



THE CENTRAL COUNCIL OF CHURCH  
**BELL RINGERS**

## Are you able to contribute to the future of bellringing?

*This article is written by Alison Everett and David Smith, both of whom are retired in 2022 after completing two terms on the Central*



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### Who contributes to bellringing?

Every ringer contributes every time they ring! But there are of course many ways of contributing further: you may be a tower captain or ringing master; you may be an office-holder in your local district or association; you may assist with recruitment and training, perhaps via involvement with ART; you may make your opinions known by writing to *The Ringing World* or through the new Forums. But we would like to draw your attention to one particular way in which you can give weight to your opinions and help determine and strengthen the future of ringing – namely by becoming a Trustee and member of the Executive of the Central Council.

The Central Council has seen many changes in the last few years. We, Alison and David, both joined CRAG (the Central Council Review Action Group) when it was set up following the 2016 Portsmouth AGM. CRAG's recommendations were approved in 2017 and the resulting changes adopted at the 2018 AGM in Lancaster<sup>1</sup>. We were both then elected to the new CC Executive as Ordinary Trustees when it was formed, and have both since been re-elected for a further three-year term, now about to come to a close. So the questions we want to address are:

**Did we enjoy being on the CC Executive?**

**Do we think we achieved anything?**

**Is it a job only for expert ringers?**

**How can YOU join this team and influence the future?**



### Was it fun? Did we achieve anything?

Well, fun may not be quite the word, but yes generally the experience has been both satisfying and constructive. The monthly meetings are not onerous (typically lasting an hour and a half, with a longer meeting every three months that also involves the workgroup leads); the members of the team get on well and while there's inevitably some bureaucracy and paperwork that can sometimes be tedious, most of the time there's a feeling of achievement and progress. It's not always plain sailing – discussion is sometimes robust, but we do listen to each other's contributions and it's a supportive environment.

If you read Simon Linford's blogs you will be aware of what the Central Council gets up to but, just as an example, Alison was a major part of the team steering up the last roadshow at Nottingham and David helped with the North-West residential [ringing course](#), this year to be held in August. In each case these are initiatives of the Council (with this year the [AGM weekend being held in Exeter](#)). Such initiatives are then implemented by members of the Executive or through workgroups (the Volunteer and Leadership workgroup, in the case of the NW course).

Quite apart from specific tasks like these, we feel we have played a part in bringing about a change in the Central Council, and we have had a say in the policies and directions it has developed. This is an ongoing process which new Trustees will continue.

### Is it only for expert ringers?

Absolutely not. While there's nothing wrong with being a white Anglo-Saxon male of advanced years who has rung thousands of peals, there's the feeling that perhaps in the past this group has been a bit over-represented. Neither Alison nor David fits into this category, and the published [structure of the CCCBR Executive](#) specifically encourages involvement from a more diverse group of ringers.

Meetings are held on-line (with an on-line option at the occasional in-person gathering), so 'geographical diversity' (David lives in Australia) is not a problem – in fact technology has enabled increased participation as location is no longer relevant. We have both received a lot of feedback in recent months indicating the importance of diversity generally, and in particular the need for grass-root ringers, not necessarily of any great expertise, to continue to be represented on the Central Council Executive. New ringers may have less experience, but are welcome as they bring a fresh perspective. So don't be put off if you are not a peal ringer, are not in the black zone or even in the red zone, or indeed if you are a learner and fairly new to ringing. If you have any ideas or opinions about the future of ringing, and can spare the comparatively few hours necessary to play a part, do please consider volunteering to be a part of the Executive – or indeed contributing in to the work of any of the Workgroups.

### How to I apply?

Nominations for trustees need to be signed by two [Representative Members](#) of the Council so if you think you could help, or know someone else who might be able to, please submit a [nomination](#) to The Secretary, [secretary@cccbr.org.uk](mailto:secretary@cccbr.org.uk) by 23rd July, ideally with a supporting statement of up to 200 words. If you don't know anyone who could nominate and second you, please let us know – there's no need for that to be a barrier. In fact if you have any queries at all don't hesitate to contact [Ernie de Legh-Runciman](#) (The Secretary) – we are really keen to have more voices heard and more ringers represented, both of which will help ensure the future of bellringing.

Here's a [link to the formal stuff](#) but don't let it put you off. Take this opportunity, as we did, to contribute – you won't regret it!