8 a Oxford Diocesan Guild of Bell Ringers Reading Branch Rep’s report Feb 2024

Two Guild Committee meetings were held during the past year since the 2023 AGM.

The Case for Change Initiative is the main ongoing topic of discussion. Currently, the focus is on improving communication as this was the main point for development arising from the Guild’s earlier survey. The leadership group would like to purchase and implement MemberMoJo, a data handling system that will store the data of all members and allow the setting up of specific focused groups for the distribution of information. An alternative, Love Admin was considered but was dismissed as not being fit for our purpose. MemberMoJo has been used successfully in a number of ringing associations including Essex, Lincoln and Birmingham.

The Guild website has been migrated to a new server, saving £150 per annum and providing extra storage. This was completed in December 2023 but there have been some teething troubles particularly with emails. Work to correct this is ongoing.

There are plans to add QR codes to some Guild posters where appropriate.

The Learning and Development, and Towers and Belfries, working groups are looking to co-opt new members. There is also a need to recruit people to the current group focusing on PR. We currently have no Guild PR Officer. The current Odd Bob editor is retiring so a replacement will be required. There was a suggestion that the publication could be simplified and/or produced in an online form. If you are interested in any of these roles, please contact the Master or Honorary Secretary.

Amongst other courses the Learning and Development group are running a series of Tower Leaders Workshops focusing on three branches at a time. The first of these is being held in the north of the Guild on February 3rd but there will be one in this area at some stage so look out for that if you are interested.

The Guild Committee voted to increase Guild subscriptions from £8 to £10 per annum. The reasons given for the increase by the Guild Treasurer were:

* to support youth groups within the Guild
* to fund the purchase of the new membership software
* to help fund enhanced IT activities
* to fund the increased insurance premium.

The amount given to the branches will remain at £3 as there has been no request from branches for an increase. Peal fees will also remain at 50p per ringer.

The next Guild Festival will be held in Oxford in 2031 rather than 2030 as this is the 150th anniversary of the founding of the ODG.

**CCCBR News**

The meeting receives a regular communication from the CCCBR. The following items may be of interest:

* surveys suggest that after a post-Covid drop in the number of active ringers numbers are beginning to pick up again
* the Central Library has been relocated to Loughborough Museum
* the council is develop a greater emphasis on recruiting young people
* council voted against reducing the number of association reps
* consideration is being given to developing a photographic record of peal boards within towers and churches.

**June Wells**

**Branch Representative**