Minutes of the Michaelmas Term Business Meeting, held in St Bene't's Church, Cambridge, on 30th October 2026

Members present

President: J A Agg
Master: O M Bennett
Secretary: M J Collier

Abby Higton
Amy Dunn
Charlie Betts
Hannah Cargill Thompson
Jonathan Shanklin
John Sturdy
Martyn Tickner
Mina Corso*
Samuel Johnson
Samuel Canning
Schoen Cho

*Elected during the Meeting

The President opened the meeting at 21:04.

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from:

Áine Williamson
Ben Shorter
Chris Winkless-Clark
Claire Barlow
Dave Richards
Jadd Virji
Juthika Sarma
Kirsten Hawkins
Marianne Hayward
Samuel Spencer
Stella Johnson
Thomas Haslam
Toby Clifton

2 Minutes of the Lent Term Business Meeting 2026

With no corrections, the minutes were proposed as a true and correct record of the meeting by Abby Higton, seconded by Jonathan Shanklin, and accepted without opposition.

3 Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

4 Election of new members

The following were proposed for membership by Oliver Bennett, seconded by Samuel Canning, and accepted unanimously.

Alfie Stick (Gonville and Caius)
Braden Cronin (Girton)
Matthew Black (Girton)
Mina Corso (Girton)
Nathan Richardson (Hughes Hall)
Orla Murray (Fitzwilliam)
Patrick Winters (Magdalene)
Songling Sun (Corpus Christi)
Sophie Marsland (Christ's)

5 Election of librarian

The Master explained that since our current Librarian, Áine, is now on her year abroad, we would propose Ben Shorter take over the role. This had been the plan when Áine was first elected. This motion was proposed by Samuel Canning, seconded by Abby Higton and accepted unanimously.

6 Cambridge Towers

St Andrew the Great

Hannah Cargill Thompson provided an update on the condition of the bells. She informed the meeting that the bells are still there, and that an annual inspection was carried out at the end of last term, with everything being in order. Those doing the inspection also took part in cleaning the belfry, as dust had set off a fire alarm last term. The church has asked us to finish hoovering, and a Saturday morning slot will be used to clean (and ring).

Great St Mary's

Jonathan Shanklin informed the meeting that a stay had recently broken and that the simulator was still not working. Otherwise, everything was as usual. The Master said that it would be good to see more Guild members at Evensong ringing and noted the new Evensong time following the change of the clocks. Jonathan Shanklin mentioned that access to the bell chamber is now controlled by a box system, which can only be opened by a few people to retrieve the key. This was implemented by Luke Smith due to concerns that it was too easy to access the bell chamber. Luke also carried out training for people to have belfry access at the start of term. Anyone wishing to receive this training should ask Abby. The Master mentioned that the intercom outside the ringing room is out of service, so members should listen for tourists before going down.

St Bene't's

Samuel Johnson informed the meeting that we had an annual inspection at the beginning of the summer, with normal maintenance and no major issues. The void was hoovered and there were plans to hoover the belfry before he broke his foot. Emergency maintenance had to be carried out at the end of the summer due to the wooden frame drying out in the drought, requiring the bolts to be tightened. Amy Dunn has been appointed as Steeple Keeper. The 5^{th} is no longer odd-struck, and we are unsure why. Jonathan Shanklin asked whether we are going to get an inspection from Taylor's. Samuel Johnson replied that we were waiting on Chesterton, who were planning to organise a joint inspection to reduce the call-out fee. This should happen soon.

St Clement's

Samuel Johnson informed the meeting that there has been no real change since the last meeting. They are getting through their fair share of stays and sliders, but they buy them in bulk. He mentioned that the Guild has an allotted amount of time at Clement's and that more could be used. The Master noted that the Society of Cambridge Youths had agreed to pay for any additional teaching on top of this.

OLEM

The President noted that ringing continues at OLEM, and there will be a Guild practice coming up soon.

Ed's

Samuel Canning informed the meeting that he went to a practice there a month or two ago and that one of the bells was out of action. Abby asked Sam if that was his fault. He said it was not.

7 Diary dates

10 bell Practice, Thursday 22nd *October 2026* - The Master thanked those who came to the 10-bell practice, and suggested speaking to Greg at a Monday practice if people wanted to ring more complicated methods.

Cycle Outing, Saturday 24th *October 2026* - We had 6 people for an enjoyable and wet cycle outing.

University Sermon, Sunday 1st *November 2026* - The Master encouraged people to come along and watch him attempt to stand the 11 at every stroke. Mina mentioned that she would be singing in Girton Choir for the service.

OLEM Practice, Wednesday 11th *November 2026* - The Master informed the meeting that we would not have to ring half-muffled for Remembrance Day, and that more details would be circulated closer to the time.

SUA (London), 13th *November* - 15th *November 2026* - The Master stated that a message would be sent out soon for those planning to go, and that a group chat would be made to organise transport.

London Outing, Saturday 28th *November 2026* - The London Outing will be organised by Chris Winkless-Clark. It will take place in Croydon, making use of the trams there. Samuel Canning was very excited about this information. More details will come out soon.

Annual Dinner, Saturday 20th *March 2027* - The annual dinner will be at Homerton this year.

Guild Week, Summer 2027 - John Sturdy informed the meeting that Guild Week will almost certainly be based in West Somerset next summer.

At 21:17 Amy Dunn descended from the belfry.

8 Bank account

The Secretary read out the following statement from our Senior Treasurer:

> Unfortunately, the Guild bank account is currently frozen. This is because of the business review process which was started in July this year, and we have had difficulties removing old signatories to the account.
>
> For the time being, we request that no payments are made to the Guild account. It is noted that the Guild currently would not be able to open a new society account with the NatWest, and this might be part of the problem.
>
> As people may well know, banks have typically been adding monthly charges for accounts provided to unincorporated societies. As far as I am aware, HSBC is the only mainstream bank which can provide a society account without recurring monthly charges. If we are unable to resolve our issues with NatWest, I would ask that the officers are enabled to open a new society account and transfer all cash assets to the new account.
>
> Motion: That the Officers be authorised until the next business meeting to open a new bank account on behalf of the Cambridge University Guild of Change Ringers, to transfer to it all funds held in any existing accounts, and to close those accounts thereafter.

This motion was proposed by John Sturdy, seconded by Samuel Johnson, and accepted unanimously. Jonathan Shanklin mentioned that the Cambridge University Astronomical Society had experienced similar issues with NatWest. The Society had written to NatWest and received a reply acknowledging that a mistake had been made.

9 Any other business

Samuel Canning informed the meeting that the Joint Outing would take place on 27th February 2027. Nothing had been organised yet, but the outing would take place in Buckinghamshire.

Oliver proposed a vote of thanks for Abby for organising teaching and maintaining such high attendance, which was met with applause. Abby thanked everyone who had helped with teaching, and noted that there was now a leaderboard showing who had attended the most teaching sessions

With no further business, the President closed the meeting at 21:22.

M J Collier