GUILD OF DEVONSHIRE RINGERS
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
held at Withycombe Raleigh on Saturday 27th June 2026

A26/1 Bishop Mark Rylands opened the meeting with a prayer. Tim Bayton (President) welcomed the 63 members present and it was confirmed the meeting was quorate. Tim thanked the team who provided lunch and refreshments during the day, the Aylesbeare Deanery branch for acting as hosts, Bishop Mark for taking the service, Ian Rees for playing the organ and Charlotte Boyce and John Martin for their consistent work behind the scenes.

A26/2 Apologies for absence were received from: Robert Brown, John Buckley, Steven Came, Albert Campbell, Alison Cox, Huw Davies, Carla Dawes, Jane Dunn, Phil Dunn, Cheryl Fellows-Bennett, Margaret Fitzgerald, Robert Franklin, Christine Harris, Trevor Hitchcock, Susan Illing, Jinny Jeffrey, Jenny Jones, James Kirkcaldy, Mary Mears, Mike Mears, Chris Meijburg, Lucy Neal, Robert Neal, Christian Ong, Matt Pym, Don Roberts, Frances Salisbury, Sue Sparling, Clare Stagg, John Steere, Julia Steere, Jayne Tolliday, Simon Trott, Mike Wigney, Lester Yeo.

A26/3 Losses by death since the last AGM: Rev Michael Hart, Anthony Appleton, Robert T Perry, Sherene Jeffries, Ron Trickey, Pippa Barter, Trevor Vercoe, John Fisher, Liz Price, Jill Larbalestier, Janet Osler, Pam Miller, Stuart Clark, Valery Stevens, Mary White, Marion Baker, Nellie Croft. A short period of silence was observed to remember them.

A26/4 Minutes of the 2025 meeting were unanimously agreed as a correct record (p: Michael Cannon, s: Alena Wardle).

A26/5 Matters arising from the minutes:
Guild rules (A25/1). Tim Bayton reported that Becky Fowlds and Janet Ritterman had offered to help review and update the rules and a draft of the updated rules would be circulated after the meeting. Tim also presented a brief overview of the main changes made before inviting questions. Richard Johnston recommended making the Charity Commission aware of the proposals at the earliest opportunity
Publicity banners (A25/5). Nicola Jones (Publicity Officer) reported a graphic had been created by Sarah McIntyre suitable for creating a banner 2m tall and 80cm wide. The text to go onto the reverse side of the banner is yet to be designed and Tim Bayton suggested that anyone with ideas for material to include should contact Nicola. Nicola advised she hopes to circulate a final draft of the design by the end of September 2026.
Record of anniversary performances (A25/12). Tim Bayton noted a draft had been produced which was available for inspection at the meeting. This document needs to be proof read and thanked Wendy Gill (Master) for offering to help; following a request for additional help Amy Hurlock and Lily Neal also offered to assist.

A26/6 Election of new members: Benjamin Gray (p: Kathy Gray, s: Mike Burrow), carried unanimously.

A26/7 Guild certificates: Wendy Gill presented certificates to Lynsey Fearn (Feniton) and Wendy Smith (Lympstone). A third certificate was available but the recipient was unable to be present for the presentation.

A26/8 Officers' reports: Charlotte Boyce (Treasurer) noted some errors were present in the numbers of members reported in the printed version of the Guild accounts and Tim Bayton reported omissions from the list of officers; these small errors had all been corrected in the electronic version of the report made available to all members within the membership system. No further comments or questions had been received.

A26/9 Adoption of accounts: The accounts were as published in the annual report and had been examined by Paul Willis. Charlotte Boyce presented the highlights, adoption of the accounts was proposed by Patricia Slade (Membership Secretary), seconded by John Foster (Report Editor) and carried unanimously.

A26/10 Subscription review: Charlotte Boyce reported that the Guild Committee had reviewed a range of financial forecasts for the coming years and recommended the subscription rate for 2027 should increase to £13; seconded by Alena Wardle. Accepted with one vote against.

Charlotte Boyce also announced the Guild General Committee had decided the peal fee would remain at £1 per ringer.

A26/11 Financial proposals: Charlotte Boyce explained the financial proposals being considered had all been shaped by discussions at the Guild General Committee meeting in January.

Charlotte Boyce proposed transfers of:
- £279.09 to the Library Fund
- £751.71 to the Devon Young Ringers
- £2,250 to the Bell Fund

Seconded by Ian Rees and accepted with one vote against.

Richard Johnston queried the costs for recording peals which is listed in the Reserves policy for the General Fund and it was explained this relates to the purchase of a bound book for the peals to be recorded in. John Foster noted there are now few with the skills to produced hand bound books and recommended proceeding with this purchase soon. John agreed to speak to Mike Mears about the suggestion of purchasing bound books now, rather than waiting an indeterminate period for updating of PealBas

A26/12 DenMisch Ring update: Ian Campbell (DenMisch Management Committee) explained that following January's announcement regarding the closure of Exeter Cathedral School a discussion had taken place at the General Committee meeting resulting in a recommendation to decommission the DenMisch Ring and offer the bells for use elsewhere as training bells. Ian went on to explain it had subsequently been discovered that the school building is owned by the Cathedral and there is a possibility the buildings may be retained which might mean the DenMisch Ring could be retained and developed into a more useful facility such as a ringing training centre.

Tim Bayton noted the DenMisch Ring had received very little use over recent years and that a lengthy discussion at January's Committee meeting had resulted in a decision to dispose of it before inviting those present to comment. Rodney Horder and others noted the possibility of the Ring becoming a training centre and Ian Campbell suggested holding an open afternoon for members to try the bells and assess their suitability as a training facility before making a final decision.

Tim Bayton asked for a show of hands and it was agreed the DenMisch Management Committee should attempt to schedule an open afternoon as soon as possible, ideally before October 2026; this session would be advertised to all Guild members and feedback sought from those attending.

It was also agreed by those present that the General Committee is empowered to make a final decision after reviewing the outcome of the open session.

A26/13 Election of officers:

a) Master 2026/27: Tim Bayton noted Revd Jon Rose had been selected as Master Elect in 2025 and handed over to Wendy Gill who presented Jon with the Master's insignia and welcomed him to the role after thanking all who had welcomed her to meetings around the county (and beyond!) over the last year. Jon took the chair and asked for nominations for President.

b) President: Tim Bayton (p: Matthew Weighell, s: Janet Deem), carried unanimously.

c) Master Elect: Janet Deem (p: Sofie Emmens, s: Nigel Birt), carried unanimously.

d) Vice Presidents: At the January General Committee Meeting the following proposals for the election of new Vice Presidents had been received:

   Neil Deem (p: Roger King, s: Mike Burrow)

John Foster (p: Charlotte Boyce, s: Sheila Scofield)

The proposals were carried unanimously.

e) Secretary: John Martin (p: Patricia Slade, s: Paul Pascoe), carried unanimously.

f) Treasurer: Charlotte Boyce (p: Patricia Slade, s: Paul Pascoe), carried unanimously.

g) Membership Secretary: Patricia Slade (p: Paul Pascoe, s: Ian Smith), carried unanimously.

h) Education Officer: Andrea Young (p: Patricia Slade, s: David Hird), carried unanimously.

i) Young Ringers Coordinator: Elena Brake (p: Les Boyce, s: Paul Pascoe), carried unanimously

j) Safeguarding Officer: Karen Lee Donaldson (p: Hugh Lodder, s: Sheila Scofield), carried unanimously.

k) Publicity Officer: Nicola Jones (p: Janet Deem, s: Sheila Scofield), carried unanimously.

l) Peal Secretary: Michael Mears (p: Paul Pascoe, s: David Hird), carried unanimously.

m) Quarter Peal Secretary: Janet Deem (p: Paul Pascoe, s: Sheila Scofield), carried unanimously.

n) Librarian: Leslie Boyce (p: Ian Smith, s: Paul Pascoe), carried unanimously.

o) Report Secretary: John Foster (p: Charlotte Boyce, s: Martin Mansley), carried unanimously.

p) Ringing Round Devon Editor: Ian Campbell (p: Patricia Slade, s: Matthew Weighell), carried unanimously.

q) Bells and Belfries Advisors: Nominations had been received as follows:
Ian Campbell (p: Patricia Slade, s: Matthew Weighell), carried unanimously.
Alena Wardle (p: Janet Deem, s: Andrea Young), carried unanimously.
Kate Fulcher (p: Ian Smith, s: Sue Sparling), carried unanimously.

r) DenMisch Management Committee (7): Nominations were received as follows:
Oliver Coldrick (p: Paul Pascoe, s: Leslie Boyce)
Ian Campbell (p: Paul Pascoe, s: Leslie Boyce)
David Hird (p: Paul Pascoe, s: Leslie Boyce)
There being no others, these nominees were duly elected.

s) DCBRF Trustees (3): Nominations had been received as follows:
Janet Deem (p: Wendy Campbell, s: Andrea Young)
Andrew Digby (p: Richard Shere, s: Harry Andrews)
Alena Wardle (p: Lily Neal, s: Richard Norman)
The proposals were carried unanimously.

t) Central Council Representative (4): Nominations had been received as follows:
Harry Andrews (p: Kate Wills, s: Tim Bayton)
Charlotte Boyce (p: Sheila Scofield, s: Matthew Weighell)
John Martin (p: Russell Chamberlain, s: Richard Shere)
Alena Wardle (p: Wendy Campbell, s: Andrea Young)
The proposals were carried unanimously.

u) Devon Ringers' Council Representative (5): The following nominations were received:
Sue King (p: Janet Ritterman, s: Ian Rees)
Martin Mansley (p: Alena Wardle, s: Rodney Horder)
There being no others, these nominees were duly elected.

Tim Bayton thanked retiring officers Sue King, Wena Mansley and Ian Smith for their hard work.

A26/14 Appointments:

a) Independent examiner of accounts — Paul Willis (p: Tim Bayton)
b) Insurance officer — Will Carew (p: Tim Bayton)
c) Webmaster — Matthew Hilling (p: Tim Bayton)

A26/15 Guild 6 and 8-bell striking competitions: Wendy Gill outlined arrangements for this year's striking competitions, scheduled to take place in the Exeter branch on 17th October. A lengthy discussion took place regarding the unsuitability of the methods suggested for this year's inter-branch 8-bell competition and it was agreed to refer the choice of method back to the General Committee for further consideration.

A26/16 Date of next meeting: The next meeting will be hosted by the East Devon branch on Saturday 19th June 2027 where we hope to welcome our Patron, the Right Reverend Doctor Mike Harrison. Ian Rees outlined preliminary plans for the day and invited feedback and suggestions for activities to include on the programme.

A26/17 Any other business: None notified.

Tim Bayton declared the meeting closed at 4.32pm.

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Tim Bayton (President)

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(Date)

GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING

Held at Withycombe Raleigh on Saturday 27th June 2026

Tim Bayton (President) opened the meeting that followed the Annual General Meeting of the Guild and asked for proposals of method options for teams taking part in the inter-Branch 8-bell striking competitions on Saturday 17th October.

Fergus Stracey proposed Plain Bob Major and Little Bob Major and Janet Deem proposed Plain Bob Major and Double Norwich Court Bob Major.

Tim Bayton invited a show of hands resulting in the selection of Plain Bob Major and Double Norwich Court Bob Major.

It was agreed other business should be deferred to the next meeting of the General Committee on Saturday 16th January 2027. The meeting closed at 4.40pm.

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Tim Bayton (President)

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(Date)