordered to display in towers recording this event. A letter was received from Buckingham Palace and also the Bishop of Coventry thanking members for their contribution to the National event.

Training has been of key focus in 2023. A new training centre has been established in Lighthorne. This has been a great success in developing the ringing skills of members from across the Diocese.

During 2024, we hope to roll out the model to other areas in the Diocese. The six new training bells will help with this objective.

Successful striking competitions were held at Leek Wootton in March and Harbury in September. The drive to improve standards is of great importance. Every time we ring the bells it is a public performance and part of the cultural heritage of this country. We have a duty to make sure it is of the highest standard. Regular Surprise major practices are held to allow more experienced ringers to practice and improve their skills.

The Youth Team practice monthly and the highlight of this year's activities was a trip to York for the Ringing World National Youth Competition. The band rang well and our young members are a credit to the Guild and to the teachers who give so generously of their time to help them develop.

The Guild quarter peal fortnight in November proved a success with 46 performances recorded of which 78% were recorded as a 'first'.

Regular business meetings take place across the Guild. Their popularity declines, as in every Guild. Members want to enjoy ringing together rather than attend meetings. This year's AGM was held in Brinklow, and the six monthly in Stoke. The outing in July was well attended. One of the best attended events is always the annual Carol Service, which was held this year at Wolston.

After 10 years as Ringing Master and Trustee, Mark Sayers retired in April and the role was taken by Steve Tibbetts. Thanks, Mark, for all your hard work and commitment to the Guild.

Thanks to all the District Officers, Guild Officers and organisers for all your hard work this year. Bellringing is in a better place because of the time you spend, selflessly supporting others. Thank you.

Michael Chester, (President), Annie Hall (General Secretary), Simon Rogers (Treasurer) & Steve Tibbetts (Ringing Master)

The Coventry Diocesan Guild of Church Bellringers				
Charity Number 517977				
Accounts for the year ending December 31st 2023				
	Unrestricted Funds 2023	Designated Funds 2023	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
Income				
Subscriptions:				
Coventry	1,048	-	1,048	924
Rugby	790	-	790	782
Warwick	2,436	-	2,436	2,397
Unattached	100	-	100	170
Late/Early	10	-	10	0
Non Resident	5	-	5	15
Gift Aid Recovered	500	-	500	505
Total Subscription Income	4,889	-	4,889	4,793
Donations	50	15	65	329
Report Advert	80	-	80	-
Building Society Interest	104	-	104	11
Jill Roberts Legacy	-	-	-	4,531
Youth Team Donation	-	1,600	1,600	-
	5,123	1,615	6,738	9,664
Operating Costs				
Officers' Expenses	497	-	497	224
Central Council Subscriptions	90	-	90	160
Annual Report	274	-	274	292
Newsletter Costs	-	-	-	-
PR, Website etc	120	-	120	28
Training	180	-	180	45
Youth Team	598	-	598	614
Donation	-	-	-	-
Liabilities/Maintenance Insurance	427	-	427	466
	2,186	0	2,186	1,829
Element of Subs to Bell Repair Fund	2,170	-	2,170	2,120
Jill Roberts Legacy	-	3,358	3,358	-
	4,356	3,358	7,714	3,949
Surplus of Income over Expenditure	767	-1,743	-976	5,715
Total Funds at January 1st	12,927	17,952	30,879	25,164
Funds at December 31st	13,694	16,209	29,903	30,879
Funds at December 31st				
General Fund	13,694	-	13,694	12,927
Churches Conservation Trust Fund	-	936	936	921
Jill Roberts Legacy	-	13,673	13,673	17,031
Youth Team Designated	-	1,600	1,600	-
Sundry Creditors	90	-	90	-
Total Funds at December 31st	13,784	16,209	29,993	30,879
Statement of Assets at December 31st				
Coventry Building Society			10,033	
Cash at Bank and in Hand			19,880	
Ringing World Credit			80	
Sundry Debtors			-	
			29,993	
Note: It is anticipated that the money from the Jill Roberts legacy will be used during 2024.				
The accounts were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees				
on January 29th 2024 and were signed on its behalf by:				
Simon Rogers Trustee and Treasurer			David Bell Independent Examiner	

The Coventry Diocesan Guild of Church Bellringers Bell Repair Fund		
Charity Number 502576		
Accounts for the year ending December 31st 2023		
	Unrestricted Funds 2023	Unrestricted Funds 2022
Income		
Element of subscriptions from Coventry Diocesan Guild of Church Bellringers	2,170	2,120
Coventry Diocesan Trustees - Philip Faulks Memorial Bell Repair Fund	24,051	23,918
Donations from towers and individuals	-	658
Donations from PCC affiliation scheme	246	301
Gift Aid Recovered	-	-
Draw Club	480	480
Surplus from Guild events and sales	649	222
Building Society Interest	423	44
Total Income	28,019	27,743
Payments		
Donation – Ansley	500	-
Donation – Ryton on Dunsmore	1,300	-
Donation – Ryton on Dunsmore	200	-
Donation – Tysoe	200	-
Donation – Burton Hastings	4,000	-
Donations - 2022 (10)	-	17,300
Maintenance Inspections (4)	588	483
Total Payments	6,788	17,783
Surplus of Income over Expenditure for the year	21,231	9,960
Total Funds at January 1st	53,729	43,769
Total Funds at December 31st	74,960	53,729
Statement of Assets at December 31st		
Coventry Building Society	50,850	40,426
Cash at Bank and in Hand	24,110	13,303
Sundry Debtors	-	-
Total Funds at December 31st	74,960	53,729
Note: The Bell Repair Fund has further commitments of £71,700		
The accounts were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees on January 29th 2024 and were signed on its behalf by:		
<i>Simon Rogers</i> Trustee and Treasurer	<i>David Bell</i> Independent Examiner	