

Western District AGM Minutes, Towednack, 26th April 2025,

Draft

The meeting opened at 3.30pm on Saturday 26th April 2025.

Over 60 attendees, representing 22 towers, were in attendance. Those present from the district were: Kevin & Calum Hocking, Carole & Clive Jeffery, Miranda Penhaligon, Doreen & Roger Sullivan, Kathryn Arkless, Steve Moore, Phil & Trina Peters, Jane & Neil Hitchens, Martin & Debbie Spittle, Steve Adcock, Chris Davie, Bob & Christine Woods, Jake Williams, Mandy Basher, Margaret & Stan Pryor, Janeve Bainbridge, Jo Hodding, Judith Holden, Steve Clothier, Neil Gunnell, Hilary Angel, Cherilyn Woolford, Ian Self, John Swan, Lindsay Eddy, Helen McCabe, Jeremy & Jo McCabe, Katie Smith, Jackie Corney, Douglas Taylor, Christine Iles, Cheley Vanderkar, Mary Jones, Susan Powell, Jenny Nankervis, Vicky Harper. Tony Dixon, Elaine Retallack, Christine Woods, Claire Thomson, Caroline Teale, Sam Nankervis, Alaister Hopkins, Michael and Ann-Marie Hopkins.

Those from outside the district were Owen Borlase, Malcolm Day, Robert & Helen Perry, Alan Perry, Gemma Marchant, Sean Shaw and Neil Clements.

Apologies were received from: Sally Cleaver, Carolyn Howell, Geoff Cook, Claire Sweetman, Anna McClary, Ray Spencer, Andrew Annear, Marion (Jem) Smith, Sarah Lewis, Ally Simpson and Gemma Swan.

The meeting began with Bob Woods (Chairman) welcoming everyone to the meeting and extending his grateful thanks to all members of Towednack tower for their welcome and hospitality.

Minutes - The minutes of the 2024 AGM (6th April at Paul) had been previously circulated via email to all attendees. The acceptance of these was proposed by Phil Peters, seconded by Sam Nankervis and it was unanimously approved to adopt these minutes as final. There were no 'Matters Arising'.

Chairman's Report – Bob Woods noted that 2024 had been his fourth year as Chair of the Western District and that this had, once again, been a busy year. In review, he mentioned many events but drew particular attention to several towers with new recruits, for example St Erth. However, recruitment does remain an issue with several towers now silent and some with few ringers. Wendron has continued to be a good venue for teaching up new bands, and his thanks were given to the time and commitment of teachers at these sessions.

Three Open Practice evenings were held at St Gluvius, Mawnan & Budock. These sessions were attended by 35 to over 50 ringers each time.

In June, the Western District 6 bell striking competition was re-started. This proved a successful return to some competitive ringing with awards going to best band in the Rounds, Call Changes & Method sections. In November, we had the Annual Dinner, back at The Queens Hotel. The meal this year was excellent, There was a great feeling of enjoyment & the social aspect of the gathering was very apparent.

Bob thanked all towers visited for making him welcome and also thank you to all who have hosted or supported the various events this year.

Bob asked members to remember their fellow ringer, Christiana Hancox of Gwennap, who passed away in March this year. She will be much missed.

Finally, he thanked Sam Nankervis, our Ringing Master, for all his help to & input to bellringing this past 12 months. Chris Davie, treasurer. Mike Cockeram who sees to our Accounts as Auditor. Our Deanery Stewards, Tony Dixon & Mary Jones. Also, thanks to our Western District Reps, Michael Wycherley & Christine Iles & finally Miranda Penhaligon, who has worked tirelessly as the Western District secretary.

Treasurer's Report – The Western District's Financial Report 2024 had been circulated via email to all attendees. Chris mentioned that again financial activity was limited with most functions being handled by the central TDGR account. He suggested that in future, a Treasurer for the district may not be needed as the dinner money could be handled separately. Neil Hitchens mentioned that the removal of an officer role may not be possible under current TDGR rules [action Chris to check]. The report was proposed by Neil Hitchens, seconded by Sam Nankervis and unanimously approved to accept the Treasurer's report as circulated.

Ringing Masters Report - Sam Nankervis

The workshops we've introduced on the days of our Spring festival are proving very popular. The one I hosted at Ludgvan last year was very well attended. We're very lucky this year, as we have our President, Owen Borlase running a workshop on Devon style call changes at Gwinear, before more general ringing at Gwinear before we move onto Towednack for AGM and refreshments on Sat. 26th April.

These are a great opportunity to ring at other towers with other ringers, so please take the time to listen to your own bell, to help improve striking, which is good for us and the wider community, and is something we should all be striving to do.

This leads us onto this years Western District 6 bell striking competition which will be held at Mawgan in Meneage on Sat. 14th June. Last years competition at St.Erth was thoroughly enjoyable by everyone I spoke to on the day. It was a very social occasion with an excellent Tea, so I would encourage as many towers as possible to be part of this fun day.

I would like to thank Claire Below for her enthusiasm when she spoke at our WD Dinner about our TDGR Youth ringers. The two young lads from St.Buryan have now attended the last 3 TDGR youth practices which were held at Gulval, St.Stephens in Brannel and Bodmin.

Deanery Steward Reports

Penwith – Mary Jones mentioned that there is no job description for Deanery Stewards and in recent years she has focussed on recruitment and training. She mentioned that there are several new recruits in different towers, all making excellent progress.

She offers intensive individual teaching in order to get new ringers ringing with their band as soon as possible, and has held dedicated practices for Bob Doubles and Stedman and welcome suggestions for other method practices.

She organised a ring and ramble (and lunch!) from Ludgvan to Penzance in the summer as well as the regular Advent walk from Paul to Penzance in December. More are planned for this year.

Mary's main recruitment event is an open tower afternoon at Towednack as part of the St Ives September Festival. We have done this for a number of years and it usually results in a few new recruits. In addition this year I will be giving a talk at the Morrab Library early in September. These talks are well attended and I am hoping we might be able to recruit a new band for Penzance.

Carnmarth - no report, position vacant in 2024.

Kerrier – Tony Dixon reported that he has visited nearly all Kerrier Deanery Towers and was warmly welcomed.

He assisted in arranging ringing support, help with recruitment days, extra ringers for Sunday services, weddings, funerals and other ringing events needing additional ringers. With Bob, he has consulted with towers to arrange members of neighbouring bands to join for practice and this has encouraged towers to welcome other ringers to support ringing sessions. This has enhanced the activity of depleted bands and

has helped to ensure regular ringing - which in turn, serves to heighten local residents' interest in bell ringing.

He reported that safeguarding is a high priority in Kerrier towers and was reassured that band members are taking safeguarding seriously and are engaging with the safeguarding training offered by the Truro Diocese Safeguarding Team.

Several Tower Keepers, and those assisting, have attended the extremely informative and beneficial TDGR Bell Maintenance Course

For Cury and Mullion, Bob and his team of instructors and helpers have completed another intake of recruits at the Wendron Winter Ringing School.

Standing Committee Representative's report

Christine Iles reported that discussions this year featured reviewing and re-establishing the Guild Hand Book Report, church closures, bell towers grants and funding, education training, Youth Liaison Officer Claire Below's achievements with youth groups and competitions, Rev'd Andy Earl, Diocese Safeguarding Officer's visit and talk on DBS checks and Safeguarding, bell ringing promotions, national news and information from CCCBR, not forgetting merchandising with Owens T-towel fundraiser.

I am sure Michael Wycherley would have liked to elaborate more on the ringing towers locally that he has been overseeing and wishing them well for the future.

Westerner Report On behalf of Ally Simpson, Miranda reported that Ally is now Editor of The Westerner which continues to be published quarterly and is available on the TDGR website. She stated that this magazine would not exist without news recorded through the quarter prior to publication by individuals from around the Western district. Ally thanked everyone who contributes to the magazine as without them the magazine would not exist in its current newsy format.

Election of Officers: A number of officers (Secretary, Ringing Master and Standing Committee representatives) stood down this year. These positions were advertised and ringers came forward for these positions. Voting was as follows:

Position	Candidate	Proposed By:	Seconded By:
Chairman	Bob Woods	Sam Nankervis	Martin Spittle
Secretary	Claire Thomson	Bob Woods	Mandy Basher
Treasurer	Chris Davie	Phil Peters	Christine Iles
Independent Examiner of Accounts	Mike Cockeram	Sam Nankervis	Christine Iles
Ringing Master	Martin Spittle	Sam Nankervis	Michael Hopkins
Deanery Stewards:			
Penwith	Mary Jones	Sam Nankervis	Phil Peters

Carnmarth	Geoff Cook	Sam Nankervis	Christine Iles
Kerrier	Tony Dixon	Ann-Marie Hopkins	Debbie Spittle
Standing Committee Reps	Bob Woods	Sam Nankervis	Martin Spittle
	Tony Dixon	Sam Nankervis	Martin Spittle

Election of New Members to the TDGR

The following had been proposed and accepted as new members to the TDGR; all were presented with certificates (or had them collected on their behalf):

Tower	Name
St Buryan	Calum Hocking
Helston	Jacob Samuel Williams
Wendron	Andrew Annear

Calum also received his Level 1 Association of Ringing Teachers Certificate (Bellhandling).

Long Service Awards

Doreen Sullivan - 35 years	Carbis Bay
Ray Spencer – 40 years	Wendron
Bob Woods - 60 years	Helston

Autumn Festival – To be hosted by Wendron on the 13th September 2025; ringing beforehand at Helston.

Spring Festival & AGM (2026) – St Buryan offered to host the 2026 Spring Festival and AGM. Members agreed to this. To be held on Saturday 11th April 2026; other ringing towers to be confirmed.

Annual Western District Dinner – The Chair guided that the Annual Western District dinner will be held on the 22nd November 2025; the venue will be The Queens Hotel, Penzance.

Presentations

Bob presented a lovely bouquet to Miranda and a box of ale and this week's edition of Farmers Weekly to Sam in recognition of their service to the Western District.

Any Other Business:

- Bob sought approval from members that monies raised for a dumbbell in the district be used for a training bell in Helston tower. This was proposed by Carole Jeffery and seconded by Miranda Penhaligon and was unanimously approved.
- Martin Spittle reminded members of the Guild website 'Swap Shop' link, should towers need extra ringers for weddings or other events.

- Ian Self showed the new Guild recruitment banner and reminded everyone that this, and other display material could be borrowed for tower recruitment days. He also thanked all for their An Clogh articles and asked everyone to continue forwarding their photos and news to support this publication.
- Owen Borlase informed the meeting that the resurrected paper edition of the Guild Report would be available at the TDGR AGM in May. Malcolm Day was instrumental in compiling this.
- Bob reminded everyone :
 - that the next Truro practice for the district is Monday 4th August.
 - The new South West Ringing School, in Millfield Somerset is 24 - 27 October and will be open for applications from students and helpers on 1st May.

The meeting closed at 4.20pm.