

Minutes from the EACR Training and Recruitment Sub-Committee Meeting

Venue: In person at St Laurence's Church Upminster

Date: 7th December 2025 **Time:** 15:00 hours

Attendees: Beth Johnson, Carol Adams, Sarah Chin-a-Loy, Paul Crick, Sylvia Crick, Ian Kerwin, Sandra Murphy (AKA Smurf), **Visitor:** Steve Ashley

Apologies: Anne Bray, Anne Sloan, Yvonne Towler, Andrew Brewster, Christina Brewster, David Sparling, Sarah Holland, Vicki Chapman

CC: Nigel Taylor, Roy Threadgold

1. Apologies, Minutes & Matters Arising

Minutes from the October 2025 meeting were reviewed, confirmed as accurate and accepted unanimously.

2. Strategy discussion ref TOR

"To consider how ringing should develop in the county over a five-and-ten-year time period and how this target can be achieved."

The committee were informed by the summary document relating to the CCCBR 2030 project as well as the Bequest Strategy. CCCBR 2030 looks to recruit 10,000 new ringers (half under age of 30), 30,000 people to have heard about or had a go at ringing, and to double the number of teachers and trainers.

The Bequest strategy was written in May 2023 and the meeting asked what member numbers show between 2023 to 2025. The Bequest Strategy looked for 30% increase between 2023 and 2029.

In regard to trained teachers, we continue to organise ART Training courses but the meeting recognised the problem of moving individuals who had taken the course through to accreditation via mentoring.

Consideration needed to be directed at following this through over the next 5 years. Note ERIE (Energising Ringing in Essex programme) looks to trained teachers in 75% of towers. The recent tower survey records to be reviewed to give a guide to current situation.

Consider some group management training for tower captains and/or teachers.

Beth reported that she has written to Colin Chapman (CC) to see if we can refine the membermojo information to show more clearly which towers have teachers specifically trained to teach bell handling.

PC asked if ART teaches how to deal with a dropped rope.

CA suggested we had some sort of exit survey to cover lapsed ringers.

[Beth to report on member numbers, % of towers with teachers and response from CC.](#)

3. Budgets

3.1 Budget for Universities Ringing Initiative

Anne Bray has requested £750 for the Freshers Fair as follows:

£540 – cost for a charity stand + mini-ring (includes VAT)

£60 – printing / promotional expenses

£50 – travel to collect and return mini-ring

£50 – donation to the Suffolk Guild

Total budget: £700 (£750 would be good to allow a bit of leeway/possible inflation)

As the budget has to be set some way in advance to align with the AMC dates, the meeting considered allowing the extra £50 for leeway was reasonable.

The budget of £750 was unanimously approved, and will be brought to the AMC on February 7th 2026.

Beth to liaise with Anne Bray

4. Around the Districts

Ian Kerwin reported for the NW: moving up to 8 bells practice in Feb; calling touches - monthly sessions starting in the spring; PBD courses in April and May plus normal District practices taking place.

Sylvia and Paul Crick reported for the SW – nothing really new apart from an 8-bell practice currently by invitation only. Many towers at PH, CC – time is right to do something more maybe Sat Mornings, just in the planning.

Smurf will report at the next meeting for the SE

Carol Adams reported for the S – higher number practices dropped and some other diminishing activity (eg 'What shall I try next' practices). Carol has canvassed members regarding hopes and needs, and aims to organise some more intensive training for RFK ringers.

Discussion was had about the best training offerings and noted that the N District were looking to combine some of their practices with adjacent districts.

5. Training Courses

5.1 Simulator Workshop – 8th November 2025

Smurf reported that the simulator workshop had received positive feedback from attendees and that both she and Simon Mann had taken some points away from this first workshop day to inform further workshops, which had been requested.

A simulator user group to be set up. Sarah C-a-L (webmaster) will look at the best way to do this.

ACTION: Smurf to set date for further workshop; Sarah C-a-L to liaise with Smurf re user group.

5.2 November Training Day – 22nd November 2025

Very positive feedback from students and helpers which will be circulated to tutors and Sarah Holland (helper organiser) for future action.

Beth reported that the day had made a surplus of £67.75; students were charged £12.50 each and towers paid £50 for the day. Beth asked the meeting if we should reduce the fee next year so we did not make a surplus and may need a contribution to cover costs from the Education fund. The meeting felt that £12.50 was not a lot for the day and it would be reasonable to keep the fee as is, and possibly to increase the tower fee to £60 to cover heating costs as the training day is always in November. Beth confirmed that no one had ever complained about the fee.

5.3 Essex Ringing Course

Beth reported that the Master had advised that he, the Treasurer and Secretary were progressing the Course following the excellent set up provided by Sarah Knights pre her resignation. The sub-committee were concerned that these three individuals did not understand the action required once applications were opened.

BJ to write on behalf of the sub-committee to the Principal Officers to ask for an update as the Essex Course is deemed to be part of this sub-committee's responsibilities.

5.4 ART Courses

13th December 2025: Writtle – M1 run by Lesley Boyle (14 students and is full)

6th February 2026: Coggeshall – M1 run by David Sparling (6 registered)

Beth reported that we do work hard to get mentors in place at the day course and encourage people to move to accreditation. PC suggested that if there is no immediate learner, could an experienced teacher pretend to be a learner?

ACTION: Beth to share details of February course with members. Also to ask ART about idea of a 'pretend learner'.

6. Grant Applications

6.1 Basildon Grant Application

Beth attended a simulator-run practice at Basildon this week and confirmed the sound kit is working really well. Beth has notified Treasurer that grant should now be paid.

7. Essex Young Ringers (EYR)

No update from Christina Brewster received.

8. Recruitment and Retention

A recruitment event is proposed across the county in 2026. Find pockets of towers who would like to take part, get Comms to promote it via radio, press and social media. Possibly get mini ring at a central location (or two). Discussed timing, either June or as part of Heritage week in September (11 to 20th). If part of the Heritage Week, would our activity get diluted amongst everything else or would we benefit from the heritage association? Is mid-September a good time to start recruiting, bearing in mind follow through would be in winter? Discussion ended with preferred date to be earlier in year. Note that we do need to know where our good teachers are.

ACTION: Need a couple of people to take this forward. Volunteers?

Any Other Business

1. Model Bell Purchase Opportunity

Ten people have said they are interested in a model bell; Vicki Chapman is contacting the contractor to find out if there is a discount available. Note Paul Crick at West Ham has already bought one of the new models and recommends it.

ACTION: Beth to follow through and liaise with those who want to purchase a bell.

2. Ladies Guild

Smurf reported on the activity of the Ladies Guild which has really taken off in the SE District; it is well supported, there's no pressure, aiming for a quarter peal a month and encouraging women to start finding their voice and calling from basics to quarter peals. Spread the word and contact Smurf for more information.

3. ADM notes

Beth to draft and circulate items for the District Reps to mention at their ADMs e.g. Training Calendar, Recruitment Day, Recruitment and Training Grants.

4. Mobile Belfry Trust

Ian updated the meeting on the repairs to the Touring Tower; the calendar is already heavily booked up so if anyone would like to have a mobile belfry they need to refer to the website.

5. Universities initiative

Anglia Ruskin University – attend their Freshers Fair?

[Beth to mention this to Anne Bray.](#)

Thanks to Tony Bloomfield for the presentation of the proposal for a new ring of bells at St Laurence and for showing the sub-committee around the church and tower. Also, for allowing us to use the Parish Office for the meeting.

Next meeting will be later in February and Beth will circulate proposed dates after the ADMs to new/remaining sub-committee members.

The meeting closed at approximately 18.00 hours.