

CCCBR Admin Committee

# CHANGE RINGING FOR THE FUTURE

Update May 2015

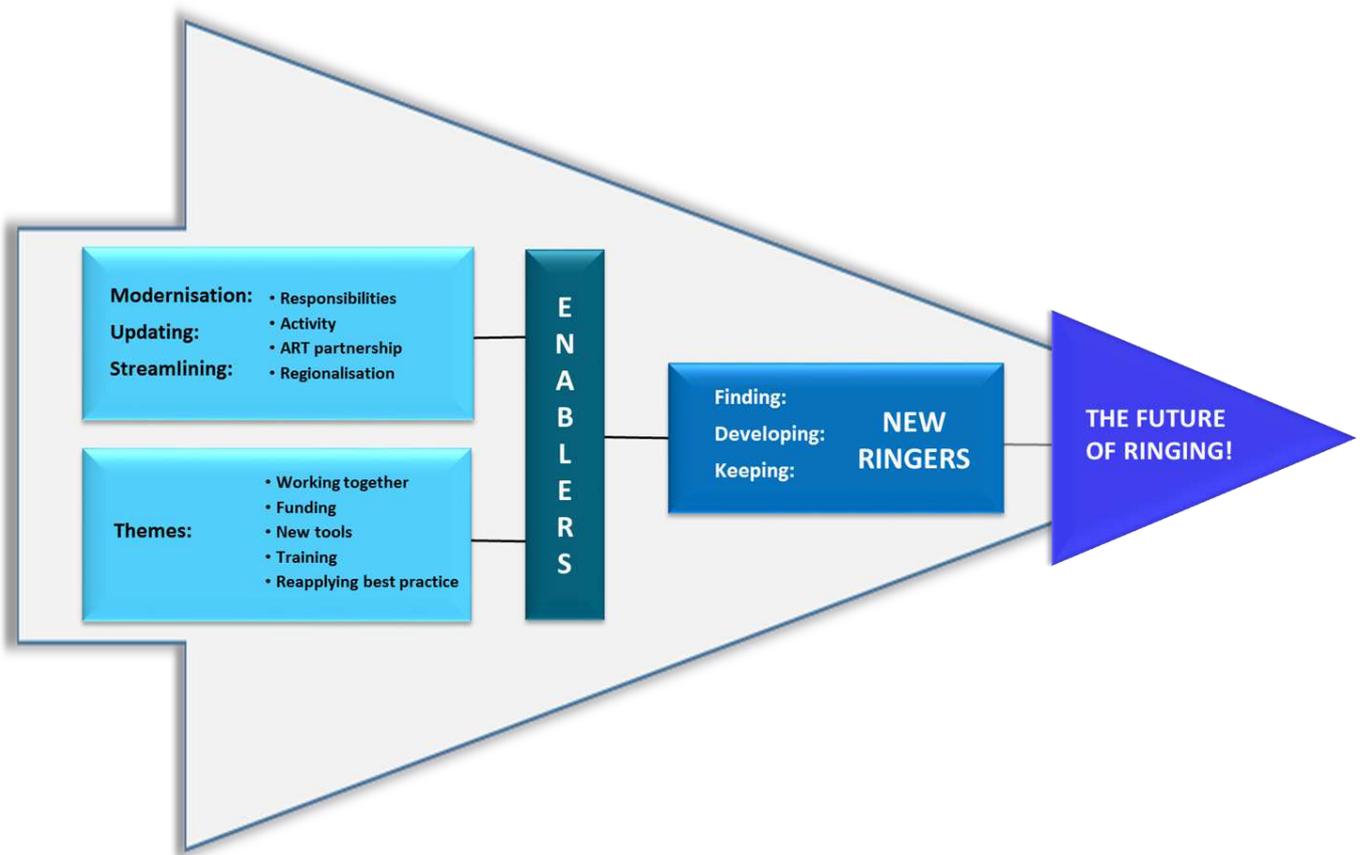
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## SUMMARY

The ageing population of ringers combined with the increasing challenge in attracting today's youngsters, means we have a problem. Towers are quietly falling silent and the numbers of people ringing their first peals is dropping dramatically year on year. In some areas, standards of change ringing are not being maintained and energy is seen as slipping away in the existing organisations. The CCCBR Regional Seminars held over 2013/14 and a survey of Association funding for training showed this up clearly and at the same time also demonstrated what could be done by generating debate and dialogue about what works. It is now time to take stock about how we are all using our precious resources and to look at developing new and smarter ways of attracting, recruiting, training and then motivating new ringers so we retain them long term. This is working really well in parts of the exercise eg Birmingham School of Ringing and Taunton, which proves we can all be part of the solution with some new thinking. So what can we do that could make a huge difference? **Time for a "NEW LEARNER INITIATIVE" delivered to meet your tower needs via a REGIONAL delivery network.**

The first priority of this strategy focuses on this crucial, early stage of a ringer's experience, with the aim to make it easier to attract and keep good ringers of all ages. The plan starts with the Central Council taking the lead – firstly with two initiatives to be delivered centrally, then facilitating cross-regional working and an intention to join grass roots ringers more closely with the national ringing bodies.





How is this to be achieved?

There are seven specific streams of activity planned to deliver the above picture.

## KEY ACTIONS

### I. Going regional

Further regional working, building on existing initiatives and energy, is proposed via eight regions. The initial structure is to facilitate funding approaches to the lottery fund, but for some it may make sense to subdivide into more practical structures. The proposal therefore is to invite each Central Council member to join a region with the objective to develop an agreed plan for ringing in the region. The aim of the region is to co-ordinate and share thinking, funding and practices in the areas of attraction, recruitment, retention and further development.



In order to effectively deliver on a regional basis, it is expected that each region will have a 'Regional Development Leader' who can give some dedicated time. That will likely be someone in a voluntary capacity initially, but if funding allows it may make sense for it to be a paid position. Depending on the nature of the region, it could be a combination of people.

The regions initially proposed are as follows:

North	Beverley & District, Carlisle, Chester, Durham & Newcastle, Durham University, Lancashire, Leeds University, Liverpool University and Yorkshire
East Midlands	Barrow & District, Derby, ED&WA, Leicester, Lincoln, Peterborough, Police Guild, Sherwood Youths, Southwell
West Midlands	Birmingham University, Coventry, Four Shires, Hereford, Lichfield, North Staffs, St Martins Guild, Shropshire, Worcestershire
East	Bedfordshire, Cambridge University, Ely, Essex, Hertford, Norwich, Suffolk
London	ASCY, Ladies, University of London, Middlesex, SRCY, Surrey
South East	East Grinstead, St Agatha, Guildford, Kent, Oxford Guild, Oxford Society, Oxford University, Sussex, Winchester & Portsmouth
South West	Bath & Wells, Bristol University, Devon, Dorset, Gloucester & Bristol, Guild of Devon, Salisbury, Truro
Scotland, Wales, Ireland and Overseas	ANZAB, Irish, Llandaff & Monmouth, North American Guild, North Wales, St David's, Scottish, South African, Swansea & Brecon, Veronese

Central Council members may opt for a different allocation if desired, as long as the organising team is informed (via Elva Ainsworth and Duncan Walker).

To kick this off, each member is invited to participate in their regional meeting during the CCCBR meeting this May, where the opportunities of this approach will be discussed. Timescales will be agreed for confirmation of participation and next steps. Before the meeting, individual members will be invited and briefed to facilitate these regional meetings to a structured agenda.



Additional members and those from non-territorial societies will be asked to choose the most appropriate region for their participation. The proposed principles for the working of these groups are set out in the appendix for guidance.

The regions will be provided with a toolkit of online/paper surveys developed and trialled by the Ringing Trends Committee to enable them to gather information on ringers, tower captains and society officials in the region. This should provide clarity on numbers and standards and issues as well as on priority challenges and requests for support.

Data from these surveys will of course be available to the districts and regions but it will also be aggregated across the exercise to form clarity on the big picture. Key questions will be followed through from the 1988 census so, as long as a representative number is covered and the surveying process is followed as directed, we can then get clear on an accurate picture of ringing as a whole.

### Proposed actions and dates

<b>By the end of July 2015</b>	each region will be requested:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To elect a chair/leader</li> <li>• To confirm participant societies</li> <li>• To confirm key surveying contacts</li> </ul>
<b>By the end of 2015</b>	each region will be requested:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To have completed a full survey of ringers, towers masters, officials and clergy</li> <li>• To have initiated the consultation and action planning process in the region</li> <li>• To have established a list of their key stakeholders, from both inside and outside the exercise, to help develop their plans.</li> </ul>
<b>By the CCCBR 2016 meeting</b>	each region will be requested:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To submit their initial, agreed priority targets for the next 1-2 years</li> </ul> <p><i>(eg x% increase in new learners, x youth activities, £x in training funds, x new teachers and aligned action plans for the next 1-2 years)</i></p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To take a longer view of 3-5 years, on where they are aiming to get to</li> </ul> <p><i>(eg training events beyond the initial learning stages, 10-12 bell ringing, conductor development, peal ringing, striking competitions etc)</i></p>



Support will be provided to the regions from a core central team, who may be invited to help facilitate regional meetings. Central events may be set up specifically to support this process, provide training, ideas etc, if needed. Regions will be encouraged to think broadly on who their key stakeholders are beyond existing ringing associations, including senior clergy, ringing centres and active groups involved in training ringers (eg peal bands, university societies etc).

## **2. New format for the CCCBR meeting**

The CCCBR meeting is a special event, plus a significant resource and investment of time and money for all those 200+ people who are invited. The desire is to ensure the CCCBR meeting is as useful and constructive as it can be, to be a place for healthy debate and dialogue on common matters of interest as well as covering critical business matters efficiently. The intention is to move towards a higher level of participation and dialogue and to start this year with a new format session (as described above).

The intention then is to move to a rather different format and timing better suited to these new objectives which also changes the way committee membership is achieved - a more detailed proposal is being separately formulated.

## **3. New website to attract prospective learners**

There are a number of websites that point people interested in learning to ring to information and/or towers but there is an opportunity to upgrade our web presence and to manage it more proactively, together with easier updating of key contacts and other details. The vision for this initiative is to develop a new website that links to other relevant websites, that provides an attractive shop window for a prospective learner, some interactive pieces to bring it alive, video clips, links to recent broadcasts or competitions etc and also provides an easy and accurate search for towers. It will have an automatic contact page with an automatic follow-up to those contact details submitted for participating towers. Numbers of enquiries can be tracked and reported. Campaigns can be monitored.

Such a website requires web build, sales and design skills and some project management. It also requires the co-ordination of contact details across the exercise, hence the link with actions above. We can apply again for free sponsorship from Google to support google advertising and we can look to raise some of the funds required by sponsorship/advertising. Total budget required is estimated to be between £7k and £10k.



#### **4. New survey toolkit for regions to get clear on needs**

We want to repeat and update the census of 1988 but we want to do this in a practical and useful way. This will be an online survey using *QuestionPro* (as tested at the Roadshow for the Ringing World survey) which will be delivered via a url link and can be chased by email or alternatively it can be printed and posted. This will be centrally coordinated and supported.

This proposal offers these surveys as tools to the regions, so they can be used to gather data and inform clear, grounded debate. Asking questions will also serve to generate debate and the aggregated picture will inform our understanding further in terms of where we are at right now.

#### **5. Leadership training modules**

Tim Hines, Pip Penney and Elva Ainsworth are co-ordinating, across the Central Council and ART, to shape multi-media training modules that can be rolled out to encourage and energise inspiring leadership. This was a core need highlighted through our Regional Workshops and will serve to inject some energy, confidence and skill at all levels in the exercise. Pilots of the new material are planned for March 2016.

#### **6. Launch a "New Learner Initiative" with a "New Learner Pack"**

Just as other activities and hobbies are finding, ringers need to work harder to attract and keep people. This requires some new attitudes, new tools, new technology, new processes and new practices in order to be effective. Our vision is that everyone who wants a go at ringing gets a warm, friendly and efficient response online and in person; sufficient information so that they can choose whether they want a go or not; that they are offered a free trial (or trial period) and then offered an initial programme of committed quality training in an atmosphere that has them feel welcomed and supported as well as the opportunity to feel inspired and excited by what else is possible in ringing.

To reinforce this priority, the intention is to work across the Central Council and ART to produce a "New Learner Pack" which will then be available to all teachers, towers and/or ringing centres on request. The vision for this product is that it will be a professional, physical binder/pack with a number of different sections, special offers, things to try, things to buy and pointers to online material and apps - stuff that commonly interests new learners. This will be co-created with input from potential



and current new ringers from a range of ages. There may be a 'younger ringer' version also.

The pack is intended to be the first step in developing a more complete package of help for new learners, in order to guide them through their ringing career.

## 7. Partnership with ART

The considerable efforts made by ART are energising and supporting positive shifts in the exercise. The intention is to accelerate and enhance these efforts, as well as ensuring that the training, tools and support ART offers is integrated well and with all the other groups involved in leading ringing. This strategy is to work in close partnership with ART, to mirror the regional boundaries its funding is dictating and to ensure the whole exercise gets what it needs more consistently.

## FUNDS

At this point, it is envisioned that we will need investment of **a maximum of £15k in 2015/16** to move this strategy forward - this assumes the following breakdown:

- **Regional support**  
£5k for 10 meetings @ £500 for meeting rooms/CCCBR expenses
- **"Learn to Ring" Website**  
£5k with matched funding from sponsors
- **"New Learner Pack"**  
£5k for initial design and production with ongoing production -  
to be sold at a small profit so that in two years it will fund itself

## WHAT'S NEXT?

- Kick off regional meetings will be held at the CCCBR meeting in May 2015
- Co-creation team (including Education Committee and ART) initiating work draft specifications for new learner pack and website



# APPENDIX

## KEY PRINCIPLES FOR REGIONAL TEAMS

- In order to secure the sustainable future of change ringing, we expect the initial focus areas to be around Recruitment, Training and Change Ringing Development. However, as Regional Teams become established, other areas may be included.
- The key areas of working together are likely to include: sharing successes which can be reapplied more broadly, joint work on training and other events, new innovations and/or technology and overall, doing things together where that is more effective.
- There needs to be an emphasis on using up to date standard technologies, to help make the work efficient, effective and easily shared. Those include Skype, Phone Conferences, Websites, online Surveys, File Sharing and Social Media. Teams may need someone with technology skills involved, or seek outside help (eg CC, local professional etc).
- There needs to be a way of making tax recoverable donations, to cover the region, for Ringing Recruitment, Education and Development. This could be by establishing something new, or using already existing charitable organisations with a Restricted Fund for this purpose.
- Teams may choose to establish this as a new formal organisation, with a governing document (which the CC can help with) and Committee/Officer structure. However, the main emphasis should be focused on doing, sharing and helping each other, rather than organisation and meetings.
- A broad base of ringing leaders and organisers need to be involved, beyond existing affiliated structures – including Ringing/Teaching Centres, unaffiliated organisations, local leaders or groups, key peal organisers, university groups, leading clergy etc.
- Effective communication lines will need to be put in place with key CC Committees (Ringing Trends, Education, Ringing Centres, Information Technology) and other national ringing organisations (eg ART). This will help the national organisations to work more closely with key initiatives and the Regional Teams to influence their work.
- The general approach to be encouraged is one of consultation, inclusion and collaboration.
- In order to effectively deliver on a regional basis, it is expected that someone will need to give some dedicated time as a Regional Development Leader. That will likely be someone in a voluntary capacity initially, but as funding allows it may make sense for that to be a paid position. Depending on the nature of the Region, it may make sense for that to be a combination of people, each with dedicated time for this.

