

CHANGE RINGING FOR THE FUTURE

REPORT ON BREAKOUT GROUPS NORTHWEST REGION

A. What's working well in your area?

Working together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Good relationship between University Society and local towers in City and surrounding area ▪ Informal working together across branches ▪ Inter-branch discussion ▪ Manchester University students ring in the local area ▪ Good relationship with church at local tower (Chester DG) ▪ Adapting to changing needs/availability of ringers/recruits eg earlier starts for youngsters (Chester DG) 	
Training and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of good young ringers (Chester DG?) ▪ Annual Training day, with the whole Guild involved (Carlisle DG) ▪ Initiative to recruit/train a new band of ringers in prep for transfer of bells to a new tower (Chester DG) ▪ 'Intermediate' practices, to bridge the gap from Plain Bob to Surprise ▪ University societies work with local ringers (Manchester-LACR?) ▪ 6/8-bell Surprise practices (Chester DG) ▪ Most events focus on ringing, not meeting (Chester DG) 	
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Handbell ringing (Chester DG) ▪ Codgers midweek daytime events (Carlisle DG) ▪ Presence with mobile belfry at county and other local shows (Chester DG) ▪ University Society recruitment for last year was better than usual, due to enhanced use of media (Facebook) ▪ Excellent quality newsletter (3-4 times per year) ▪ Bell Restoration fund via legacies (LACR) ▪ Individual ad-hoc, informal, groupings of towers for mutual support (Chester DG) ▪ Good support from guild officers to help members/towers/branches to address issues (Chester DG) 	



B. What's NOT working well in your area?

Working together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Traditional (hierarchical) communication methods failing (Group) ▪ Some places isolated (eg Isle of Man), how can we make everyone feel included? ▪ Communication between branches (Chester DG) ▪ Weakness in communication at all levels ▪ Little/no communication with neighbouring societies (Chester DG) 	
Training & development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Unclear expectations of goodness in ringing (Chester DG) ▪ Very little ringing on 10/12, need to work together with others (Carlisle DG) ▪ Not enough conductors, or way to learn (Carlisle DG) ▪ Poor ringers not attending practices, not being helped to improve ▪ Lack of interest in good striking (Carlisle DG) ▪ Quality of striking ▪ No one in charge of ringing at Association Level 	
Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Perception of reducing support for (traditional) branch and guild meetings (Chester DG) ▪ Branch meetings are poorly supported (Chester DG) ▪ Whole guild meetings often poorly supported (Chester DG) ▪ Towers isolate themselves, little interest in branch activities ▪ Branch practices in one tower get only 1-2 visitors 	
Young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Youth initiatives not on the radar (Group) ▪ Issues with Child Protection resurfacing ▪ No presence (eg from Guilds) at University/College Freshers events (Chester DG) ▪ Youth events: critical mass and distance problems (Carlisle DG) ▪ The most work is done by the few: how can we encourage others to get involved? ▪ Failure to attract ringers from Universities ▪ Dealing with over-zealous concerns of Child Protection issues by PCCs/vicars (Chester DG) ▪ Challenges over-zealous H&S concerns for PCCs/Incumbents (Chester DG) 	
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Weakness in leadership at all levels ▪ Lack of support, as not enough experienced ringers available (Carlisle DG) ▪ Fundraising (LACR) ▪ Recruitment (Carlisle DG) ▪ Guild training budgets often not used by branches (Chester DG) ▪ Issues with insurance resurfacing (Chester DG) ▪ Huge distances and few ringers (Carlisle DG) ▪ Lack of Commitment (Carlisle DG) ▪ Retention of ringers - move away for jobs/university 	

C. What cross-boundary initiatives are happening near you?

Working together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Joint 'nationality' towers (eg Low Bentham) with help from LACR/YACR ▪ Universities work together ▪ NUA meetings/weekends are good opportunity for Northern University Societies to meet together ▪ Informal links eg Wirral/CDG/Liverpool ▪ Cross border working between branches, eg LACR Liverpool/Wigan and Chester DG Wirral ▪ Several informal links (mainly individual ringers) across guild boundaries eg Chester/Lancashire 	
Training and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Joint ITTS and tower maintenance with D&N/SACR (Carlisle DG) ▪ ITTS courses with D&N to get critical mass (Carlisle DG) 	x 2
10/12-bell ringing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 10-bell (Hexham), 12-bell (Stockton) joint practices with D&N/YACR (Carlisle DG) ▪ Liverpool/Chester joint 12-bell practices 	
Private initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Young Ringers days out (some joint with D&N), distances/times very long (Carlisle DG) ▪ Merseybells – privately run cross association website and email list (LACR/Chester DG) ▪ 'Cumbrian Codgers' (mid-week day time), also attended by North LACR and others (Carlisle DG) ▪ 'Codgers Day Out' monthly (Carlisle DG) 	
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Don't know (Chester DG) ▪ Nil except with Liverpool City (Chester DG) 	

D. What are the cross-boundary opportunities in your region?

Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cross branch/association outings/meetings rare (Chester DG) ▪ Wirral/Liverpool urban area 	
Training and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Isle of Man – all visiting peal bands must take part in a training session ▪ Could share training opportunities (we organise for you, you organise for us) ▪ Cheshire vs Manchester ▪ South Manchester and Cheshire? ▪ Good geography links with other associations ▪ Joint events with neighbouring guilds/associations (Chester DG) ▪ 10/12-bell quarter peal weekends (Carlisle DG) ▪ Improve 10/12-bell ringing ▪ Joint effort at the top end eg Surprise Max, 12-bell team (Carlisle DG) 	
Universities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Local societies working with individual students, where no society exists eg at Freshers fairs ▪ University society life members can provide a (limited) amount of support for university activities ▪ Improve university membership ▪ Universities working together 	



Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regional battle bus with mini-ring for recruitment ▪ Shared facilities eg websites, publicity <i>(Chester DG)</i> ▪ Spend a week working intensively with a single tower, with enough ringers to train to rounds in a week ▪ Regional Youth Contest <i>(Carlisle DG)</i> ▪ Membership of national organisation, with local branch, aka CAMRA ▪ Cross regional officer ▪ Cluster towers for recruitment in smaller areas <i>(Carlisle DG)</i> ▪ Associate membership, to allow people to cross borders easily 	
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Actions

Ideas to consider taking forward:

- Explore/try to improve the effectiveness of peer to peer communications.
- Arrange some more distributed 10/12-bell practices/opportunities/quarter peal days to learn, in addition to established practices
- Regional youth activities, with association/guild supporting funding
- Involve university/higher education societies in the youth activities
- Associate membership for neighbouring associations (to foster more joint activities, especially for those who live close to existing boundaries)
- Regionally co-ordinated initiatives:
 - Recruitment
 - Publicity
 - Achievement/PR
 - Training
 - Leadership
- Establish an email list for those attending the meeting

