

The Hertford County Association of Change-Ringers Rules

(last modified 1st Sept 2026)

Registered Charity No. 1037400

1. The Name, Objects and Territory of the Association

1. The Association shall be called "The Hertford County Association of Change-Ringers".
2. The objects of the Association shall be:
 - a. To further the work of the Church by the ringing of bells, and to promote all aspects of bells and bell ringing;
 - b. To encourage the recruitment and training of bell ringers, and to advance the art of change ringing.
3. In furtherance of these objects, but not otherwise, the Association shall have powers to:
 - a. Arrange meetings and instruction;
 - b. Maintain a Library;
 - c. Publish Annual and other Reports;
 - d. Assist in the maintenance of church bells;
 - e. Engage in other such activities as shall conduce to the objects of the Association.
4. The territory of the Association (hereinafter called "the Territory") shall be the county of Hertfordshire with the addition of the ecclesiastical parishes of Chipping Barnet, Monken Hadley and Great Stanmore.
5. The Association shall be affiliated to the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers, and shall abide by the rules and decisions thereof.
6. The Association shall be registered with the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales (Registration No. 1037400).
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2. Membership

Membership shall be open to any person interested in bells or bell ringing. The Association shall provide the following classes of Members:

1. Ordinary Members, who shall be able to handle a bell and ring rounds unaided ;
2. Life Members, who shall be elected in recognition of outstanding services, and all members who have completed fifty years as an Ordinary Member, whether continuous or not;
3. Associate Members, who wish to support the Objects of the Association or ring peals for the Association who are not or are no longer a member under categories 1 and 2.;

3. Elections

1. All members shall be elected at any General or District Meeting after being proposed and seconded by any two Ordinary Members or Life Members who are able to vouch that the candidate possesses the necessary qualifications.
2. A qualified candidate may be provisionally elected to class 3 if required to take part in a peal, after being proposed and seconded by any two Ordinary Members or Life Members, but such election must be confirmed at the Association Annual General Meeting held in the following calendar year.
3. Election to Life Membership shall take place only at a General Meeting, after notice has been given to the Honorary Secretary, and the candidate has been proposed and seconded by two Ordinary Members or Life Members.

4. Subscriptions

1. Subscriptions at the rate appropriate to each class of member, as prescribed in a Schedule attached to these rules, shall become due in the month of January for the year beginning on that date (or on the day of election during any year). A fifty per cent reduction in annual subscription may be claimed by Ordinary Members receiving full time education or of State pensionable age.
2. Life Members are not required to pay any subscription.
3. Associate Members are required to pay a one-off subscription, subject to rule 4.4.a.
4.
 - a. Ordinary Members becoming eligible for Associate Membership shall not be required to pay any further subscription, provided they have been an Ordinary Member for at least two years.
 - b. Associate Members becoming eligible for Ordinary Membership shall be required to pay the subscription, prescribed in the Schedule attached.
5. It is the duty of all members to pay their due subscription.
6. Members who are more than twelve months in arrears shall be deemed to have resigned their membership.

5. Privileges of Membership

1. Ordinary Members or Life Members aged 18 or more may seek election as an Officer of the Association and of its Districts, and may attend, address and vote at any meeting of the Association and of the District to which they belong; they may attend the meetings of other Districts and, with the consent of the chairman, may address such meetings.
2. Ordinary Members or Life Members aged less than 18 may attend and address meetings of the Association and of the District to which they belong, but may not vote upon the election of, nor seek election as, a Trustee of the Association; they may otherwise vote at meetings of the Association and of the District of which they are a member, and may seek election as a member of their own District Committee; they may attend meetings of other Districts and, with the consent of the chairman, may address such meetings;
3. Associate Members may attend and, with the consent of the chairman, may address any meeting of the Association and its Districts, but may not vote nor seek election as an Officer of the Association or its Districts.
4. All Members, except Associate Members, shall receive a copy of the Annual Report of the Association.
5. Life Members shall each receive a certificate of Life Membership.

6. The Association Officers

The Officers shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting and shall take office upon election. The Officers shall be:

1. The President, who shall be responsible for the conduct of Association meetings;
2. The Honorary Secretary, who shall keep a record of the minutes of Association and Committee of Management meetings, and execute the decisions thereof;
3. The Honorary Assistant Secretary, who shall deputize for the Honorary Secretary.
4. The Honorary Treasurer, who shall give and receive vouchers for money passed, provide regular statements to District Secretaries/Treasurers of subscription payments received directly from members, keep proper books of accounts, and prepare an income and expenditure account and a balance sheet at 31st December each year, which shall be audited and presented to the members at the following Annual General Meeting;

5. The Honorary Peal Secretary, who shall receive and record the details of peals rung for the Association and of any members elected in accordance with rule 3.2, and ensure such members are presented for ratification to the Association Annual General Meeting held in the following calendar year;
6. The Honorary Librarian, who shall manage the Association's library;
7. The Central Council Representative(s), who shall attend the meetings of the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers.
8. The Safeguarding Officer, who shall ensure that the procedures of the Association comply with the guidelines issued by the Central Council of Church Bellringers, the Diocese and Parochial Church Councils of the area of the Association's operation, and legal requirements; and ensure, as far as possible, that towers affiliated to the Association are aware of and meet such guidelines and requirements.

Notes:

- a. An existing elected officer may also hold the office of Safeguarding Officer.
- b. The Safeguarding Officer must be checked with the appropriate authorities in accordance with current regulations.
9. The Y@H manager who shall organise and arrange youth ringing for the county
10. The Honorary Annual Report Editor, who shall prepare and publish the annual report
11. The Honorary Membership Secretary, who shall keep a record of all current and past members.
12. Training and Recruitment Officer. Shall be responsible for co-ordinating county wide training courses and recruitment initiatives
13. Web Master who shall be responsible for maintaining the Association internet site

7. The Committee of Management

1. The Committee of Management ("the Committee") shall manage the affairs of the Association; it shall comprise the Association Officers, the District Secretaries and the Immediate Past President (who shall assist the President and perform the duties of the President in the absence of the President), and one elected representative (or an elected deputy) of each District.
2. The trustees shall be the Honorary Secretary, Honorary Assistant Secretary and Honorary Treasurer for the time being of the Association and six elected Ordinary Members or Life Members of the Association, being one nominated by each of the Association's six Districts.
3. The Committee shall have power to invest or otherwise deal with the assets of the Association, and such sums as the members or others subscribe or otherwise contribute to the Association, in such manner as the Committee considers is in the best interests of the Association. Bank accounts as may be required shall be maintained in the name of the Association, and any one of six nominated Committee members shall have power to sign cheques, with the signatures of two such required for amounts exceeding £50.
4. The Committee shall meet at least twice each year, and eight members shall constitute a quorum. All decisions shall be carried by a simple majority of members present and voting.
5. The Committee shall have power to invite any person(s) to attend a Committee meeting, to assist it in the management of the affairs of the Association, but such invited person(s) shall have no vote and shall not be counted towards a quorum. The Committee may appoint sub-committees as required, and may raise funds by any lawful means other than permanent trading.
6. The Committee shall have power to fill any vacancy which arises, between Association General Meetings, amongst either the Officers of the Association or the Central Council Representatives.

8. General Meetings of the Association

1. The Annual General Meeting shall take place on the last Saturday in April in every year (or on such a day as the Committee shall decide). The place of the meeting shall be decided by the Committee, but so far as possible shall be within the Districts of the Association in rotation. A special service shall be arranged at one of the churches at the place of the meeting.
2. The business of the Annual General Meeting shall include the presentation of reports (which shall include an audited statement of accounts and balance sheet), the election of Association Officers, and of the Central Council Representatives when due, the appointment of an Independent Examiner, the ratification of any provisional elections of members, and any other business relating to the Objects of the Association.
3. Other General Meetings may be called by the Committee, and shall be called within six weeks of receipt by the Honorary Secretary of a written requisition, signed by not less than 20 members, at such time and place as the Honorary Secretary shall determine. Any notice or requisition of such a General Meeting shall state clearly the business of the meeting, and no other business shall be transacted. Thirty voting members shall constitute a quorum. If, within 30 minutes of the advertised meeting time, no quorum has formed, the meeting shall stand adjourned for between four and six weeks, when it shall be reconvened and those who attend shall constitute a quorum.
4. Notice of any General Meeting shall be given by the Honorary Secretary within the previous four weeks by means of an advertisement in "*The Ringing World*" or other such paper(s) as the Committee shall determine. Such published notice shall be sufficient without further communication being sent to members.

9. The Districts of the Association

1. The Territory shall be divided into Districts by the Association in General Meeting, on recommendation of the Committee of Management, which shall consult with the Districts concerned before making or varying any determination of District boundaries.
2. Each District shall elect a District Secretary, the representative (and a deputy) of the District upon the Committee of Management, and other such District Officers, if any, as it shall determine. These, together with such elected members as the District shall determine, shall comprise the District Committee, which shall manage the affairs of the District.
3. The District Secretary shall be responsible for:
 - a. Calling at least four District Meetings annually;
 - b. Receiving and compiling details of members' subscription payments from members within the District, issuing receipts if requested, and passing such money to the Honorary Treasurer that has not been paid directly into the Association bank account or via the third party membership management system;
 - c. Informing the Honorary Membership Secretary on request the names of members who have paid their subscription payments directly into the Association bank account;
 - d. Informing the Honorary Secretary, in writing, of the names and addresses of the District's elected representative (and deputy) on the Committee of Management;
 - e. Transmitting to the Honorary Treasurer immediately after December 31st each year a copy of the provisional annual statement of the income and expenditure of the District, together with all the relevant books and vouchers. The District Secretary shall confirm or amend the annual statement immediately following the Annual District Meeting.

Where a District elects a District Treasurer, that individual shall be responsible for b and c above and not the District Secretary.

4. The first meeting of the District in any year (arranged so far as possible before the end of January) shall be the Annual District Meeting, at which shall be elected:
 - a. The District Secretary and other District Officers, if any;
 - b. The other members of the District Committee;
 - c. The District's representative (and deputy) on the Committee of Management. The Annual District Meeting shall receive and consider an annual statement of income and expenditure and conduct any other business relating to the Objects of the Association.
5. Notice of District Meetings shall be given by the relevant District Secretary in accordance with the procedures detailed in rule 8.4.

10. Management of Funds

The expenses paid by the Honorary Treasurer from the Association's funds may be:

1. Those of General Meetings and of meetings of the Committee of Management.
2. The cost of printing, binding and distributing the Annual and other Reports.
3. The cost of maintaining the Peal Book.
4. The cost of maintaining the Association Library.
5. Postage, stationery and sundry expenditure incurred by Association and District Officers.
6. Central Council affiliation fees and the reasonable expenses of representatives attending Central Council meetings.
7. The costs of advertising Association and District Meetings, courses and practices.
8. Administrative and other expenses incurred in respect of the Hertford County Association of Change-Ringers Bell Restoration Fund.
9. Other expenditure as the Committee of Management shall determine.

11. Peals

Every peal rung for the Association shall be entered in the Association's Peal Book, and published in the Annual Report. A peal shall be recognized as rung for the Association and so recorded, subject to:

1. Proof of composition.
2. The participants being members (or having been provisionally elected in accordance with Rule 3, such election(s) having been ratified subject to Rule 11.5).
3. The conductor should inform the Honorary Peal Secretary, within one month, the composition (unless such is apparent from the published report), and of the names, if any, of any person(s) provisionally elected before the peal;
4. The conductor should transmit to the Honorary Peal Secretary within one month, if not paid into the Association's bank account, the subscription(s) and address(es), if known, and the name of the proposer and seconder, of any provisionally elected participant(s).
5. Any provisional elections being ratified at the Association Annual General Meeting held in the following calendar year.

12. Dissolution of the Association

1. The Association may be dissolved by a resolution presented at a General Meeting called for this purpose. The resolution must have the assent of two thirds of those present and voting. Such resolution may give instructions for the disposal of any assets remaining after satisfying any outstanding debts and liabilities. These assets shall not be distributed among the members of the Association, but will be given:
 - a. To charitable bell restoration funds as the Association may select;
 - b. To the St Albans Diocesan Board of Finance for the religious and charitable purposes of the said Diocese, or transferred to such other charitable institution or institutions having objects similar to some or all of the objects of the Association as the Association shall determine and, if in so far as effect cannot be given to this provision, then to some other charitable purpose.

13. Rules

1. All members of the Association upon election shall accept these rules and shall abide by them whilst they remain in membership.
2. Any question of interpretation of the Rules shall be a matter for the Committee of Management, subject only to a decision of a General Meeting of the Association.
3. No alteration of, addition to or deletion from these rules shall be made so as to cause the Association to cease to be a charity in law.
4. No alteration to these Rules shall be made save at the Annual General Meeting or at a General Meeting called for this purpose. No amendments or alterations shall be made without the prior written permission of the Charity Commission to the objects clause, the dissolution clause or this clause. Alterations to these Rules shall receive the assent of two thirds of the members present and voting at an Annual or other General Meeting.
5. Notice of any proposed alteration, addition to, or deletion from these rules must be sent, in writing, to the Honorary Secretary, to be received at least eight weeks before the General Meeting at which such proposal is to be discussed. In the case of proposed amendment to the objects clause, the dissolution clause or the rules clause, this period of notice shall be extended to twelve months.
6. Meetings may be held in person or using remote methods including; telephone, teleconferencing and online.
7. Safeguarding Responsibilities. All members of the Association shall uphold the principles of safeguarding and are expected to contribute to a safe, respectful environment for all, particularly for young people and vulnerable adults.
8. Safeguarding Declaration. At the time of joining or renewal, all members shall confirm their agreement to follow the Association's safeguarding policy and code of conduct, as approved by the Committee of Management.

THE SCHEDULE TO THE RULES (See Rules 4 & 11)

Subscriptions

- a. Ordinary Members shall subscribe £15.00 annually;
- b. In the first year of membership, new members shall pay 100% of the subscription if they join between 1 January and 31 March; 75% if they join between 1 April and 30 June; 50% if they join between 1 July and 30 September; and 25% if they join between 1 October and 31 December.
- c. Associate Members shall pay one subscription of £15.00 upon election, subject to Rule 4.4.a.

The Hertford County Association of Change-Ringers

Bell Restoration Fund

Registered Charity No 264847

RULES (last modified 26th April 1997)

1. Title

This fund shall be known as "The Hertford County Association of Change-Ringers Bell Restoration Fund".

2. Object

The object of the Fund shall be the provision of financial assistance by way of grants to church authorities incurring expenditure on the provision, maintenance or improvement of their bells and bell installations or for the maintenance of the fabric of their towers and belfries in the county of Hertfordshire and the ecclesiastical parishes of Chipping Barnet, Monken Hadley and Great Stanmore.

3. In furtherance of the object of the Fund provision of financial assistance by way of grants may be made to church authorities incurring expenditure in taking into their care bells pending their installation in a tower.

4. Definition

References to "the Association" shall mean the Hertford County Association of Change-Ringers.

5. Trustees, Treasurer, Independent Examiner and Administration

The Trustees of the Fund, referred to hereinafter as the Trustees, shall be the Honorary Secretary, Honorary Assistant Secretary and Honorary Treasurer for the time being of the Association and six elected Life or Ordinary Members of the Association, being one nominated by each of the Association's six Districts. The Honorary Treasurer and Honorary Independent Examiner of the Fund shall be the Honorary Treasurer and Honorary Independent Examiner for the time being of the Association. The Fund shall be administered by the Trustees. Five Trustees shall form a quorum at a meeting. A casual vacancy amongst the elected Trustees shall be filled by the Committee of Management of the Association. The Association's rules in respect of membership and of the Committee of Management are attached as an appendix to this constitution.

6. Grants

1. An application for or proposal to make a grant, of more than the amount prescribed in the Schedule attached to these rules, from this fund shall only be considered at an Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting of the Association. Notice of an application must be made to the Trustees at least eight weeks before the General Meeting at which the application shall be discussed.
2. Following notice duly given, the Trustees shall consider such applications or proposals and shall make recommendations to the Meeting of the Association at which the application shall be considered. The Trustees shall give notice of a proposal to make a grant from this Fund in accordance with the rules of the Association on giving notice.
3. Grants shall be made from this Fund only for the purposes outlined in the objectives in Rule 2 above. A grant may be made at a General Meeting of the Association, subject to the requirements of Rule 6(i) above, if approved by two thirds or more of those members of the Association present and voting. To be eligible to vote on such matters, such members must fulfil the requirements of the rules of the Association on voting.
4. Following such approval a grant shall be made at such time as the Trustees shall decide except that the Trustees shall be given absolute discretion to reduce, but not to increase, a donation in the exceptional circumstances that they unanimously feel it in the interests of the Fund and the Association to do so. They shall inform the Association of any such action at the next General Meeting of the Association.
5. Where such an application or proposal would involve consideration of a grant equal to or less than the amount prescribed in the Schedule attached to the Rules, and particularly where the proposed work was, or had been, an urgent repair to bells and/or bell installations and/or bell towers, then the Trustees, in their absolute discretion, may approve and make grants from the Fund without the need to satisfy the requirements of Rules 6.1 to 6.4 hereof.

7. Disbursements

Any payments drawn on this Fund under Rule 6 above or required under Rule 9 below, shall be made over the signatures of two Trustees of the Fund. All administrative and other expenses incurred in respect of the Fund other than those specifically relating to the acquisition and realization of investments shall be borne by the Association.

8. Accounts

The Honorary Treasurer shall prepare accounts consisting of a Balance Sheet as at 31st December in each year, and an Income and Expenditure Account for the year ending on that date.

These accounts shall be presented to the Independent Examiner of the Fund who shall satisfy himself as to the correctness thereof.

These accounts duly audited shall be submitted for approval to the Annual General Meeting of the Association next after the 31st December to which the accounts of the Fund have been prepared.

9. Investments

The Trustees acting together shall have the power to invest or otherwise deal with the assets of the Fund and such sums as the Association or others shall contribute or from time to time decide to transfer to the Fund, in such manner as they think fit in the best interests of the Fund.

10. Dissolution of the Fund

If it shall be decided to dissolve the Fund, such decision being taken only at an Annual General Meeting of the Association following notice given at the previous Annual General Meeting, the assets shall be disposed of to either or between both of the following:-

To other charitable Bell Restoration Funds as the Association may select.

To the St Albans Diocesan Board of Finance for the religious and charitable purposes of the said Diocese.

In the event that the Association becomes defunct, it shall be allowed for the Trustees in office at the time the Association became defunct, after five years non-working of the Fund, to cause it to be dissolved and its assets applied as under Rule 10(1)(b).

11. Provision for changes of Rules

No amendment of, addition to or deletion from these rules shall be made which would cause the Fund at any time to cease to be a charity in law.

No amendment, addition or deletion whatever shall be made except at a General Meeting of the Association following notice given in detail of the proposed alteration in accordance with the Rules of the Association on changes in its rules, and approved by two thirds or more of those members present and voting.

SCHEDULE

The amount referred to in Rules 6.1 and 6.5 shall be £250.00.