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## Newsletter No. 101

September 2016

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*As you may have noted from the letterhead, Adam Garland has now danced out from the position of Squire of the Morris Ring and we welcome Eddie Worrall of Saddleworth MM to the position.*

## **Future Events**

### **2016**

8<sup>th</sup> October                      **Goathland Plough Stots Annual Longsword Tournament**  
*More information from [goathlandlongsword@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:goathlandlongsword@yahoo.co.uk).*

28<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> October              **Fools and Beasts Unconvention**  
*Hosted by Wyvern Jubilee, see application form on page 9.*

### **2017**

18<sup>th</sup> February                      **Dancing England reboot**  
*Sheffield City Hall, for more information see [www.dancingengland.co.uk](http://www.dancingengland.co.uk).*

4<sup>th</sup> March                          **ARM Oak Farm Lodge, Hatherton**

25<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> March              **Histories of the Morris in Britain**  
*Historical Dance Society conference (in conjunction with EFDSS and the morris organisations) at Cecil Sharp House. For more information, see Newsletter 100.*

13<sup>th</sup> May                              **National JMO day of Dance, Leicester**  
*Hosted by Leicester Morris Men. The plan is to host around 60 sides in total, of which the Ring would be able to provide up to 12.  
Applications to the Bagman of the Ring will open shortly.*

12<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> May

**Helmond Morris Men weekend of Dance**

*This meeting of Morris Ring sides is based at a museum of the history of farming before mechanisation on the edge of the city of Helmond in the south of the Netherlands. Accommodation will be outdoor camping around the museum and indoor camping in one of the museum's special halls. Toilets and showers will be available. All meals (except lunch on the Saturday tour) will be taken at the museum. Our aim is to provide a real Dutch experience with tours taking in some of the most beautiful villages in Brabant. The price of the weekend is expected to be €90. For more information visit the club website <http://morrisdans.nl/helmond/ring.php> which will be frequently updated. Numbers are limited so early application is advised.*

2<sup>nd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> June

**Thaxted Morris Meeting**

9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> June

**Ring Meeting no. 354: Hartley 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Meeting**

*2017 marks the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the formation of Hartley Morris Men so to celebrate they will be expanding their long established weekend Ale to offer more places in the form of a Meeting of the Morris Ring. Based in the village of Wrotham, there will be indoor and secure outdoor camping accommodation, modern shower facilities, a professional caterer plus free beer in the hall from 7pm Friday onwards. Saturday tours will be by vintage transport with the massed display taking place in Tonbridge Castle midday on Sunday.*

*Numbers are limited to 120 at an anticipated cost of around £70.*

28<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> July

**Ring Meeting no. 355: Ravensbourne London Meeting**

*Dance with the backdrop of some of the most iconic sites in London! These include the Tower of London, St Paul's Cathedral and The Globe Theatre. Take a leisurely perambulation on London*

*Underground and historic buses via the magic of the Oyster Travel Card to the walking tours, taking in a number of delightful pubs that Ravensbourne have already arduously vetted on your behalf at prime tourist spots in London. This is based in an East London school with indoor camping at around the £90 mark (less if possible) which covers:- Indoor camping / Supper on Friday night / Breakfast on Saturday & Sunday / Lunch on Saturday / Saturday Feast with Ale ! / Travel on the Tube and London Buses on Saturday. It's close to good road and public transport links. Potentially maximum 120 guests. Photos, map and contact details etc. all available at [www.ringmeeting.org](http://www.ringmeeting.org)*

18<sup>th</sup> August – 4<sup>th</sup> September **Australian Morris Ring National Ale**

*Details included in Newsletter 100.*

26<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> August **Ring Meeting no. 356: Saddleworth Rushcart Meeting**

*Please note that as a result of decisions made at the ARM, booking places onto Ring Meetings for the 2017 season will revert to the Bagman to administrate. More detail on how this process will operate are included on the next page (action required).*

## **From the Bagman (if you only read one page, make it this one!)**

### **1. Ring Meetings 2017 – booking places**

As agreed at the 2016 ARM, the Bagman of the Morris Ring is now responsible for allocating places at Ring Meetings. There are two affected Ring Meetings in 2017, Hartley and Ravensbourne. Saddleworth is not limited on numbers, so apply directly to the Rushcart Secretary.

The next Bagman's Newsletter will contain a form asking sides to apply for one or both of these two meetings (in priority order), providing an estimate of the numbers of members they would wish to bring. Please consider your plans for 2017 meetings now, so you can manage a rapid response to the form. I should like to be able to discuss applications and numbers with hosts and applicants at the ARM. I foresee these meetings filling quickly.

### **2. Morris Ring Annual Representatives' Meeting Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2017**

The Morris Ring ARM will again be held at Oak Farm, Hatherton. All costs will remain the same as last year. A booking form will be included in the next Newsletter, please ensure prompt action. Subscription forms are included with the email and paper copies of this Newsletter.

The Bagman and the Area Reps for South West and Wales, West Midlands and North West are all due for re-election; as we go to press the Bagman of the Morris Ring and the Reps for West Midlands (Pete Simpson) and for the North West (Dave Loughlin) have indicated that they wish to continue in their roles.

### **3. Morris Ring Safeguarding Policy**

Organisations with persons under 18 years of age should have a Safeguarding Policy. Recent events in the Press have illustrated that an organisation without a policy can be vulnerable to Press criticism even where no issue has arisen. In order to support those sides who have under-18 members (yes, I do mean under-18) and do not currently have their own policy, a draft Ring policy has been prepared and is included as an Appendix to this document.

Yes, I know it is lengthy and all it really says is "do not allow under-18s to be alone in the company of another individual, and don't bully them" but it is valuable legal protection. It is intended that sides would be able to sign up to the policy as part of the subscription renewal process, if they do not currently have their own. This will be discussed at the ARM. In the interim, if you have knowledge and experience of Safeguarding, please could you read the draft policy and provide me with comments in the form of annotations before the end of November?

## Who knew?



... that the Squire's badge of office is attached quite so physically? Thanks to Steven Archer for this picture which captures the handover of office, and Adam attaching the chain of office directly to flesh, quite so succinctly.



Thanks also to Steven for this one (although he miraculously manages to appear in it) which shows the outgoing and incoming Squires, Bagman and Treasurer of the Ring, along with Fee Lock, Secretary of the Morris Federation and

Nicki Pickering, Chair of the Open Morris, invited by the Squire to the East Suffolk Ring Meeting to witness the handover.





# Joint Morris Organisation's National Day of Dance

**Saturday 13th May 2017**

## Leicester



The Morris Ring, Open Morris and The Morris Federation come together each year for a spectacular Morris event. This year in Leicester there will be more than 60 Morris and Sword Dance sides from across the country dancing around the City.

To attend please apply through your Morris Organisation.

For further information, visit our [Facebook page](#).

Sides will be provided with a programme for the day detailing the 22 dance venues, all of which are within walking distance, along with information about local cafes, pubs, restaurants, parking and public transport (including Park & Ride).

**Free to attend.**

## **Sadly Missed**

### **“Hairy” Dave Hughesman, Hartley Morris Men**

On 6<sup>th</sup> July ‘Hairy’ Dave, Hartley’s long serving Foreman sadly lost his battle with the cancer from which we had all hoped he would recover. His funeral took place at Kemnal Park Cemetery on Friday 22 July with the chapel full to standing.

Dave’s coffin was borne by members of Hartley through an arch of sticks held up by a guard of honour formed by two rows of dancers in full kit.

During the service due recognition was given to his long term commitment not only to Hartley but also the Morris in general including his time with White Star Rapper, the Darent Valley Champions Mummers and his active involvement with Broadstairs Folk Week.

During the latter event in August a commemorative singing evening was arranged at which, and subsequently, sufficient cash was collected from friends and well-wishers for a dedicated seat to be permanently installed on the seafront in Dave’s memory.

Our thoughts are with his two daughters and granddaughter to whom he was so close.

Terry Heaslip

Squire, Hartley Morris Men

### **Len Bandall, RiP**

Clive Du’Mont writes: On behalf of Pam Bendall and Mendip Morris Men it's my sad task to let you know that Len, our long-time friend and Fool of many years, unexpectedly but peacefully died in Bristol Royal Infirmary last week.

Many amongst us will recall Len for his quick wry wit, cheeky grin and lightness of foot, whilst others will have benefited from his extensive pharmaceutical knowledge and expertise.

Morris folk (in kit or not, as you wish) and others who knew him are welcome to join the family for a service of celebration of Len's life, at Congresbury Methodist Church at 11.15 on Friday 16th September (no flowers please). This will be preceded by a private cremation in Weston-super-Mare.

As the number of Morris friends who may wish to join us in saying "goodbye" to him is difficult to predict, it would be appreciated if you would please let our Bagman, Brian Kemplay, know if you plan to attend ([mail@mendipmorrismen.org](mailto:mail@mendipmorrismen.org)).





## **Fools and Beasts** **Unconvention 2016**

**Hosted by Wyvern Jubilee Morris**

**Castle Cary, Somerset**

**28th-30th October 2016**

*Open to all budding or experienced Fools, Beasts and Morris Characters from any team from the Ring, Open or Federation. A truly JMO event!*

This year's Unconvention will be based at Caryford Community Hall, Somerset BA7 7JJ and will involve workshops, Saturday bus tour to Wells and Cheddar Gorge, with Wyvern Jubilee and guests Enigma Border Morris.. The Feast will follow at the Hall. On Sunday we will have the AGM of course - your chance to have your say, followed by a walking tour of Castle Cary.

Accommodation is indoor camping; there may be provision for outdoor camping and Motorhomes, to be confirmed. Please indicate at time of booking. Sorry, no dogs allowed.

We have been able to keep the cost at £65 per person, which includes all meals except Sunday lunch, plus coach trip etc.

**Closing date for Applications 17<sup>th</sup> October 2016.**

Yours,  
Robert Chisman, Scrivener and Convenor

Delegate:1).....Fool/Beast/Other.....

2).....Fool/Beast/Other.....

Team:.....

Address for correspondence.....

.....

Tel:Day:.....Eve:.....e-mail.....

Any Special Dietary needs.....

We anticipate having ..... further applicants, if places available.

Return this form with cheque for the full amount (£65 pp) payable to "The Illustrious Order of Fools and Beasts" to Robert Chisman, Fools and Beasts Convener, **1, Treverbyn Road, St. Austell, Cornwall, PL25 4EU** Tel:01726 68178 mobile 07970063922. OR pay by BACS - please ask for details.

E-mail: [triggertrotter1@aol.com](mailto:triggertrotter1@aol.com)

Follow Trigger on Facebook and Twitter!

**\*\*\*\*PLEASE NOTE NEW ADDRESS AS FROM 16<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2015\*\*\*\***



Trigger Morris-Horse



@TriggerMHorse

## **Letter to the Editor**

Dear Editor,

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> July found away from home for a few days' break in the Cotswolds having an evening meal in The Plough Inn, Ford, Gloucestershire when the sound of bells reached my ears.

A mixed-sex Border side arrived, beautifully costumed, and began to dance to a small audience. A motley selection of six musicians (including a tuneless, overbearing vuvuzela) and 6-8 dancers competently performed the Brimfield Stick dance first. The display then degenerated into sloppily-done, invented, same-ish dances to barn-dance or music-hall tunes with very un-Morris figures. They skipped (not single-stepped) or shuffled through the dances with the only similarity to Morris being figure-chorus sequences with simple patterns of basic sticking interspersed.

They looked the part and were clearly enjoying themselves and I had to disappoint my family (who urged me to join in) because there was nothing I could join in with. To be honest I would not have wanted to, because the performance was shambolic and really rather shameful.

The episode both upset me and set me thinking. The side claimed to be dancing 'morris' but it wasn't Morris. If I'm not a trained ballet dancer but create my own watered-down version of it and call it ballet, is it still Ballet? I'm sure I'd never get away with that in public so why should this side be able to do that with Morris. The pompous self-regard is quite extraordinary. If someone wants to understand Morris, he has to acquaint himself with the canon. Only then can he begin to dare to invent for himself.

There is no policing of standards in Morris, nor should there be, so in a society where people are told they can be whatever they want to be, how do you get sides to police themselves and maintain quality?

(Name and side supplied)

*An interesting starter for ten: how indeed do we encourage Morris sides to self-police the quality of their performances, if indeed we should?*

*A topic for the Google Group? If you are not a member of the Ring Google Group and wish to participate, please email the Bagman with a request – you do not require a Google account.*

## **East Sussex Children's Traditional Dance Festival – May 2016**

Scores of smiling face-painted children replaced racehorses at the Plumpton Race Course on Friday 20 May 2016, as the 7th Primary Schools Traditional Dance Festival got under way. Eight of the nine primary schools in the Chailey Cluster took part, involving over 200 children from Years 3, 4, 5, and 6.

The 2016 Festival was organised and directed by the Primary School Sports Co-ordinator, Kerry Davey of Chailey School, assisted by a very able team of senior students (the Crew) who helped with a morning workshop and general setting up and clearing away



throughout the day. The majority of children from the Chailey Cluster go on to Chailey School for their secondary education. A very special 'spin-off' from the Festival has been the development of 'an element of continuity' between the senior and primary schools in that a number of the Crew have fond memories of taking part in the early festivals at their primary

schools and are now in a position to pass on their skills to the younger children.

Planning for the Festival began in September 2015 using the successful format of previous years. This year the morning activities on customs offered storytelling with Jamie Crawford who led workshops on Mumming when each group acted a short play, and 'Face painting' by the Crew where the children also learned why many Morris teams colour their faces – the answer being for disguise rather than any other reason. The Crew were instructed on Face Painting techniques by Gail Duff of TRADS ([www.tradsfolkarts.co.uk](http://www.tradsfolkarts.co.uk)).

The day was divided up into two halves, the morning programme consisted of dance practice, rehearsals, face painting and storytelling workshops while the afternoon was devoted to a regional traditional dance show for an audience of parents, guardians, event sponsors and special guest, Lewes M.P. Maria Caulfield.

TRADS, members of local dance teams, The Morris Ring and The Morris Federation all provided dance tuition for the children, before and during the Festival. Live music (and the ability to count) is the most effective tool for the children to learn the dances – rhythm and counting being essential



to good performance, and enables the tutors to vary the tempo of tunes when necessary. This played a large and important part in facilitating a happy, relaxed learning environment.

After lunch, the Crew swiftly tidied and reorganised the Marquee for the afternoon performance.

Kerry Davey, Director, opened the Festival by welcoming the visitors and thanking supporters, sponsors and helpers before the children started their show, a lively and colourful 'whistle-stop' tour of English traditional dance. This included all types of Morris, Maypole, Social and Tudor dances. During a short interval the Plumpton Parent Teacher



Friends Association served much appreciated and superb refreshments. The afternoon concluded with the now traditional roof raising mass dance, 'Shepherd's Hey' by all 200 children and joined by many of the parents guests and sponsors.

After seven festivals, many of the schools now have an 'in house' resource of knowledge to 'go it alone' fulfilling the long-term aim of the first festival in 2009 which was planned and organised jointly by SEFAN (South East Folk Art Network) and Plumpton Primary School. SEFAN closed in 2015 and The

StepBack Consortium ([www.stepback.org.uk](http://www.stepback.org.uk)) took on a lesser mantle this year, responsibilities being mainly organising the funding, external tutors and offering support if required – plus a little tuition.

Our grateful thanks to the schools who helped fund the Festival, our sponsors, the George Pheby Bequest, The StepBack Consortium, The Morris Federation, The Morris Ring, local Morris teams Chanctonbury Ring and Ashdown Morris Men for their support, without which the Festival could not happen.

Ann and John Bacon  
Ditchling Morris and StepBack  
June 2016  
*(photography courtesy Steven Archer)*



## **Sidmouth successes**

Success for Morris Ring members in the John Gasson Jigs Competition at the Sidmouth Festival:

Jake Middleton-Metcalf and musician Simon Care of Moulton Morris won the solo jig competition, and David Thompson, Ross Adamson and musician John Watcham of Taylor's Men winning best newcomer (pictured below with the trophy).



## **Banks of Green Willow – a further update**

A short film of the performance by Fool's Gambit Morris at Thiepval to commemorate the loss of George Butterworth and George Wilkinson, both listed on the Memorial to the Missing, can be seen here: <https://youtu.be/FswlBvAQqJI>

There will be one more performance of the tribute, at Cecil Sharp House on 20<sup>th</sup> November. Tickets are still available through the EFDSS website.

## Morris Ring mumming archive

The Morris Ring is indebted to Ron Shuttleworth of Coventry Mummers for his fifty-odd years of meticulous collection, cataloguing and storing in creation of a mumming archive. This has now been donated to Sheffield University Library Special Collections and researchers are now able to consult the material, by request.

The webpage for the collection, <http://www.shef.ac.uk/library/special/morrisshuttleworth> is shown below:

The screenshot shows the website of The University of Sheffield Library. The header includes the university logo and the text 'The University Library'. Below the header, a breadcrumb trail reads: 'Home > The University Library > Special Collections > Morris Ring Folk Play Archive (Ron Shuttleworth Collection)'. The main content area is titled 'Morris Ring Folk Play Archive (Ron Shuttleworth Collection)' and includes the reference 'Ref: MS 456'. The title is 'The Morris Ring Folk Play Archive (Ron Shuttleworth Collection)'. The scope is 'A collection of material relating to folk plays and cognate subjects.' The dates are '17th century onwards'. The level is 'Fonds'. The extent is 'more than 400 volumes'. The name of the creator is 'Ron Shuttleworth'. The administrative / biographical history is described as follows: 'The collection consists of a vast range of material relating to folk plays and related subjects, including books and booklets, journal articles, audio and video recordings, unpublished works such as theses, dissertations and essays, and some ephemera. The collection has been painstakingly assembled since the 1960s by Ron Shuttleworth who made it his aim to collect copies of everything that had been written on the subject of folk plays, and to provide access to the material to interested researchers. Many of the works have been arranged in subject-based volumes such as "Hero-Combat", "Wooling Plays", "Longsword Plays", etc., and a comprehensive database has been produced to enable researchers to navigate the Collection. Ron Shuttleworth was born in Sheffield in 1930 and brought up in Hathersage in North Derbyshire, eventually settling in Coventry in 1960. An interest in folk music and custom led to contact with folk plays and the establishment of the Coventry Mummers in 1966. His research into mumming developed into the beginnings of this Collection, which was donated to the University of Sheffield Library in July 2015.'

The left sidebar contains a 'Main menu' with links to 'Library home page', 'A to Z', 'About the Library', 'Library sites & opening hours', 'Digital Collections', 'General Information', 'Supporting your learning & research', 'StarPlus Library catalogue', 'Special Collections', and 'National Fairground Archive'. The right sidebar contains an 'A-Z listing' with links for 'A - E', 'F - K', 'L - R', and 'S - Z', and a 'Quick links' section with links to 'Special Collections home', 'Subject list', and 'Contact us'.






## Morris Ring Display Boards

Are you making full use of this asset?

If you have any opportunity to make use of one of the five sets we possess please contact your Area Rep or the Ring Bagman.

If you want to use them, even if a set is not currently in your area, arrangements can be made to get a set to you.

<p><b>the morris ring</b></p> <p><b>The Morris Ring</b></p> <p>The Morris Ring is an organisation for men's clubs. Every year our members can be seen dancing out during the summer, either on their own or in the company of dancers from other clubs who have been invited along to share a day or a weekend of dance. We hold a number of special meetings of the Morris Ring each year at which clubs from all over the country come together to dance. The most important of these is the annual meeting in early June in Thaxted in Essex, the town where the Morris Ring was founded in 1934.</p> <p>You can find out more about the Morris Ring by visiting our web site at: <a href="http://www.themorrisring.org">www.themorrisring.org</a></p> <p>On our home page there are links which will enable you to find the Morris clubs in your area.</p> 	<p><b>the morris ring</b></p> <p><b>Morris Dancing</b></p> <p>Morris dances are the national folk dances of England and have a recorded history going back six hundred years. In this display you will see examples of the various styles of dance which have developed over the centuries and which are performed today in all parts of the country. Why do we do it? That is an easy question to answer. It is because we enjoy it and for the fun and friendship which comes with being a member of a Morris dancing club.</p> 	<p><b>the morris ring</b></p> <p><b>A Potted History</b></p> <p>Over the centuries the popularity of Morris dancing has waxed and waned but by the latter part of the 19th century dancing had died out in many parts of the country. By great good fortune in 1899 there was a chance encounter between Headington Quarry Morris Men in Oxford and Cecil Sharp, a professional musician. Following this meeting, Sharp devoted the rest of his life to the collection of English folk songs and dances. As a result of his work and the work of others who were inspired by him, there was a great revival of interest in our folk traditions in the 20th century and especially in the 1960s and 1970s.</p>  
<p><b>Fools and Animals</b></p> <p>Often the dancers are accompanied by a fool, whose job it is to engage the audience with humorous banter and ensure that they are paying attention to the dance. Many clubs have made an animal head which is mounted on a pole and attached to a cloak. One of the dancers entertains the audience by going among them underneath the cloak and grasping the animal's jaws together.</p> 	<p><b>Regional Styles of Morris Dancing</b></p> <p>Most people are familiar with the Cotswold style of dance which comes from the counties of the West Midlands and which is characterised by the use of sticks and handkerchiefs. Other styles of dance have evolved in other parts of the country. There are sword dances from the North and the rapper, or shortsword dances from the North East. In the North West there are the processional dances, which are often performed in chaps. The Border style comes from the counties bordering Wales and there are the Molly dancers from East Angles. Mummers' plays come from all parts of the country.</p>	<p><b>Looking to the Future</b></p> <p>There are probably more people Morris dancing today than at any time in the past and our clubs are always keen to recruit new members. Many Clubs are involved in teaching young people to dance through programmes with schools, the Scout organisation and other youth groups.</p> 
<p><b>The Joint Morris Organisation</b></p> <p>The Morris Ring is one of three organisations representing Morris dance clubs. The other two are the Morris Federation and the Open Morris. Once a year we all get together for a combined day of dance to celebrate the Morris as a dance for everyone, irrespective of age or gender.</p>		<p><b>How about you ?</b></p> <p>Would you like to try Morris dancing to see if it does for you what it does for us? Many clubs hold special sessions for potential members to come along and try it out. Find your local clubs by following the links on our web site and go along and meet the dancers. Before long you too could be a Morris dancer!</p>
<p><b>founded 1934</b></p>	<p><b><a href="http://www.themorrisring.org">www.themorrisring.org</a></b></p>	<p><b>founded 1934</b></p>

*This is what the complete set of three banners looks like.*

## **Morris Ring Publications**

**Anthony Foard:** Editor of the Morris Circular

33 Cunningham Drive, Bromborough, Wirral, CHESHIRE. CH63 0JX

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thecircular@themorrisring.org

**Mac McCoig** Editor of the Morris Dancer

8 Redhills, Eccleshall, Staffordshire ST21 6JW

Tel: 01785 851052

mac.mccoig@btinternet.com

## **On-line Links:**



The main MR website with millions of pages stuffed to the gunnels with all you need to know about the MR:

<http://www.themorrisring.org/>

Follow the latest media reports concerning Morris Matters at <http://www.themorrisring.org/article/morris-matters>

The Morris Ring Google Group (MRGG). Private Forum for debate or announcements. <http://groups.google.com/group/the-morris-ring?hl=en&pli=1>

*Contact the Morris Ring Bagman to register to use.*

Morris Ring Facebook site: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Morris-Ring/158759257502840>

Morris Ring Twitter: <http://twitter.com/#!/TheMorrisRing>

## **The Morris Shop** *"the Bells and Whistles"*

<http://www.themorrisshop.com/store/index.php?route=common/home>

## Call for Contributions

Any items of Morris-related news, please send to me at [bagman@themorrisring.org](mailto:bagman@themorrisring.org) for inclusion in the next Newsletter. Longer pieces to Tony Foard, please, for the Circular.

If you have any photographs, you can send them to Duncan Broomhead, the Morris Ring Photo Archivist ([duncan.broomhead@btinternet.com](mailto:duncan.broomhead@btinternet.com)) and any articles, ideally accompanied with photographs, can be submitted to Tony Foard, the Editor of the Morris Ring Circular, details above.

Charlie Corcoran, the Keeper of the Morris Ring Log Book, is keen to receive stories about Ring events, both the formal and the quirky ([Charliecorcoran7@ntlworld.com](mailto:Charliecorcoran7@ntlworld.com)).



# SAFEGUARDING POLICY THE MORRIS RING

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# **Child Protection Policy**

## **1.1 Introduction**

Everyone who participates in morris dancing is entitled to do so in an enjoyable and safe environment. The Morris Ring and its member clubs have a moral and legal obligation to ensure that, when given responsibility for young people, its members provide them with the highest possible standard of care.

The Morris Ring is committed to devising and implementing policies so that everyone involved in morris dancing accepts their responsibilities to safeguard children from harm and abuse. This means to follow procedures to protect children and report any concerns about their welfare to appropriate authorities.

The aim of the policy is to promote good practice, providing children and young people with appropriate safety/protection whilst in the care of member clubs of the Morris Ring and to allow members to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

A child/young person is defined as a person under the age of 18 (Children's Act 1989).

## **1.2 Policy Statement**

The Morris Ring is committed to the following:

- the welfare of the child is paramount
- all children, whatever their age, culture, ability, gender (notwithstanding constitutional restrictions), language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity should be able to participate in morris dancing in a fun and safe environment
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings
- all suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- working in partnership with parents and children is essential for the protection of children.

## **1.3 Monitor and review the policy and procedures**

The implementation of procedures should be regularly monitored and reviewed. The Bagman of the Morris Ring should regularly report progress, challenges, difficulties, achievements gaps and areas where changes are required to the Squire.

The policy should be reviewed every 3 years or whenever there is a major change in the organisation or in relevant legislation.

# **2 Promoting Good Practice**

## **2.1 Introduction**

To provide children with the best possible experience and opportunities in morris dancing everyone must operate within an accepted ethical framework.

It is not always easy to distinguish poor practice from abuse. It is therefore NOT the responsibility of participants in morris dancing to make judgements about whether or not abuse is taking place. It is

however their responsibility to identify poor practice and possible abuse and act if they have concerns about the welfare of the child, as explained in section 4.

This section will help you identify what is meant by good practice and poor practice.

## **2.2 Good Practice**

All personnel should adhere to the following principles and action:

- always work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets)
- make the experience of morris dancing fun and enjoyable: promote fairness, confront and deal with bullying
- treat all young people equally and with respect and dignity
- always put the welfare of the young person first
- maintain a safe and appropriate distance with dancers (e.g. it is not appropriate for team members or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room with them)
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with young people. Where any form of manual/physical support is required it should be provided openly and with the consent of the young person. Physical contact can be appropriate so long as it is neither intrusive nor disturbing and the young person's consent has been given
- Involve parents/cares wherever possible, e.g. where young people need to be supervised in changing rooms, encourage parents to take responsibility for their own child. If groups have to be supervised in changing rooms always ensure parents and others work in pairs
- request written parental consent if members are required to transport young people in their cars
- gain written parental consent for any significant travel arrangements e.g. overnight stays
- ensure that if mixed teams are taken away, they should always be accompanied by a male and female team member
- ensure that at away events adults should not enter a young person's room or invite young people to their rooms
- always give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- recognise the developmental needs and capacity of the young person and do not risk sacrificing welfare in a desire for club or personal achievements. This means avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will
- secure written parental consent for the club to act in loco parentis, to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid or other medical treatment if the need arises
- keep a written record of any injury that occurs, along with details of any treatment given.

## **2.3 Poor Practice**

The following are regarded as poor practice and should be avoided by all personnel:

- unnecessarily spending excessive amounts of time alone with young people away from others
- taking young people alone in a car on journeys, however short
- taking young people to your home where they will be alone with you
- sharing a room with a young person



- engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- allowing young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- making sexually suggestive comments to a young person, even in fun
- reducing a young person to tears as a form of control
- allow allegations made by a young person to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
- do things of a personal nature that the young person can do for themselves.

When a case arises where it is impractical/impossible to avoid certain situation e.g. transporting a young person in your car, the tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of the parent/carer and the young person involved.

If during your care you accidentally hurt a young person, the young person seems distressed in any manner, appears to be sexually aroused by your actions and/or if the young person misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, report any such incidents as soon as possible to another colleague and make a written note of it. Parents should also be informed of the incident.

## 3 Defining Child Abuse

### 3.1 Introduction

Child abuse is any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm, it commonly occurs within a relationship of trust or responsibility and is an abuse of power or a breach of trust. Abuse can happen to a young person regardless of their age, gender, race or ability.

There are four main types of abuse: **physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect**. The abuser may be a family member, someone the young person encounters in residential care or in the community, including sports and leisure activities. Any individual may abuse or neglect a young person directly, or may be responsible for abuse because they fail to prevent another person harming the young person.

Abuse in all of its forms can affect a young person at any age. The effects can be so damaging that if not treated may follow the individual into adulthood.

Young people with disabilities may be at increased risk of abuse through various factors such as stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, isolation and a powerlessness to protect themselves or adequately communicate that abuse had occurred.

### 3.2 Types of Abuse

**Physical Abuse:** where adults physically hurt or injure a young person e.g. hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, biting, scalding, suffocating, or drowning. Giving young people alcohol or inappropriate drugs would also constitute child abuse.

This category of abuse can also include when a parent/carer reports non-existent symptoms or illness deliberately causes ill health in a young person they are looking after. This is called Munchausen's syndrome by proxy.

In dancing, as with any sports situation, physical abuse may occur when the nature and intensity of training disregard the capacity of the child's immature and growing body

**Emotional Abuse:** the persistent emotional ill treatment of a young person, likely to cause severe and lasting adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve telling a young person they are useless, worthless, unloved, inadequate or only valued in terms of meeting the needs of another person. It may feature expectations of young people that are not appropriate to their age or development. It may cause a young person to be frightened or in danger by being constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted which may make the young person frightened or withdrawn.

Ill treatment of children, whatever form it takes, will always feature a degree of emotional abuse.

Emotional abuse may occur when the young person is constantly criticised, given negative feedback, or expected to perform at levels that are above their capability. Other forms of emotional abuse could take the form of name calling and bullying.

**Bullying** may come from another young person or an adult. Bullying is defined as deliberate hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. There are three main types of bullying.

It may be physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, slapping), verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, name calling, graffiti, threats, abusive text messages), emotional (e.g. tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating, ignoring, isolating from the group), or sexual (e.g. unwanted physical contact or abusive comments).

In dancing or sport bullying may arise when a parent or coach pushes the young person too hard to succeed, or a rival uses bullying behaviour.

**Neglect** occurs when an adult fails to meet the young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, to an extent that is likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development. For example, failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect from physical harm or danger, or failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

Refusal to give love, affection and attention can also be a form of neglect.

Neglect in dancing, as with sport, could occur when a coach does not keep the young person safe, or exposing them to undue cold/heat or unnecessary risk of injury.

**Sexual Abuse** occurs when adults (male and female) use children to meet their own sexual needs. This could include full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse and fondling. Showing young people pornography or talking to them in a sexually explicit manner are also forms of sexual abuse.

In dancing, activities which might involve physical contact with young people could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed.

### 3.3 Indicators of Abuse

Even for those experienced in working with child abuse, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. Most people are not experts in such recognition, but indications that a child is being abused may include one or more of the following:

- unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries
- an injury for which an explanation seems inconsistent
- the young person describes what appears to be an abusive act involving them
- another young person or adult expresses concern about the welfare of a young person
- unexplained changes in a young person's behaviour e.g. becoming very upset, quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper
- inappropriate sexual awareness
- engaging in sexually explicit behaviour
- distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected
- difficulty in making friends
- being prevented from socialising with others
- displaying variations in eating patterns including over eating or loss of appetite
- losing weight for no apparent reason
- becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt.

Signs of bullying include:

- behavioural changes such as reduced concentration and/or becoming withdrawn, clingy, depressed, tearful, emotionally up and down, reluctance to attend practices or dance displays
- physical signs such as stomach aches, headaches, difficulty in sleeping, bed wetting, scratching and bruising, damaged clothes, bingeing e.g. on food, alcohol or cigarettes
- a shortage of money or frequent loss of possessions.

It must be recognised that the above list is not exhaustive, but also that the presence of one or more of the indications is not proof that abuse is taking place. It is **NOT** the responsibility of those working in the member club to decide that child abuse is occurring. It **IS** their responsibility to act on any concerns.

### 3.4 Use of Photographic/Filming Equipment at Events

There is evidence that some people have used public performances as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young people. All clubs should be vigilant and any concerns should be reported to the Bagman.

## 4 Responding to Suspensions and Allegations

### 4.1 Introduction

It is not the responsibility of anyone in the Morris Ring and its member clubs to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities so that they can then make inquiries and take necessary action to protect the young person. This applies **BOTH** to allegations/suspensions of abuse occurring within the Morris Ring and its member clubs and to allegations/suspensions that abuse is taking place elsewhere.

This section explains how to respond to allegations/suspensions.

## 4.2 Receiving Evidence of Possible Abuse

We may become aware of possible abuse in various ways. We may see it happening, we may suspect it happening because of signs such as those listed in section 3 of this document, it may be reported to us by someone else or directly by the young person affected.

In the last of these cases, it is particularly important to respond appropriately. If a young person says or indicates that they are being abused, you should:

- **stay calm** so as not to frighten the young person
- **reassure** the child that they are not to blame and that it was right to tell
- **listen** to the child, showing that you are taking them seriously
- **keep questions to a minimum** so that there is a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said. The law is very strict and child abuse cases have been dismissed where it is felt that the child has been led or words and ideas have been suggested during questioning. Only ask questions to clarify.
- **inform** the child that you have to inform other people about what they have told you. Tell the child this is to help stop the abuse continuing.
- **safety of the child is paramount.** If the child needs urgent medical attention call an ambulance, inform the doctors of the concern and ensure they are made aware that this is a child protection issue
- **record** all information
- **report** the incident to the Bagman.

**In all cases if you are not sure what to do you can gain help from the NSPCC 24 hour help line Tel No: 0800800500.**

## 4.3 Recording Information

To ensure that information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern. In recording you should confine yourself to the facts and distinguish what is your personal knowledge and what others have told you. Do not include your own opinions.

Information should include the following:

- the child's name, age and date of birth
- the child's home address and telephone number
- whether or not the person making the report is expressing their concern or someone else's
- the nature of the allegation, including dates, times and any other relevant information
- a description of any visible bruising or injury, location, size etc. Also any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes
- details of witnesses to the incidents
- the child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising/injuries occurred
- have the parents been contacted? If so what has been said?
- has anyone else been consulted? If so record details
- has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record detail.

## 4.4 Reporting the Concern

All suspicions and allegations **MUST** be reported appropriately. It is recognised that strong emotions can be aroused particularly in cases where sexual abuse is suspected or where there is misplaced loyalty to a colleague. It is important to understand these feelings but not allow them to interfere with your judgement about any action to take.

The Morris Ring expects its members to discuss any concerns they may have about the welfare of a child immediately with the person in charge and subsequently to check that appropriate action has been taken.

It is assumed that the Bagman of the individual member club will take responsibility for Safeguarding as part of their role, supported by the Bagman of the Morris Ring. Clubs may choose a different individual to act in this capacity, however, the designation of Bagman has been used in this document for consistency. If the Bagman (or appropriately nominated individual) is not available you should take responsibility and seek advice from the NSPCC helpline, the duty officer at your local social services department or the police. Telephone numbers can be found in your local directory.

Where there is a complaint against a member, there may be three types of investigation.

- **Criminal** in which case the police are immediately involved
- **Child protection** in which case the social services (and possibly) the police will be involved
- **Disciplinary or misconduct** in which case the Morris Ring will be involved.

As mentioned previously in this document the Morris Ring and its member clubs are not child protection experts and it is not their responsibility to determine whether or not abuse has taken place. All suspicions and allegations must be shared with professional agencies that are responsible for child protection.

Social services have a legal responsibility under The Children Act 1989 to investigate all child protection referrals by talking to the child and family (where appropriate), gathering information from other people who know the child and making inquiries jointly with the police.

**NB: If there is any doubt, you must report the incident: it may be just one of a series of other incidences which together cause concern.**

Any suspicion that a child has been abused by someone within your club this should be reported to the Bagman of the club who will take appropriate steps to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk. This will include the following:

- The club Bagman will refer the matter to social services department
- the parent/carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social services department
- the Squire of your club should be notified to decide who will deal with any media inquiries and implement any immediate disciplinary proceedings
- the Bagman should also notify the Bagman of the Morris Ring
- if the Bagman is the subject of the suspicion/allegation the report must be made to the Bagman of the Morris Ring who will refer the matter to social services.

Allegations of abuse are sometimes made sometime after the event. Where such allegation is made, you should follow the same procedures and have the matter reported to social services. This is

because other children may be at risk from the alleged abuser. Anyone who has a previous conviction for offences related to abuse against children is automatically excluded from working with children.

#### **4.5 Concerns outside the immediate environment (e.g. a parent or carer)**

- Report your concerns to the club Bagman
- If the Bagman is not available, the person being told or discovering the abuse should contact their local social services department or the police immediately
- Social Services and the Bagman will decide how to inform the parents/carers
- The Bagman should also report the incident to the Bagman of the Morris Ring. The Governing Body should ascertain whether or not the person/s involved in the incident play a role in the organisation and act accordingly
- Maintain confidentiality on a need to know basis.

#### **4.6 Confidentiality**

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only. This includes the following people:

- The club Bagman
- The parents of the child
- The person making the allegation
- Social Services/police
- The Bagman of the Morris Ring
- The alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is a child).

Seek social services advice on who should approach the alleged abuser.

All information should be stored in a secure place with access limited to designated people, in line with data protection laws.

#### **4.7 Internal Inquiries and Suspension**

- The club Bagman will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and social services inquiries.
- Irrespective of the findings of the social services or police inquiries the club officers will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision; especially where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases the club officers, in consultation with the Bagman of the Morris Ring, must reach a decision based upon the available information which could suggest that on the balance of probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of the child should remain of paramount importance throughout.

### **Declaration**

On behalf of **[CLUB NAME]** we, the undersigned, will oversee the implementation of the Child Protection Policy and take all necessary steps to ensure it is adhered to.



**Signed:**

(N.B. One of the signatories should be the Bagman or nominated representative)

**Name:**

**Name:**

**Position within [CLUB NAME]:**

**Position within [CLUB NAME]:**

**Date:**

**Date:**