

CHANGE RINGING FOR THE FUTURE

REPORT ON BREAKOUT GROUPS WEST MIDLANDS REGION

A. What's working well in your area?

Working together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clusters of neighbouring towers ringing together – good cooperation 	x 5
Training and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local guild-organised training initiatives including 10 and 12-bell, and handling tuition at 2/3 towers Ringling centre (mainly local use only) Number of cross-district/guild training/teaching opportunities Birmingham School of Ringing St Martin's Guild including St Martin's Youths, Henry Johnson Dinner – enthusiasm and dedication of guild officers 10 bell quarter peal programme Very keen, enthusiastic teacher (at a good local 4cwt 6) Opportunities for Surprise Major level of ringing – dedicated practices, meetings and peals 	x 3 x 2
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young ringers entered a team in striking contest for past 3 years 6-bell striking competition (about 20% members involved) Everything working well, including liaison with neighbouring associations Shropshire Association is small (270 members) – “everyone knows everyone else” Nothing – we are limping! 	

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

Working together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interaction and cooperation between members outside their local area – boundaries are a hindrance 	x 4
Recruitment & training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment Retention Retention of young ringers Ability to encourage recruits in a younger age range PR / web presence Training No Ringing Centre Education & training is failing outside a few miles of the Ringing Centre 	x 5 x 3



Meetings/ practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Guild meetings/events are badly attended ▪ Guild general meeting ▪ Guild meetings – the standard of ringing is now poor – not worth taking good inexperienced people ▪ Still using meeting structures that were in use generations ago! ▪ 12-bell practices 	x 2
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Involving young ringers in all areas and activities of the guild ▪ Getting people to stand for office ▪ Society can sometimes be like a retirement club ▪ Resistance from older (especially) members/ringers to change ▪ Acceptance of ringers' limitations ▪ Suspicion of change ▪ Most things! 	x 2

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

Working together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Groups at the guild boundaries attend practices in neighbouring guilds 	x 3
Training and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Birmingham School of Ringing ▪ Help in education/training between districts ▪ ITTS & ART is filtering across to G&B ▪ Attendance as helper on Hereford & G&B courses 	
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inter-association striking competition ▪ Four Shires Guild ▪ Nothing that I know of 	x 3

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

Working together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Four Shires Guild exists as an umbrella organisation in the North Cotswolds (Glos, Oxon, Warks & Worcs). It does this very well indeed in this very complex, rural area 	
Training and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lots of joint practices (including 12-bell) and training events ▪ Crossing guild boundaries for helping on training days ▪ Better simulator technology ▪ Learn from the Birmingham School of Ringing ▪ Make ringing centres available to neighbouring associations/ guilds 	x 2
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chance to create new bands that can ring the 'fundamentals' 	



Additional notes

- Another layer of bureaucracy?
- Starter pack good
- Internet facilities good
- Smaller groups work better? Clusters of towers
- Should ringing be divorced from the church?
- Group opinion is that regionalisation in a formal sense is not a good idea, but the group is happy to continue discussion on a regular basis – possibly in Facebook.
- Image of ringing has to be improved
- Suggested regional groups may be wrong and could be better grouped
- Give the Central Council **real** power to manage and run
- Make guilds/associations report to and take lead from the Central Council which genuinely leads
- Raise personal membership to about £50pa each to make a **real** member organisation
- Create a national record system for all ringers and communicate with them

