

# Top Tips for Survival and Recovery

## Key messages

**Stay positive** – we will return to ringing at some point. The exercise has survived much longer periods of inactivity without all the fantastic resources that have been developed during this pandemic.

**Stay safe** – always follow social distancing requirements and the coronavirus restrictions in your local area.

**Keep in touch** – try as many different ways as possible. Not everyone enjoys virtual ringing, that doesn't mean that they aren't as keen to return.

**Keep ringing** – the sound of bells has been missed in our cities, towns and villages. Use every opportunity to promote ringing to your local community.

**Plan ahead** – think about what you can do differently when we return to ringing to help sustain ringing for the future.

**Be bold** – if nothing is happening in your tower, then what not organise something yourself.

## Keeping in touch

### Ringers

- Run virtual pub sessions or coffee mornings using online video conferencing platforms.
- Keep in touch with ringers with regular phone calls.
- Meet up as small group where restrictions allow. Go for a walk or have a catch up over a hot drink following social distancing requirements.
- Run social events. How about a virtual Carol Service or a Bake-Off challenge?
- Keep in touch with other towers, encourage ringers to take part in Association / Branch events.

### Church

- Have regular meetings with clergy and church wardens. Agree how and when bells can be rung for services and community events.

### Community

- Keep in touch with your local community via newsletters, websites and social media. Let the community know why bells are silent or why ringing might sound different.

### A tower approach

- Use the skills of all your ringers, this is not just down to one person. Involve the whole of the band and use the skills and strengths of everyone. Do you have a social media expert, someone to check on the bells, or someone who likes to arrange social events?

## Keeping Ringing

### Church bells

- Ring for every possible occasion – services and other occasions. Let the local community know what you are ringing for.
- Draw up a rota and give everyone an opportunity to take a turn even if this means ringing fewer bells. Allow less experienced ringers to chime a bell.

### Online ringing

- Organise a virtual practice or form a hub practice with other towers.

### Handbells

- Organise a handbell practice.

## **Recovery**

### **Plan ahead**

- What are the aspirations and values of your band? Do you know how many of your band may not return to ringing?
- Are you planning to recruit? Do you have the capacity, skills and experience to teach new ringers? How about working with other neighbouring tower or targeting lapsed ringers.

### **Return to Ringing**

- How are you going to support less experienced ringers when we return to 'normal' ringing? Find ways of helping people return to ringing – e.g. offer one on one silent practice for less experienced ringers.
- Reach out to others to share ideas for returning to ringing – what else is happening in your area? Get in contact with your Guild / Branch / Association to find out what's happening. If nothing is happening then set something up.

### **Developing your band**

- Look out for and take advantage of training opportunities for new steeple keepers, tower captains etc.
- What new ways are there to keep your band motivated? How about organising joint practices with neighbouring towers.

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