

Minutes of the Michaelmas Term Business Meeting, held in St Bene't's Church, Cambridge, on 25th October 2024

Members Present

President: J A Agg
Master: S J Spencer
Secretary: A S Cooke

Toby Clifton
Thomas Haslam
Kate Jennings
Thomas Higton
Sam Johnson

Jonathan Martin
Jonathan Nash
Melissa Nash
Jonathan Shanklin
John Sturdy

Lena van Dongen
Ben Willetts
Chris Winkless-Clark

The President opened the meeting at 21:04

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from:

Claire Barlow
Greg Chu
Amy Dunn
Kirsten Hawkins

Lucy Hennessy
Stella Johnson
Peter Seager-Fleming
Jadd Virji

2 Minutes of the Lent Term Business Meeting 2024

With minor corrections raised by Chris Winkless-Clark (correcting 'arised' to 'arisen'), the minutes were proposed as a true and correct copy of the meeting by Chris Winkless-Clark, seconded by Kate Jennings and were accepted unanimously.

3 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4 Election of New Members

The following were proposed for membership by Sam Johnson, seconded by John Sturdy, and accepted unanimously.

Samuel Canning (Homerton)
Matthew Collier (Homerton)
Zoe Gooding (Jesus)
Thomas Higton (Emmanuel)

Yanina Khrobostova (Lucy Cavendish)
Douglas Page (Magdalene)
Peter Seager-Fleming (Robinson)

5 Cambridge Towers

St Andrew the Great

Chris Winkless-Clark informed the meeting that the Steeplekeeper had purchased new tools and that these were now padlocked. Sam Johnson said that the bolts on the stays of the 3 and 4 were regularly being tightened and that the clapper on the 7 is loose. This has not yet been addressed because of difficulty removing the split pin, but the Steeplekeeper is consulting others in Cambridge on how best to proceed. Toby Clifton asked about the stay on the 6 to which Sam Johnson informed him that it had been removed, rotated and replaced.

St Bene't's

Sam Johnson confirmed the bells are still there. A new set of ropes has been purchased, with a new rope already fitted on the 4 so it is no longer stretchy. He said he would change out the remaining ropes over the coming weeks. Following on from discussions about paying for the ropes at the AGM, he explained that St Bene't's had covered a large amount of the cost beyond what could be paid for from the bell fund. The President suggested the committee discuss options for the Guild potentially making a contribution to the cost with the Senior Treasurer. Jonathan Shanklin explained that he is in the process of replacing the tower's information boards.

Great St Mary's

Sam Johnson reported that teaching is continuing at GSM and that problems with the simulator were being passed on to the tower's steeplekeeper. The President asked those ringing at GSM to continue speaking with staff when going up and down the tower.

OLEM

The President reported that ringing has resumed in the tower and highlighted the upcoming Guild practice.

St Clement's

Melissa Nash remarked that the new demonstration bell has been installed. Sam Johnson added that the bell was being used effectively for one-to-one teaching but that this is of little use to the Guild, mainly servicing ringers from nearby villages. He reminded everyone that the EDA continues to host intermediate practices at the tower. The President encouraged those present to continue making use of the Guild's free time in the tower. The Master explained that there would be Guild intermediate practices in the tower again this year.

6 Diary Dates

University Sermon, Sunday 3rd November - The Master reminded everyone of the upcoming University Sermon ringing and said that it would be good to see as many people there as possible for the last University Sermon of term. The President reminded the meeting that part of the agreement allowing the Guild to use GSM is that the Guild would ring for these services.

OLEM Practice, Wednesday 6th November 2024 - The Master reminded those present of the upcoming practice at OLEM, which has not been able to take place for two years due to issues with the tower.

SUA Southampton, Friday 8th to Sunday 10th November 2024 - The Master reminded the meeting that the deadline for registering with Southampton was Thursday 31st.

London Outing, Saturday 30th November 2024 - The London Outing is being organised by Kate Jennings this year. She asked anyone who was planning on attending for all or part of the day to let her know by replying to the email which had been sent out.

Annual Dinner, Saturday 15th March 2025 - The Annual Dinner is being held at Fitzwilliam College this year.

7 Any Other Business

The Secretary updated those present on a recent meeting between university societies and the Central Council on affiliation fees. He explained that at that meeting it was agreed that the increase to 40p for next year was affordable but that future increases may not be. Numerous options are being explored for how university societies report membership, pay fees and are allocated representatives including potentially reducing the number of members needed for a university society to affiliate which could both reduce costs and allow smaller societies to affiliate. The President suggested that anyone with ideas should speak to the Central Council Representatives.

Samuel Johnson updated the meeting on the current state of teaching by the Guild, pointing out that there is a heavy reliance on recent graduates to teach and that it is important to ensure what is offered to learners is feasible to organise. He also explained he felt he may be too involved given that he holds no official position within the Guild. The Master suggested a session for teaching new teachers, including increasing the number of student teachers. Chris Winkless-Clark suggested offering less teaching slots at GSM, while Ben Willets suggested only advertising teaching once teachers were organised. Jonathan Nash suggested being more open to having multiple learners to one towerbell teacher. Kate Jennings suggested the Teaching Officer should be more involved in ensuring sessions had sufficient teachers. The President commented that teaching is a credit to the Guild and suggested that the Teaching Officer and committee look into ways to make it run more smoothly

With no further business, the President closed the meeting at 21:23.

A S Cooke