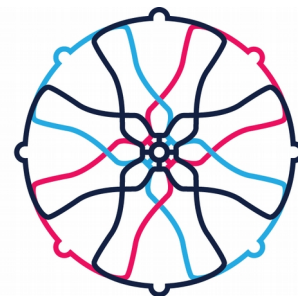


Engaging with the Public

Successfully engage the public with your ringing and ringing-related activities.

Pick from each section the ideas that work in your local area.



THE CENTRAL COUNCIL OF CHURCH
BELL RINGERS

Your Event or Project

Do your own thing or take part in a wider event

- Annual event: e.g. ringing in the New Year, St George's Day.
- Arts festival, festival of bells, 'bells et Lumière'.
- Charity event: local or national charity, e.g. BBC Children in Need 'A Peal for Pudsey'.
- Church calendar: e.g. Christmas, Easter, harvest, patronal festival, saint's day.
- Church event: e.g. Christmas tree festival, flower festival, concert.
- Event at a local attraction: e.g. National Trust, stately home, heritage site, steam railway.
- Exhibition: e.g. local promotional event, Countryfile Live.
- Fund-raising: bell fund, tower work, church or community project.
- Learn to ring course: e.g. week long course in school holiday.
- Local event: e.g. fête, fair or rally: church, village, steam, county, folk.
- Local parade or festival: e.g. Scout, Guide, fireworks, Christmas lights.
- National event: e.g. Heritage Open Days, BBC Music Day.
- Non-ringing activity: e.g. cleaning or decorating in the tower.
- Promoting ringing: e.g. Ringing Remembers - Armistice 100.
- Ringing for another group's event: e.g. historical ceremony, concert.
- Sporting event: e.g. football match, cycling race, marathon, Olympics.
- Tower open event and 'have a go' sessions.



The Location

could be anywhere

- At a meeting or gathering
- At an organised event
- In a school
- In a shop, café, pub, bank, museum
- In the churchyard or on the street outside the church
- In the streets or shopping centre
- In the tower
- On the church roof

Carry out an Activity

Involve as many ringers and non-ringers of all ages as possible



- Chiming the bells when down: ideal for young children.
- Do something unusual for attention.
- Incorporate aspects of ringing into art and craft.
- Interactive presentation with visual aids: brief, positive, attractive and suitable for the audience.
- Ring 'bodies' with or without handbells or on steps, e.g. Plain Hunt.
- Ringing display or stand.
- Ringing: any form of ringing!
- 'Say it with Bells': sell special ringing for a fee or as an auction prize.
- Sponsored: e.g. ringing, tower abseil, teddy zip-wire.
- Unusual ringing: e.g. a ringing relay for all abilities.
- Use a significant number: e.g. 750th anniversary: children chime 750 times, raise £750, ring 750 changes.
- Welcome non-ringers into the tower: e.g. tower tours, demonstrations, have a go sessions, to see the view.

Useful Contacts

Build good relationships with people and work together

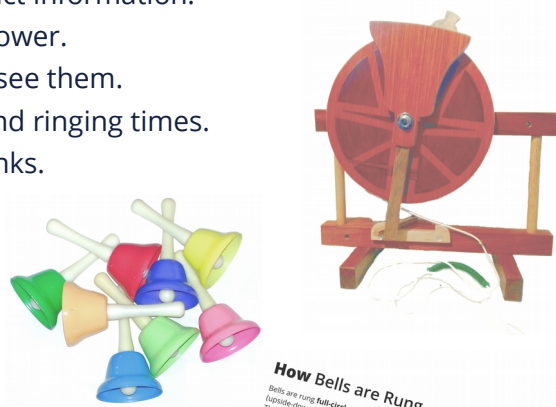
- Clergy, church officials, congregation and people who live near the church.



- Charities: local and national.
- Groups who appreciate the music or spiritual power of bells.
- Heritage bodies: e.g. National Trust, English Heritage, local stately home, steam railway, other heritage site.
- Local government: e.g. councillors, mayor, MP, town crier.
- Local interest group: e.g. Rotary club, U3A, historical society.
- Media contacts: see Dealing with the Media.
- Schools, colleges and universities.
- Sports groups: e.g. football club, cricket club, cycling.
- Youth groups: e.g. Scouts, Guides, DofE, junior church.

Helpful Things to Have

- **A friendly smile and welcome!**
- A clean, tidy and comfortable ringing chamber.
- Attractive and colourful **displays**, flyers and posters: easy to understand information about ringing with bullet points, diagrams, pictures, appropriate logos and contact information.
- Banners or flags: near the entrance to the churchyard, church or tower.
- CCTV to the bells and/or ringing chamber to where the public can see them.
- **Flyers** customised with contact details, an official email address and ringing times.
- Food to attract people: e.g. sweets, cakes, biscuits, cream teas, drinks.
- Handbells or 'rainbow' bells.
- Mini ring, mobile belfry or Wombel.
- Photographs: good quality, colourful, cheerful.
- Props for presentations: e.g. working **model bell**, rope, stay.
- Seats (maybe outside) for passing 'customers' to sit on: put flyers on empty seats so that people have to pick them up to sit down.
- Ringing simulator.
- Videos for showing: e.g. DVDs or on the internet.
- Websites: e.g. Discover Bellringing: www.bellringing.org.



Interact, Invite and Welcome people at your event and at every opportunity

- **Ask other ringers to invite people they know.**
- Interact with spectators and passers by and invite them in.
- Invite groups and useful contacts: see Useful Contacts.
- Invite noise-sensitive and other locals to see ringing in action.
- Invite non-ringers to ringers' social events.
- **Be bold: they may want to know more but are afraid to ask!**

Explain why Ringing is a Fabulous Activity making it appropriate for your audience

- All year round whatever the weather and flexible around other commitments.
- Always something different to try: keeps the mind active.
- Boosts: concentration, teamwork, discipline, listening and analytical skills.
- Choice of activities: e.g. ringing for services & special occasions, tower grabbing, peals/quarters, competitions.
- Effective exercise: for posture, toning muscles, gently aerobic, burns calories.
- Exciting, satisfying and relaxing: relieves stress, switch off and unwind.



- For all ages (generally 10 years +) and all backgrounds: ideal for individuals, couples, families, groups.
- Groups for young people: e.g. local groups, RWNYP, university ringing.
- Inexpensive and no special clothing required.
- Makes a glorious sound which can stir emotions and open the soul.
- New technology in a centuries-old tradition.
- No need to be musical, strong or religious: for all faiths & none.
- Ring on holiday or away on business: most towers welcome visiting ringers.
- Social, make new friends: e.g. pubs, outings, meetings, interest groups.
- The largest and loudest (unamplified) musical instruments in the world!



Opportunities to Communicate

- **Anytime & anywhere:** e.g. at work, school, pub, shop, club or gym.
- **Before, during & after your event.** Advertise early as 'Coming Soon' so people look out for your event.
- Carry flyers with you everywhere: you never know who might ask you about ringing.
- Have a tower open door policy: welcome visitors and non-ringers when safe and appropriate.
- Invite wedding couples to your ringing practice: explain ringing and give them a go at backstroke, ask them to bring the bell fee with them.
- Keep flyers in the tower to give to non-ringing visitors.
- Link your event to another event and publicise it as part of that event.
- Make your special ringing event an annual feature in the local calendar: e.g. start a local tradition of people listening for the bells at an annual event, e.g. New Years ringing; host a (youth) group meeting every year.
- Publicise extra ringing in advance, especially to the local community: e.g. outside the church, on websites, on social media, in the local media.
- Share ringing achievements for individual ringers or the band: e.g. announce in church, in a ringing display, in the local media, on social media, on the church website.
- Take contact details of potential recruits to liaise with them to get them started.
- Time your event to maximise participation: e.g. during coffee after church, to coincide with another event.

Do your own Publicity

including via social media and get the media on board

- A regular feature: slot on local radio or column in a local magazine.
- Advertisements offering ringing lessons: social media, local newspapers.
- By word of mouth: talk about ringing, announcements in church.
- Church or local Facebook page, newsletter, magazine or weekly sheet.
- Display board outside the church: e.g. why the bells are being rung, who is ringing, or to give notice of additional ringing. Provide flyers for people to take.
- Display ringing times and contact details in the church porch or external noticeboard. Add interesting information on your bells, band and ringing activities.
- In church: displays, leaflet stands, noticeboards, use the tower door or ground floor ringing chamber to display publicity material.
- In national magazines: e.g. Primary Times, Country Life.
- Insert ringing information into programmes and advertisements for events.
- Invite a local magazine or freelance writer to do an article on your bells, ringers and activities.
- Posters & flyers: noticeboards, church, shops, pubs, cafés, house to house, and outside when you ring.
- Send ringing-related Christmas cards.
- Social media: reach out, tell, explain and invite: e.g. a public Facebook page about ringing; post photos, videos, links to ringing in the media, your events, news; share on other pages and encourage sharing and 'likes'.
- Through local media: newspapers, magazines, radio, TV: see Dealing with the Media.
- Use local church/diocesan/cathedral and village/town/city publicity networks including social media.
- Websites and social media: church and community.
- What's on sections: community websites, local media websites, local newspapers and magazines.



Dealing with the Media Easily & Efficiently

They usually welcome a good story

- Write a short, simple and positive article:
 - Keep it people-focussed and link it to something with general public interest (e.g. charity event, Christmas) to make people want to read it.
 - Add your own catchy title and a good quality, colourful and cheerful photo (following safeguarding guidelines).
- Offer to provide further information and a follow-up article/interview.
- Adapt your article to suit the target audience of the newspaper/magazine/radio station.
- Send it to each media contact personally addressing them by name.
- Compliment them: say how much you enjoyed a certain article or programme to help to get yours published.
- Follow your email with a phone call, especially if you have had no response.
- Offer to speak on the radio or appear on TV: Say only what you want the public to hear. Turn negative publicity into positive publicity. Ask a cheerful, enthusiastic, eloquent ringer to speak.
- Invite a local reporter or radio/TV presenter to have a go at ringing.
- Plan ahead, keep your media contacts informed and borrow successful ideas.
- Be prepared for the media to: alter your article; want you ready at very short notice; or even not turn up!



Ringling in £1,000 for Pudsey

Hundreds of local folk have been raising funds for Children In Need. Keen to play their part were these Brampton bell ringers

MORE than £1,000 has been raised for BBC Children in Need by Old Brampton's Bell Ringers. They held an 'A Place for Pudsey Bells & Cakes' event, supported by other members of Old Brampton Church.

On Sunday, 5th November, ten bell ringers, including five 11-18 year-olds, rang a sponsored 45-minute novapop ringing relay on the six bells.

During the ringing, cakes and refreshments were served and a fun sack race was held, all helping to raise money. There were 36 passes in the ringing relay, each involving a bell ringer passing their rope to another ringer while keeping the bell ringing.

It wasn't just the ringers changing places; during the relay the bell sounding 1,260 rings. Bell ringing is an exhilarating, fascinating and fun activity with a great social life for all ages. Young people and adults learn bell ringing skills in a relaxed and friendly environment, and new recruits are always welcome at Old Brampton.

For more information, contact PR@ccbr.org.uk

Examples of Engaging with the Public

- Bell ringing activity at international Scout and Guide camps with mobile belfry, Wombel and rainbow bells.
- Bell spotting: non-ringers listen to all of the bells in the district/branch and tick them off on a card.
- Cakes and refreshments at a ringing event to attract people and/or help to raise money.
- Communicate with potential new neighbours, or the council for planned residential developments.
- Ring for a football home victory: publicise widely beforehand that the bells will be rung at the end of the match only if there is a home victory; have it announced in the stadium; get the town listening for the bells.
- Ringing as a cycle race or marathon passes by.
- School ringing club or project: by young ringers or as a class activity covering many curriculum subjects.
- Sponsored ringing relay involving ringers of all abilities to raise money for a national charity.
- Towers linked with heritage sites/estates: link ringing to estate events and use the estate's publicity network.
- Up-cycle and sell old sallies, rope, stays, etc.: e.g. sallies as draught excluders.
- Viewing from the tower roof: e.g. fireworks, Christmas lights, sporting event.

Summary

- Do what works for you in your local area
- Involve as many people as possible
- Use social media to reach out
- Get useful contacts on board and work together
- Contact your local media
- Make use of every opportunity
- Communicate and promote
- Use initiative and imagination
- Present ringing positively
- Smile and welcome everyone!

Resources and Help

Your local ringing association, guild or society

Local associations, guilds and societies usually have a Public Relations Officer who should be able to offer advice and provide promotional material such as flyers and displays.

The Central Council of Church Bell Ringers (Registered Charity number 270036)

Many pages of the Central Council's website (www.cccbr.org.uk) give information about all aspects of ringing, and the Public Relations section (www.cccbr.org.uk/services/pr) has plenty of advice and resources for you to use. Alternatively you may contact the Council's Public Relations Committee at chairman@prc.cccbr.org.uk.