

Rules of Sonning Deanery Branch of Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bellringers

Draft version for 2025 AGM (For history see below)

1 General

These rules are supplementary to the Guild rules and to the Guild's generic Branch rules. They provide additional information that is specific to the management of the Branch. The Guild's objects, rules and decisions apply to the Branch, in as far as they are applicable, unless stated otherwise in these Branch rules.

2 Towers:

The Branch comprises a set of Guild towers, as agreed with the Guild.

3 Members:

Members of the Branch shall be those Guild members attached to Branch towers plus those unattached members attached to the Branch. A member may be elected as specified in the Guild rules, or may be elected at any Branch event open to all members, subject to ratification at a subsequent General meeting.

4 Officers:

Branch officers shall include the honorary posts listed below, plus other officers as shall from time to time be agreed by a Branch AGM. An officer may hold more than one post. A post may be split between more than one person, providing the division of responsibilities is made clear.

- 1 Chairman
- 2 Secretary
- 3 Treasurer
- 4 Ringing Master
- 5 Deputy Ringing Master
- 6 Training Officer
- 7 Newsletter editor
- 8 Youth officer

Officers should not normally hold the same post for more than five consecutive years unless agreed by the AGM.

5 General Meetings:

An Annual General Meeting shall be held in the first quarter of the year. Not less than 14 days' notice by email or in writing of the date, time and place, and draft agenda shall be given by the Branch Secretary to the Guild General Officers, to Branch officers and to each Branch tower's nominated correspondent. All meeting papers shall be posted on the Branch website before the meeting.

An Extraordinary General Meeting shall be convened, if requested (in writing or by e-mail) by at least 10 voting members, within 28 days of such request. In case of urgency the meeting may be called at the discretion of the Chairman or Secretary. An EGM shall in all other respects be the same as an AGM, requiring the same notice and having the same powers.

6 Business meeting:

The Branch shall hold a business meeting in the last quarter of the year, with not less than 14 days' notice in writing of the date, time and place, and the business to be transacted at the meeting, shall be given to Branch officers and to each Branch tower's nominated correspondent. All Branch officers and one representative from each Branch tower shall be entitled to attend, and if necessary to vote.

7 Quorum for meetings:

The quorum for a Branch General Meeting shall be 20 members and for a Business Meeting 10 members.

8 Delegated powers:

Between meetings, the officers, in consultation with other officers as appropriate, shall have power to act on behalf of the Branch, providing that such actions are subsequently reported and justified to the Branch at or before the next

General Meeting or Business Meeting. This may include the authorisation of urgent expenditure providing all officers agree and provided that it does not exceed an amount agreed periodically by a Branch General Meeting,

9 Branch Funds:

The Treasurer shall separately account for any 'funds' (categories of income and expenditure) agreed in advance at a Branch AGM. There shall be at least three signatories to any Branch bank account. Any one signature shall be adequate for expenditure up to the amount agreed periodically by the Branch AGM, and any two signatures for any larger amount.

10 Branch Records:

The Branch officers shall ensure that appropriate historical records are kept of the following:

- 1 Names of members (including Life, Honorary Ringing, and Non-ringing Members)
- 2 Accounts
- 3 Records and minutes of meetings
- 4 Rules
- 5 Records of other major activities significant to the life and development of the Branch

Any historical records or artefacts that the Branch does not wish to retain shall be offered to the Guild before considering disposal.

2006 – Original adopted, 2013 – 'committee meeting' changed to 'business meeting'. 2017 – Youth Officer added.

2022 – Delegated powers including spending defined, Provision for EGM added. 2025 – Changes to allow for meeting notification by email and document distribution via the website.

Items that don't require a rule change, to be agreed by AGM and recorded:

- The officers to be elected over and above what the rules require are: Minutes secretary, Bookstall holder, Webmaster. (2006)
- The officers to be signatories to the Branch bank account are: Treasurer, Chairman, Secretary. (2006)
- The amount above which cheques shall require two signatures is: £0 (zero) – all cheques must have two signatures. (2006)
- The normal date of AGM and Business Meeting meeting are: 3rd Saturday in February and November respectively. (2006)
- The total expenditure in any year approved by the officers without prior approval of a General Meeting shall not exceed 10% of the Branch's assets relevant to the expenditure being considered. (2022)

JAH – 16 Feb 2025