Newsletter No. 124

December 2021

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Future Events (DEPENDING ON RESTRICTIONS)

2022

5th March  
Annual Representatives’ Meeting, Oak Farm, Cannock  
*Thanks to Peter Copley (Stafford) for organising. Booking form on last page.*

9th April  
Joint Morris Organisation National Day of Dance - Liverpool 2022  
*They say 3rd time’s a charm! More details to follow*

10th-12th June  
Thaxted Morris Weekend  
*Later than usual due to extra bank holiday. All teams within the Morris Ring welcome regardless of gender profile.*

15th July  
Letchworth Centenary Ring Meeting - FULLY BOOKED  
*A high-flying event based at Shuttleworth College*

20th-21st August  
Saddleworth Rushcart  
*Back again to the rolling hills of Saddleworth*
News from the Squire

Though the early half of the year was a relatively quiet period I was pleased to see the return to Morris in the early summer months which has continued to thrive into December. I had the pleasure to represent the Ring at a number of events and I would like to thank all those involved in their hard work and dedication in organising these fantastic events. A personal highlight was the opportunity to finally dance in, I owe Saddleworth Morris a huge thank you for allowing the event to take place on their day of dance and wish them great success in bringing the Rushcart back in 2022.

Plymouth Ring Meeting: This was a fantastic weekend of not only dancing but singing and feasting. It was my first opportunity to light the candles and to deliver a speech, a nerve wracking but enjoyable experience.
Peterborough Meeting of the Ring: The standard of dance and organisation at this day of dance was excellent. It was a great showcase of the dedication to practice and performance from all involved in keeping the morris active over the course of the pandemic I only wish I didn't have to leave the feast in such a hurry to catch the last train home!

Morris 18-30, London: A massive thank you to Simon Mathews for organising a great tour of the South Bank. I had a brilliant time playing and even dancing with the guys who came from all over the country to be there. Who knew a video titled ‘Vandals outside Borough Market’ would attract over 4.9K views on Facebook!

Squires Commission: I’d like to thank all those who volunteered for the arduous tasks of re-writing the constitution and supporting documents. These individuals have given hours of their time over the last year to ensure that Ring will continue to thrive into the future. We still have some work left to do following the consultation period for which I am grateful to those members who have taken the time to read and offer feedback.

Bank Card Readers: Following discussion with Clayton, Pete and the members of the Advisory Council, I am pleased to announce that each member club will have the opportunity in the new year to apply for a card reader. As we move evermore into a cashless society it is our hope that by providing teams with a card reader, they can continue to raise funds via members of the public. More details will soon be released; however, we anticipate that a small fee of £10 will be required for the equipment. It will then be the responsibility of each club to maintain the equipment set up.

On a personal note, I would like to thank Peter Austin (Cheesy) for all the support and friendship he has offered me over the last year. He is doing a fine job since taking over as Bagman, long may he continue.

Finally, I would like to wish all the members a very Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and a Happy New Year!
All the best!
Simon
From the Bagman’s Desk

Dear All

Apologies for this arriving a week later than intended, it’s been very busy here in Warwickshire to put it mildly! As promised, please find the final drafts for the proposed new constitution and supporting documents attached. Thank you to those who sent feedback in response to the consultation of members. Not all of these have translated into changes, but hopefully the FAQ’s section of this newsletter can address some of the questions raised.

The next stage is to vote on the documents at the ARM. Please find the form to register your intention to attend the ARM at the end of this newsletter.

We will also be electing our next Squire at the ARM, so please look at the statements from both candidates and discuss in your sides who your preferred candidate is. At time of writing, it has not been decided whether or not to have the option of electronic voting via the website, as used this year for the Bagman election, but I hope to be able to confirm plans in the next edition of the newsletter which should be coming out in early February. The next edition will also include the agenda, officers’ reports and area reps reports as usual.

Please also find a letter from our treasurer within this newsletter. Clayton’s looking to confirm all side’s details ahead of renewing our insurance in the New Year. It has been agreed that there will be no membership subs charged for the year 2022 in order that the money be put towards getting sides back on their feet. Please make sure you have filled in the form if you haven’t already done so.

On a personal note, I would like to thank Thaxted Morris Men for their generous hospitality at their Ale at the end of November. It was a very convivial affair, and I hope those sides planning to hold evening events of their own this winter manage to keep them on schedule in spite of what the world’s throwing at us.

Any questions about any of the content herein can be directed, as always, to bagman@themorrisring.org.

Happy Christmas to everyone and see you in 2022 (with a fair wind!)

Cheesy
Candidates for Squire of the Morris Ring

1. Emma Melville

I am Emma Melville, a member of Anker, First Class Stamp Appalachian, Dolphin, Knightlow and Hinckley Bullockers. I have been involved with morris and The Ring for nearly fifty years – as a spectator until I went to university and then I got involved. I joined Portland Poklers North West team – first to play, then as dancer and eventually foreman. I also learnt step clog, joined Touchwood Appalachian and became a musician for Dolphin Morris Men.

Moving to Nuneaton, I joined Anker Morris and Hinckley Bullockers as musician and First Class Stamp as a dancer. I organised Anker’s Ring meeting in 2015 and, for the last four years, have been Anker’s squire. I teach the dance at First Class Stamp and run Appalachian workshops at the festivals they attend. I was instrumental in the team moving to the Ring. They danced in in 2019 – the first mixed side to become full members. I also play for Knightlow and have recently taken over running Hinckley Bullockers.

I am part of the Squire’s commission looking into constitutional change and relevance. I believe the Ring should maintain traditions and standards while evolving to survive in the modern world and engaging the next generation. Co-operation and positive relationships with the JMO are important and something I can maintain.

Morris, to me, is entertainment, joy and fellowship – a community and family which is a major part of my life. I feel this immersion and enjoyment makes me ideal to lead the Ring into the future.
23 November 2021

Emma Melville: Candidate for Squire of the Morris Ring

We have known Emma for many years both as an accomplished musician for 1st Class Stamp and Anker Morris and now as Squire of Anker Morris. She has been a stalwart supporter of Man Friday’s Midsummer Evening in Thrussington and a regular attendee at feasts hosted by Leicester, Kennet, Ripley, Jockey and Devil’s Dyke, as well as many Morris Ring meetings, where she always proves approachable and willing to offer help, support and encouragement to others.

Emma has been immersed in the Morris community all her life, and her knowledge of the traditions and politics of the wider Morris world, along with her professional expertise, proved invaluable as a member of the Squire’s Commission to review the Morris Ring constitution.

Emma’s positive, friendly personality and immense people skills make her an ideal candidate to help lead the Morris Ring forward in these changing and challenging times. Leicester Morrismen are proud to propose and strongly recommend that Emma Melville should be the next Squire of the Morris Ring.

Yours sincerely

[Signature]

Bagman Leicester Morrismen
The Morris has been a major part of my life since I took it up with Devil’s Dyke MM in 1992. They taught me the importance of dancing well and maintaining standards, but also of ensuring that a team works hard for its audience.

As Ring Overseas Bagman since 2012, I’ve maintained contact with sides from Vancouver to Adelaide, and have danced on special occasions with several of them. By 2022, I’ll have done six years as Eastern Area Rep. I’m a huge believer that the reps are the “eyes and ears” of the Officers, and have done my best to ensure that club reactions to any proposals gets back to “senior management”.

The Ring can’t exist in the modern world without working with the other organisations through the JMO, and our constitutional changes (and the hard work of the Officers) have made this task a lot easier. The Ring seems well placed to continue building on its relationships and developing new ones in the folk world, demonstrating that it can look to the future while still maintaining its links with the original Morris revival. At the same time, we must also listen to our member clubs and ensure they are fully kept up to date about what is going on, including the work of the JMO. I’m putting my name forward as I believe I am well placed to work with everyone to keep the momentum of the last ten years going.

Photograph © Lewis Augustus Elliot
Dear Peter

Shakespeare Morris are delighted to propose Nigel Strudwick as the next squire of the Morris Ring. Shakespeare have come to know Nigel really well over many years through his leadership of Devil’s Dyke Morris Men, his role as Eastern area rep and overseas bagman. Nigel has shown a huge commitment to the Morris Ring throughout his roles and we have been impressed with his professionalism and dedication in the way in which he has carried these out.

The last couple of years have been difficult for the morris and folk community alike, rebuilding over the next few years is going to be critical for the Morris Ring. Shakespeare Morris believe that having a squire with a strong presence across the country is key. We have been struck by the effort that Nigel goes to in attending days of dance, ales and feasts right the way across the country, usually bringing a number or side of Devil’s Dyke with him. Through his leadership of Devil's Dyke Morris Men, his team have regularly attended Ring meetings too. A number of us won't forget Nigel starting off impromptu dancing at the ARM in 2019 and his efforts in organising scratch sides at numerous days of dance have breathed life into these events and we believe as squire, he has the ability and dedication required to breathe life into the Morris Ring too.

Through conversations with Nigel, it's clear that the Ring’s presence in the JMO will be in safe hands, as this is something he is passionate about - which is more important now than ever. We believe Nigel is well placed and capable of encouraging new sides and personalities to join and support the Morris Ring too.

Shakespeare Morris are honoured in proposing Nigel Strudwick as the next squire of the Morris Ring

Yours sincerely,

Pat Herlihy
Squire
Shakespeare Morris of Stratford-upon-Avon
Morris Ring Newsletter No124 December 2021
A Letter from the Treasurer

Dear Bagman/Treasurer,

2021 has been a difficult year as far as the Morris Ring membership is concerned as a result of the social distancing measures that are in place to stem the spread of Covid-19.

The Morris Ring Officers recognise this and that there has not been the opportunity to dance out and collect whilst at the same time sides still have costs to meet.

The JMO insurance cover that was in place for 2021 as part of your membership renewal was waived. With that in mind I am pleased to inform you that we, (MR Officers), have decided to carry over again your membership fees and cover the cost for 2022, by which time hopefully we will be out dancing again.

During the current regime it is unclear how many sides will continue into next year. Some may have decided to call it a day, others may wish not to for different reasons. The vast majority will do so.

There are some actions that you need to complete for your side to get the cover and other benefits that membership gives;

1. I have put a link to a Google form below that you will need to complete to indicate that your side wishes to renew or not renew, your membership and take this insurance cover proposal.  
   https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe2iXVGpCBBczQbR_Tvz1oR81eP8d8Uf151T9rP6d7Ng3beA/viewform?usp=pp_url

2. I know that the majority of sides pay electronically either by standing order or bank transfer. If this applies then, please can you ensure that your 2021 payment is stopped so I don’t have to give refunds as you have paid your fees. You should have enough time to act on this.

I hope that you support this course of action so that we can renew the JMO cover into 2022 however should you have any questions please get in touch with me

Regards

Clayton Francis, Morris Ring Treasurer

Morris Ring Newsletter No124 December 2021
Common questions on the Proposed New Constitution and Documents

Q. Surely the constitution and the documents we have now are sufficient and it doesn’t need all these changes?
A. The constitution in its current form has been modified over the years, sometimes to account for policy changes and at other times because it needed to be for legal reasons. As a consequence of this, the constitution in its current form is a very wide-reaching document which doesn’t necessarily have policies and procedures to back its contents in the event that there is an issue which needs addressing. The squire’s commission has sort to bring the constitution back to a document that acts as a central point from which anyone (be they officer, side or member of the public) can identify the Morris Ring’s base principles and practices, while also providing some policy documents that can help lay out a process for dealing with any issues that may arise.

Q. Some of the sections in the documents are ambiguous, can we make them more defined or specific?
A. Whilst it would be nice to write down every single eventuality that could occur whilst performing and what to do if they occur, this is not possible or realistic. The aim with the policies is to provide a base point which everyone in the Morris Ring can refer to when needed. None of these documents prevent sides from writing their own policies specific to them, and indeed the Morris Ring would actively encourage all teams to consider carrying out their own assessments at a more local level.

Q. Some of the language in the constitution has moved away from that previously used, why is this?
The commission has tried to update the language of the constitution to make it more appropriate to the 21st century. While this may appear on initial reading to be a shift away from the Morris Ring being an association of clubs towards a governing body, please bear in mind that clause 1.3 on the proposed new constitution clearly states that ‘Member clubs, in all respects, retain their independence. The Morris Ring does not replace or supersede member clubs, but will seek to assist, and where appropriate, represent them.’ That said, the Morris Ring has always had conditions of membership and it is not unreasonable to expect that these terms may be updated from time to time.

Q. It is proposed that the Squire and Advisory Council be given the power to suspend member sides, why?
A. In times past, issues that occurred when dancing out were unlikely to come to the attention of the wider public, so could be managed less formally. Unfortunately, in the times we now live in, a small issue can become a bigger problem very fast. Social media in particular has a potential to bring small, isolated incidents into the public eye much more readily than ever before, and thereby bring the Morris Ring into disrepute. To this end, the commission has been mindful of the need for prompt action in these circumstances. That said, it has also been recognised that there must be a check to this power to avoid vindictive action, hence the inclusion of clause 4.2 in the proposed Complaints Procedure which states that ‘In the case of suspension or exclusion, the decision must be done in consultation with the Morris Ring Advisory Council and ratified at an ARM, or a special meeting called for the purpose.’
It should be emphasised that the power to suspend or exclude a team from membership of the Morris Ring is a last resort, and as such the commission have designed a process which requires multiple stages to be completed before it reaches this point.

Q. Will suspended/excluded sides still be insured?
A. Yes, for the remainder of the contracted period of insurance the side has paid for. The Morris Ring would not renew insurance for excluded sides for the following year. In the event that a side is suspended at the end of the contract period and is waiting for an investigation into a complaint to be completed, the Morris Ring will arrange to renew insurance for that side.

Morris Ring Newsletter No124 December 2021
1. **OBJECTS AND DEFINITIONS**

1.1 The Morris Ring is an association of clubs and other organisations practising and performing morris, sword, mumming and related activities; any established club meeting regularly for these purposes and endeavouring to uphold the standards and dignity of the morris, will be eligible for membership of the Morris Ring.

1.2 The Morris Ring will encourage the performance of the morris, maintain its traditions, encourage research into all aspects of the morris, conserve its history as it is able, and bring into contact all morris clubs.

1.3 Member clubs, in all respects, retain their independence. The Morris Ring does not replace or supersede member clubs, but will seek to assist, and where appropriate, represent them.

1.4 The Morris Ring will treat all individuals with dignity and respect, regardless of race, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability and/or age.

2. **MEMBERSHIP OF THE MORRIS RING**

2.1 At the discretion of the elected officers, a club or organisation may become an associate member of the Morris Ring; if appropriate, such a club or organisation is expected to seek admission to full membership.

2.2 Admission of a club into full membership of the Morris Ring is subject to a majority of votes cast at a meeting of club representatives, following any advice from the elected officers.

2.3 Each member club or associate will pay an annual subscription, the amount to be determined by the annual representatives meeting, following a recommendation by the Treasurer.

2.4 The Morris Ring will maintain public liability insurance cover for all member clubs and associates in the United Kingdom, as appropriate, applicable to all clubs on receipt of their annual subscription. Optional additional insurance cover may be offered, where appropriate.

2.5 Clubs whose standards or conduct fall below those generally accepted by the member clubs, or that conflict with any applicable Morris Ring policy or code of practice may:

- exceptionally, following the advice of the Advisory Council, be suspended from membership by the Squire, or
- be suspended or removed from membership of the Morris Ring if at least two thirds of the votes cast at a meeting of club representatives are in favour of such action.

3. **REPRESENTATIVES’ MEETINGS**

3.1 Representatives of member clubs will meet annually.

3.2 Other representatives’ meetings may be called:

- at the Squire’s discretion
- following a written request to the Bagman by at least one third of member clubs subject to the published policies of the Morris Ring

3.3 Save for:

- the election of officers, where there are more than two candidates
- suspension or removal of a club from membership
- amendments to this constitution

any matters requiring formal determination at a representatives’ meeting will be determined by a simple majority vote of the member clubs represented; each club will have one vote on any such matter.

3.4 Voting may be by written, electronic or such other reasonable means as the elected officers will agree in advance, appropriate to the circumstances.

4. **OFFICERS**

4.1 The Morris Ring will have three elected officers:
Morris Ring Draft Constitution 2021

- the Squire, who leads the Morris Ring
- the Bagman, who is responsible for administration
- the Treasurer, who is responsible for financial matters.

4.2 The Squire, Bagman and Treasurer will be elected biennially at the annual representatives’ meeting. Elections for Squire and Treasurer will alternate with those for the Bagman, with the Squire taking office at the annual representative’s meeting next following their election. The Bagman and Treasurer take office on election.

4.3 The Squire may not, but the Bagman and Treasurer may be re-elected. The officers are elected by an absolute majority of the votes cast unless there are more than two candidates, when the alternative vote system will be used.

4.4 In consultation with the Advisory Council, the Squire may appoint a deputy for any other officer and, may appoint such other officers as they think fit to carry out other functions.

4.5 If a vacancy occurs in the office of Squire, Bagman or Treasurer, the Advisory Council will take such action as it thinks fit, pending an election to that office.

5. AREA REPRESENTATIVES

5.1 Area Representatives will be elected at an annual representatives’ meeting for a three-year term and will be eligible for re-election.

5.2 For the sole purpose of choosing Area Representatives, each member club will be allocated to one of the geographical areas within the United Kingdom and may only vote in that area.

5.3 Candidates for Area Representatives must be a member of one of the area’s clubs, be nominated by at least one of those clubs and be elected by a simple majority of votes of the clubs in that area. Clubs outside the UK will be represented by the elected officers. A temporary replacement area representative may be appointed by the Squire, where necessary.

6. ADVISORY COUNCIL

6.1 The Advisory Council consists of the Squire, Bagman and Treasurer, any officers elect, and all past elected officers of the Morris Ring whose term of office has concluded within the past six years, together with the elected area representatives. The Advisory Council will elect a chair, who may not be a currently elected officer but may be the last past Squire.

6.2 The Advisory Council will meet at least once a year, and will have a quorum of five members, including at least one elected officer and two area representatives.

6.3 The purposes of the Advisory Council include:
- advising and assisting the officers to further the objects of the Morris Ring
- taking action in an emergency
- considering any other appropriate matters in accordance with the policies of the Morris Ring.

7. GENERAL

7.1 Any amendment of this constitution will require at least two thirds of the votes cast at the annual representatives’ meeting to be in favour of the amendment.

7.2 Appropriate policies and codes of practice may from time to time be adopted by the Morris Ring at a meeting of club representatives by simple majority vote.

7.3 All funds or assets of the Morris Ring will be used only for the furtherance of its objectives and no such funds or assets may be transferred to the officers or member clubs of the Morris Ring for their personal use.

7.4 On the dissolution of the Morris Ring none of its funds or assets may be transferred to its officers or member clubs for their personal use and may only be transferred to charitable or not-for-profit organisations having the same or similar objectives as the Morris Ring and an equivalent prohibition on personal use of funds or assets once transferred.
Meetings and Advisory Council Policy

1. GENERAL

1.1 Meetings may be conducted by personal or remote attendance of the participants or by a mixture of methods, as appropriate to the circumstances, at the discretion of the Squire, or, in the case of Advisory Council meetings, the chair of the Advisory Council.

2. ANNUAL REPRESENTATIVES’ MEETINGS

2.1 Member clubs will be given at least three months’ notice of the date and location of the annual representatives’ meeting by the Bagman.

2.2 Any of the following must be received by the Bagman no later than two months before the meeting:

- Nominations for elected officers
- Nominations for Area Representatives
- proposed alterations to the constitution
- formal resolutions for discussion

2.3 In the case of nominations for elected officers and Area Representatives, each nomination will be accompanied by short biographical details of the candidate, their photograph and the nominating club’s supporting statement, no more than 250 words in length.

2.4 The Treasurer will recommend to the ARM the level of annual subscription for full member clubs, including public liability insurance, and for associate members, including public liability insurance where equivalent cover is not held elsewhere.

2.5 The Bagman will circulate details of the matters set out above to member clubs no later than one month before the meeting.

2.6 In the case of elections of officers, member clubs wishing to send their vote to the Bagman in advance, should do so in writing (including by electronic means), to arrive at least seven days before the meeting. Voting in advance will normally only be available for officer elections.

3. OTHER REPRESENTATIVES’ MEETINGS

3.1 When a representatives’ meeting (other than the ARM) has been called, it will normally be held within four weeks and the Bagman will give notice of the meeting at least two weeks beforehand, together with any necessary information.

4. VOTING PROCEDURE - GENERAL

4.1 Voting for all matters is normally on the basis of a simple majority of votes cast, except for constitutional amendments and suspension or removal of clubs from membership, where a two-thirds majority of member clubs voting is required; however, if there are more than two candidates for the posts of Squire, Bagman or Treasurer, the alternative vote system\(^1\) is used.

4.2 Each full member club is entitled to one vote in each election or other matter to be determined. Associate clubs may attend a representatives’ meeting, but may not vote.

5. VOTING PROCEDURE - ELECTION OF OFFICERS

5.1 The Bagman will send one ballot paper to each member club with the formal notice of the meeting for use either as a postal vote, if the club is not sending a delegate to the ARM, or as a ballot paper at the ARM. In accordance with procedures at Local and Parliamentary Elections, these will be uniquely marked to allow checking and/or reissue as/if required.

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\(^1\) See the Electoral Reform Society’s explanation of the alternative vote system at: https://www.electoral-reform.org.uk/voting-systems/types-of-voting-system/alternative-vote/
Meetings and Advisory Council Policy

5.2 Reasonable time will be allowed at the meeting for open discussion about the candidates. By convention, the candidates do not speak on their own behalf and are not present during the discussion, of which no minutes are taken.

5.3 With the consent of the meeting, the Squire will appoint a Returning Officer and a deputy to conduct the ballot and count and may appoint at least two independent scrutineers. None of these shall be current officers of the Morris Ring or candidates.

5.4 The name of each club submitting a ballot paper will be marked on a voting register. The ballot papers should not indicate the name of the club voting.

5.5 Postal votes should be enclosed in a sealed envelope bearing the name of the member club on whose behalf the vote is submitted or, if submitted by electronic means, printed and placed in suitably marked envelopes by the Bagman before the meeting.

- The Returning Officer will check to ensure the submitting club has voting rights.
- The club’s name will be marked on the register of clubs as having voted.
- The ballot paper will be added to those ready for sorting/counting and the envelope discarded.
- Postal votes submitted in a form other than described above will be treated as spoilt.

5.6 If there are more than two candidates, the alternative vote system is used:

- Member clubs rank candidates in order of preference by marking 1, 2, 3 etc. Member clubs may rank as many or as few candidates as they wish or vote for one candidate.
- First preference votes are counted first. If a candidate receives more than 50% of the first preference votes, then they are elected.
- If no candidate reaches 50%, the candidate with the fewest first preference votes is eliminated. Their second preference votes are reallocated to the remaining candidates. If one candidate has more votes than the other remaining candidates put together, that candidate is elected.
- If not, the process is repeated until one candidate has more votes than the other remaining candidates put together. This candidate wins the election.

5.7 In the event of equality of votes or, at the discretion of the Returning Officer, a near equality of votes, the result should first be verified by a recount, to eliminate any doubts or concerns.

5.8 In later rounds, in case of equality of votes, a higher number of votes in the earliest round gives precedence. In the case of continued equality, the following process will be adopted:

- The Returning Officer marks a blank ballot paper for each of the two tied candidates, folds them, places them in a suitable receptacle and then draws one ballot “blind”. The candidate for whom it is marked is awarded one more vote [in that round only].

5.9 Announcement of results by the Returning Officer:

- The results of the ballot will be announced to the meeting at a convenient point as soon as the result is known.
- In keeping with the principle of open democracy, the number of votes for each candidate will be given.
- The number of spoilt papers and a summary of the reasons for their exclusion will also be given.

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2 Taken from relevant instructions for Returning Officers in Local and Parliamentary Elections
6. MEETING PROCEDURES

6.1 So that representatives’ meetings may be conducted efficiently and equitably, the following procedures will normally be adopted:

6.2 Motions will be considered in the order that they appear on the agenda unless the meeting decides otherwise.

6.3 Motions and amendments will be proposed and seconded.

6.4 Motions may be withdrawn by the proposer with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.

6.5 An amendment is a proposal to remove or add words to a motion, not to negate the motion.

6.6 If an amendment to the original motion is carried, the original motion becomes the substantive motion upon which further amendments may be moved.

6.7 A representative may move an amendment to their own motion if agreed by the meeting and any seconder.

6.8 If there is more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion, the amendments will be moved and debated in the order directed by the chair.

6.9 One or more amendments may be discussed together if the chair considers it expedient but each amendment will be voted upon separately.

6.10 A representative may not move more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion.

6.11 The mover of an amendment has no right of reply at the end of debate on it.

6.12 Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the mover of the original motion will have a right of reply either at the end of debate of the first amendment or at the very end of debate on the final substantive motion immediately before it is put to the vote.

6.13 Unless permitted by the chair, a representative may speak only once in the debate on a motion except:

   • to speak on an amendment moved by another representative;
   • to move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since they last spoke;
   • to make a point of order; or
   • in exercise of a right of reply.

6.14 A point of order will be decided by the chair and their decision will be final.

6.15 When a motion is under debate, no other motion will be moved except:

   • to amend the motion;
   • to put the motion to a vote;
   • to refer a motion to the Advisory Committee for consideration;
   • to proceed to the next business;
   • to ask that a person to be no longer heard or that they leave the meeting;
   • to adjourn the debate;
   • to adjourn the meeting; or
   • to propose a guillotine motion.
Meetings and Advisory Council Policy

6.16 Before an original or substantive motion is put to the vote, the chair will be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated and that the mover of the motion under debate has exercised or waived their right of reply.

6.17 Excluding motions moved under 6.15 above, the contributions by a representative will relate only to the motion under discussion.

7. THE ADVISORY COUNCIL

7.1 The Advisory Council consists of three elected officers, officers elect and all past officers of the Morris Ring, for a maximum of six years following the conclusion of their term of office, together with elected representatives for geographical areas. The purpose of the Council is to advise and assist the Squire and the other elected officers to further the objects of the Morris Ring, to take action in an emergency and any other appropriate matters.

7.2 It elects its own Chair, who may not be a currently elected officer.

7.3 The Squire or the Advisory Council may invite others to assist it, as necessary. Those individuals will not have voting rights in the Advisory Council’s deliberations.

7.4 Area Representatives are elected on a three-year cycle as members of the Advisory Council. They represent member and associate clubs based in the following general geographical areas (shown in the map below), subject to the agreement of individual clubs:

- Eastern
  - Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Greater London (part), Hertfordshire (part), Lincolnshire (part), Norfolk, Rutland, Suffolk
- North
  - East Riding of Yorkshire, Lincolnshire (part), North Yorkshire (part), South Yorkshire, West Yorkshire
- North West
  - Cheshire, Derbyshire (part), Greater Manchester, Lancashire, Merseyside
- South West & Wales
  - Bristol, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire (part), Somerset, Wales, Wiltshire, Channel Islands
- West Midlands
  - Gloucestershire (part), Herefordshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire (part), Warwickshire (part), West Midlands, Worcestershire
- North East
  - Cumbria, Durham, North Yorkshire (part), Northumberland, Scotland, Tyne and Wear
- East Midlands
  - Derbyshire (part), Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire, Staffordshire (part), Warwickshire (part)
- South Midlands
  - Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Greater London (part), Hampshire (part), Hertfordshire (part), Oxfordshire
- South East
  - East Sussex, Greater London (part), Hampshire (part), Isle of Wight, Kent, Surrey, West Sussex

7.5 The Overseas Bagman will represent non-UK member clubs on behalf of the elected officers, as necessary.
MORRIS RING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY PROPOSAL

OUR COMMITMENT TO PEOPLE

1. The Morris Ring is committed to ensure that everyone we have dealings with is treated fairly, without bias or discrimination. This means that we will do our best to:

   • Treat people with respect
   • Avoid behaviour which is discriminatory or which treats a person less favourably than others
   • Avoid behaviour which amounts to harassment, bullying or victimisation

2. The Morris Ring is committed to ensuring that morris dancing is made as accessible to as many and as wide a range of people as possible.

HOW WE WILL MEET THIS COMMITMENT

1. By ensuring that Morris Ring officers, member clubs and those who represent the Morris Ring are aware of what constitutes unfair treatment, as defined in legislation, and are committed to avoiding unfair treatment of those they deal with

2. By ensuring that Morris Ring activities are assessed by those organising them to ensure that they avoid unfairness and are aimed at as wide a range of participants as possible

3. By keeping this policy under review

4. By ensuring that member clubs are aware of the importance of fair and indiscriminatory treatment, of the legal requirements of relevant legislation such as the Equality Act, and by encouraging them to devise appropriate policies for their own activities

5. By challenging discrimination, harassment and other unfair behaviour when we encounter it, where necessary implementing policies for members such as that relating to face make-up adopted in 2021;

   ‘Member sides should not use any solid full-face coloured makeup or disguise which could be taken by a reasonable observer to imitate or parody a skin colour different from their own.’

6. By investigating any complaints we receive promptly, and fairly, and to take appropriate action to resolve the matter, including disciplinary actions as necessary

7. By promoting the morris to place emphasis on reaching as wide a range of people as we can

8. By identifying barriers to participation in morris and working to remove those barriers where we can.
MORRIS RING COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

CONTEXT NOTES
There are numerous situations where a complaint may be made to the Morris Ring.
In all cases the same procedure will be followed.

1. SOURCES OF COMPLAINTS
   1.1. Member clubs of the Ring.
   1.2. Officers or Area Representatives.
   1.3. Members of the public or press.
   1.4. Other organisations, which interact with the Ring or its members, such as: the JMO, local authorities, groups who have commissioned Morris performances.

If individuals have a complaint about their own club, it should be resolved locally.
Only in the event of total failure of that process, would the Ring endeavour to resolve the matter.

2. TYPES OF COMPLAINT
   2.1. Non-compliance with any codes of practice published by the Ring, which may include:
      2.1.1. Safeguarding.
      2.1.2. Discrimination.
      2.1.3. Health and Safety.
      2.1.4. Insurance conditions.
   2.2. Maladministration.
      2.2.1. This may include such things as obstruction, incompetence, dereliction of duty, financial impropriety or abusive behaviour.
   2.3. Disputes between Member Teams or other Morris Teams.
   2.4. Illegal activities.
      2.4.1. These may include such things as: theft, drug use or sales, misuse of property or equipment, smuggling, etc.
      2.4.2. Serious breaches of safeguarding or discrimination laws.

Items in Section 2.4 would normally be referred directly to the police.
However, the Morris Ring would need to be aware of anything that may impact on its reputation.

3. PERSONS OR BODIES COMPLAINED AGAINST
   These may include:
   3.1. Officers of the Morris Ring
   3.2. Area representatives.
   3.3. Persons or groups with Morris Ring related responsibilities, such as: Overseas Bagman, Archive Group members, shop administrator, appointed instructor, webmaster.
   3.4. Member Teams.
   3.5. Members of the Advisory Council.
   3.6. Should the complaint relate to all three elected Ring Officers, the matter would be referred to the Chair of the Advisory Council. After a decision by the Advisory Council, actions as in section 7.4 below would be implemented.

Complaints about individual members of Morris Ring Teams must be dealt with locally.
The Ring would only be involved in exceptional circumstances.

4. AUTHORITY
   4.1. The Squire of the Morris Ring has the authority to effect any of the outcomes defined below, either immediately, or in a specified time.
   4.2. In the case of suspension or exclusion, the decision must be done in consultation with the Morris Ring Advisory Council and ratified at an ARM, or a special meeting called for the purpose.

5. SUMMARY
   5.1. It is hoped that few situations arise that lead to such formal complaints. However, should they occur, the Morris Ring will endeavour to resolve them amicably in as short a time as possible.
   5.2. It should be remembered that this is a voluntary organisation, not structured for litigation.
5.3. The purpose of these procedures is to ensure correct handling and transparency in the event of significant problems occurring.

PROCEDURES
These procedures relate only to the Morris Ring and its own activities, not to member teams. Matters relating only to member teams must be processed locally.

6. METHOD OF DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS TO THE MORRIS RING
6.1. An elected officer of the Morris Ring is informed of the complaint.
6.1.1. Methods appropriate to the complainant may be used, but must be recorded, and followed up in writing, giving the basic details of the case.
6.2. The officer acknowledges the complaint.
6.3. The same officer informs the other elected officers and any other parties that may be affected, such as insurance providers, or other Morris organisations.
6.4. The officers investigate, review the case and agree the appropriate outcome.
6.5. The complainant is informed of the outcome.

7. Possible Outcomes of the Review.
7.1. No action to be taken. (The reason for this may need to be explained.)
7.2. Report to appropriate bodies such as the JMO, police, social services or health care for further action.
7.3. Sanctions against teams, which could include:
7.3.1. A warning
7.3.2. Temporary suspension until the problem is rectified
7.3.2.1. In the event of a Temporary Suspension, arrangements would be made to maintain the member’s insurance cover until its expiry date.
7.3.3. Exclusion
7.3.3.1. In the event of exclusion, the team would be informed that insurance cover would not be renewed by the Morris Ring.
7.3.4. Appointment of someone to monitor the team (preferably their Area Representative)
7.4. Sanctions against individuals, which could include:
7.4.1. A warning.
7.4.2. Instruction to rectify a situation.
7.4.3. Removal from office.

8. Appeals
8.1. A complainant, who is dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint, has the right to request a review by the Advisory Council.
8.2. The Chair of the Advisory Council will inform the appellant of the decision.
8.2.1. Any decision overturning that of the elected officers requires a two thirds majority of the full Advisory Council.
8.3. No further appeals will be entertained.

9. Confidentiality
9.1. Unless a criminal offence is alleged or suspected, which has to be divulged to police or other authorities, details of complaints will be restricted to those directly involved.
9.2. No press statements or other media responses will be made, other than to say that the matter is being dealt with by the Morris Ring in line with its Complaints Procedure.
9.3. No personal information about individuals or groups involved will be divulged to external bodies, unless legally required.
9.4. Complaint Information held electronically by the Ring will only be retained in line with current legislation.

Issue 7 Date 20211204
MORRIS RING SAFEGUARDING COMMITMENT PROPOSAL

OUR COMMITMENT TO SAFEGUARDING

Everyone who participates in morris dancing is entitled to do so in an enjoyable and safe environment. This applies to everybody, but particularly to those legally classed as children or as vulnerable adults (hereafter collectively referred to as vulnerable people).

In its own activities the Morris Ring is committed to ensuring that, when given responsibility for vulnerable people, it provides them with the highest possible standard of care as detailed in the full safeguarding policy.

While acknowledging that its member clubs are diverse, and many do not include vulnerable people amongst their members, the Morris Ring is committed to encouraging all its member clubs to devise and implement safeguarding policies appropriate to their membership and activities.

HOW WE WILL MEET THIS COMMITMENT

1. By ensuring that Ring officers, member clubs and those who represent the Ring are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities, as defined in legislation, and are committed to promoting the well-being of those they deal with.

2. By ensuring that Ring activities are assessed by those organising them to ensure that potential safeguarding issues are identified and suitable steps put in place to deal with them, working in partnership with clubs, vulnerable people and their parents / carers.

3. In relation to its member sides, the Morris Ring will:
   a. ensure that they are aware of the importance of safeguarding, of the legal requirements of relevant legislation
   b. encourage them to devise appropriate policies for their own activities
   c. provide information on devising an appropriate safeguarding policy for the club
   d. provide specific safeguarding information to clubs when requested

4. By challenging unsafe behaviour when we encounter it.

5. By investigating any safeguarding concerns we receive promptly, and fairly, taking appropriate action to resolve the matter

6. The Executive Officers of the Morris Ring have responsibility for implementing the Safeguarding policy and will keep it under regular review.

For more details please see the full policy document (link to doc)
MORRIS RING SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1.1 INTRODUCTION
The aim of this policy is to promote good practice, providing vulnerable people with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of the Morris Ring.

The Morris Ring, within its activities, will ensure that vulnerable people are kept safe.

The Morris Ring is committed to promoting policies so that everyone involved in morris dancing is aware of their responsibilities to safeguard vulnerable people from harm and abuse. This means to follow procedures to protect vulnerable people and report any concerns about their welfare to appropriate authorities.

For the purpose of this document a “vulnerable person” includes any child, young person and any individual who is considered to be vulnerable, whatever their age.

A child or young person is defined as a person under the age of 18 (section 105(1), Children Act 1989). The terms “child” and “young person” are used interchangeably in this document.

For vulnerable adults, the terms “adult at risk” or “adult at risk of harm” are also used and can be described as “an adult who requires assistance in the conduct of their own affairs”.

References to “elected officers” are to the officers of the Morris Ring.

1.2 POLICY STATEMENT
The Morris Ring is committed to the following:

- the welfare of the vulnerable person is paramount
- all people, 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 an enjoyable and safe environment
- taking all reasonable steps to protect vulnerable people 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, guardians, carers and vulnerable people is essential for the protection of vulnerable people.

1.3 MONITOR AND REVIEW POLICY AND PROCEDURES
The implementation of procedures should be regularly monitored and reviewed. The Bagman of the Morris Ring should regularly report to the Squire and other officers about progress, challenges, difficulties, achievements, gaps and areas where changes are required.

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

2. PROMOTING GOOD PRACTICE

2.1 INTRODUCTION
To provide vulnerable people 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. However, it is their responsibility to identify poor practice and possible abuse, and act if they have concerns about the welfare of the vulnerable person as explained in section 4.
This section will assist in identifying what is meant by good practice.

2.2 GOOD PRACTICE
The Morris Ring should adhere to the following principles and action:

- Ensure member clubs are aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding their members attending events
- 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 enjoyable: promote fairness, confront and deal with bullying
- Treat all vulnerable people with respect and dignity
- Be mindful of the welfare needs of vulnerable people present
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact. Where any form of manual or physical support is required, it should be provided openly and with consent.
- Aim to give positive, constructive feedback
- Keep a written record of any incident or injury that occurs, along with details of any outcomes

Involvement of parents/carers

- Involve parents or carers wherever possible, so that they know where the person in their care is, who they are with and what they are doing.
- Secure parental or carers’ consent for the club to act in loco parentis, to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid or other medical treatment if required

3. DEFINING ABUSE

3.1 INTRODUCTION
Abuse is any form of physical, emotional, financial or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to physical or psychological injury or harm. Abuse can happen to anyone regardless of their age, gender, race or ability.

3.2 INDICATORS OF ABUSE
It is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. Indications that someone is being abused may include one or more of the following:

- An injury on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries for which an explanation seems inconsistent
- The vulnerable person describes what appears to be an abusive act involving them
- Someone expresses concern about the welfare of a third party
- Unexplained changes in behaviour including but not limited to: becoming very upset, quiet, withdrawn, displaying sudden outbursts of temper
- Inappropriate sexual awareness in minors
- Engaging in sexually explicit behaviour
- Distrust of adults by children, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected

The above list is not exhaustive; the presence of one or more of the indications is not proof that abuse is taking place.

It is NOT the responsibility of the Morris Ring to decide that abuse is occurring. It IS everybody’s responsibility to act on any concerns.

3.3 Use of Photography or Filming Equipment at Events
Performances and events may be used as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of vulnerable people. Any concerns should be reported to an Elected Officer.
4. RESPONDING TO SUSPICIONS AND ALLEGATIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION
There is a responsibility to act on any concerns raised through contact with the appropriate authorities. This applies to allegations or suspicions of abuse occurring within the Morris Ring, and to allegations or suspicions that abuse is taking place elsewhere.

This section explains how to respond to allegations or suspicions.

4.2 RECEIVING EVIDENCE OF POSSIBLE ABUSE
Awareness of possible abuse may arise in various ways. It may be reported to the Morris Ring by someone else or directly by the vulnerable person affected.

If a vulnerable person says or indicates that they are being abused, the individual should:
- **stay calm** so as not to frighten the vulnerable person
- **reassure** the vulnerable person that they are not to blame and that it was right to tell
- **listen** to the vulnerable person, showing that they are being taken 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 vulnerable person abuse cases have been dismissed where it is felt that the vulnerable person has been led or words and ideas have been suggested during questioning. Only ask questions to clarify.
- **inform** the vulnerable person that other people must be informed about what they have said. Tell the vulnerable person this is to help stop the abuse continuing.
- **safety of the vulnerable person is paramount.** If the vulnerable person needs urgent medical attention call an ambulance, inform the doctors of the concern and ensure they are made aware that this is a vulnerable person protection issue
- **record** all information
- **report** the incident to an elected officer immediately

4.3 RECORDING INFORMATION
A detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure or concern. The individual recording the incident should confine themselves to the facts and distinguish between personal knowledge and other sources. The individual should not include their own opinions.

Information should include the following where possible:
- the vulnerable person’s name, age, date of birth and contact details
- the details of the allegation or disclosure, including dates, times and any other relevant information (including details of any witnesses)
- the date and time the incident was disclosed

4.4 REPORTING THE CONCERN
The elected officers of the Morris Ring will take responsibility for Safeguarding as part of their role. If they are not available, the individual concerned should take responsibility and seek appropriate advice.

In the event of an incident being reported, the elected officers will:
- refer the matter to the appropriate authorities
- decide who will deal with any media enquiries
- take any other appropriate action

In the event of an elected officer being the subject of a disclosure or allegation, a report must be made to the Chairman of the Morris Ring Advisory Council, who will follow the above steps
4.5 CONFIDENTIALITY
Every effort should be made to ensure confidentiality is maintained without compromising the safety of those concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need-to-know basis only.

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

5. DECLARATION
On behalf of the Morris Ring, we will oversee the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy and take all necessary steps to ensure it is adhered to. This safeguarding policy supersedes all previous versions.

Signed on behalf of the officers of the Morris Ring:

Name

Date
Morris Ring Publications

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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:  https://www.themorrisring.org/

The Morris Ring Google Group (MRGG). Private Forum for debate or announcements.  https://groups.google.com/group/the-morris-ring

Contact the Morris Ring Bagman to register to use.

Morris Ring Facebook site:  https://www.facebook.com/TheMorrisRing

Morris Ring Twitter:  https://twitter.com/TheMorrisRing

Morris Ring Newsletter No 124 December 2021
Call for Contributions

Any items of urgent Morris-related news, please send to me at bagman@themorrisring.org for inclusion in the next Newsletter. Less time-dependent updates and 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) 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).
The Morris Ring – Annual Representatives’ Meeting Sat 5th March 2022

Name of Side: .................................................................

Contact Name: ...............................................................

Names of other attendees: ..................................................

Email: ................................................................. Tel No: .................................................................

Address: ........................................................................

postcode: .................................................................

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<th>Amount</th>
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<td>Friday Night accommodation &amp; Saturday Breakfast</td>
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<tr>
<td>Camper van</td>
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<td>Saturday ARM to Sunday morning including coffee, lunch, tea and Saturday night accommodation &amp; Sunday breakfast (U16 - half price)</td>
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<tr>
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There are 20 twin bedded rooms and 5 double bedded rooms. Book early to get a twin room!

Please specify number of non-alcohol drinkers .................. Please specify any dietary requirements..........................

Please indicate if disabled access is required Yes / No

Please fill in this form, (even if only attending the afternoon meeting) and post it or email it.

Cheques made payable to: Stafford Morris Men (Misdemeanours)

BACS details are 60-22-09. A/c 64513165. (Put your name/club as reference)

Peter Copley, 5, Woodleighton Grove, Uttoxeter, Staffs., ST14 8BX

drpetercopley@gmail.com  01889 567962 or 07949 309043