



The Worcestershire & Districts Change Ringing Association

Founded 10th April 1882 – Branches formed 1911

PATRON:

The Right Reverend Martin Gorick, Acting Bishop of Worcester, and Bishop of Dudley

PRESIDENT: *The Reverend Canon Dr Stephen Edwards, Dean of Worcester*

GENERAL SECRETARY:

*Alison Hodge
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24th September 2025

**SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION
SATURDAY 18th October 2025 AT 4pm at Claines Church
with ringing from 3pm**

AGENDA

1. Opening prayer
2. Chairman for the meeting
3. Apologies for absence
4. Proposal to amend Rule 8 of the Association Rules
Proposed by James Mort and seconded by Alison Hodge

Explanatory notes –

Rule 8 (and 7)

Rule 7 is titled Membership and Rule 8 is titled Election of Members. Rules 7 and 8 are to be combined into a single rule (new Rule 7) and every rule from 9 onwards will be renumbered down by one.

Rule 7 is split into (i), (ii), etc for each class of member. (i) will be the header of Classes of membership and each class is then a, b, c, d. There are three small changes to what is now Rule 7(i)(d).

Rule 8(i) becomes Rule 7(ii), Rule 8(ii) becomes Rule 7(iii), etc.

At Rule 7(vii)(b), the previous (b) and (c) are combined into a single clause, with amended references as a result of this reduction of paragraphs in Rule 7(vii).

'Non Resident' should be 'Non-Resident'. This change affects Rules 7, 8 and 19.

Consequential changes

Rule 9 - The reference to Rule 7 becomes to Rule 7(i).

Rule 19 - The reference to Rule 7 becomes to Rule 7(i).

Rule 19 - The two references to Rule 8(iii) become to Rule 7(ii)(c).

The Existing Rule 8 –

8. Election of Members

The following provisions shall apply:-

- (i) Ringing Members and Associate Members shall usually be elected at a Branch meeting at which they should normally be present. Prospective members shall be proposed and seconded by Ringing Members. A vote on the proposition shall follow. Membership shall take effect from the end of the meeting.*
- (ii) Non Resident Life Members shall normally be elected at a Branch meeting. Prospective members shall be proposed and seconded by Ringing Members. A vote on the proposition shall follow.*
- (iii) Ringing Members or Non Resident Life Members may be elected to membership before an Association peal attempt subject to ratification of the belfry election at the next available Branch meeting. Full details of such elections must be sent by the proposer to the Secretary of the Branch in which the election takes place or the proposer resides. The number of such provisional members shall not exceed half of the peal band.*
- (iv) Ringing Members whose subscriptions are more than twelve months in arrears shall forfeit all rights to membership until they pay all outstanding subscriptions or they are re-elected in accordance with these rules.*

The proposed Rule –

7. Membership

i. Classes of membership

Membership shall be divided into the following classes:-

a. Ringing Members

Ringing Members shall be active church bell ringers, including those learning the art, and shall reside and/or ring in the Association area. A Ringing Member shall be affiliated through one tower only or, alternatively, shall be designated "Unattached".

b. Associate Members

Associate Members shall be persons other than active ringers who may wish to support the work of the Association.

c. *Honorary Members*

The Patrons, President and Chaplain, all for the time being, shall, unless holding Ringing or Associate Membership, be designated Honorary Members.

d. *Non-Resident Life Members*

A Non-Resident Life Member shall be a ringer who does not fulfil the conditions of full membership under Rule 7(i)(a). A Non-Resident Life Member who subsequently fulfils the conditions of full membership under Rule 7(i)(a) may become a Ringing Member and in that case shall pay annual subscription commencing on the 1st January after the member fulfils those requirements. The member should inform the Branch Secretary of such a transfer, which should be reported at the next branch meeting. A Ringing Member of two years' standing or more who ceases to fulfil the conditions under Rule 7(i)(a) shall automatically become a Non-Resident Life Member without further payment.

ii. **Election of members**

- a. *Ringing Members and Associate Members shall usually be elected at a Branch meeting at which they should normally be present. Prospective members shall be proposed and seconded by Ringing Members. A vote on the proposition shall follow. Membership shall take effect immediately.*
- b. *Non-Resident Life Members shall normally be elected at a Branch meeting. Prospective members shall be proposed and seconded by Ringing Members. A vote on the proposition shall follow.*
- c. *Ringing Members or Non-Resident Life Members may be elected to membership before an Association peal attempt subject to ratification of the belfry election at the next available Branch meeting. Full details of such elections must be sent by the proposer to the Secretary of the Branch in which the election takes place or the proposer resides. The number of such provisional members shall not exceed half of the peal band.*

iii. **Terms of membership**

- a. *Ringing Members whose subscriptions are more than twelve months in arrears shall forfeit all rights to membership until they pay all outstanding subscriptions or they are re-elected in accordance with these rules.*
- b. ***Members are expected to support the Objects of the Association.***
- c. ***Members are expected to follow all relevant guidance and policies required by a church where they are involved in any ringing related activity. They are also expected to follow policies provided by the Association, any guidance provided by the Central Council of Church Bellringers, and the Association. This includes but is***

not limited to: safeguarding, health and safety, data protection, discrimination and use of social media.

iv. Suspension

- a. The Standing Committee shall have the power to suspend (or afterwards reinstate) any Member of the Association where a serious concern about the conduct of that Member has been raised which may bring the reputation of the Association into disrepute.***
- b. The Standing Committee will inform the Member of the suspension in writing, its implications and the process by which the suspension can be ended as set out in these rules. The Member will have the right to reply which will be considered by the Standing Committee.***
- c. A Member who has been suspended cannot attend Association events, take part in any Association meetings, vote in those meetings or stand for any Office or other Committee position of the Association. If they already hold any Office or other position in the Association, they will be suspended from that Office or position and appropriate arrangements will be put into place to cover their duties.***
- d. No subscriptions will be due during the period of suspension. Where a subscription has already been paid, no refund will be due.***
- e. The Standing Committee will actively consider whether ongoing suspensions should continue at least every three months or when the situation significantly changes. The Standing Committee will set out any Terms of reinstatement of membership.***
- f. Where appropriate, the Standing Committee will liaise with the Worcester Diocesan Safeguarding Team.***
- g. Where appropriate, the Safeguarding Contact will be co-opted to the Standing Committee for the sole purpose of advising and making decisions with respect to matters under Rule 7(iii) and (iv).***
- h. A Member suspended in accordance with these rules shall have the right to appeal against the suspension in accordance with Rule 7(vii).***

v. Termination

- a. The Standing Committee shall have the power to terminate the membership of any Member of the Association where the serious conduct of a Member (which resulted in their suspension) is such that it is no longer appropriate for that person to remain a Member of the Association.***

- b. Where appropriate, the Standing Committee will liaise with the Worcester Diocesan Safeguarding Team.*
 - c. The Standing Committee will ensure that the Member is able to make representations to them which will be considered before any decision under (a) is made.*
 - d. In some circumstances, such as where the Worcester Diocesan Safeguarding Team excludes the Member from all ringing within the Diocese or where a custodial sentence is given, a decision to terminate membership can be made without representations being heard from the Member.*
 - e. The Standing Committee will inform the Member in writing of the decision to terminate their membership of the Association and with what terms.*
 - f. If a Member whose membership was terminated under this rule wishes to rejoin the Association at some later date (for example when a custodial sentence has ended or the Worcester Diocesan Safeguarding Team remove some or all restrictions on their ringing), they must first apply to the Standing Committee who will consider the application in liaison, where appropriate, with the Worcester Diocesan Safeguarding Team. The Standing Committee will decide to either continue to refuse membership or to permit them to seek membership in accordance with Rule 7(ii)(a) or 7(ii)(b).*
- vi. Implementation of Rules 7(iv) and (v)*
- a. Any Member of the Association becoming aware of the potential serious conduct of another Member should notify those concerns to an Officer or Branch Officer of the Association or the Safeguarding Contact. The Officer, Branch Officer or Safeguarding Contact will then notify the Standing Committee of those concerns to allow action under Rule 7(iv) or 7(v) to be considered.*
 - b. Where the Association tower at which the Member rings is located in another Diocese then references to the Worcester Diocesan Safeguarding Team should be read as to the Safeguarding or equivalent team of that Diocese.*
 - c. Where the Member being considered for suspension or termination of their membership is a Member of the Standing Committee, the other members of the Standing Committee together with one of the Vice-Presidents will make the decisions or recommendations.*
 - d. Someone closely connected with the Member being considered for suspension or termination of their membership who is themselves a member of the Standing Committee or Central Committee, shall declare the circumstances and take no further part.*

e. *Where the Standing Committee requires additional members, one or more of the Vice-Presidents will supplement the Standing Committee.*

f. *Communications required by these rules from the Standing Committee will be in writing by a nominated member of the Standing Committee.*

vii. **Appeals against Rules 7(iv) and (v)**

a. *A Member, or former Member, subject to a decision under Rule 7(iv)(a), (v)(a) or (v)(f) may appeal against that decision within 30 days of being notified of the decision. They may also appeal against any terms imposed under Rule 7(v)(e) or (f).*

b. *Appeals will be considered by an Appeal Committee which will be formed, when required, by a group of at least two persons who are independent of those persons who made the original decision. The Standing Committee will nominate members of the Appeal Committee as required. Independent persons may include the Patrons, Presidents or Vice-Presidents of the Association.*

c. *The Appeal Committee will ensure that the Member, or former Member, is able to make representations to them which will be considered before any decision under (e) is made.*

d. *The Appeal Committee will ensure that the Standing Committee is able to make representations to them which will be considered before any decision under (e) is made.*

e. *The Appeal Committee shall have the power to reconsider the original decision or terms and either uphold, vary or reverse that decision, or confirm, vary or remove the terms.*

5. Any other relevant business with the consent of the Chairman

Standing Orders - to be observed at General Meetings of the Association

These are printed in W&DCRA Report for 2021 and on the website:
<http://www.wdcra.org.uk/assn/ASSNRules.pdf>