



**The Central Council of Church Bell Ringers**

**Working for ringers and ringing**

Registered  
Charity  
No: 270036

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## **Welcome . . .**

. . . to this the third occasional leaflet from the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers (usually known as the CC). This time we're looking at the work of two more of the committees, telling you a little about the sort of folk who make up the CC, and blowing our trumpet a bit to tell you about the next Ringing Roadshow.

## **Ringing Centres Committee**

Ringing Centres are probably something you have heard of but have not come across yet. They're not just a fancy idea dreamed up by the CC, but a practical innovation which is gaining momentum.

So what exactly is a Ringing Centre? Well, it's a tower which, apart from normal ringing activities, is a centre of good practice in teaching ringing for an area such as an association or district. This means having available teaching equipment such as simulators, dumb bells and possibly video kit. It requires the availability of competent teachers to run courses, a suitable space or room for teaching, sound control for long periods of practice or a multisensor simulator. For the centre to be successful a management team is required, and needless to say the co-operation of the local ringers and the vicar is essential.

We on the Ringing Centres Committee envisage that in due course there will be at least one in every guild and association area. Our aim is to encourage the setting up of Ringing Centres for the dissemination of good practice in ringing teaching. We do this by setting minimum standards for good ringing centres and we formally recognise those who achieve these standards. Seventeen have done so to date and that number will certainly rise.

We are one of the newer CC committees, having been in existence only since the advent of Ringing Centres in 1993, and the membership currently consists of eight people who bring together complementary skills and knowledge, such as teaching and management, legal, technical and financial expertise.

Our work received a big boost when, to mark the millennium, the Worshipful Company of Founders offered the magnificent sum of £50,000 for the furtherance of ringing. The CC decided that the beneficiaries of the money would be individual towers wanting to set themselves up as Ringing Centres with aims as stated above. The Ringing Centres Committee have the responsibility of allocating that money to

those who apply and meet the requirements set down by the Council. Some 60% of the money is being spent on teaching equipment needed by Ringing Centres and 12 towers have so far benefited. The other 40% is being spent on courses to help ringers manage their Ringing Centres and to support them in developing their teaching skills.

### **Towers and Belfries Committee**

The Towers and Belfries Committee came into existence in 1912 specifically for the purpose of discussing some questions relating to bellframe design and installation with the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings - but the Council's very first publication in 1892 was a *Handbook on Preservation and Repair of Bells, Frames and Fittings*.

Today a wide range of expertise is offered to ringing, with architects, bell historians, surveyors and engineers included in the membership of the committee. We are willing to visit any tower and offer free advice on such varied topics as sound control, cracked towers, belfry maintenance, loose frames, cracked bells, rehanging and augmentation. As well as carrying out inspections all over the country and dealing with other problems by post, members give their services as lecturers and instructors on belfry maintenance courses. The committee has also embarked on a series of seminars on various aspects of towers and bells.

In addition to producing technical advice leaflets on popular topics, the committee was also responsible for the *Maintenance Handbook* and the *Towers and Bells Handbook* first published in 1974, and extensively revised in 1990. A new *Schedule of Regular Maintenance* guide was published in 1991. Many members serve on Diocesan Advisory Committees (DACs) and some are also members of the Bells Sub-Committee of the Council for the Care of Churches. Members assisted with the "Ringing in the Millennium" project, some providing technical advice, and some sitting on the Council's working party, responsible for awarding grants.

Advice may be sought, and is freely offered, on all aspects of bells, bellhanging, bell towers and bell maintenance. The only provisos are that a request, in writing, is received from a responsible church officer - incumbent, churchwarden, PCC secretary - and that an undertaking is given to pay reasonable out-of-pocket expenses.

### **So there you go**

You see, your representatives on the CC are not necessarily fanatical peal ringers (though it has to be admitted that some are), and most of them are not really concerned with the legality of strange 16-bell methods, but are in there to try to further the advancement of all aspects of ringing. This help covers not only the

technicalities of ringing but all manner of other related areas - such as the two examples mentioned in this leaflet. What are your association reps doing for you? Could you do better? Have you got non-ringing skills which might be useful to the Council? Why not find out a bit more about us - and consider taking an active role yourself?

## **The Roadshow**

If you've stayed with us so far, you'll recall that we said we'd mention the Roadshow. In 1997 the first Ringing Roadshow was held at Knowle and proved to be a great success with over 1000 ringers visiting the many exhibits and entertainment. In 1999, Tewkesbury was the venue for the second event and this proved even more popular with over 2000 visitors. However, we really hit the big time in 2001 when the Roadshow was at Keele University and the splendid facilities there were host to more than 2500 visitors and 60-plus exhibitors. We're not resting on our laurels, though, and the next Roadshow will take place on Saturday 26 July 2003, at The Lincolnshire Showground, just north of Lincoln - watch The Ringing World for advance notices. We want over 3000 visitors this time, so don't forget to book the date NOW!

## **Useful contacts**

- for more information on Ringing Centres ring 01962 856112 or email [gailcater@8salters.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:gailcater@8salters.freeserve.co.uk)
- for more information on Towers and Belfries ring (01386) 584388 or email [cmpovey@3wayswormington.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:cmpovey@3wayswormington.freeserve.co.uk)
- for more information on the Central Council (and indeed a whole host of other ringing stuff) visit the CC website at <http://www.cccbr.org.uk>.

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