

Essex Association of Change Ringers
Draft Rules at 09 October 2010

- 1 The **ASSOCIATION** shall be called '**THE ESSEX ASSOCIATION OF CHANGE RINGERS**'.
- 2 The **OBJECTS** of the Association shall be:
- (a) to encourage the attendance of its members both at service ringing and at public worship; and to encourage the recognition of ringers as Church workers;
 - (b) to encourage fellowship and communication among ringers;
 - (c) to recruit and train new ringers, so that there may be regular service ringing in all the towers within the Association's boundaries where the bells are ringable;
 - (d) the promotion of the art of change ringing; and
 - (e) to promote interest in the care of all the bells and provision of new bells within the Association's boundaries.
- 3 **THE ASSOCIATION** shall be registered with the **CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES** (registration number 292250).
- 4 **THE ASSOCIATION** shall be affiliated to the **CENTRAL COUNCIL OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS** and loyally abide by the rules and decisions thereof.
- 5 **THE PRESIDENT** shall be the Lord Bishop of Chelmsford. The Vice-Presidents shall be the Dean of Chelmsford Cathedral, the Area Bishops, Honorary Assistant Bishops and Archdeacons of the Diocese.
- 6 **The ASSOCIATION** shall be **GOVERNED** by the Association Trustees (defined in Rule 13) advised by the Management Committee and administered by them through the Management Committee and its sub-committees, and through the Districts and their respective District Committees and District Meetings.
- 7 **THE BOUNDARIES** of the Association shall be those defining the geographical County of Essex prior to 1st April 1965 and shall include towers in adjacent counties which are by tradition affiliated to the Association. The Association shall be sub-divided into **SIX DISTRICTS**: Northern, North-Eastern, North-Western, Southern, South-Eastern and South-Western, the boundaries of which shall be regulated by the Management Committee.
- 8 **MEMBERSHIP**
- 8.1 **MEMBERSHIP** shall be open to any person interested in bells and bellringing.
- 8.2 Membership categories shall comprise the following:
- (a) **RINGING MEMBERS** able to ring changes to a standard suitable for Sunday Service ringing on tower bells or to ring handbells. Changes shall be deemed to include method ringing, call changes and tenor cover on tower bells. Handbell ringers shall be capable of ringing methods on two bells retained in hand.
 - (b) **LIFE VICE-PRESIDENTS** are Ringing Members honoured by the Association for their exemplary service and substantial contribution to operation of both a District and the Association for over 20 years.
 - (c) **LIFE MEMBERS** are Ringing Members or Friends honoured for their substantial contribution to their tower and district for an extended period (over 20 years) or who have been Ringing Members for at least 50 years.
 - (d) **NON-RESIDENT LIFE MEMBERS** who shall meet the criteria for Ringing Membership and who shall not be normally resident within the Association's boundaries. Ringing Members for five consecutive years, on moving from within the boundaries of the Association shall qualify as Non-Resident Life Members without election on payment of current subscriptions; Non-Resident Life Members on moving to within the boundaries of the Association shall qualify as Ringing Members without election, on payment of current subscriptions.
 - (e) **FRIENDS OF THE ASSOCIATION** who wish to be associated with and support the objects and activities of the Association but who are not eligible for membership under any other category.
- 8.3 Members in categories 8.2 (a), (b) and (c), only, shall be entitled to vote at any meeting.
- 8.4 Any person whose name appears on the Sex Offenders Register is not eligible to become or remain a member of the Essex Association of Change Ringers.
- 9 **SUBSCRIPTIONS**
- 9.1 **SUBSCRIPTIONS** shall be due on election and subsequent annual subscriptions on 1st January. Members may become paid-up life members by paying not less than 20 times the annual subscription.
- 9.2 Those members whose annual subscriptions are not paid by 30th April each year shall not participate in or vote at meetings or ring peals until the subscription is paid and those not paid by 31st December shall be deemed to have withdrawn from the Association and their names shall not be published in the Annual Report for that year. Lapsed members may be readmitted to membership within one year on payment of arrears and the current year's subscription. After that lapsed members need to be re-elected in accordance with Rule 10.
- 9.3 Ringing Members aged less than 18 years on 1st January shall be entitled to a 50% reduction in their subscriptions.
- 9.4 Life Members and Life Vice-Presidents shall become free from further subscriptions upon election.
- 10 **ELECTION OF MEMBERS**
- 10.1 **ELECTION OF MEMBERS** (except Life Vice-Presidents and Life Members) may take place at any business meeting. Prospective members shall apply using the prescribed Application Form and may only be elected

- by a majority vote of members present. Election is only completed on payment of subscriptions.
- 10.2 Ringing Members and Non-Resident Life Members may be provisionally elected prior to a peal attempt by two Ringing Members of the Association and ratified at the next business meeting, the proposers being responsible for subscriptions and for ensuring the prescribed Application Form is completed.
- 10.3 **ELECTION OF LIFE VICE-PRESIDENTS** shall be by overall majority vote of members present at an Annual General Meeting. Nominations shall be forwarded by the Management Committee only if not less than four-fifths of the Committee Members present vote in favour. All nominations for Life Vice-President, including details of the work of the nominee, together with the names of proposer and seconder shall be submitted to the Association General Secretary in writing by 1st January for review at the February Management Committee Meeting.
- 10.4 **ELECTION OF LIFE MEMBERS** shall be by overall majority vote of members present at an Annual General Meeting. All nominations for Life Members, including details of the work of the nominee, together with the names of proposer and seconder shall be submitted to the Association General Secretary in writing by 1st December and all nominations shall be circulated to all District Secretaries by 14th December.
- 11 ASSOCIATION OFFICERS**
- 11.1 The **MASTER** shall promote the interests of the Association, control all ringing activities at General Meetings or gatherings of the Association (other than District meetings or functions), chair General, Executive, Charity and Committee Meetings and deal with such other matters as may be provided for in these rules or as may be directed by the Management Committee.
- 11.2 The **GENERAL SECRETARY** shall record the Minutes of General and Management Committee meetings, issue notices of all General Meetings of the Association and of the Management Committee, and carry out such other duties as may be directed by the Management Committee, the Charity Trustees and the Association Executive.
- 11.3 The **TREASURER** shall give and receive vouchers for monies passed, maintain an up to date Membership List, keep proper books of account, ensure that proper financial records and procedures are maintained, prepare a balance sheet as at 31st December each year and an income and expenditure account for that year, or other such financial statement as prescribed by law, all of which shall be examined by the two Independent Examiners or professionally audited if required. The income and expenditure account and the balance sheet shall be approved by the Charity Trustees prior to being presented to the members at the next Annual General Meeting.
- 11.4 The **PROPERTY TRUSTEES** ("holding trustees") shall be vested with the title to all investments held by or on behalf of the Association and shall be responsible for the safe keeping of books and records and other property of the Association and shall maintain an accurate list of the property of the Association. The Master, General Secretary and Treasurer shall be Ex-Officio Property Trustees of the Association. All monies received by the Association shall be paid into an account in the name of the Association at a bank or building society appointed by the Management Committee; any two of the six nominated Property Trustees shall have the power to sign cheques. All money in the Association's funds not required for normal working purposes shall be invested or deposited by the Treasurer as may be directed by the Management Committee.
- 11.5 The **PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER** shall be responsible for co-ordinating Association publicity including providing press liaison, a point of contact for public enquiries and a source of material for use by the Association Members for displays, exhibitions, etc.
- 11.6 The **TECHNICAL ADVISER** shall advise the Management Committee and Association on all matters relating to towers, bells and belfries and shall chair the Grants Sub-Committee. The Technical Adviser shall provide or solicit high quality and unbiased advice regarding all technical aspects of bells, bell fittings and bell hanging, etc., as requested. This shall include advice and training for those considering DIY maintenance, etc., to any parish within the Association's boundaries and to undertake detailed inspections as requested providing a full written report including any recommendations.
- 11.7 The **EDUCATION OFFICER** shall provide advice and guidance on the recruitment and training of new ringers and coordinate training events at Association and District level as required.
- 11.8 The **DISTRICT MASTER** shall promote the interests of the District, control all ringing activities at District Meetings, chair District Committee Meetings and deal with such other District matters as may be provided for in these rules or as may be directed by the Management Committee.
- 11.9 The **DEPUTY DISTRICT MASTER** shall deputise for the District Master as mutually agreed.
- 11.10 The **DISTRICT SECRETARIES** shall arrange and publicise District Meetings and other events, record the Minutes, and carry out decisions thereof.
- 11.11 **DISTRICT TREASURERS** shall be responsible to the Association Treasurer for collecting membership subscriptions, donations and other monies, maintaining an up-to-date District Membership List (including addresses) and making payments within their Districts, giving and receiving vouchers for monies passed, making prompt bankings and ensuring banking summaries are sent to the Treasurer, submitting accounts to the Treasurer not later than the 31st December. A statement of district accounts shall be prepared for presentation to their Annual District Meeting.
- 12** The **ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE** shall comprise the Association Master, Secretary and Treasurer, and the six District Masters. All actions and meetings shall be minuted; and a report on proceedings of all actions

and meetings shall be circulated to the Association Management Committee within 14 days of each meeting. The Role of the Association Executive is to meet (including communication by telephone and email) only if required, at short notice, to consider urgent items that need to be dealt with immediately and that are beyond the remit of individual officers. The decisions made must be unanimous (or by majority if the matter concerns one of the Executive). In the event that a decision is not reached, a Management Committee meeting shall be convened. The Executive may make emergency temporary Officer appointments in extreme cases if urgently required.

The quorum for the Association Executive shall be seven, including the three principal officers.

- 13 The CHARITY TRUSTEES** (the Trustees) shall comprise the Association Master, Secretary, Treasurer, Property Trustees, Technical Adviser, Public Relations Officer and Education Officer and two officers from each District elected under Rule 16.
- 13.1 The Trustees shall be normally advised by and act through the Management Committee. They shall meet as often as required to discharge their responsibilities under the Charities Act and all meetings shall be minuted; they shall report on proceedings of all meetings to the Association Management Committee. The quorum for Trustees meetings shall be 12 including at least two of the principal officers, and one Property Trustee.
- 13.2 The Trustees shall ensure that the Management Committee complies with its obligations under all current legislation, including but not limited to the current Charities Act from time to time in force, with regard to:
- (a) the keeping of accounting records for the Association;
 - (b) the preparation of annual statements of account for the Association;
 - (c) the preparation of an Annual Report and its transmission to the Charity Commission;
 - (d) the preparation of an Annual Return and its transmission to the Charity Commission.
- 13.3 Accounts must be prepared in accordance with the provisions of any Statement of Recommended Practice issued by the Charity Commission.
- 13.4 All Trustees shall be at least 18 years of age and shall not be disqualified for acting as a Trustee by virtue of the section 72 of the Charities Act 1993 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that provision). Prospective Trustees of the Association shall sign a declaration that they are not disqualified from becoming Trustees prior to taking up office or attending a Trustees' or Management Committee meeting.
- 14 MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**
- 14.1 **A MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** shall manage the affairs of the Association and shall comprise the Charity Trustees, Life Vice-Presidents, Central Council Representatives and Officers appointed by the Management Committee including conveners of the Sub-Committees; 20 members shall form a quorum.
- 14.2 The Management Committee shall have full powers on matters not provided for in these rules. All decisions of the Management Committee shall be carried only by overall majority of members present, except as provided for in Rules 10.3 and 20.3.
- 14.3 The Management Committee shall determine subscriptions and peal fees and the proportion of subscriptions transferred to Bell Restoration.
- 14.4 The Management Committee may appoint a Child Protection Officer, Peals Secretary, Report Editor, Newsletter Editor, Webmaster, Chaplain, Ringing Course Administrator and any other officers as it may decide and may also appoint Sub-Committees as required. All such appointments shall be confirmed annually and reported to the Annual General Meeting.
- 14.5 All acts and proceedings of any Sub-Committee shall be fully reported to the Management Committee at each meeting.
- 14.6 The Management Committee shall have the power to co-opt such persons as it considers necessary to assist its deliberations. The number of co-opted persons at any one Management Committee meeting shall not exceed three. All co-options shall be reviewed annually and only renewed if deemed necessary. No aspect of control of the Association may be delegated to any person or persons not duly elected or appointed as members of the Management Committee.
- 14.7 The Management Committee shall meet on at least two occasions during the year to discuss matters concerning the Association: not later than the last day of February to prepare the Agenda and other arrangements for the Annual General Meeting and not later than the last day of October to review the Association's financial affairs to date and for the coming year, and also to consider whether the accounts for the current year are likely to be required by law to be audited and if necessary to appoint Auditors in place of the elected Independent Examiners if they are not qualified for such appointment.
- 14.8 Should no Auditors be appointed and subsequently it is found necessary so to do then the Auditors shall be appointed by the Property Trustees
- 14.9 The Management Committee and its Sub-Committees shall have the power to raise funds by any lawful means other than permanent trading.
- 14.10 A permanent Grants Sub-Committee shall normally be appointed to consider applications for financial assistance for bell maintenance and restoration in accordance with Rule 14.11, meeting at least 30 days before each Management Committee meeting and making recommendations for consideration at the next Committee meeting. This sub-committee shall comprise the Technical Adviser as Convener, one representative from each District, and the Treasurer, with the other two principal officers as ex-officio members. The Management Committee shall determine guidelines for the Sub-committee and publish

details of the Grant application process.

- 14.11 The Management Committee shall have the power, after considering a recommendation from the Grants Sub-Committee, to approve financial assistance for maintenance and improvement of a bell installation, which shall be deemed to include the following:
- (a) Taking out an existing ring of bells, supplying and installing a new frame and fittings, recasting bells and erecting the same.
 - (b) Taking out, overhauling and reclapping existing bells, supplying and installing a new frame and fittings, recasting or overhauling and re-erecting.
 - (c) Taking out existing bells, overhauling existing frame and fittings, recasting or overhauling and reclapping same and re-erecting.
 - (d) Augmentation and bringing existing bells, frames and fittings into an adequate state of repair.
 - (e) All other major repairs to bells, frames, fittings and towers.
 - (f) The provision of bells, frames and fittings and erection of same in Churches which previously had none.
 - (g) The provision of sound regulation by means of adjustable equipment designed to facilitate ringing.

15 GENERAL MEETINGS

- 15.1 **THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** shall normally be held in Chelmsford on the May Day Bank Holiday and arrangements made for a special service.
The following business shall be transacted: confirmation of Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting (and any Extraordinary Meeting held since the previous AGM); adoption of reports and accounts; consideration of motions; matters recommended by the Management Committee; election of Officers whose nominations shall have been received by the General Secretary before 1st February: Master, General Secretary, Treasurer, three Property Trustees, Technical Adviser, Education Officer, Public Relations Officer and Central Council representatives as defined by the Council's rules; election of two Independent Examiners; election of Life Vice-Presidents and Life Members.
Notices of motion sponsored by at least two members must have been received by the General Secretary before 1st February. The closing date for nominations and notices of motion shall be published in accordance with Rule 24 in December of each year.
Notice giving full details of the Agenda and other arrangements shall be delivered, in accordance with Rule 24, not later than 14 days prior to the Meeting;
- 15.2 **EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETINGS** may be called by the General Secretary, either by request of the Management Committee or by written request, detailing the business or motion to be discussed, signed by no fewer than fifty members. The meeting shall be convened within two months of receiving a properly constituted written request or Committee instruction.
One month's notice of any such meeting shall be sent in accordance with Rule 24 stating the purpose for which it is called.
No other business shall be transacted thereat.
- 15.3 50 Members shall form a quorum at any General Meeting.

16 DISTRICT MEETINGS

- 16.1 Each District shall hold at least three meetings yearly.
- 16.2 The first of the three meetings shall be the Annual District Meeting at which shall be elected four Officers. These shall be District Master, Deputy District Master, District Secretary and District Treasurer. Two of these shall represent the district on the Management Committee and shall be Charity Trustees – these shall be the District Master and District Secretary unless the District determines otherwise at its ADM. The General Secretary shall be notified, in writing, of these District elections immediately.
- 16.3 The quorum for District Meetings shall be 10 members of that District plus at least two elected District Officers.

- 17 **THE EXPENSES** paid by the Treasurer from the Association Funds may be: those of the Annual General Meeting; the Essex Ringing Course; cost of printing and distribution of the Annual Reports, purchase of stock; travelling and other expenses of Officers; postage, stationery and incidental expenditure including Audit fees approved by the Executive Committee; Central Council affiliation fees, and, if authorised by the Executive Committee, reasonable expenses of Representatives attending the Council; instructors' expenses as certified by District Officers; the cost of advertisements in *The Ringing World* and any other expenditure determined by the Executive Committee year by year.

No action involving expenditure in the name or on behalf of the Association shall be taken and no undertakings which would commit the Association to expenditure or other liability shall be made without the prior authority of a resolution of the Management Committee.

- 18 An **ANNUAL REPORT** for the year ended 31st December shall be printed and shall contain: Office for Belfry Use; a list of Officers and Conveners of Sub-Committees; Charity Trustees Report; Officers' reports for the year's work including Statement of Accounts signed by the Treasurer and the Independent Examiners/Auditors; a classified list of members, excluding those in Rule 8.2(d) elected prior to the current year; peals and quarter peals rung and other matters determined by the Management Committee. The Rules, list of Association Property as certified by the Property Trustees, Standing Orders and Striking Competition Rules shall each be printed in the Annual Report at least every five years.

- 19 **PEALS RUNG** by members which conform to the current regulations of the Central Council may be credited

to the Association. Details of such peals shall be forwarded by the Conductor together with the peal booking fee charged at the time to the Peals Secretary. Peal Booking Fees for peals rung up to 30th November each year shall be forwarded by 14th December. Peals rung in December shall be notified to the Peals Secretary by 1st January and the Peal Booking Fees forwarded by 7th January.

20. REMOVAL or SUSPENSION of OFFICE or MEMBERSHIP

- 20.1 If in the unanimous opinion of the Association Executive any Officer is unfit to hold office or fails to carry out their duties to its satisfaction, it shall have the power to suspend the Officer immediately, advising the reasons for suspension, and confirming in writing within seven days.
- 20.2 If in the unanimous opinion of the Association Executive a member has committed acts which have or are likely to damage the reputation of the Association, then their membership may be suspended with immediate effect, advising the reasons for suspension, and confirming in writing within seven days.
- 20.3 All suspensions shall be reviewed and confirmed or rejected at the next Management Committee meeting, whose decision shall be final. The Association Executive shall present the facts and circumstances of the suspension. Members and Officers who are suspended shall be given the opportunity to make representation to the Management Committee either in person or through an intermediary prior to the Committee making its determination. Membership or Office shall be terminated or reinstated if not less than four fifths of the Committee Members present vote in favour. Life Vice-Presidents whose Office is suspended may retain their life membership but may not take part in Management Committee meetings. Terminated members shall forfeit any payment made to the Association.
- 20.4 Terminated members may not seek re-election until at least five years after termination, or in the case of a custodial sentence, five years after release, and then not until a formal application supported by at least two members has been considered by the Management Committee and approved by not less than four fifths of the Committee Members present. Those terminated members whose application to rejoin has been approved must present themselves at a District Meeting for re-election and may not be re-elected by Belfry Election.

21 STANDING ORDERS

- 21.1 All Association and District business meetings shall use Standing Orders.
- 21.2 In the event of urgency the Chairman may accept a motion for the suspension of Standing Orders. A member proposing this motion must clearly state the urgency and the Standing Order numbers involved. The length of time of any suspension shall be subject to the discretion of the meeting.

22 RULE CHANGES

- 22.1 No alteration, addition or deletion of these rules shall be made except by a motion considered at an Annual General Meeting or at an Extraordinary General Meeting specially called for the purpose.
- 22.2 No alteration, addition or deletion of these rules shall be made so as to cause the Association at any time to cease to be a Charity in Law. No alteration, addition or deletion of these rules shall be made unless approved by a two thirds majority of those present and eligible to vote. No alteration, addition or deletion of these rules shall be made so as to cause the Association or its Officers to act or potentially act illegally. If at any time the Association Officers are advised that a rule is illegal, then the Executive shall meet to review the matter, seeking such legal advice as deemed necessary. If the advice is upheld it shall issue a notice suspending the application of that rule with immediate effect and convene an Extraordinary General Meeting in accordance with Rule 15.2 to formally remove the rule or pass a legal alternative.

23 DISSOLUTION

- 23.1 If the members resolve to dissolve the Association (through a Motion at a General Meeting) the Trustees will remain in office and be responsible for winding up the affairs of the Association in accordance with this clause.
- 23.2 The Trustees must collect in all the assets of the Association and must pay or make provision for all the liabilities of the Association.
- 23.3 The Trustees must apply any remaining property or money:
- directly for the Objects of the Association (defined in rule 2);
 - by transfer to any Charity or charities for purposes the same as or similar to the Association;
 - in such other manner as the Charity Commission for England and Wales ("the Commission") may approve in writing in advance.
- 23.4 The members may pass a resolution before or at the same time as the resolution to dissolve the Association specifying the manner in which the Trustees are to apply the remaining property or assets of the Association and the Trustees must comply with the resolution if it is consistent with paragraph 23.3 above.
- 23.5 In no circumstances shall the net assets of the Association be paid to or distributed among the members of the Association (except to a member that is itself a Charity).
- 23.6 The Trustees must notify the Commission promptly that the Association has been dissolved. If the Trustees are obliged to send the Association's accounts to the Commission for the accounting period which ended before its dissolution, they must send the Commission the Association's final accounts.
- 24 NOTICES** shall be given by the following means: advertisement in The Ringing World, publication on the Association Website, distribution through the Association Email list. In addition Notices of Agenda for the Annual and Extraordinary General meetings shall be sent by mail to each Tower Correspondent (delivery of the Annual Report shall be deemed sufficient notice of the AGM).