

Draft minutes of the NEC meeting held on 03-07-21
on Zoom from 11.00 am to 3.50pm

Present: Tim Willetts (Chair), Christine Reid (Secretary), Anthony Hayes (Treasurer), Diane Holt (Membership Secretary), John Willis & Amanda Jones (SWR), Linda McCord & Keith Meader (EAR), Gay & Alan Cooper (SER), David Hampson (WMR), Alan Hartley (WHMF), Christine Lazenby & Roger Lazenby (NER), Laura Buist & John Elcock (SR), Mike Johnson & Judy Gees (EM), Irene Merson (NW)

Attending: Malcolm Wilson (SR) and Jane Willis (SWR)

1. Apologies - Corrie Paxton (WMR), John Atkinson (NER), Lysbeth Wilson (SC), Margaret Hubbard and Beth McCord (NWR)

2. Chair's opening remarks. The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. He said the intention is to have a shorter meeting than usual.

3. Minutes of last meeting.

Item 4 Archives should read 'the audio catalogue is now on the website'.

Item 5.iii should read 'John Willis has sign posted these on the website'

Item 11 should read 'Membership renewal period was extended'

With these changes, the minutes were agreed and accepted *nem. con.*

4. Matters Arising

Item 5.iii Physiotherapy/exercises - Susan Berry has given permission for her diagram to be printed in Reverberations and in regional newsletters.

Item 9 Regional Representatives roles - A comment was made at the last meeting that some Regional Reps are not aware of becoming a trustee. The four elected officers have discussed this and agree that we need a specific brief induction for new trustees. This could be a brief meeting via Zoom, run by at least two of the elected officers, once or twice per year, when the following matters would be covered: -

- the role of the regional representative (as in our agreed role description).
- the role of the trustee (as in the Charities Commission guideline).
- the requirement to self-declare that one is a fit and proper person to be a trustee and completing the necessary documentation.
- the fact that one's name and address will be on the CC website.

SW pointed out they are having trouble getting regional reps and it is possible that informing them that they will be trustees of HRGB will make this task more difficult. Ideas on trusteeship should be passed to Tim.

Action: All

5. Starting to Ring Again

i. Regional reps shared their plans.

SC - have carried out a survey of all teams - 3 have started ringing again, others are meeting online or socially and some have not been able to meet at all. Autumn Rally on 9th October will be on Zoom.

NW - Beth planning an online event for 17th July. Planning very small get togethers for October - 2/4 teams by invitation. These will be inside with social distancing. Very few teams are back together.

NE - held their AGM in May on Zoom. This included video clips to highlight Hazel Bradey's contribution. Some teams are ringing in gardens or homes. Larger team had planned to start but when opening up was delayed, this was postponed. Summer Ring planned on Zoom. Small rally in October to be organised by Ecclesfield in tribute to Hazel.

WM - have a joint event planned with SW for October. Have held several successful Zoom sessions.

EM - going forward, committee meetings will continue on Zoom. 2 teams using Zoom regularly. Held regional rally on 6th June which included international attendees. Virtual rally planned for 17th July. Continue to publish a full colour newsletter.

EAR - regional team practising regularly on Zoom. Hoping from September to meet physically. Rally planned for 10th October - hoping this will be physical but Zoom booked as well. This will be massed ringing. Smaller teams are ringing in sixes. Large teams using rotas.

SW - regional rally will be massed ringing on Zoom. Looking at venues for autumn events.

SE - very quiet. Possible invitation rally in September. SERBO have had a first meeting. Hoping for a physical AGM at the end of October but no rally. It is hoped the Guildford Handbell Festival will happen in June 2022.

Members were asked to feedback the appreciation of the whole NEC for everything that individuals, teams and committees are doing to keep handbell ringing going. Both regionally and nationally, a great deal of creativity is evident in the ways that members have responded constructively to the restrictions imposed by the pandemic. **Action: All**

6. Future Events

i. Regional Events

2022 National Rally - will be re-engaging with the hotel soon. Information will be in the Autumn edition of Reverberations. 130 individuals have retained their bookings. New bookings will be slightly more in price. Thanks were expressed to everyone for moving this event forward.

2023 National Rally, Stirling - encouraged by number of volunteers offering help.

2024 National Rally, Kettering - date has been confirmed with the venue.

ii. Virtual Events

Three events have been held since the last NEC:

17th April Aidan Fozard on Techniques with 90 attendees.

15th May Malcolm Wilson on Capturing Young People's Imagination with 60 attendees.

19th June Virtual Massed Ringing with 120 attendees.

Ideas in the excellent feedback will be incorporated into the next sessions.

Thanks were expressed to the leaders of these sessions, to Laura Buist for co-ordinating things and to John Willis for setting it all up.

The programme for the next events was tabled, together with some suggested topics for website based presentations. Members are invited to both make suggestions about possible workshops / presentations and also lead future presentations and webinars. One suggestion was a discussion forum on how to select music which will interest experienced ringers when your team has reduced in size. **Action: All**

iii. International Events

20th International Symposium, Nashville, USA - Massed Ringing Music - the judges had selected Robin Benton's Celebration for Bells. It was agreed to invite Robin to conduct in Nashville.

Action: Secretary

Information on the event has begun to appear on the symposium website - www.internationalhandbells.org. Registration opens on 5th October.

22nd International Symposium, UK - the sub-committee has identified 5 preferred venues - Newcastle Gateshead Quays, ICC Wales, EXCEL London, Manchester Central and SECC Glasgow. All have been contacted to see if in principle they could host us.

Action: Sub-committee

7. Money Matters

i. Review & Approval of 2020 Accounts - these had been sent to all and comments requested. The net sales deficit was £2,371 for the year, but given the Stock Policy used, the provision for slow and bad stock was increased by £6,808. Without this the surplus for sales would have been £4,437. This provision will unwind once sales start to pick up. The only amendment made was that the £166 should be against Regional Ensembles and Orchestras and not Regional Subscriptions.

Acceptance of the accounts was proposed by Alan Hartley, seconded by Keith Meader and agreed nem. con.

ii. Review of Regional Accounts for 2020 - nothing significant to report. Looking to this year, Anthony is aware that there will be significant challenges for the regions with continued loss of potential income due to the lockdown forced by the COVID-19 pandemic. Any region with concerns about their finances were encouraged to get in touch with Anthony.

iii. Review of 2021 to date - The current financial position of HRGB is quite strong, but we may still feel the impact as the COVID-19 pandemic continues. Web sales have continued to be impacted but other than the monies being held & deferred for the National Rally we have no other financial obligations or risks other than normal day to day costs (such as bank charges, card processing, web hosting etc.)

Thanks were expressed to Anthony for all his work on our finances.

8. Membership

Membership has increased by 195 since our last meeting. There are 3 new teams - 2 of which are youth teams. Diane has been seeking views from regional secretaries about a protocol for death notifications and made some suggestions to this meeting. These were agreed to be appropriate and a paper based on these will come to the next meeting.

Action: Diane Holt

9. Membership Renewals Software

A test version of the online renewal facility has been received and tested. For the most part it is acceptable and easy to use. Test teams were set up and renewal notices sent to nominated testers. A few changes (mainly cosmetic) have been requested. There appears to be some significant work to be done with regard to Gift Aid but all indications are that the new facility will be usable for 2021/2 renewals.

Action: John Willis

10. Social Media

Thanks were expressed to Malcolm and Amanda for keeping our social media channels full.

11. Archives

Alan has obtained agreement from Ted Cribley, who made the original recordings, and from the Trustees of Norbury HR, to produce a commercial CD from the tapes we have in the Archive made of the team in 1975. Once Covid restrictions relax, he will get back in touch with Huddersfield University archives. English Brass Bands have put their archives there.

Action: Alan Hartley

Amanda has transferred 30 videos to DVD for the archives. She is now looking for someone to transfer from DVD to digital so the footage is preserved for posterity and editable should we wish to use them.

Action: Amanda Jones

12. WHMF

Minster Minis have a set of bells on loan. Otherwise there is little activity.

13. Reverberations

Deadline is the 10th July. Back copies have been scanned up to 1986.

14. Sales

Things are very quiet. Receiving about one order per week.

15. Website

The website has been used successfully to book the various webinars being run and this is encouraging members to visit the website, often for the first time. It was pointer out that some browsers eg Firefox do not support the HRGB website. The security certificate has been reissued a month back so hopefully these issues are resolved. However it is best to use www.handbells.org.uk

Action: All

16. Handbells in Education

There had been no recent activity.

17. Policy on conditions for attending Ringing Events

Tim presented a paper outlining possible ways forward. We need to support our members who wish to play music together and we need to help them to stay safe. Our current interim policy says nothing about keeping people safe. With possible guideline changes in England imminent, it is difficult to set out a policy without knowing what these are. Following discussion, it was agreed that our current Covid sub-committee of Keith Meader, Laura Buist, Gay Cooper and Mike Johnson - would give some thought to a policy once the governments' guidelines are announced. In the meantime, our current interim policy remains in place.

Action: Keith Meader, Laura Buist, Gay Cooper and Mike Johnson

18. Matters arising from the AGM

There were none.

19. Gender Equality

EM Region committee pointed out that the standing version of the HRGB rules as published on the HRGB website (dated 17th April 2010) contains gender specific references in approximately 30% of the total number of paragraphs. They therefore proposed that the HRGB rules be revised to remove all gender specific references in advance of any other rule changes that may or may not be approved in the future. This was agreed.

It is hoped that an AGM will be sufficient to make these changes rather than a referral to the Charities Commission. Members with a view on this are asked to get in touch with Tim.

20. New National Officers

Members were asked for names of individuals who could take on these roles. **Action: All**

It is important to establish an effective way of overseeing the work of these officers. Tim suggested that it should be possible to work out a way of (i) giving appropriate amounts of attention to the work of all officers, (ii) creating a balance between charity and handball matters and at the same time (iii) make NEC agendas shorter. He would bring a proposal on this to the September meeting. **Action: Tim Willetts**

21. Safeguarding

Tim has contacted Michelle Robbins, a safeguarding trainer, who is happy to train relevant people. Virtual autumn training dates will be circulated and members were asked to ensure these were brought to the attention of safeguarding officers and event organisers.

EM Region proposed that standard approved forms to be added to the HRGB website safeguarding pages for use by regions and individual teams as required. It was agreed that this would be the form developed by the NE Region (with many thanks to the Region for offering this). Christine Lazenby offered to ask Andrew Ford to add the HRGB logo to the form in place of the NE Region logo. **Action: Christine Lazenby**

22. Charity Governance Code

The next section of the Code we need to reflect on deals with Board Effectiveness. Members were asked to reflect on the points and write down whether we do things effectively and the reasons for our answers. A form will be sent out to help with this - with answers being collated as the starting point for discussion at the September meeting. **Action: All**

23. Charity Commission News

Nothing appears to be of concern for us.

24. A.O.B.

Zoom - EM Region intend to keep using Zoom. HRGB paid 50% of the costs last year and they asked if this would happen again going forward. It was agreed to have a discussion on Zoom licences at the September meeting.

Thanks were expressed to Anthony and Laura for being our Zoom hosts.

25. Diary dates

These had been circulated.

26. Future Meeting Dates

The next meeting will be held on Saturday 2nd October 2021 on Zoom at 11am.

Future dates:
29th January 2022
26th March 2022
25th June 2022
1st October 2022

Meeting closed at 15.52