



Ringling Societies and Guilds

Advisory Note on Child Protection

Through the auspices of the Central Council all ringing associations should be aware of the forthcoming legislation on Child Protection. This will affect both local towers and, to a more limited effect, ringing societies and detail will be found in the following documents which are available on the Central Council website under Tower Stewardship Committee :-

- Guidance Note No. 3 – Child Protection in Bell Towers
- Child Protection Officer – suggested job description for ringing Guilds
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (as amended 2012)
- Legislation affecting church activities – Summary for towers and PCCs
- Ringling Societies and Guilds –Advisory Note on Child Protection

These documents have been updated as necessary to reflect changes which have occurred up to March 2013. All references to CRB checks should be read as DBS being under the Disclosure and Barring Service with effect from December, 2012".

Suggested action by ringing Guilds and Societies

Officers should familiarise themselves with the above documents and decide whether the activities of their particular Society requires any persons to be DBS (CRB) checked **to support Guild activities**. That is, not in the home tower context. It may be that the nature of the Society being non territorial or non teaching does not have such a requirement but the majority of societies will do so.

If there is a requirement for which the Guild may be responsible and in the interests of ensuring that Child Protection matters are dealt with satisfactorily at tower level, then the following steps should be taken:

1. Appoint a Child Protection Officer as soon as possible.
This may need a post to be created and may need a change of society rules relating to Officers and the associated responsibility.
However, change of rules should not be allowed to delay the key matter of appointing a person to deal with Protection issues.
See CCCBR website for job description.
2. Ensure that the appointed CPO is properly trained.
There are several elements to the training requirement:-
 - (a) familiarity with requirements – guidance notes available on CCCBR website;
 - (b) Processing DBS (CRB) checks; and
 - (c) Understanding issues surrounding child protection and abuse.

- Training for activities (b) and (c) can usually be arranged through Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers* and generally are provided at no cost.
3. DBS (CRB) checking of Guild Officers or others for teaching activities.
Negotiate for such officers or others as may need to be DBS (CRB) checked to cover Guild training activities either through Diocesan office via the Safeguarding Adviser*.

It may, for example, be that principal Officers are already DBS (CRB) checked through their home towers and that all training leaders used by the Guild are also so certified. In this case the immediate requirements are fulfilled.

If, however, there are Officers or other Society members who should be checked before undertaking teaching activities, this may be achieved in several ways:

- (1) By asking their home tower to arrange a DBS (CRB) check;
- (2) By the Society asking the Diocese to process a check;
- (3) By using umbrella body registered with DBS (CRB) (e.g. CCPAS)

The last option is available if the Diocese is not willing to process DBS (CRB) checks to be used on a wider than parish basis. The CCPAS is a charitable body and be contacted as follows:-

Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service
PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent BR8 7UQ. Tel: 0845 1204550
Email: info@ccpas.co.uk Website: ccpas.co.uk

Note: CCPAS will charge for their services.

Note that unattached members could not be dealt with under option(1).

In order for methods (2) or (3) to be used it is **essential** that a Society CPO has been appointed and themselves cleared through a DBS (CRB) check. This individual is then classed as the "Recruiter" and will process any further DBS (CRB) applications for other members including Officers. The Recruiter will be the acknowledged signatory on behalf of the Society and will sign that the application is for an activity which is "regulated" and dealing with children. The Recruiter can scrutinise the individual's identification documents, necessary to avoid false identity and fraud, and verify this on the application for disclosure. This will avoid the necessity of sending original documents away.

4. Recording DBS (CRB) checks/registration for individuals.
The CPO will, besides processing any new DBS (CRB) checks as outlined above, require to keep a record of such applications and to have sight of DBS (CRB) disclosures which have been obtained through individuals' home towers. The CPO will keep records up to date as proof that necessary checks have taken place. Any disclosures secured on behalf of the Society either through the Diocese or via an umbrella body may, once recorded, be disposed of. This obviates the need for long term holding of confidential records.
5. Monitor child protection arrangements in affiliated towers and advise as necessary.
Whilst it is the responsibility of churches and PCCs to ensure the law is met for their own ringers, it is **desirable** that the Society should assist both churches and local tower captains where appropriate. In the interests of use of individuals

for teaching activities elsewhere it is also recommended that each Society keeps a register of DBS (CRB) checked ringing members.

6. Why should Societies appoint a CPO?

It is important for all ringing Societies to realise that there are good reasons to appoint a Child Protection Officer, these may be summarised as follows:

- To ensure that Child Protection legislation is complied with;
- To ensure that Society organised teaching activities are organised and run within the law;
- To meet implications of any Society insurance which may require not only a Child Protection Policy but also a transparent process;
- To give reassurance to parents of children entrusted to Society teaching activities and to safeguard those children;
- To protect the Society against litigation for any breach of the law or failure to safeguard children, which as an unincorporated society, the officers might be liable.

If there is any doubt or question relating to these processes then in the first instance it is suggested that matters be referred to the Tower Stewardship Committee.

*Central Council of Church Bellringers, Tower Stewardship Committee
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For further information, contact the Chairman of the CCCBR Tower Stewardship Committee:

Dr Christopher O'Mahony

3 The Foss, Grove Hill, Harrow on the Hill, Middlesex HA1 3HF
Tel 0208 872 8215 E-mail tschair@cccbr.org.uk

Other **Guidance Notes** produced by the Tower Stewardship Committee are:-

GN1 - Insurance

GN2 - Tower Management

GN3 - Child Protection In Towers

GN4 – Tower Safety and Risk Assessment

GN5 - Church Law

GN6 - Fire Risk Assessment and Protection

GN7 – Noise, the Law, and the Environmental Health Officer

These Guidance Notes can be downloaded free of charge from the Tower Stewardship Committee section of the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers website:

www.cccbr.org.uk/towerstewardship