



Guidance Note No. 6

Sources of Funds for Society Bell Restoration Funds

This Guidance Note discusses a number of possible ways in which ringing societies can derive income for their Bell Restoration Funds (BRF). The list is not exhaustive and the Committee will be pleased to hear of other successful sources of funds.

- **A proportion of members' annual subscriptions** – In many societies income from members' annual subscriptions is shared between the society's general fund and its BRF. The proportion which goes to each does not have to be fixed for all time but can be varied each year according to the needs of the two funds. For any one year, however, the proportions should be decided at the start of the year so that members know in advance how their subscriptions will be used and the branch and general treasurers can account for the income accordingly. Alternatively, it can be agreed that any general fund surplus is transferred to the BRF at the end of the financial year.
- **Annual donations from PCCs** – Many Parochial Church Councils and their equivalents are willing to support BRFs either in recognition of grants made from them towards the cost of work on their bells or in anticipation of grants towards future work. Letters should be sent annually to all PCCs of churches in the society's area of operation with bells by the society's bell restoration adviser or treasurer explaining the purpose and scope of the BRF, listing recent grants made from the fund and inviting donations. Not all will respond but over time many will and their donations can become an important source of BRF income. It is important that each year the sender of the letter should check the name and address of each PCC Secretary or Treasurer. Distribution by email can save much postage cost and effort.
- **Affiliation fees** – Instead of an annual request for donations, in at least one large society PCCs pay an annual affiliation fee (usually by direct debit or standing order) of £15. While all parishes may take advantage of the society's tower advisory service, only affiliated towers are eligible for grants from the BRF. This has the advantage of regular and assured income to the BRF, but the affiliation fee rate is likely to be rather lower than many PCCs are prepared to give in the form of voluntary donations.
- **Annual donations from towers** – Many local bands have tower funds which derive their income from a proportion of wedding fees, peal fees, visitors' donations, etc. and from which they are willing to make donations to the BRF.



- Letters similar to those to PCCs (see 2 above) should accordingly be sent each year, preferably by email, to tower correspondents inviting donations. In some towers where quarter peals are often rung the amount collected from each participant (say £1) is divided between *The Ringing World* and the BRF. Tower donations can also form a substantial part of BRF income.
- **A Number Club (also known as a 100 or 200 Club)** – The idea is that members (usually but not necessarily of the society) pay a set amount each month, collected annually, and are allocated a number. Each month the income for that month is split between the BRF and the prize fund in set proportions (e.g. 45% and 55%). Draws are held monthly, quarterly and annually, normally at branch or society meetings with one prize at each draw. The monthly prize is a set amount and the remainder of the prize money is set aside for larger quarterly and annual prizes. Members can join the Number Club at any time in the year, but the administrator must keep a careful record of the number of active members each month. As it counts as a lottery, the Number Club must be registered with a local authority under the Gambling Act 2005. Depending on the number of members and the monthly subscription (say anything from £1 to £5), a Number Club can raise significant sums for the BRF.
- **Collections at meetings** – Those attending ringing meetings are often willing to make donations to the BRF if, for example, a plate is placed by the door of the meeting room to which attention is drawn. Sometimes, where a ringers' tea is provided, the amount charged per person will exceed the cost of provision and, if the tea organisers agree, the surplus can be put to the BRF. If a church service is held in connection with a meeting, the incumbent may agree that a collection is taken in aid of the BRF, or shared between the church and the BRF. Under the Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme, Gift Aid can be reclaimed on donations made in the form of collections such as these without the charity needing to know the identity of the donors, provided that the donations are in cash and do not exceed £20 each (*see Guidance Note 4 on Gift Aid*).
- **Sales of goods** – All sorts of goods, many ringing related or containing the society name or logo, can be sold in aid of the BRF. Examples are items of clothing, such as polo shirts, mugs, tea towels, dusters, pens, coasters and fridge magnets. A certain amount of capital is required to acquire these items in the first place. One way of achieving this is to invite loans from a limited number of society members into a separate fund set up for this purpose. As sales proceed income is first paid into this fund until the cost of sales have



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been met and then into the BRF. Sales can be to society members at meetings, to other ringers at open days and at events such as the Ringing Roadshow, and to the general public at any event where the society has a presence.

- **Open days** – Open days, when many of the society's towers are open for ringing, can raise substantial sums of money for the BRF. If they are well planned, they can attract a great many ringing visitors. It is not unreasonable to invite donations of £1 per tower or £10 or £15 for a day ticket purchased in advance or at the first few towers of the day. Bank holidays are popular for open days, but clashes with similar events in other societies must be avoided. Routes must be carefully planned with some overlap between towers. Two experienced stewards are needed at each tower, one to collect donations and, if necessary, control access to the ringing room, and the other to run the ringing. To ensure a good chance of success, open days should not be held in the same area more than once in five years.
- **Fund-raising events for society members** – Non-ringing events organised for society members and their families can be very enjoyable occasions as well as raising substantial amounts for the BRF. Examples are quiz evenings, wine tastings and visits to popular concerts, pantomimes and other shows. In each case the charge for taking part should exceed the cost by say 10% or 15%, with the profit going to the BRF. If a block booking at a theatre or concert hall can be arranged at a reduced price, the charge could be the full price with the difference going to the BRF. Other ideas are sponsored walks and quarter peal weeks (or fortnights or months) during which, say, £1 per rope is collected for the BRF.
- **Sale of maintenance materials** – A centrally-maintained store of wood for stays and top-end rope can provide both a useful service for the society's towers and provide a source of income. Provided that a society member is willing and has the facilities to store the wood and rope free of charge and supply it on demand, a charge of say £10 per stay and £2 per metre of rope is not unreasonable. It should be possible to purchase the wood and rope at considerably less cost. At least one society was fortunate enough to be given a felled ash tree, for which the only costs were transport and cutting into suitable planks for storage.
- **Personal donations** – Active society members are likely to contribute to the BRF in several of the above ways every year but some may be willing to make a regular personal donation, gift-aided if possible. This should be



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encouraged but not pressed too hard and forms should be available for setting up standing orders and gift aid.

- **Legacies** – In a discreet way members could be encouraged to include a bequest to the society in their wills. Some form of permanent address for the society, such as the diocesan office, is needed so that the executors know how to contact the society when the time comes.
- **Interest on capital** – Until the recession, which began in 2008, and the subsequent fall in interest rates, interest received on the money held in BRFs could form a significant part of annual income. Income from bank accounts is now derisory and it is necessary for BRF treasurers to shop around to find the best rates available for charities. If it is known that a proportion of BRF money will not be needed for one, two or three years, a fixed-rate account might provide the best answer. At the time of writing, it seems impossible to obtain interest at more than 2%, but with the economic situation brightening we may soon see interest rates rising again.
- **Gift Aid** – Every opportunity should be taken to claim Gift Aid on income to the BRF. *See Guidance Note 4.*

Members of the Bell Restoration Committee are always willing to provide further advice on sources of funds for BRFs. Please contact the Committee Secretary: secretary@brc.cccbr.org.uk.

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.