

Name

The Society shall be known as the St Nicholas Society of Bell Ringers.

Objectives

The aims of the Society shall be:

- a) To glorify God by the ringing of bells.
- b) To ensure the bells are rung for all major services and events.
- c) To advance the standard of ringing at St Nicholas' Church.
- d) To foster the art of Change Ringing.
- e) To recognise the position of ringers as Church Officers.
- f) To contribute, where possible, to the community and church life through the provision of bells and bell ringer presence.

Affiliation

The Society shall be affiliated to the Oxford Diocese Guild of Church Bell Ringers and shall support the objectives of the Oxford Diocese Guild of Church Bell Ringers (ODGCBR).

Officers

- a) By default, the incumbent Vicar shall hold the position of Chair and does not require nomination.
- b) Other officers of the society shall be:
 - (a) Tower Captain
 - (b) Vice Captain
 - (c) Secretary
 - (d) Treasurer

All above positions shall be elected annually.

General meetings, AGMs, EGMs

- a) An Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be held each year as soon after December 31st as is practicable and no later than fifteen (15) months after the previous AGM.
- b) The AGM shall be chaired by the Vicar of St Nicholas Church (Old Marston) or his/her nominee in their absence.
- c) **Voting.** Four members form a quorum to vote. The Chair holds the casting vote.
- d) **Term of office.** All officers upon election at the AGM shall serve two years. After two years they are eligible for re-election for a further two years. Any term of office shall not normally exceed four years, but may be possible with a quorate agreement only in circumstances where a non-election would leave the post vacant.
- e) **EGM.** An Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) may be called upon 14 days' notice
 - i. by the officers or
 - ii. by request of a simple majority of the members.

Casual vacancies among the officers shall be filled by calling an EGM.

- f) **Agenda Items.** Items for meeting agendas will usually be expected no less than three (3) weeks in advance of a meeting (72 hours for Any Other Business – see below). This is to allow time for the agenda to be produced and circulated.
- g) **Agenda.** The agenda for all meetings shall be distributed to Officers and those permitted to attend no less than fourteen (14) days in advance of the meeting. In the case of an EGM where only fourteen (14) days' notice is required, an agenda should be provided no less than seven days in advance.
- h) **Any Other Business (AOB) items.** Where Agendas have been circulated, notified AOB will be permitted up to 72 hours in advance and any updates to the Agenda will be available at the meeting. The Chair does not have to accept AOB from the floor on the day. Where they do, no responses have to be provided at the meeting and can be carried to the next meeting.

Membership

- a) New members of the Society shall be elected by a simple majority vote at an AGM or EGM. Between such meetings the Officers shall be empowered to grant membership to ringers who are eligible, subject to ratification at the next AGM.
- b) Any regular service ringer at St Nicholas' Church shall be eligible for membership.
- c) All Society members are encouraged to become members of the ODGCBR and will, subject to the agreement of the Officers, have membership paid for by the Society.

Termination

- a) Membership shall terminate:
 - i. Upon a member giving written notice to that effect to the Secretary.
 - ii. Failure to attend regularly, without notice, for a period of three months.
 - iii. Failure to conduct oneself appropriately when engaged in ringing duties or when representing the ringers.
- b) Only Officers have the authority to suspend a ringer for bad conduct. In such cases, the matter must then be brought before the Vicar.

Finance

- a) The Society shall hold and maintain its own funds. These shall be owned jointly by the members and shall not be part of church funds.
- b) The Officers shall be empowered to open and maintain a bank or building society account, with two Officer's signatures being required for withdrawal.
- c) The Officers shall be empowered at their discretion to subsidise up to 100% the annual Guild subscription of particular ringers. This shall in no way affect the beneficiary's eligibility for membership of the Society.
- d) The financial year shall end on 31st December each year. A statement of accounts shall be presented to the ensuing AGM.

Rule changes

The constitution shall only be changed by vote at an AGM or EGM, and shall require a two thirds majority of the members present, with a quorate of four.

St Nicholas (Old Marston) Bell Ringers Constitution

Duties and conduct

- a) Membership of the Society shall imply an obligation to make every reasonable effort to attend for Sunday service ringing, at practices, and, when called upon to do so, at weddings and special functions.
- b) All members shall conduct themselves appropriately while in the ringing chamber.
- c) A list of Senior ringers shall be agreed between the Vicar and the Officers. These shall be those deemed of sound capability to oversee the safety and quality of ringing, especially where learners or visitors are concerned.
- d) No ringing shall take place without the permission of the Vicar or their designate, unless a Senior ringer is present.

Accepted Behaviour and Rules for Ringing

- a) 'Ears open, eyes wide, feet steady, tongue tied'
- b) Respect for self, others, and the tower.
- c) Cheerfulness, commitment, and companionship.

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Rev. Skye Denno
Chair

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Hugh Deam
Tower Captain

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Roy Peach
Secretary

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Judith Kirby
Treasurer

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Date