Recruitment Toolbox: The Ten Point Plan

A plan and ideas for you to adapt to suit your local area. Visit the recruitment section of SmART Ringer to find out more about the individual parts of the plan – www.smartringer.org/resource/4689

1. Raise awareness

Events and recruitment drives have a much greater chance of success if there is a basic awareness of ringing and ringers in both the community and church.

- Aim for ringing to be recognised as one of the regular normal activities in the locality.
- Make sure that people see you enjoying your hobby.
- Create a band that supports learning and welcomes those keen to learn a new skill.

Make yourselves easy to find – ensure contact details and practice times are correct on-line and in print. This includes Branch and Guild publications and Dove. Ring with your bells open so that people know that you're there!

Ideas	Your Plan
Ensure ringers are known and appreciated in the community	
Take part in local events as a bell ringing group	
Ring for public events and publicise it	
Give a talk to local groups. Follow up with a taster session	
Write general articles for community and Church magazines and newspapers	
Celebrate your successes	
Get support of clergy, Church Wardens and parishioners	
Invite them to social events	
Give them a taster day	
Give them access to publicity materials so they can spread the word	
Raise your on-line presence	
Build your own social media presence	
Connect and contribute to social media of others	
Maintain an interesting tower website and link to other websites.	
Add yourself to activity and event based websites (e.g. meetup)	
Let people know why you're ringing for special events	
A board outside the tower	
Postcards through the door	
Local media	
Social media	
Get the basics right	
Ensure your contact details and ringing times are correct on Guild websites and Dove.	

2. What do you want to achieve?

Decide what you want to achieve, rather than what you are going to do. When your band are clear about this it will be a lot easier to decide who to target and how to get them into your tower.

Question	Answer
How many new recruits do you want?	
Do you want a low-level steady flow of new recruits or need an injection of new recruits?	
Are you starting a band from scratch?	
What are the aspirations and values of your band?	
Are you interested mainly in keeping the bells ringing on a Sunday?	
Are you looking for ringers who can extend your method ringing repertoire?	
Will the band welcome the new ringers or resent the time they take to train up?	
Do you have the skills and people to transform new recruits into fully developed ringers?	
Organise some teacher training?	
Ask for help?	

3. Who to recruit

Knowing what you want to achieve, think about who you'd like to recruit and how you might appeal to them. Think: why would they be interested in learning to ring with your band.

Potential recruits	Yes/No	Best way of connecting to them
Family and friends		
The local community		
Church groups		
Church congregation		
Families		
School children		
University students		
Retirees		
Established professionals		
Scouts and guides		
Duke of Edinburgh scheme		
Other local groups		

4. What are you going to do?

What activities can you organise to reaching and convince your target recruits to learn to ring?

There is a tendency to organise tower open days, but there are many other ways of connecting with people. Have you considered offering an Experience Day or gift voucher, for someone to learn to ring? These could be given as auction prizes for local fundraisers, or sold as gifts for special occasions or Christmas.

Or a talk, as part of a Church Service or to a local interest group. Have a specific invitation to come and have a go at the end of the talk. Collect names straight away.

Potential Activity	Yes/No	Your Plan
For a steady flow of new recruits		
Personal contact	Yes	
Posters	Yes	
Leaflets	Yes	
Social Media	Yes	
Website	No	
On-line hobbies listing	Yes	
Magazines	Yes	
Church notices	Yes	
Experience Day or gift voucher	Yes	
For an injection of new recruits or to build a band from scratch		
Church Service	Yes	
Tower open day	No*	
Mini-ring at an event	Yes	

5. Publicity

Be specific in your message. You may have a tower open day just for public interest but if you also wish to recruit new ringers make sure you say so in your publicity literature.

Use the right medium. If you're recruiting school children you need to talk to the parents. It is rarely any good approaching the children without their parents. The children are often keen to try anything on offer, but when they ask their parents if they can attend ringing lessons, the parents are suspicious of religion/expense/time commitments and say no.

Have a clear call to action. Giving a talk to the U3A? At the end of the talk, offer a taster session on a specific date. Give out leaflets and collect contact details of those coming. The invite is what turns interest into action.

Communication channel	Your plan
Personal contact / invitation	
Websites	
Social Media	
Press - local newspapers & radio	
Posters	
Leaflets	
Displays	
Talks	

6. The Event

- Be professional and be welcoming.
- Use people to their best effect – some people will be more suited to meeting the public, some would prefer to stay in the background, making refreshments or demonstrating ringing.
- Check your plans out with a non-ringer, ask what they think.
- Ensure you have fulfilled all safeguarding and H&S requirements.
- Collect names, emails, Facebook names and phone numbers. Delegate this task to someone and make sure you can read their writing!

Action	Yes/No	Your Plan
Date agreed with Church and any helpers?		
Venue cleaned and welcoming?		
Safeguarding and H&S requirements		
Display boards and information		
Leaflets and booklets on bell ringing		
Refreshments		
Talks and demonstrations		
Ringing props – history, ringing hardware (e.g. broken stays), photos		
Post-event publicity including photos to share on social media and press		
Collect names, emails, Facebook names and phone numbers		

7. The follow-up

The important thing is to keep the momentum going; contact anyone interested in learning to ring as soon as you can after they have expressed an interest and arrange something concrete – either a no-obligation taster session or their first lesson. People will lose interest if you contact them months later or think you're not really interested in them.

Action	Your plan
Contact everyone after event	
Arrange a taster session	
Arrange date for first lesson	

8. Intensive training

Research clearly demonstrates that intensive training leads to faster learning. More of what has been learned is retained between sessions and ringers maintain enthusiasm as they feel they are progressing. These days new recruits expect 'courses' and a defined, structured way of learning to ring. This is comparable to other hobbies – such as music grades or karate belts. Intensive training is both frequent and concentrated.

Plan for 10 to 15 hours of one-on-one training.

Action	Your plan
Silence bells or use sound control	
Decide whether to charge for training	
Permission to ring forms and safeguarding for minors	
Tour of bells at home tower or alternative	
Decide with new ringer best times for bell handling training	
Get helpers if more than one is being taught	
Set date for first go of ringing rounds with others on open bells – a great motivator	

9. Keeping your new ringers interested

Throughout the phase of learning to handle the bell the ringer receives lots of individual attention. Once the ringer joins the normal weekly practice they will receive considerably less attention. The learning curve will plateau which may lead to a waning in interest and motivation. Think about how you can provide targeted sessions and give your new ringers in as much rope time as possible to keep them progressing.

Action	Your plan
Carry on with tied-bell sessions otherwise handling will deteriorate	
Organise a separate early ringers' practice, perhaps joint with other towers	
Individual practice sessions using a simulator	
Organise early ringer's courses over 6 to 8 weeks	
Provide plenty of activities (games, reading, quizzes, mobile phone apps) for your ringers to learn when they aren't ringing at the practice	
Integrate them into the ringing social scene	
Group learning keeps ringers motivated	

10. Making recruitment work for everyone in the band

What can you do to keep the whole band happy and make recruitment work for the whole team?

- Some people gradually stop coming, or go elsewhere, or their method ringing ability declines.
- Practice nights becoming swamped by new ringers from other towers
- How can you ensure that your teachers and helpers don't start to feel burned out?

Issue	Your plan
Experienced members of band not getting enough advanced practice or enjoyable ringing	
A monthly advanced practice by invitation only	
Regular Quarter Peal attempts	
Combine with another tower for special practices on a particular method or aspect of ringing	
Split your practice so that the last half hour is always reserved for more advanced ringing	
Sunday Service ringing by invitation only - giving opportunities to ring longer touches of methods	
Ensure that everyone at the practice gets to ring at least one touch of something they'd like to ring … with a steady band	
Teacher burn-out or practice nights becoming swamped by new ringers from other towers	
Have a ringing friend who you can confide in and help you solve problems	
Teach in groups where the burden is shared	
Collaborate with other towers running combined foundation practices or workshops	
Don't neglect your own ringing … make sure you get the balance right	