

## APPENDIX 1 - Guild Responses to Questionnaire

### Question 1: What drew you into ringing?

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Family   | 17 |
| Friends/Neighbours                                 | 16 |
| Millennium   | 6  |
| Vicar  | 5  |
| Already involved with Church                       | 5  |
| Open Day   | 4  |
| Curiosity  | 3  |
| Publicity – request for ringers after augmentation | 3  |
| Another ringer                                     | 2  |
| Recruiting drive in village                        | 2  |
| Read book Nine Tailors or Myths of Bellringing     | 2  |
| Guide/Scout badge                                  | 2  |
| Intrigued, musical curiosity and Challenges        | 2  |
| Freshers' Week                                     | 2  |
| Opportunity to try something new                   | 2  |
| Mathematical fascination                           | 1  |
| Publicity leaflet                                  | 1  |
| TV programme                                       | 1  |
| School visit                                       | 1  |
| Something to do in the evenings                    | 1  |

Comment made - the tower became a kind of alternative youth group

### Question 2: What keeps you in ringing?

- Enjoyment
- Fun
- Passion
- Enjoyment and satisfaction of a well struck touch - associated with an interest in music
- Hearing and seeing experienced ringers plying their craft
- Challenge to produce 'perfect' ringing
- Challenge of ringing new stuff
- The hope of eventually making a positive contribution
- Occasional glimpses of progress
- Desire to improve
- Being part of a team
- To keep the bells ringing
- Having ringing appreciated by clergy and congregation
- Desire to give something back
- Loyalty
- Part of town's history

- Fascination with something that forms part of our national and cultural heritage
- My friends
- Friendship, fellowship, camaraderie, company
- Happy tower atmosphere
- Holding office
- Good mix of ages from all walks of life - no social divide
- Helpful and patient experts
- Social occasions
- Satisfaction that results from training new ringers
- Helping others and seeing them progress
- Good conversation starter
- Opportunities to practise
- Visiting and appreciating other churches
- Visiting new towers and villages and in different parts of the country that we would otherwise never visit
- Access to ringing towers
- Madness
- Regularity of practice nights
- Obsession - wouldn't know what else to do
- Parents
- Being involved in something that is greater than the sum of its parts
- Masochism
- Modest subscriptions

Question 3: If your tower has held an open day, were you pleased with the attendance? If not, have you any idea why it was not successful?

- Discouraged from holding an Open Day by the attitude of the Church's insurers, EIG. So video cameras installed with screen at the base of the tower. Used whenever there is a special service which brings in people who are not regular members of the congregation.
- Successful Open Day due to detailed planning by the tower captain and extensive publicity both in the church and local press.
- Attendance may have been higher if there had been more publicity and if the bells had been rung at intervals.
- Open Day combined with Church Spring Festival and visits to the tower were met with success especially among the young.
- Yes - three held in recent years. One for members of the congregation who wanted to know what goes on in the towers - about 25 attended - 2 new ringers. The other 2 were for outside groups but produced no recruits.
- Both well attended and poorly attended events have been held. When linked to a wider church event publicity not always effective but successful links to a local cultural festival provided lots of free publicity.
- Short (30 minute presentation) open sessions after Sunday service
- Open Hour - following morning service - well attended.
- No open day but keep lines of communication open between ringers and congregation.

- Open Day combined with celebration of the centenary of the augmentation of the bells from a ring of 4 to 6. 6 new ringers resulted - but gradually drifted away - did not want commitment.
- Open Days are a good PR exercise but may only attract the occasional recruit.
- Successful Open Day - time of year may have helped - mince pies were served and it was a sunny Saturday morning. Location of Church - central.
- Invite brownies and cubs into tower and watch a demo ring.
- Varying degrees of success - starting a band from scratch needs good input from experienced ringers. New ringers need plenty of enthusiasm and the desire to visit other towers and go on courses.
- Difficulty in getting potential recruits to commit to ringing.
- Difficulty in maintaining learners - possibly due to very steep steps to ringing chamber.

Question 4: Any thoughts on how the Guild could help your tower recruit new learners or publicise ringing in general?

**Media**

- Advertise in Parish magazine and local media (What's On), county magazines
- Regular slot/article in local paper
- Advertise in free local magazines
- Good relations with local press in Clubs and Societies section which meant a fee but good relationship with them meant regular featured articles for free
- Publicity about recently re-hung bells has brought back ringers who now have leisure to ring again
- An article in the local press and/or diocesan newsletter naming someone (Guild Officer) who could pass on enquiries to the relevant person
- BBC Radio Devon - early morning spot which features reports from minority activities
- TV coverage like Mike Hatchett on Spotlight

**Publicity**

- Information to promote ringing to schools/colleges and clubs for young people
- Become involved in Duke of Edinburgh award
- Keep ringing in the public eye
- Anything that promotes bellringing as a family activity
- Any way that ringing could be associated with health could perhaps be fruitful - are there physicians who would want to encourage people to take up bellringing
- Links with musical provision for young people - initially with handbells?
- Leaflets in local libraries particularly around the time of year when new adult education courses are being promoted
- Get a celebrity to open a new or restored ring
- Eye-catching posters, flyers, information
- Publicise existing facilities and resources
- Possibly help with being "media-savvy"

## **Word of Mouth**

- Talks to local clubs and societies.
- Personal recommendation to friends - must catch them young.
- Approach people and invite them in - many have never thought of approaching anyone to learn.
- Stronger presence in schools.
- Face to face invitation.
- Talk to non-ringers who know very little about it.
- Encourage present ringers to be welcoming and supportive of new ringers. Continue targeted practices for improvers.
- Dispel Harry Potter image of talking different language and existing behind scenes of normal Parish life.

## **Events**

- Annual recruitment drive.
- Invite non ringers on annual outing.
- Vacation courses for young people and families.
- Presence at local fairs and festivals (have a go...)
- Offer a course to learn to ring in conjunction with a local evening institute.
- Youth Open Days - taster sessions.
- Annual tower open days.
- Invite TV newsreader or personality to learn to ring as part of a general programme about ringing. Interested people could be invited to phone or e-mail a member of the Guild who could put them in touch with their local tower.
- A road show type event with a portable mini-ring to demonstrate the art to the general public.
- Presence at Freshers Fairs in Plymouth and Exeter in particular - including the mini-ring - could also capture existing ringers who have just arrived at university looking for towers.
- Special practices for rounds and call changes.
- Give demonstrations.
- Offer to give talks to local history societies or similar organisations, or to provide material for such talks.
- Seminar on recruitment at the Guild Festival.

## **Resources**

- Practical training guide for older ringers who know how to ring but not the best way to teach.
- Loan out display boards with info already attached.
- Facebook - University of London Society has done this - very successfully.
- Resource pack of good practice.
- A film to be shown on local TV and in schools.
- A pool of experienced ringers who could help out at towers with a large amount of 'learners', offer advice on planning and running an open day or even to help on the day itself.

- Produce/advertise posters for display in local shops/libraries/village notice boards.
- Co-ordinated approach to public relations and recruitment between towers, local branch, Guild and Association and national bodies such as the Ringing Foundation Support with good publicity and display materials.

**General comments:**

- Anything that raises awareness of the enjoyment and the scope that exists for people to start should be beneficial
- Not aware what the Guild already does
- Learning from best practice of successful recruiters
- Retention is more of a problem than recruitment
- Not in favour of teaching primary school children - too small and their size means they develop bad handling habits - to have tried, failed and gone away makes it less likely that they will come back later
- Don't shout at youngsters
- Keep away from the religious aspects of ringing which can put people off
- At present have as many recruits as we can cope with - not quite sure why
- Rely on recruiting from the congregation but support general publicity
- Recruitment needs to be done locally - Guild may provide publicity resources for open days, displays, ads
- Easier to recruit from congregation where the ringers are part of that congregation
- Be up beat and encouraging about it.
- Encourage towers to think about recruitment - include something in both Guild and Association communications
- Negotiate a softening of attitude on the part of EIG so it is easier to run Open Days
- Effective dissemination of information for towers to adjust to their own needs