

## May 2021

### A welcome from the ART Chair

I am really pleased that Lesley Boyle has agreed to take over the coordination of the ART Hubs and Centres from Graham Nabb. Group teaching as show-cased by you, our Hubs and Centres, will play an important part in securing the future of bell ringing after the pandemic and I will be looking to promote it and you wherever I can. One of our number, Vinni Sullivan, will be talking online about the development of the Loddon Hub in Berkshire, on Thursday 13 May at 19:30. If you're interested, then you need to register in advance at:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZctd-CvpzwtEtC6KEQII3dsPZqBucQOnQp5>

In the past month, we have had four new groups contact us wanting to become ART Hubs and I know others are considering it. Obviously, a great network to belong to! If you have any ideas about how we can do more for you, please feel free to contact Lesley Boyle; I know she'd be delighted to talk with you.

**Lesley Belcher**

Association of Ringing Teachers Chair

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### PLEASE CIRCULATE THIS NEWSLETTER TO OTHER RELEVANT PEOPLE AT YOUR HUB OR TEACHING CENTRE!

The mailing list used for distribution has only one or two contact emails per hub, therefore we are relying on you to distribute onwards to others who may be interested in the content. Thankyou!

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## Hubs and Centres – we need you!

The health and growth of ringing Hubs and Centres is something that is very close to my heart, as group ringing is a vital strand for ringing recovery. If individual towers are challenged by lack of ringers or ringing teachers, then they can be coaxed back into strength by calling on their nearest Hub for help. Or it may be that a group of individual towers can club together and form one strong band between them. Hubs can enable a positive and better future for ringing in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic having forced the issue by making pre-existing challenges more extreme.



## What are Hubs and Centres?

You all know this, of course, but it's good to agree what Hubs and Teaching Centres look like. We are not talking about a single tower with a good practice and an innovative tower captain (also good!)

- Single tower equipped to support teaching and learning, which may also have its own band and practice night with Tower Captain/Ringing Master. For example Walsoken in Cambridgeshire and Moresby in Cumbria
- Multiple tower clusters cooperating and supporting each other with joint teaching sessions and practices. Eg Ledbury District, Loddon
- Hubs and Teaching Centres enable *more* teaching to take place because users from multiple towers attend, and through ART and mutual support of multiple teachers, they enable *better* teaching.
- Learners have more fun learning together and thus are more likely to be retained, giving better return on your investment of time and effort in teaching them.
- Learners get into the habit of socialising, and visiting multiple towers and making friends with other learners, making it more likely that they will persist with their ringing. Also they indulge in healthy mild competition

## Challenges for you in running a Hub or Teaching Centre...

Organisation and workload – you need to use a pool of people to spread the load, share ideas, and make the Hub/Centre sustainable long term.

Avoid having just one, key, inspirational leader, or a closed fiefdom, as however well-intentioned, these scenarios tend to lead to burnout and only short term gains.

Succession planning – institute a formal constitution, reporting lines, elected positions with maximum tenures, so that you are forced to train up people to take over roles, or people are at least rotated within roles. Ask yourself seriously whether your hub could survive two people in your team moving away or stopping ringing for some reason? If your answer is 'no' or 'it depends which two people' then this is a message to make changes!

See below for a short article on this topic by Dee Smith, Chairman of Stretham Ringing Education Centre in Cambridgeshire. An initiative of Philip Bailey's, Stretham REC is a rural teaching centre, formed 6 years ago and supported by the Ely Diocesan Association.

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## Being practical – what's your plan for relaxation from lockdown?

Stage 2 will switch to stage 3 on 17<sup>th</sup> May meaning that your Hub needs a plan. What are you going to do? What are your first practical steps? Do you have a draft schedule?

If not, maybe you need to meet with others now, and form a planning group if you haven't already got one. There's a recovery plan template [http://ringingteachers.org/download\\_file/view/2082/1490](http://ringingteachers.org/download_file/view/2082/1490) which gives lots of advice and links of things to consider.



## Some practical ideas:

- Announce 'come and revise your bell handling' sessions for experienced learners. This would involve a tied bell, or a dumbbell/training bell, and a trainer to be there for specified times of the day. Let people book their slot. Check the incumbent is happy with people coming into the church, and clarify use of loos, kitchen areas and Covid protocols being followed. It may be best for people to bring their own refreshments, and make sure you have hand sanitizer available.
- Using Abel or other simulator software – people who have been using Ringing Room will be used to listening for their bell in each row. Wean them back onto the delays involved with real tower bell ringing by hooking the tied bell up to a sensor and via a computer to Abel or Virtual Belfry. Get the trainee to ring rounds, or cover to doubles or minimus, and start their brain thinking about real bell ringing again.
- Communications – Comms – do you have a mailing list? If not, now is the time to start building one. See recent correspondence on Facebook 'Bellringing Branch / Guild Officials Group' (search for 10 point recovery plan roger booth) or this post in the same group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1763452097020742/permalink/2939014829464457>

## I need help - Your ideas and feedback please?!

I have people ringing Stedman Triples on Ringing Room who were only able to ring rounds and call changes on real bells a year ago so I need to focus on them being able to transfer their listening and striking skills to real bells again, and I am trying to work out the best ways of doing this. Hubs and teaching centres are likely to have more people like this pass through their hands than an average village tower, so it would be good if we could come up with a practical list of things to do to facilitate this. We want to avoid frustration and potential loss of ringers. Is it just a case of finding the fastest way of getting people to acquire ropesight? Or is there more to it than that, given that they've gained so much ringing knowledge in the lockdown period? Please let me know your thoughts on the subject so we can share this with each other. That way we can work together and help each other without re-inventing the wheel.

Thankyou!

**Lesley Boyle**

ART Hub and Teaching Centre Coordinator

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## Other useful resources

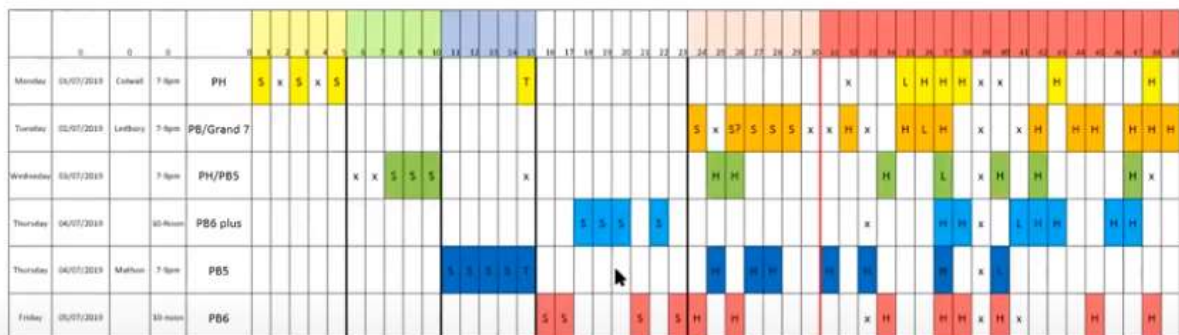
- Publication packs for hubs? Did you get yours? ART sent out a free 'Hub Starter Pack' of all the publications and DVDs which support the work that Hubs and teaching centres do. This was sent out at the time of the March 2020 Conference. As you contemplate opening up, take advantage of these learning materials.
- Liaison visits – do you know who your local ART liaison person is? If not, get in touch with me and I'll give you a ring to discuss.



- Workshops – you may want to think about your long-term plans for Listen and strike workshops, bell maintenance, and the various other workshops that ART offer. Get them scheduled for a future event at your Hub.
- Maybe you need to book a Teaching Bellhanging (M1) refresher course? Get in touch. Groups may have to be smaller than usual to start with, but ART will support you in what you need to start building your group of new and confident teachers
- Facebook –consider signing up to <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ringingcentres/> and keep up to date with people in similar situations
- Survival and recovery toolbox < <https://ringingteachers.org/survival-and-recovery-toolbox> > and Newsletter <[http://www.ringingteachers.org/download\\_file/view/2076/1](http://www.ringingteachers.org/download_file/view/2076/1)>
- Survival and recovery champions meetings – in case you missed it, Frank Seabright's webinar about the Ledbury district describes how a Hub of 8 towers might work – <https://youtu.be/Kky4cyA98Ok> A key point he makes is getting everyone involved.
- CCCBR Covid advice - <https://cccb.org.uk/coronavirus/> and <https://cccb.org.uk/coronavirus/guidance-17-may-to-21-june/> . The President's latest blog post also has interesting information about a potential new Hub that we all might be jealous of - <https://cccb.org.uk/2021/05/04/presidents-blog-33/>

Taken from Frank Seabright's talk at the most recent Survival and Recovery Champions' meeting, 18<sup>th</sup> April 2021. Listeners were much enthused by the idea he described of having a monthly District Practice Week, when all the cluster's own tower bell practices are cancelled and a set of streamed/themed practices substituted. See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kky4cyA98Ok>

## District Practice Week Organisation Spreadsheet



	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun											
Monday	01/03/2021	Convent	7:30pm	PH	S	X	S	X	S																														
Tuesday	02/03/2021	Ledbury	7:30pm	PB/Grand 7											S	X	S	S	S	S	X	X	H	X	H	L	H	H	X	X	H	H	H	H	H	H	H		
Wednesday	03/03/2021		7:30pm	PH/PB5				X	X	S	S	S																											
Thursday	04/03/2021		10:00am	PB6 plus																																			
Thursday	04/03/2021	Mathon	7:30pm	PB5																																			
Friday	05/03/2021		10:00am	PB6																																			

From Dee Smith, Chairman for Stretham REC (Ely DA Hub)

## Stretham REC

### Organisational Structure

The REC has a constitution, with a managing committee, holding regular meetings and annual elections. Minutes of its meetings go to the General Committee of the Ely DA along with regular reports. Current make-up of its committee:

- REC Chairperson (who is currently an Art Assessor and Ely DA RATO) – responsible for, general vision, and reporting upwards. Also runs a monthly practical session.
- REC Secretary/Administrator - deals with bookings, meeting minutes. Also tends to attend most practical sessions
- REC Manager – responsible for making sure practical sessions are manned adequately and run consistently. Tends to attend most practical sessions.
- Treasurer – reports to quarterly meetings and AGM. Organizes banking and payments.
- Stretham Church Contact – is the Tower Captain of the local band, and represents the local needs to the REC committee and the REC needs to the local band.
- ART Local Organiser – organises ART events and encourages local teachers to get accredited by using Stretham REC teaching sessions
- REC Social Media Officer – announces events on FB and relevant websites.
- Two other members.- representing users and the association.

Prior to Covid shut down in March 2020, Stretham REC focussed on holding practical ringing sessions every Saturday morning and also once a month in the afternoon, plus a weekday evening tied handling session for a new band. Sessions covered from complete beginner handler/starter teacher to PB6+. Students came from across the association and sometimes beyond. Ely DA now has another Hub at Walsoken in the north, and one in the process of being created in Cambridge city (St Clement's, building work starting summer 21).

Stretham REC has moved nimbly into the virtual ringing arena by providing three practices a week on Ringing Room enabling ringers, who lack a practice organised by their own tower, to be able to continue to ring and to progress. It has also encouraged a number of regulars to start handbell ringing.

Dee lists plus points: following LtR, using ART teaching methods, choosing towers with good facilities, and achieving a good, happy atmosphere. The REC has excellent relationships with the church although the current interregnum may prove challenging. The constitution and committee mean that there is a process for taking up the slack when someone key needs to take time out and organising the work. Although this is generally good it still could be better. Improving the system for planning sessions so as to avoid too few or too many teachers at practical sessions is a future aim, so that we avoid the classic situation in ringing, that the same few people give all their time and end up overloaded.

