Dorset County Association of Church Bell Ringers

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Dorset County Association of Church Bell Ringers
Bell Restoration Fund is a registered charity. Charity number 294239

Standing Orders of the Dorset County Association of Church Bell Ringers and the Dorset County Association of Church Bell Ringers Bell Restoration Fund

Version History

Version	Approved by	Date Approved	Minute Ref
1.0	AGM	2/2/19	Item 8.4 – First creation of Standing Orders for DCA
2.0	AGM	7/3/20	Item 6 - Finance
3.0	DCA Committee	26/5/21	Item 6 – Steepleage & Safeguarding
4.0	DCA Committee	22/10/22	Item 9 - Safeguarding
5.0	DCA Committee	6/11/23	Meeting 23/10/2023 Follow-up Item 3 - Gift Aid
5.1	DCA Committee	19/11/23	Meeting 23/10/2023 Follow-up Item 5 – Peal Fees
5.2	DCA Committee	1/11/24	Item 7c – BRF Grants
5.3	EGM	30/8/25	Motion 1 – Participating Members
5.4	DCA Committee	31/10/25	Item 5a – Charity Commission
6.0	DCA Committee	4/12/25	Meeting dated 31/10/25 Post Meeting Email Votes – General Changes especially on General Meetings.
6.1	AGM	13/6/26	Motion 1 – New Members
6.2	DCA Committee	28/6/26	Item 8 – Safeguarding
6.3	DCA Committee	26/7/26	Item 7- Conduct & Compliance Policy Item 8 - General Meeting and Member Voting Policy
6.4	DCA Committee	23/8/26	Item 7- Financial Management Policy Item 8 - Data Protection Policy

1. Financial Amounts

1.1 Life Membership Subscription

The Life Membership Subscription shall be £6.00.

1.2 Steepleage

The standardl steepleage payable at Association practices and meetings will be:

- Adults: **£2.00**
- Members in Full Time Education: **Free**

The Organising Officer(s) may vary the steepleage charge where necessary to meet the requirements of a particular event.

1.3 Host Tower Donation

At Association practices, a donation of £15.00 will normally be made to the host tower. The Organising Officer(s) may vary this amount where appropriate, but it should normally be not less than £2.00 per rope.

1.4 Collection of Steepleage

- Steepleage will normally be payable by all attendees, including members of the host tower.
- Steepleage will not normally be collected at virtual ringing sessions.
- Fifty per cent of any surplus from steepleage, after payment of the host tower donation, shall be transferred annually to the Bell Restoration Fund.

1.5 Peal Fees

The peal fee per rope will be:

- Adults: **90p** (minimum **£1.00** donation for Gift Aid)
- Members in Full Time Education: **45p** (minimum **50p** donation for Gift Aid)

Peal fees will be credited to the Bell Restoration Fund in accordance with the Association's Rules. Members wishing to make a Gift Aid declaration may obtain the appropriate form from the Secretary.

2. Financial Management

2.1 The financial affairs of the Association shall be managed in accordance with the Financial Management Policy approved by the Committee.

2.2 The Financial Management Policy governs:

- banking and investments;
- income and expenditure;
- reimbursement of expenses;
- grants, including Bell Restoration Fund grant applications, approvals and payments;
- operation of Association funds;
- accounting records;
- annual accounts and independent examination; and
- financial controls.

3. Association Funds

3.1 The Association shall operate the following funds:

- General Fund;
- Training and Recruitment Fund; and
- Bell Restoration Fund.

3.2 The purpose and operation of these funds shall be as set out in the Financial Management Policy and, where applicable, the governing document of the Bell Restoration Fund.

4. Mobile Bell Tower

- The tower can be used at DCA Events if accompanied by a DCA Officer.
- To Hire the Tower (collected from the storage location) a fee of £20 (£10 for DCA Members) per day is charged and a returnable deposit of £50 must be lodged against breakages.
- If the Tower is booked to be taken by a DCA Officer to an event then a charge of £50 per day is made plus travel expenses at 45p/mile.
- Whilst in use the Tower must by controlled by a Bell Ringer at all times.
- Storage and administration of bookings of the tower will be the responsibility of the Treasurer. All finance associated with the Tower will be under the DCA Training and Recruitment Fund.

5. Safeguarding

5.1 The Association shall maintain and publish a Safeguarding Policy setting out its safeguarding arrangements, requirements and procedures.

5.2 All members, officers and volunteers involved in Association activities shall comply with the Safeguarding Policy.

5.3 The Committee shall appoint a Safeguarding Officer and shall ensure that appropriate safeguarding training, DBS checks and other safeguarding requirements are maintained for those roles identified in the Safeguarding Policy.

5.4 For the purposes of Association governance, compliance with safeguarding requirements shall be determined in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy and by verification undertaken by the Association Safeguarding Officer.

5.5 Where the Safeguarding Policy provides for the suspension of an officer due to non-compliance with safeguarding requirements, that suspension shall take effect automatically in accordance with the Policy and shall not require approval by the Committee.

5.6 The Committee shall ensure that all officers and members are supported in meeting the safeguarding requirements applicable to their roles.

6. Membership Records

6.1 New Member Joining Process

6.1.1. Ringing Members

a) All applicants for Ringing Membership shall complete a Membership Application Form (either in paper or electronic form), which shall include:

- their name;
- their home tower;
- their email address;
- a declaration confirming that they are able to ring a full-circle bell unaided; and
- where the applicant is aged 18 or over, a declaration confirming that they have completed the current Church of England safeguarding requirements applicable to bell ringers within the preceding three years.

The completed application form shall be submitted to the Secretary.

b) The Life Membership Subscription (see Section 1 of these Standing Orders) shall be paid to the Treasurer, normally by BACS.

c) Once the Treasurer has confirmed receipt of the subscription, the Secretary shall:

- confirm the applicant's membership;
- record the member's details in the Master Membership Register; and
- add the member's email address to the Email Distribution List for Members' Information.

d) The new member's name and home tower shall be published in the next available DCA Newsletter.

6.1.2. Honorary Members

Honorary Membership may only be conferred following election at an Annual General Meeting of the Association.

6.2 Maintaining Membership Records

6.2.1. The Association's Master Membership Register, which shall record all current and former members of the Association, shall be maintained by the Secretary.

6.2.2. Once a person's membership has been confirmed, their record shall remain on the Master Membership Register unless its removal is authorised in accordance with the Association's Data Retention Policy.

6.2.3. The Association's electronic distribution list for Members' Information shall be maintained by the Secretary using the approved communications platform.

6.2.4. New members shall be invited to join the Association's electronic distribution list following confirmation of their membership.

6.2.5. Members are responsible for accepting the invitation to join the electronic distribution list and may unsubscribe from the distribution list at any time using the facilities provided by the communications platform.

6.2.6. The Secretary may remove a member from the electronic distribution list where:

a) the Secretary receives persistent non-delivery reports indicating that the email address is no longer valid;

b) the member requests removal;

c) the Secretary is notified of the member's death; or

d) the communications platform automatically removes or rejects a member in accordance with its normal operation.

6.2.7. Removal from, or failure to join, the electronic distribution list shall not affect a person's membership of the Association. However, members who are not subscribed to the Association's electronic distribution list may be unable to receive notices, meeting papers or ballot invitations.

6.2.8. Members are responsible for notifying the Secretary of any changes to their contact details.

6.2.9. Members are responsible for maintaining a valid email address and, where applicable, membership of the Association's approved electronic communications platform. The Association shall not be responsible for any member failing to receive notices, meeting papers or voting invitations where the member has declined, unsubscribed from, or otherwise failed to maintain access to the approved communications platform.

6.3 Participating Members

6.3.1. A Participating Member is a member of the Association who satisfies either of the following criteria:

a) has attended one or more **qualifying Association events** during the preceding twelve months; or

b) has joined the Association within the preceding twelve months.

6.3.2. For the purposes of these Standing Orders, a **qualifying Association event** is an event organised by or on behalf of the Association at which the prescribed steepleage or attendance contribution is collected and paid into the Association's General Fund.

6.3.3. Activities that do not contribute to the Association's General Fund, including peals, quarter peals and similar member-organised activities where contributions are paid to another Association fund, shall not constitute qualifying Association events unless the Committee has expressly designated them as such.

6.3.4. Attendance at qualifying Association events shall be recorded by the Association and used to maintain the register of Participating Members on a rolling twelve-month basis.

6.3.5. A member's Participating Member status shall automatically be determined by reference to the attendance records and the date on which they joined the Association.

6.3.6. The Secretary shall maintain the register of Participating Members and shall ensure that it is kept up to date.

6.3.7. Participating Member status shall be used to determine eligibility to:

- vote in formal ballots arising from General Meetings;
- stand for election to the Association's Committee; and
- exercise any other governance rights reserved to Participating Members by the Association's Rules, Policies or Standing Orders.

6.3.8. The total number of Participating Members shall constitute the Association's official active membership figure for reporting to external organisations, including the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers.

6.3.9. The Committee may approve procedures for recording attendance at qualifying Association events to ensure the accurate maintenance of the Participating Members register.

7. General Meetings

7.1 General

7.1.1. General Meetings comprise Annual General Meetings (AGMs) and Extraordinary General Meetings (EGMs).

7.1.2. General Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the Association's **Policy on General Meetings and Member Voting**.

7.1.3. The format of each General Meeting shall be determined jointly by the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer, having regard to:

- the nature of the business to be transacted;
- accessibility for members;
- practical considerations;
- the efficient conduct of the Association's business; and
- where appropriate, advice provided by the Safeguarding Officer.

7.1.4. General Meetings may be held:

- in person;
- virtually using an approved online meeting platform; or
- in a hybrid format.

7.1.5. Where an Extraordinary General Meeting has been validly requested in accordance with the Rules, it shall be convened and concluded, including completion of any formal ballot, within two months of the Secretary receiving the request.

7.1.6. The business of an Extraordinary General Meeting shall normally be limited to the matters specified in the request for that meeting.

7.2 Timetable

7.2.1. The Secretary shall publish a timetable for each General Meeting.

7.2.2. The timetable shall include:

- the date of the meeting;
- the closing date for submission of motions;
- the closing date for committee nominations (where applicable);
- the closing date for reports and supporting statements;
- the publication date for meeting papers;
- the opening and closing dates of the formal ballot; and
- any other relevant administrative deadlines.

7.2.3. Unless otherwise determined by the Committee:

- notice of an AGM shall be issued at least two months before the meeting;
- notice of an EGM shall be issued at least twenty-eight days before the meeting.

7.2.4. The Annual General Meeting process, including the formal ballot and declaration of the voting results, shall be concluded within one calendar month of the published meeting date or no later than 30 June in each calendar year, whichever is earlier.

7.2.5. Meeting papers shall be published no later than **10 days before** the date of the General Meeting.

7.3 Submission of Business

7.3.1. All motions shall be submitted to the Secretary by the published closing date.

7.3.2. Motions submitted by members shall include the names of both a proposer and seconder. Motions originating from the Committee may instead be approved by resolution of a quorate DCA Committee meeting.

7.3.3. Nominations for election to the Committee shall be submitted by the published closing date.

7.3.4. A candidate for election to the Committee must:

- be a Participating Member of the Association on the closing date for nominations; and
- not be subject to any resolution of a General Meeting that disqualifies them from standing for election.

7.3.5. Officer reports, member statements and supporting papers shall be submitted by the published closing date.

7.3.6. Written statements relating to motions or committee nominations shall not exceed 600 words unless the Committee determines otherwise.

7.4 Apologies

7.4.1. Members wishing to register apologies shall submit them by email to the Secretary no later than 24 hours before the commencement of the General Meeting.

7.4.2. Members submitting apologies may also submit written statements for circulation or presentation in accordance with the Policy on General Meetings and Member Voting.

7.5 Conduct of Meetings

7.5.1. The Chair shall be responsible for the orderly conduct of the meeting.

7.5.2. Advisory votes may be taken during the meeting but shall have no binding effect.

7.5.3. Where the Chair is absent, Rule 10 shall apply. The order of precedence shall be:

1. Vice-Chair
2. Ringing Master, Training Officer, Secretary or Treasurer
3. Any other Committee Member

Only if none of the above are present shall a member be elected by those present to act as Chair.

7.6 Continuity of Office

7.6.1. An elected Officer or Committee Member shall remain in office until:

- the expiry of their term of office;
- their resignation;
- their death;
- they cease to be eligible under the Association's Rules or Standing Orders; or
- they are removed from office by resolution of a General Meeting.

7.6.2. No vote of no confidence, resolution of the Committee or other informal procedure shall, of itself, remove an elected Officer or Committee Member from office unless the Association's Rules expressly provide otherwise.

7.6.3. Where a motion seeking the removal of an Officer or Committee Member is proposed, it shall be included in the notice convening the General Meeting and determined through the Association's formal voting process.

7.7 Formal Voting

7.7.1. Formal votes shall be conducted using an approved independent third-party voting platform selected jointly by the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.

7.7.2. The Secretary and Assistant Secretary shall jointly act as Returning Officers unless the Committee determines otherwise.

7.7.3. Ballot invitations shall be issued to those Participating Members who are subscribed to the Association's electronic distribution list maintained in accordance with Section 6.2. Eligibility to receive a ballot shall be determined by reference to both the register of Participating Members maintained under Section 6.3 and the electronic distribution list maintained under Section 6.2.

7.7.4. The formal ballot shall open as soon as reasonably practicable following the close of the General Meeting.

7.7.5. The formal ballot shall remain open for a minimum period of seven days.

7.7.6. Only votes cast for or against a proposal shall determine the outcome. Abstentions shall not be counted for either side.

7.7.7. In the event of an equality of votes, the proposal shall be deemed not to have passed.

7.7.8. The Chair shall not have a casting vote.

7.7.9. Voting results shall be published within 48 hours of the close of the ballot.

7.8 Quorum

7.8.1. The quorum for a General Meeting shall be determined in accordance with the Association's Rules and the Policy on General Meetings and Member Voting.

7.8.2. Where attendance at the meeting is below the quorum required by the Rules, but the number of Participating Members casting valid votes in the formal ballot meets or exceeds that quorum, the meeting and all resulting decisions shall be deemed quorate.

8. Miscellaneous

8.1. For a ringing session (i.e. Peal, Quarter Peal, etc.) to be recorded against the DCA a minimum of 50% of the band must be members of the DCA who are on the Email Distribution List (i.e. Receiving monthly newsletters from the DCA). In the case of a Peal then all members of the band must agree to abide to the DCA Peal Fee as defined within this document.

8.2. All Committee Members terms of office end automatically at the AGM unless they:

a) Submit a nomination to stand for election by the published date

b) Are elected by the AGM

c) Fulfil any requirements for appointment to office as set out within these Standing Orders or UK Regulating Bodies.

8.3. Changes to the Bell Restoration Fund Rules have to be notified to the Charity Commission. Before being presented to a General Meeting the changes should be checked to see it they are 'regulated alterations.' (See the GOV.UK website for guidance). After changes have been approved at a General Meeting they must gain the Charity Commission's authority before they can be implemented.

8.4. The Committee shall maintain and administer a Conduct and Compliance Policy setting out the standards of conduct expected of members and the procedures for the handling of complaints, investigations, disciplinary matters and appeals. The Committee shall administer that Policy in accordance with its terms.

8.5. The Committee shall maintain and administer a Data Protection Policy setting out the Association's commitments in relation to the processing and protection of personal data. The Committee also maintains supporting procedures and guidance for the administration of personal data. Committee members, officers and authorised volunteers who process personal data on behalf of the Association shall comply with the Data Protection Policy and any procedures approved by the Committee under it.

9. Alteration of Standing Orders

No alteration, addition or deletion of these Standing Orders shall be made except when one of the conditions is met:

- By majority vote in favour of the change at a quorate Annual General Meeting or Extraordinary Meeting of the Association.
- By majority vote in favour of the change by at least 51% of the Association Committee Members either at a Committee Meeting or via an electronic poll (i.e. Email).

Definitions

Email Distribution List for Members Information	List of email addresses of members used to send Newsletters and other information which is relevant to all members (i.e. AGM paperwork).
Honorary Members	Honorary members are non-ringers who have been granted membership for services offered to the DCA.
Ringing Members	Members of the DCA who joined after leaning to ring a full circle bell without help and who have paid a one-off joining fee and been elected a member. Ringing Members retain this status for the rest of their lives regardless of whether or not they still ring or participate DCA events.
Life Membership Subscription	The one-off joining fee paid to become a member of the DCA.
Master Membership List	The list of all members who have joined since the DCA was founded on 1st January 1983.
Non-delivery Reports	A non-delivery report (NDR) is an automated email message sent to the sender of an email, informing them that the email message was not successfully delivered to the intended recipient. NDRs typically include information about why the delivery failed, such as an invalid email address, a full mailbox, or a technical issue
Participating Member	A member who has attended a DCA event where a steepleage fee was collected and that the collected steepleage fee goes to the DCA General Fund. Peal Fees which go to the DCA Bell Restoration Fund do not count financially as steepleage in this respect.