The ‘Ringing Recovery Workgroup’

Catherine Saunders

10th May 2021

15th May 2021

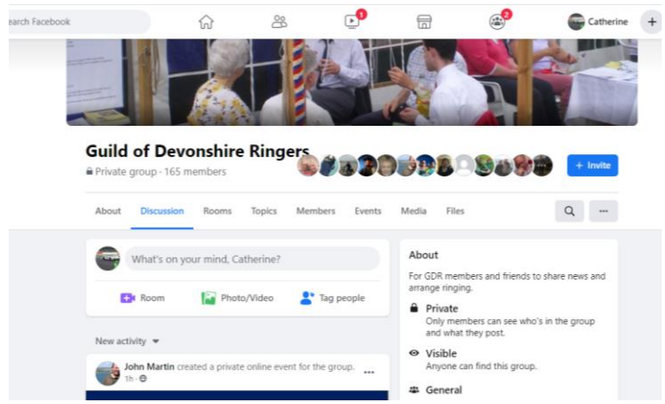
Our Guild: Before the Covid-19 Pandemic

- 7 Branches

- Active Guild Committee
- Annual General Meeting
- Annual Report

- Website: www.devonringers.org.uk
- ‘Ringing Round Devon’ publication
- Public and Member’s ‘Facebook’ Pages

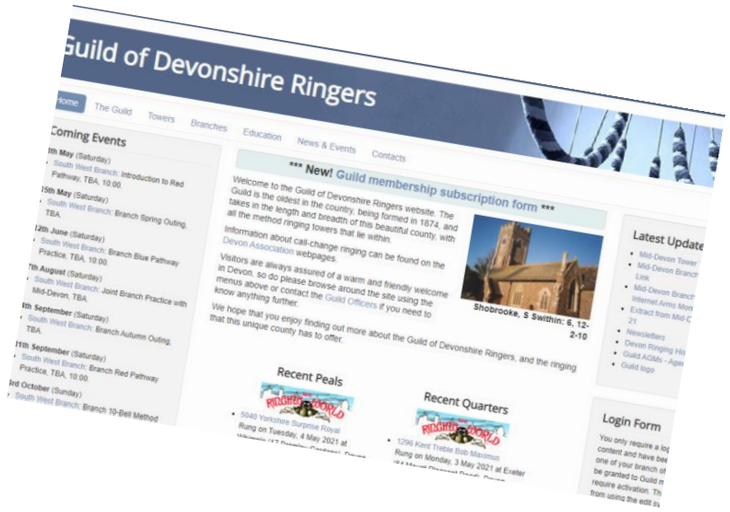
- Striking Competitions
- Training events
- ART Tutors
- Annual Ringing Festival



- Fundraising for the Devon Church Bell Restoration Fund

- Devon Ringers’ Carol Service

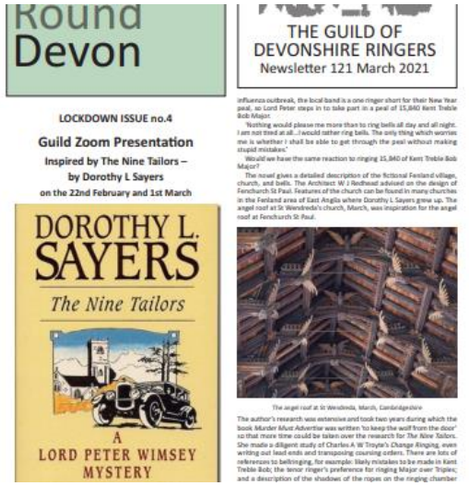
- Library



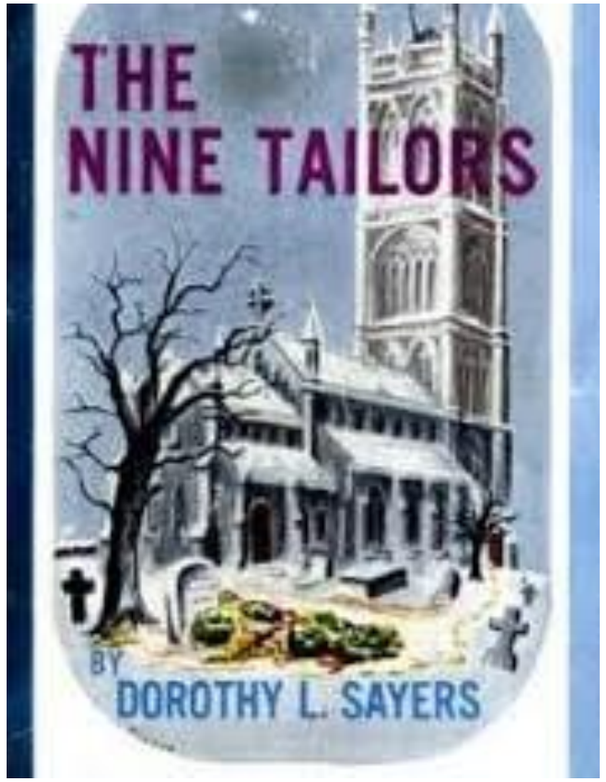
Our Guild: During the Covid-19 Pandemic

‘Business as usual’ as far as possible… with some ‘tweaks’:

- Guild Committee has remained active
- Guild AGM held virtually via ‘Zoom’
- Website remained active
- ‘Ringing Round Devon’ publication made available electronically
- Use of Member’s ‘Facebook’ Group
- Training events moved to on-line / virtual events



- Devon Ringers’ Carol Service successfully held via ‘Zoom’
- Annual Reports (2020 and 2021) available electronically via website
- Fundraising continued but in different ways



Our Guild: During the Covid-19 Pandemic

<u>‘New’ activity also introduced at ‘The Internet Arms’</u>

- Monday evenings at 9pm
- Twice weekly informal drop-in social sessions
- Ringing practices

Our Branches: Before the Covid-19 Pandemic

- Programme of Practices
- Weekly or monthly tower practice nights
- ‘Tied Bell’ Clinics
- Ringing Courses
- Ringing for Sunday Services, Special Services & Weddings
- Input at events
- Outings
- Active Branch Committees and AGMs
- Good communication
- Fundraising activity

Programme for 2020

Saturday 11th January	Branch Centenary Event(s)	Upton Lunch at Drum Inn, Cockington Cockington	11.00am 12.30pm 2.15pm
Saturday 1st February	Branch practice	Clock Tower, Newton Abbot	7.00pm
Monday 17th February	6 bell practice	Stokeinteignhead	7.30pm
Saturday 7th March	Branch Training Striking and Basic Theory	St Marychurch, Torquay	9.30am
Friday 13th March	8 bell practice	Wolborough	7.30pm
Saturday 4th April	Branch practice	Ughborough	7.00pm
Thursday 23rd April	6 bell surprise practice	Coffinswell	7.30pm
Saturday 9th May	Branch practice	Cornworthy and Dittisham	6.00pm
Tuesday 19th May	8 bell practice	Teignmouth	7.00pm
Saturday 6th June	Branch Training Basic methods	Stokeinteignhead	9.30am
Thursday 18th June	6 bell practice	Ideford	7.30pm
Saturday 27 June	Guild AGM	East Devon	
Saturday 4th July	Branch mini-outing	Torrington/Hatherleigh area	t.b.c.
Friday 17th July	8 bell practice	Bovey Tracey	7.30pm
Saturday 8th August	10 bell joint practice with SW Branch	St Marychurch, Torquay	7.00pm
Thursday 20th August	6 bell surprise practice	Bickington	7.30pm
Saturday 5th September	Branch training	East Ogwell	9.30am

Mid Devon Branch Tower Talk February 2021

resentation to a Guild Internet Arms virtual pub meeting

tells us that this is progressing well- she is very grateful for all the information received. She is particularly interested in any
ng lockdown which could help to describe our branch area to ringers in the rest of the county.

om presentations

still producing some fascinating evenings. Most recently we heard about the North East branch followed a week later by the
e Taylors. This is the book by Dorothy Sayers which has a very strong bell-ringing theme throughout the book, even at arou
n there is still much to interest ringers in the way the plot is constructed and the interest that it was written by a non-ringer.

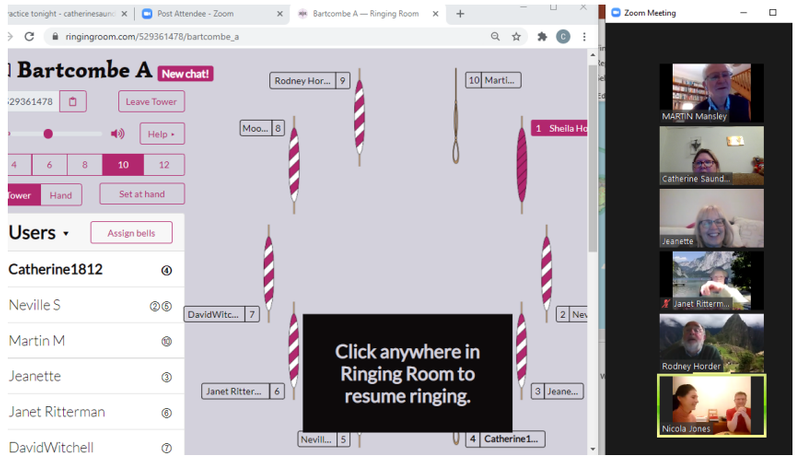
eturns working group

al Council has been looking ahead and feels that now is the time to plan for our eventual return to ringing. The Guild has set
ow the Guild needs to plan in Devon. The first meeting was held recently and another meeting will be held very soon. Many
ey will fairly soon be back to ringing again but concern was expressed that ringers who were at an early stage will feel nervo
a rope again. They suggested a survey of ringers needs was a good way forward and it was good to be able to report that c
arted the process (see below). At present it is hard to see ringing returning before mid-summer as indoor meeting is unlikely
Central Council has produced a Ringing Returns Toolbox with lots of ideas from Exercises to get your arms back to strength
otains on ways to help ease the return. We will keep you updated on progress.

Surveys

Our Branches:
During the Covid-19 Pandemic

- Programme of Practices moved on-line
- Handbell Ringing
- Tower Bell Ringing
- ‘Ringing Room’ practices
- Branch AGMs held virtually via ‘Zoom’ or physically with reduced capacity
- Branch Committee Meetings & communications continued via ‘Zoom’ and email
- Applications for Branch ‘Project of the Year’
- Maintained or increased communication via email, text message and telephone
- ‘WhatsApp’ groups



Our Branches:
During the Covid-19 Pandemic

- Face-to-face communication on an individual or group basis
- Weekly ‘coffee breaks’ or ‘chats’ via ‘Zoom’
- Branch newsletters continued to be distributed via email
- ‘Zoom’ events
- Bells and fittings checked and remedial work completed
- Ringing chambers cleaned

The ‘Ringing Recovery Workgroup’

- Formed during the Covid-19 Pandemic to assist ringers, towers and branches to plan and implement their return to ringing when Covid-19 restrictions allow
- First ‘met’ on 22nd February via ‘Zoom’
- Aimed to have representatives from all branches

Aims:

- Initial focus: getting ringers back into towers and safely ringing
- Help with preparing for a return to ringing
- Later focus: recruitment and training

- Here to assist ringers, towers and branches to return to ringing

Who are the ‘Ringing Recovery Workgroup’ and ‘Ringing Recovery Champions’?

Phil Dunn
Chair
South West Branch

Ian Avery
Ringing Recovery Champion
Association

Catherine Saunders
Ringing Recovery Champion
Mid Devon Branch

Sheila Scofield
Ringing Recovery Champion
North East Branch

Janet Ritterman
Guild Ringing Master
Mid Devon Branch

Les Boyce
North East Branch

Margaret Shackleton
North East Branch

Sue King
East Branch

Anne Bailey
East Branch

Daniel Calvert
South West Branch

Michael Cannon
Exeter Branch

Nicola Jones
Mid Devon Branch

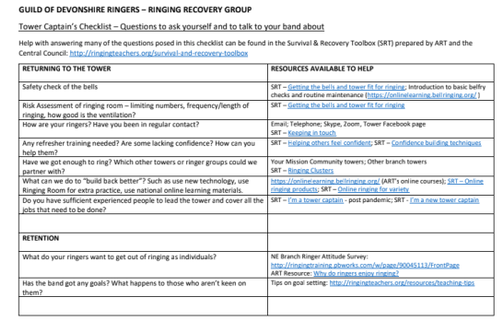
Martin Mansley
Mid Devon Branch

Steve James
North North West Branch

The ‘Ringing Recovery Workgroup’

What have we done?

- ‘Met’ via Zoom on 4 occasions
- ‘Ringing Recovery Champions’ have attended meetings led by CCCBR/ART
- ‘Ringers Survey’
- ‘Tower Captains Survey’
- ‘Tower Captain’s Checklist’
- ‘Ringing Recovery Exercise Programme’
- Facilitated Tower Captains Meetings (Branch level)
- Shared guidance and resources
  - CCCBR guidance
  - National ‘Survival and Recovery Toolkit’
  - ART/CCCBR Newssheets
  - Ringing Recovery Convention led by CCCBR/ART



GUILD OF DEVONSHIRE RINGERS – RINGING RECOVERY GROUP

Tower Captain’s Checklist – Questions to ask yourself and to talk to your band about

Help with answering many of the questions posed in this checklist can be found in the Survival & Recovery Toolbox (SRT) prepared by ART and the Central Council: http://ringingteachers.org/survival-and-recovery-toolbox

RETURNING TO THE TOWER	RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO HELP
Safety check of the bells	SRT – Getting the bells and tower fit for ringing; Introduction to basic belfry checks and routine maintenance (https://onlinelearning.bellringing.org/)
Risk Assessment of ringing room – limiting numbers, frequency/length of ringing, how good is the ventilation?	SRT – Getting the bells and tower fit for ringing
How are your ringers? Have you been in regular contact?	Email; Telephone; Skype, Zoom, Tower Facebook page SRT – Keeping in touch
Any refresher training needed? Are some lacking confidence? How can you help them?	SRT – Helping others feel confident; SRT – Confidence building techniques
Have we got enough to ring? Which other towers or ringer groups could we partner with?	Your Mission Community towers; Other branch towers SRT – Ringing Clusters
What can we do to “build back better”? Such as use new technology, use Ringing Room for extra practice, use national online learning materials.	https://onlinelearning.bellringing.org/ (ART’s online courses); SRT – Online ringing products; SRT – Online ringing for variety
Do you have sufficient experienced people to lead the tower and cover all the jobs that need to be done?	SRT – I’m a tower captain - post pandemic; SRT - I’m a new tower captain
RETENTION	
What do your ringers want to get out of ringing as individuals?	NE Branch Ringer Attitude Survey: http://ringingtraining.pbworks.com/w/page/90045113/FrontPage ART Resource: Why do ringers enjoy ringing?
Has the band got any goals? What happens to those who aren’t keen on them?	Tips on goal setting: http://ringingteachers.org/resources/teaching-tips

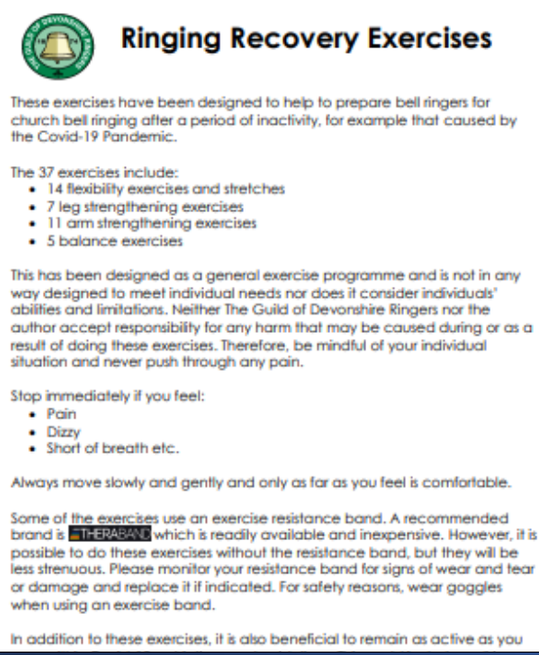
Survival and Recovery Toolbox

ART and the Central Council working together

This toolbox is provided by ART and the C
missing something or have something that

What's new

- **Planning for recovery** – for you to p
- **Care of bells and belfries** – new vic
- **Return to ringing flyer** – for you to
- **Yoga for ringers**. Added 20 Mar 202
- **Recovery Champions meeting** – re



Ringing Recovery Exercises

These exercises have been designed to help to prepare bell ringers for church bell ringing after a period of inactivity, for example that caused by the Covid-19 Pandemic.

The 37 exercises include:
- 14 flexibility exercises and stretches
- 7 leg strengthening exercises
- 11 arm strengthening exercises
- 5 balance exercises

This has been designed as a general exercise programme and is not in any way designed to meet individual needs nor does it consider individuals’ abilities and limitations. Neither The Guild of Devonshire Ringers nor the author accept responsibility for any harm that may be caused during or as a result of doing these exercises. Therefore, be mindful of your individual situation and never push through any pain.

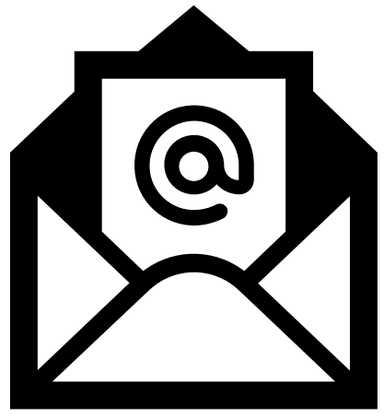
Stop immediately if you feel:
- Pain
- Dizzy
- Short of breath etc.

Always move slowly and gently and only as far as you feel is comfortable.

Some of the exercises use an exercise resistance band. A recommended brand is THERABAND which is readily available and inexpensive. However, it is possible to do these exercises without the resistance band, but they will be less strenuous. Please monitor your resistance band for signs of wear and tear or damage and replace it if indicated. For safety reasons, wear goggles when using an exercise band.

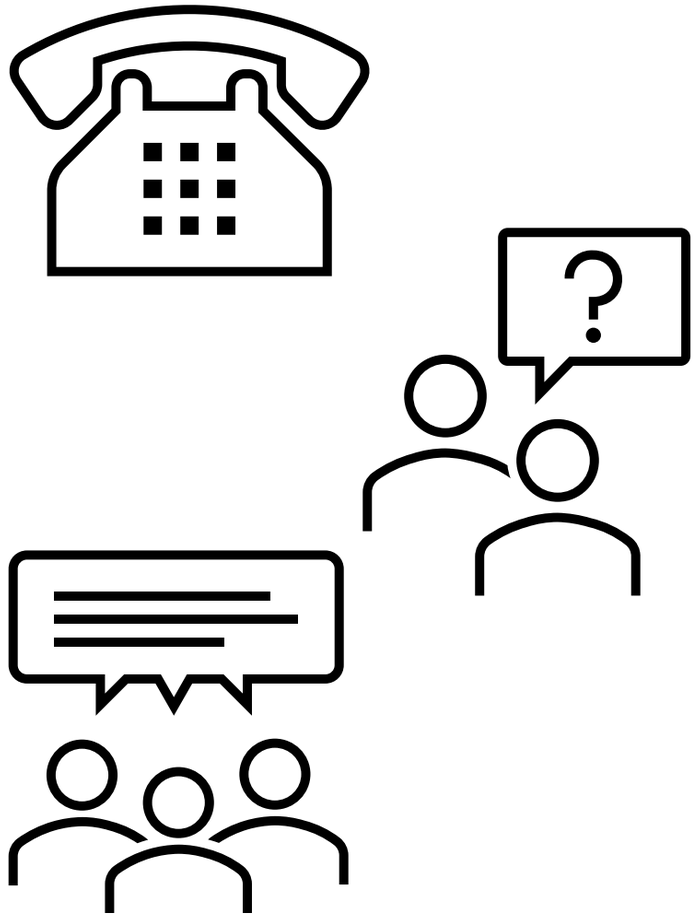
In addition to these exercises, it is also beneficial to remain as active as you

The ‘Ringing Recovery Workgroup’



What are we doing?

- ‘Ringing Recovery Page’ on the Guild website
- ‘Ringing Recovery Workgroup’ email address
- ‘Ringing Recovery Telephone Helpline’
- Two ‘Ringing Recovery Workshops’
- Attending the Ringing Recovery Convention sessions hosted by CCCBR/ART
- Understanding results of surveys and formulating ideas as to how to help ringers, towers and branches return to ringing
- Assessing ventilation in towers via use of CO_2 detectors and experts
- Continuing to meet when appropriate
- Continuing to share information



Tower Captains Survey: Findings

Fair response rate from Branches:
40-85%

Anticipated loss of ringers

- Ranged from 4 to 22 per Branch
- 6 towers anticipating a loss of 3 or more ringers
- About half of Tower Captains <u>not</u> concerned about losing ringers

Only 1 tower that usually held regular practices indicated that they did not intend to resume ringing

Tower Captains Survey: Interpretation of Findings

These could be very promising results, **BUT…**

Towers that responded to the survey are possibly more likely to be the ones that are in a better position to restart ringing when permitted

Branches have differing numbers of ringers and so need to be careful how to interpret the results as a proportion of ringers

Towers have differing numbers of ringers and so the loss of *one* ringer may have more of a significant impact on some towers than others

The large number of towers that are not concerned about losing ringers may be a positive, but could also indicate an unawareness of the situation

We don’t know about the towers that did not respond to the survey

Tower Captains Survey: Main Concerns Identified

Recruitment and retention of ringers

- Shortage of ringers in the band
- Age profile of the band
- Retaining ringers who started to ring just before Covid-19

Standard of ringing

Future of the church

Bells and fittings

Tower Captains Survey: Main Needs Identified

- Assistance with recruitment and retention of ringers
- Help with bell maintenance and tower stewardship
- Help to teach early ringers up to their first method
- Help to teach bell handling
- Assistance to develop Tower Captain skills
- Help to communicate with local communities and public relations

Member's Survey: Main Concerns Identified

Modest response: Approximately 30% of membership (229 responses)

Less experienced ringers: physical fitness

More experienced ringers: regaining higher-level skills

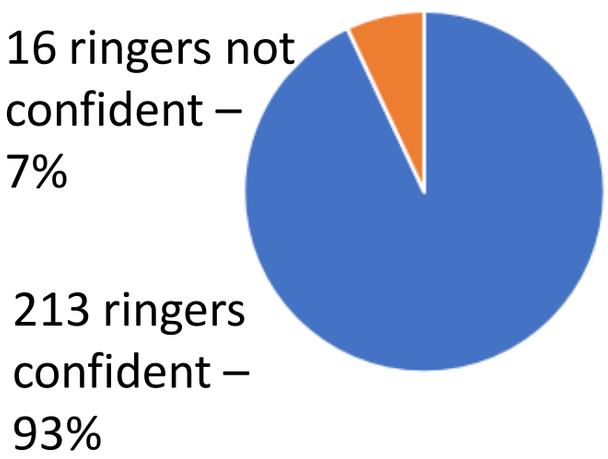
Recruitment of ringers

Member's Survey: Findings

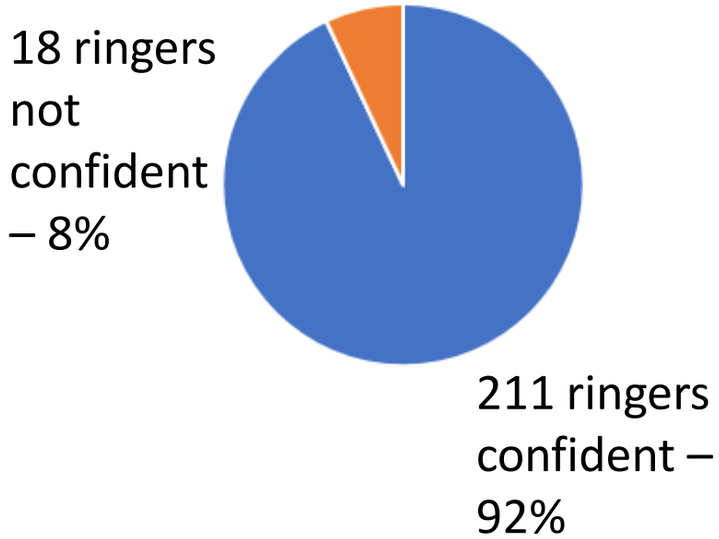
Main needs identified:

- Desire for better striking, raising and lowering and simple method ringing

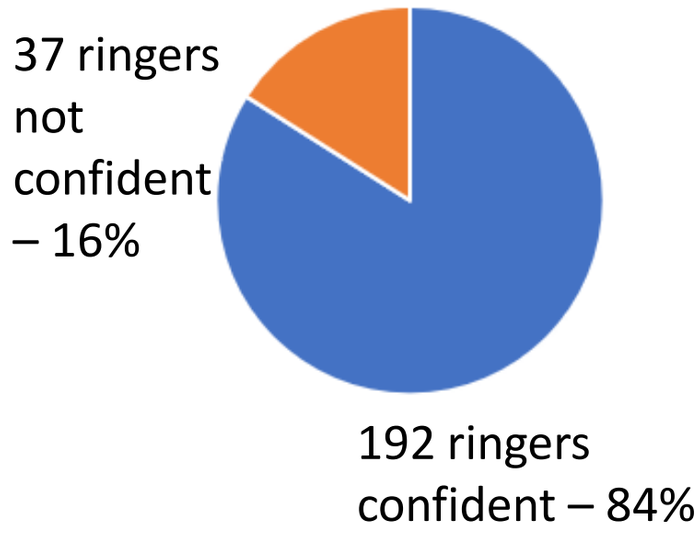
93% felt confident that they would be able to handle a bell safely



92% said they would be confident to ring rounds



Only 84% said they would feel confident to raise and lower



Member's Survey:
Main Needs Identified

- Help to run well organised practices
- Request for more Branch ringing activity to take place at weekends
- Interest in additional practices
  - eg. specialist sessions
- Request for outings to continue when permitted

Member's Survey: Interpretation of Findings

In comparison with the Tower Captain's Survey, 96% of ringers said they plan to return to ringing

- Some caution should be exercised in interpreting the results, as the 30% of ringers who responded to the survey are likely to be the ones more likely to return
- What about the plans and feelings of the other 70% of ringers?

Main reasons cited for *not* returning to ringing were **age and health**

- These ringers may have discontinued ringing soon anyway, even without Covid-19
- <u>But</u> Covid-19 may act as the catalyst for ringers to decide that *now* is the time to discontinue ringing

The ‘Covid Catalyst’?

- Many of the concerns identified existed before the Covid-19 Pandemic
- <u>But</u> Covid-19 has brought things in to focus and may have exacerbated the situation
- <u>But</u> Covid-19 also provides us with an opportunity to change, improve and address some of the issues:
  - Is this the catalyst for change?
  - Does Covid-19 provide an opportunity not to be missed?

‘Ringing Recovery Roadmap’:

<u>The latest CCCBR guidance:</u>
17th May – 21st June (at the earliest)

Considers the Government’s response to the Pandemic and is therefore is subject to change

<u>‘Rule of 6’ indoors</u>

Next steps

- Ringing sessions to be pre-arranged (rather than ‘drop-in’)
- Will need towers to organise which ringers will ring and when

<u>‘1m plus’ social distancing during ringing</u>

The ‘Ringing Recovery Roadmap’:

Next steps

Ringing permitted for up to 45 minutes

- ONLY for low risk individuals when pre-planned
- ONLY if/when good ventilation in ringing chamber is achieved

Hand sanitisation before ringing and between changing ropes

Face coverings to be worn inside

Use of ‘lateral flow tests’

- Available to everyone and can be ordered at: https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests

The ‘Ringing Recovery Roadmap’:

Next steps

<u>Individual</u> risk assessment

- Prior to each episode of ringing

<u>Individual</u> decision
whether or not to return to ringing

- Age
- Medical Conditions
- Risk to others
- Anxiety
- Ringers should not feel pressurised in to returning to ringing if they do not feel ready to do so
  - Towers should adopt a ‘no questions asked’ approach but may politely enquire as to how they could help to support a ringer to feel safe to return to ringing

The ‘Ringing Recovery Roadmap’: What then?

From 21st June (at the earliest):

- Depends on how the Government responds to the Covid-19 Pandemic
- Will we return to ringing as we used to know it?
  - Will ringers feel confident enough to handle a bell?
  - Will ringers feel confident enough to socialise without Covid-19 ‘protections’ in place?
  - Will ringers be physically fit enough to get to ringing chambers and ring a bell?
  - Will ringing chambers, bells and fittings be ready for action?
  - Will local communities be ready to hear the bells again?

We need YOUR help!

Covid-19 has affected ringing for all of us

We will all be involved with any changes and developments to a greater or lesser degree

The Ringing Recovery Workgroup do not have all of the answers!

We need to work together to identify concerns and problems and try to find solutions

Possible Ideas to Assist Return to Ringing

- Ringing ‘clusters’ and ‘sharing’ ringers?
- Sharing teaching expertise?
- Expansion of ‘Tied Bell Clinics’?
- Social activity prior to resuming ringing?
- Contacting ringers who may have ‘lost touch’?
- Begin with ringing on lighter or easier to handle bells?
- Begin with ‘easier’ methods and concentrate on quality of striking?
- ‘Focused’ practices
- Review content and timing of branch practices?
- Begin with shorter periods of ringing?
- Checking bells and fittings – can you help less experienced towers?
- Preparing ringing chambers?
- Communication with local communities?
- Ringing for weddings?
- Optimise ventilation in towers or begin with using better ventilated towers
- Begin thinking about recruitment and training

We need YOUR help!

- What things have changed as a result of Covid-19 that have been positive or you would like to see continue?
- What concerns do you have about your return to ringing?
- What concerns do you have about the survival of ringing in general terms?
- What can the Ringing Recovery Workgroup do to help you and what would you like us to do?
- Do you have any ideas for possible solutions for concerns identified?
- What can you do to help to prepare for your return to ringing?
- What can you do to help others to prepare for a return to ringing?
- What experiences can you share about what has or hasn't worked well in the past?