



Guidance Note No. 2

Applying for Grants -
The importance of Access for All

It is a well-established fact that potential funders give money for people, not artefacts! Whether it is for bell restoration or any other project, it is ultimately for the benefit of our society. So, it is in our interest to demonstrate, in any application for funds, that we are maximising the opportunity for the public to access our bells and bell ringing. And bear in mind that it is not only current and potential ringers that we need to provide access for, but all members of the general public who we need to encourage into our towers if the exercise is going to grow. We need to keep everyone on our side. Those offering grants often want to see how the whole community is involved in the restoration project and no one is excluded for any reason, even if they don't actually want to ring the bells!

A bell restoration project may well be of more interest to people in the community than ringing per se, so keeping the community in touch with events, particularly when there will be something to see on the ground floor (e.g. the arrival of bells) can be useful.

The following list provides ways of maximising access to our towers and ringing. It is not exhaustive and clearly no tower will be able to achieve all the features, but if yours does, or can do, then emphasising this in any application for funds will definitely enhance your probability of getting a grant in the first place or increasing the amount that you would otherwise have got! It is also worth bearing in mind, when first defining a restoration scheme, that including some of these features not currently provided, may well attract more funding than the cost of adding them.

This list includes providing information as well as physical access. There is little point in making the tower accessible if people do not know about it.

- Ground floor access, and particularly, adequate wheelchair access (ramps, doorways etc).
- Good, clear, well-lit stairways, with handrails, to ringing / bell chambers.
- Safe access within the bell chamber.
- Lifts! Well if a new church is being designed with bells or existing church with major structural alterations, then why not?
- Re-hanging lower in the tower improves access.
- Augmentation provides greater challenges which helps to retain / attract ringers.
- Work to improve the go of the bells will make them more appealing particularly to young people and others less strong.
- CCTV of bells / ringers at ground floor level for those not able to reach bell / ringing chambers.
- Displays in church of bells / ringers / proposed restoration scheme.



- Tower open days – access to bell / ringing chambers, demonstrations of ringing.
- Posters in church / church notice board / local community notice board with following information:
 - Contact information for access to bells / ringing.
 - Details of regular ringing times.
 - Details of ringing for local / national events.
 - Accessible to all ages from 8 up.
 - Accessible to those with some disabilities, e.g. blind.
 - Provides physical and mental exercise.
 - Social activity that encourages teamwork.
 - Inclusive – all faiths (or none).
 - Ensuring the continuation of local / national heritage.
 - Can be a skill in the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme.
 - Can provide a much-needed activity for young people in small villages.
- Web site providing all the information given above.
- Regular updates on tower activities in parish magazine / local press / community centres etc.
- Bells available to visiting ringers and for branch / association meetings.
- Ringer's services.
- Offering talks/demonstrations to local organisations.
- Links with local education e.g. music dept.
- Local history links, e.g. local history society research families in bell inscriptions.
- Ringing centre!

If you have any further ideas about how to increase accessibility, please let a committee member know so that they can be added to this list.

This and other guidance notes produced by the Bell Restoration Committee may be downloaded free of charge from the Bell Restoration Committee section of the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers web site: www.cccbr.org.uk/bellrestoration. Please check the web site to ensure you have the latest issue.