



**the central council of church bell ringers**

uk registered charity 270036

Tower Stewardship Committee

# *Ringling within the Community and the Law*

A summary of the work of the CCCBR  
Tower Stewardship Committee,  
and a summary of their guidance notes.

September 2015

## **THE TOWER STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE**

The Tower Stewardship Committee was formed in order to give guidance in the general areas of tower management within the wider community recognising Church and Common Law.

It has been increasingly obvious in recent years that bell ringers cannot exist "in isolation". There are a number of external factors that now impinge on the activities of ringers. As responsible bell ringers, we must be aware of these factors, be able to communicate effectively with the relevant authorities and be able to manage these factors to the benefit of ringers.

Particular areas of concern have been identified and the committee has produced an initial set of guidance notes on the following topics:-

- GN1 - Insurance**
- GN2 - Tower Management**
- GN3 - Child Protection In Towers**
- GN4 - Health and Safety**
- GN5 - Church Law**
- GN6 - Fire Risk Assessment and Protection**
- GN7 - Noise, the Law, and the E.H.O.**
- GN8 - Data Protection and Bell Ringing**

These documents are not being widely distributed as hard copies but are available to everyone to download as .pdf documents free of charge from the Central Council website:

**[www.cccbr.org.uk/towerstewardship](http://www.cccbr.org.uk/towerstewardship)**

Note, as most of the ringing towers in the world come under the jurisdiction of the Church of England, these guidance notes have been produced with that in mind. However, most of the principles addressed will apply to other areas.

### **GN1 - INSURANCE**

Bell ringers are protected by insurance in different ways for dif-

ferent circumstances, through different types of insurance. This Guidance Note explains the types of insurance and helps to identify whether insurance is in place that benefits ringers, what ringers should do if asked to demonstrate that they have insurance, and where further advice may be necessary from a broker or other expert.

## **GN2 - TOWER MANAGEMENT**

The good management of a bell tower is important to ensure that (a) the bells & fittings, which are the property of the Church, are used correctly, maintained properly and not allowed to fall into disuse or disrepair and (b) the quality and quantity of ringing is controlled so that the Church is able to maintain a good relationship with the wider community.

This guidance note provides guidance for those who manage towers that have an active resident band of ringers, and also for those managing towers where there is no resident band and ringing takes place infrequently. It explains the relationship between the bell ringers and the Church authorities and shows the responsibilities of each, both within the Church and in the wider community.

## **GN3 - CHILD PROTECTION IN TOWERS**

This guidance note expands on the CC leaflet 'Protecting Young Ringers' and details the ways in which ringers can keep children safe and work with the Church Authorities' requirements. Topics include: Recent reviews of legislation (up to 2015), Concerns about a child's behaviour, concerns about another ringer's behaviour, DBS checks and the Sex Offenders Register.

## **GN4 - HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Does Health and Safety really apply to ringing? Yes it does and this guidance note tells you how to meet your responsibilities quickly and easily; it includes links to a risk assessment tool and some examples.

## **GN5 - CHURCH LAW**

The church law relating to the use of bells in the Church of England is a complex matter, and in most cases would require expert opinion and guidance. This guidance note is intended to

“point the reader in the right direction”. Topics touched on include who is the legal owner of the bells and tower, Diocesan Advisory Committees and Faculties, the de minimis rules and who can grant permission to ring bells.

## **GN6 - FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT AND PROTECTION**

Recent years have seen major changes in approaching fire safety. Ringers need to be aware of the need to do a fire risk assessment, how to plan to reduce the risk caused by fire, and to afford every assistance to the, non-ringing, church official performing such an assessment. This guidance note will guide and point you to the various publications that aid understanding of legal requirements for producing and maintaining a fire risk assessment for your building.

## **GN7 - NOISE, THE LAW, AND THE E.H.O.**

As ringers we have always been aware of the possibility of complaints being made about noise. This guidance note seeks to explain the law and how the Local Authority is likely to respond. It also offers advice on how to work with the Environmental Health Officer (EHO) and what to do if an Abatement Notice is served.

## **GN8 - DATA PROTECTION AND BELL RINGING**

The Data Protection Act 1998 governs the collection, recording, storage, use and disclosure of personal data, whether such data is held electronically or in manual form. This guidance note explains the Act, and its implications for individual ringers, towers and Guilds.

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For further details of these guidance notes, and other information, please contact the Chair of the Tower Stewardship Committee:

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