



Norwich Diocesan Association of Ringers

Patron: The Right Reverend Graham Usher, Bishop of Norwich

Behaviour Policy

Background

Every ringer, ringing leader and ringing society plays their part in creating a safe, welcoming environment and in representing ringing to both church and public.

This document sets out the standards of behaviour the Association requires of its members, and the process for handling incidents when these standards may not have been reached.

1. Application

- a) This Code will apply to all categories of membership as defined in the Association Rules.
- b) The Code relates to the conduct of members. It attempts to set parameters of expected conduct and behaviour for the guidance of members, tower captains and officials of the guild.
- c) The Code does not relate to standards of ringing other than with respect to members' safety.
- d) The Code will act as a reference in circumstances where the conduct of a member raises concerns and the potential application of some kind of response from the Association; for instance informal or formal encouragement to improvement or temporary or permanent exclusion from membership or removal from office.
- e) Any issue associated with safeguarding must be undertaken in accordance with relevant safeguarding procedures of the Church of England and using the guidance of the Association Safeguarding Policy. Issues referred to the Association should be taken up with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser and the Association Safeguarding Officer as appropriate. Any safeguarding matter emanating from the church should be dealt with confidentially by Association Officers as appropriate.

2. Principles

- a) All members and officers are expected to follow and comply with the advice provided by the Association, Diocese and the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers (CCCBR).
- b) Members are expected to support the objectives of the Association and not actively undermine or subvert any of those objectives. Nevertheless, it is recognised that Association objectives should be subject to scrutiny in a manner consistent with Association rules and this Code of Conduct.
- c) The Association considers that good relations between members will assist the Association to meet its aspirations.
- d) The Association recognises that disagreements will occur from time to time and that such dissonance can often be positive, aid communication and help the Association make progress toward fulfilling its objectives. However the Association expects its members to manage such disagreement in a respectful manner for instance through the criticism of ideas rather than individuals.



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- e) The Association expects members to act lawfully at all times when undertaking activities as Association members.
- f) The Association is particularly concerned to ensure that high standards of conduct, as set out in this code, are maintained by members when utilising social media.

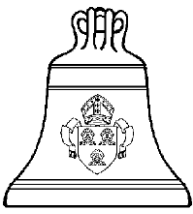
3. Expected standards of behaviour

The Association expects its members to maintain the following standards:

- a) Support the objectives of the Norwich Diocesan Association or, if a member feels they can be improved upon, constructively try to change them in accordance with Association rules.
- b) Ring in a safe and responsible manner.
- c) Be hospitable and welcoming to others in the belfry and at any event associated with ringing.
- d) Encourage harmony and good fellowship amongst bellringers and those with whom bellringers interact, for instance church incumbents and officials and residents who hear bells being rung.
- e) Not to bully, intimidate or harass others and report or condemn such behaviour if ever witnessed.
- f) Abide by, and uphold, legislation and formal guidance provided by the Central Council of Church Bellringers and the Association. In particular that relating to: Safeguarding; Health and Safety; Data Protection, Discrimination; Social media use
- g) Ensure that all the above standards are maintained in all environments including when utilizing social media.

4. Application of Sanctions

- 1) The primary aim of the Code of Conduct is to foster good conduct. It follows that for less serious and first indiscretions the 'sanction' applied should serve to encourage and support rather than condemn.
- 2) Associated with the disciplinary process described below the following **sanctions** may be applied according to the severity of misconduct;
 - a) A 'friendly warning' for first offence or series of minor infringements of Association rules or behaviour that works against the Association objectives and/or doing damage to the reputation of the Association. To stay in effect for 1 year.
 - b) Permanent withdrawal of membership for continued behaviour that is clearly contrary to the interests of the Association as described above. Permanent withdrawal of membership would also be applied for a gross misconduct at first offence. Any permanent withdrawal of membership will be subject to a five-year review by the Association.
 - c) A gross misconduct is defined as misconduct so serious as to fundamentally break the relationship between member and Association. Examples include perpetrating a criminal offence associated with Association activities, serious



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and clear disregard for Association rules on safeguarding and health and safety, clearly and unambiguously acting in such a way as to directly and seriously damage the Association reputation.

- d) For any given misdemeanour, any of the above sanctions can be considered.

5. Process

Any reported breach of this code will be considered by a panel of three trustees in accordance with Rules 34c and 35. Any potential conflict of interest shall be declared and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If the number of available trustees with no conflict of interest in the matter falls below three, then the Management Committee shall appoint additional persons, where possible drawn from within the Association, to form the panel. One of the panel will be appointed Chair, who shall have a casting vote in the event of a tied decision.

- a) The panel will hear evidence from the subject and from other members or in some cases non-members and will invite the subject to make his or her representations before the group decide on what action to take.
- b) The panel is free to adopt whatever approach it thinks fit within the Association rules, this Code of Conduct and the rules of natural justice. For instance, to avoid the unnecessary embarrassment of the person under scrutiny it may be deemed better that one member of the panel be assigned to collect evidence and in particular to speak with the member. The member under investigation will have the right to speak to the three panel members together if he/she so wishes but normally the process unless serious, should be conducted in as informal and friendly way as possible. At all times the member will be accorded the right to be accompanied.
- c) The panel of Trustees will report their findings to the Management Committee. They have authority to apply the sanction reporting retrospectively to the Management Committee.
- d) The decision of the panel shall be final

Prepared: October 2025

Adopted:

Date of next review: