



**Agenda for Eastern Branch AGM to be held on
Saturday, 7th February 2026,
at the Church Hall, High Street, Ingoldmells, PE25 1NP,
commencing 13:45pm**

1. Welcome:
2. Apologies:
3. Obituaries:
4. Minutes of previous AGM:
5. Matters arising:
6. Branch President's Report: (Inc. MTL)
7. Guild Update: (Guild Master)
8. Ringing Master's report:
9. Secretary's report:
10. Treasurer's report:
11. BRF / training grants:
12. Safeguarding:
13. Elections: Branch Officers
14. Proposals for Monthly Meetings, Branch Outing and Targeted Training:
15. Striking Competition(s):
16. Branch Wombel
17. AOB:
18. Vote of thanks:

Close

Lincoln Diocesan Guild of Church Bellringers

Eastern Branch President's Report For 2025

May Bank Holiday weekend was blessed with fine weather for a ringing outing. Bruce Talmage, a former Old Bolingbroke ringer who had moved to Herefordshire, arranged five towers around Hereford for a group of ringers that included friends from Central Branch.

Later in May, Colin Simpson announced his move back to Hampshire. Colin had been our Eastern Branch Secretary since 2020, bringing efficiency and organisation to the role that even extended to nominating his interim replacement! Sue Stevenson stepped in seamlessly for the remainder of the year.

In June it was the turn of the Guild to host the Ridgman Trophy Ten-bell Striking Competition which took place at Boston. Seven teams, including a team from our Guild, were judged over half a course of Yorkshire Surprise Royal. An unexpected outcome of the event publicity was the recruitment of new ringers, including a returning experienced ringer.

Eastern Branch were represented in the Guild Six-bell Striking Competition at Scotter by teams from Alford and Boston.

Our second outing of the year in October was to five Central Branch towers, an enjoyable day for the small number of ringers who attended.

Later in that month, an Eastern Branch team scored a close second place in the Guild 8-bell Competition, ringing St. Simons Bob Triples at Grimsby Minster.

The branch Carol Service at Boston, advertised to ringers across the Guild, was attended mainly by Eastern and Central Branch ringers. Two hours of ringing on the ten bells was followed by an uplifting service and tea.

St. Botolph's Church, Boston appears to be thriving and dynamic, in marked contrast to some rural churches in the branch that are endeavouring to remain viable. Church buildings that have been at the centre of our communities for centuries now face an uncertain future, with some near to closure. Money is important but even the most financially endowed church is at risk without people. Without open churches we cannot ring bells. Giving time by joining the PCC, volunteering our talents or taking on a position of responsibility is a good way to help support these buildings.

A fine example is SS. Peter & Paul Old Bolingbroke, awarded Church of the Year for England in the National Churches Trust Community Volunteer Awards, and additionally, UK Church of the Year! The PCC and Friends Group include members of Old Bolingbroke bellringers who are very active proponents of history, heritage and community in their small rural parish. Chairman of the group, Steve Lumb, said *"the massive contribution that our bellringing team made in sustaining the church and bringing in learners, continuing the craft. The judges saw this as such a positive and another example of making the church relevant and needed"*.

Tony Barker

Eastern Branch Secretary's Report 2025 - For Branch AGM February 2025

At the AGM in February 2025 Tony Barker was re-elected Branch President, Jo Pearson Ringing Master, Caitlin Meyer Deputy Ringing Master, Tess Rowland Treasurer, Colin Simpson Branch Secretary, and Phil Ford Website Editor and Guild Fundraising. Christine Higginson was elected Branch Safeguarding Officer.

During the summer, Colin Simpson moved back to Hampshire and, at a Branch Meeting on 7th June 2025, I was elected Branch Secretary to replace him, until the 2026 AGM. Colin played a significant role within the Branch and Guild and is missed by both, but also by the many ringers he coached and helped during his time in the area. There was a farewell for him at the Branch barbecue at Old Bolingbroke and we hope he will be back to visit from time to time.

During the year ringing events and practices have been well attended. Our Ringing Masters are presented with the wide range of abilities at each practice, but work hard to ensure there is something for all. They are also an opportunity for those learning to watch and listen, and to improve their own skills with a good supporting band. The calendar of events for 2026 has been put together and, whilst there may be changes during the year, we hope this will continue to be well supported and new members will be welcomed into Eastern Branch.

The Race Night was once again held at Alford and thanks goes to Phil Ford and Caitlin Meyer for the hard work they put in to ensuring it was a successful and enjoyable night, but also to others in the Alford team for setting up etc., and to Tess for dealing with the finances. £817.70 was raised at the event for the Guild Training Fund.

A joint Carol service and December ringing with Central Branch was held at St. Botolph's, Boston with all Guild Members invited to join us. It was well attended and a highlight of the year, made all the more festive by the organist and teenage choir and refreshments provided; hopefully this is to be repeated in 2026.

Thank you to Committee Members for guiding me and helping me when needed over the last few months. Colin is a very hard act to follow and I lack his extensive local knowledge and experience, but have done my best.

Sue Stevenson
Eastern Branch Secretary

Lincoln Diocesan Guild of Church Bellringers

Eastern Branch Belfry Maintenance Report For 2025

Maintenance activities within the branch that I was aware of or involved with during 2025

Langton by Spilsby: Inspections were made by three bellhangers who each suggested a solution to the problem of bells 2 & 3 hitting the bell frame caused by frame weakness. Blyth & Co. recommended bell frame strengthening. Both Nicholson Engineering and John Taylor & Co. recommended rehanging the bells in a new iron and steel bell frame.

Hannah: I was asked to inspect the single bell hung in a roof gable turret. The bell could not be accessed although from the ground it appeared satisfactory for chiming use to continue.

Stickney: The PCC decided to replace the bell ropes due to rotten top-ends and I was asked to take a look. The ropes had rotted due to being soaked by rainwater and some had tail-end damage. I advised Galebreaker protection to keep out wind-driven rain and replacement of the bird guard netting.

Boston: A team lead by Martin Jones carried out maintenance ahead of the Ridgman Trophy striking competition.

West Keal: Birds had accessed the belfry and an accumulation of nesting materials had to be removed before the bells could be rung for a wedding. The team who carried out this unpleasant task: Jackie and Ade Harris, Jayne and David Clayton, Steve and Emma Chapman. I was then asked to check the bells. In 1990, after being unringable for thirty years, I had led a team to get these bells going again. I was sorry, therefore, to now find that two of the bells were no longer ringable due to excessive wear in their plain bearings. In the early 2000s, West Keal ringer John Gibson initiated a scheme to rehang these bells on ball bearings, but their Faculty application was not supported; the Diocesan Advisory Committee considered the bells '*sufficiently ringable*' adding that '*there is no resident team to ring them*'. I believe the funds available were probably used instead to automate the winding of the church clock chimes.

Halton Hlegate: Weatherproofing the large expanse of belfry louvres in 2024 using Galebreaker M75 was supplemented with a second layer of Galebreaker, this time M90 grade, to keep out all wind-driven rain.

Spilsby: Broken louvres allowed pigeons to infest the belfry and ringing was stopped during the summer until the tower had been cleaned by contractors. Not long after ringing resumed problems were discovered with several of the clappers. All were removed and refurbished by Blyth & Co. and reinstalled just before Christmas. Work to replace the disintegrating louvres was delayed several times during the year and remains outstanding.

LDGCBR Eastern Branch Annual General Meeting

7 February 2026 - Ingoldmells

Treasurer's Report for Year Ending 31 Dec 25

CCLA - Bell Repair Fund investment: Note this account is an investment account, not a deposit account and the funds can go down as well as up - good rate of interest currently - to be monitored.

Note: £725 held in memory of Michael Reynolds and ringfenced for Swineshead (no interest will be allotted) as agreed at February 2024 AGM.

Current officials of this fund are Susan Stevenson (EB secretary) and Tess Rowland (EB treasurer). Interest accrued this financial year £341.89 - total in account as at 31 Dec 25 = £7,896.58.

Barclays: we hold 2 community accounts with Barclays (one 'current' and one for the 'Bell Repair Fund'). Officials of these accounts are Caitlyn Meyers, Susan Stevenson and Tess Rowland. Online banking makes life easier especially as most of the local Barclays branches have closed. Can I please request that if making an electronic payment into EB accounts members make sure that the reference for the payment is clear, eg W Smith x2 BBQ - is better than W Smith. There is a known issue with the name of the account (current account only one used for members to pay into) as the name is so long it does not fit in most online reference boxes, but if you put LDGCBR EB payment will reach account. If paying electronically and you require a receipt, please let me know as currently I only issue receipts for cheques/cash.

LDGCBR EB Current Account: this account has seen a lot of activity over the last 12 months as more people use the online option for the annual BBQ, Racenight and, not so much now, subs for the Guild. Please see attached report for more details. Balance as at 31 Dec 25 £503.99.

LDGCBR EB Belfry Repair Account: Monies paid into this account during 2025 amounted to £602.10 - from Alford Soup profit, VE 80th anniversary badge sales, Guild membership subscriptions and EB BBQ - please see attached report. During 2025 we paid out £42.20 Suterton grant payment. The balance as at 31 Dec 25 stood at £7,120.50 of which £1,749.50 is ringfenced for future grants.

Cash: Donations collected at 2025 EB monthly meetings (pig) raised £294.41 for the hosting churches. The decision to take a collection for the hosting church was made at the 2023 AGM to help churches with the mounting running costs they are facing. Balance as at 31 Dec 25 50p.

Thank you to Leslie Reeson for independently examining these accounts and thanks also to Susan Stevenson for her patience with trying to replace Colin Simpson on these accounts - it was a VERY long process,

Tess Rowland
Jan 26

Lincoln Diocese of Church Bell Ringers - Eastern Branch

Accounts Summary - 01 January - 31 December 2025

	Income	Expenditure		Income	Expenditure		
Barclays Community Account - B/F			£503.99	Cash -B/F		£0.50	
Guild Subscriptions - tranx to Guild	£150.00	£150.00		EB Mtgs Pig donations	£294.41	£294.41	
Late Alford soup paymt - transx BRF	£10.00	£10.00				£0.50	
VE 80th Ann badges purchase		£371.65		AGM decision 2024 all 'pig' donations collected at EB mtgs to be handed to Church of mtg representative.			
VE 80th Ann badges sales (info 2025 sheet)	£460.00						
VE 80th Ann donations 2x £10	£20.00						
VE 80th Ann profit transx to BRF		£108.35	£503.99	CCLA Investment acct		£7,554.69	
EB BBQ income (info 2025 sheet)	£457.00			NOTE; this is an investment acct and investment may go down as well as up.			
EB BBQ expenses		£153.70		Jan 25 - income	£89.71	£7,644.40	
EB profit to BRF		£303.30	£503.99	Apr 25 - income	£85.22	£7,729.62	
Racenight income (info 2025 sheet)	£817.70			Jul 25 - income	£85.74	£7,815.36	
Racenight transx to Guild Trg fund		£817.70		Oct 25 - income	£81.22	£7,896.58	
	£1,914.70	£1,914.70		C/F	£341.89	nil	
Barclays EB Belfry Repair Fund - B/F			£503.99				
Donation at AGM				Note: AGM 2024 - Reynolds donation for Swineshead only - £725 ring fenced (no interest to be apportioned).			
EB meeting Alford - soup profit	£10.00						
EB meeting Alford - soup profit late pymt	£26.00						
Suttoner grant payment	£10.00						
EB portion of Guild sub (15%)	£42.20						
VE 80th Ann badge sale profit	£144.45						
EB BBQ profit	£108.35						
	£303.30						
	£602.10	£42.20					
	C/F		£7,120.50				

NOTE; ringfenced funding = £1749.50

May 25 - VE Day 80th Anniversary badges

		£+	£-
Apr-25	Purchase 46 + P&P		371.65
	VE Day 80th Anniversary badges		
	£7.95 each - P&P £5.95		
May-25	Old Bol VE Badges x5	50.00	
May-25	Horncastle VE Badges x8 (R10)	80.00	
May-25	Boston VE Badges x15	150.00	
May-25	Con VE Badges x13	130.00	
May-25	x2 £10 VE rgg donations R11+12)	20.00	
May-25	Spilsby VE Badges x5	50.00	
		480.00	371.65
May-25	Transferred to EB BRF		108.35

BBQ Old Bolingbroke

Jul-25	Bank - tickets 41 x £8	328.00	
	Reynolds donation (Pearson)	20.00	
	Cash tickets 4 x £8	32.00	
	Cash raffle	77.00	
	Raffle prize	13.70	
	Food& BBQ costs	110.00	
	Venue donation	30.00	
		457.00	153.70
			Profit £303.30

Race Night

Oct-25	Money transferred into acct	587.50	
	Cash taken on night	230.00	
	Expenses paid by cash on night	194.00	
	Profit	623.50	
	Phil Ford transfer race profits	169.20	
03-			
Nov-25	Late pymt Willoughby I	25.00	
	Total to Guild training fund	817.70	

Cash		£+	£-
Jan-25	Brought forward		
Feb-25	AGM Butterwick - pig (R1)	31.10	
	Butterwick Church Rep		
Mar-25	EB Mtg Alford (soup) (R4)	52.00	
	Alford Church		
	BRF donation		
Apr-25	EB Mtg Hcastle/Hemingby	41.09	
	Horncastle Church (R7)		
	Hemingby (R8)		
May-25	Hereford tour		
Jun-25	EB Mtg Swineshead (R13)	26.45	
Jul-25	EB Mtg Old Bol (R14)	25.00	
Aug-25	EB Mtg Fishtoft/Frstn (R15)	36.00	
Sep-25	EB Mtg Addlethorpe (R16)	22.00	
Oct-25	EB Tour of Central Branch	nil	
Nov-25	EB Mtg Halton Holgate(17)	33.17	
Dec-25	EB Mtg Stump/carol ser(18)	27.60	
		294.41	

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Lincoln Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers – Eastern Branch

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Lincoln Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers – Eastern Branch (the Trust) for the year ended 31st December 2025.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act'). I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records. I have no concerns but have one note to make that an error was made in the transfer of some funds to an incorrect account. This was rectified swiftly and is clearly accounted for with an explanation in the accounts. I have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Accounts Summary as of 31st December 2025

Barclays Community Account	£503.99
Barclays Belfry Repair Fund	£7120.50
CCLA Belfry Repair Fund	£7896.56
Cash in hand	50p
TOTAL	£15521.55

Signed: 

Name: Lesley Reeson

Relevant Experience: Accounts manager for RH Turner & Son, Horncastle for 5 years. Treasurer for Thorpe Camp Preservation Group Ltd, Tattershall Thorpe for 3 years.

Address: 2 Hagnaby Road, Stickford, Boston, Lincs PE228ET

Date: 08/01/2026