**Recruitment Toolbox: The Ten Point Plan**

A plan and ideas for you to adapt to suit your local. Visit the recruitment section of SmART Ringer to find out more about the individual parts of the plan – [www.smartringer.org/resource/4689](http://www.smartringer.org/resource/4689)

1. **Raise awareness**

Events and recruitment drives have a much greater chance of success if there is a basic awareness of ringing and ringers in both the community and church.

* Aim for ringing to be recognised as one of the regular normal activities in the locality.
* Make sure that people see you enjoying your hobby.
* Create a band that supports learning and welcomes those keen to learn a new skill.

Make yourselves easy to find – ensure contact details and practice times are correct on-line and in print. This includes Branch and Guild publications and Dove. Ring with your bells open so that people know that you’re there!

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| **Ideas** | **Your Plan** |
| **Ensure ringers are known and appreciated in the community** | |
| Take part in local events as a bell ringing group |  |
| Ring for public events and publicise it |
| Give a talk to local groups. Follow up with a taster session |
| Write general articles for community and Church magazines and newspapers |
| Celebrate your successes |
| **Get support of clergy, Church Wardens and parishioners** | |
| Invite them to social events |  |
| Give them a taster day |
| Give them access to publicity materials so they can spread the word |
| **Raise your on-line presence** | |
| Build your own social media presence |  |
| Connect and contribute to social media of others |
| Maintain an interesting tower website and link to other websites. |
| Add yourself to activity and event based websites (e.g. meetup) |
| **Let people know why you’re ringing for special events** | |
| A board outside the tower |  |
| Postcards through the door |
| Local media |
| Social media |
| **Get the basics right** | |
| Ensure your contact details and ringing times are correct on Guild websites and Dove. |  |

1. **What do you want to achieve?**

Decide what you want to achieve, rather than what you are going to do. When your band are clear about this it will be a lot easier to decide who to target and how to get them into your tower.

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| **Question** | **Answer** |
| **How many new recruits do you want?** | |
| Do you want a low-level steady flow of new recruits or need an injection of new recruits? |  |
| Are you starting a band from scratch? |  |
| **What are the aspirations and values of your band?** | |
| Are you interested mainly in keeping the bells ringing on a Sunday? |  |
| Are you looking for ringers who can extend your method ringing repertoire? |  |
| Will the band welcome the new ringers or resent the time they take to train up? |  |
| **Do you have the skills and people to transform new recruits into fully developed ringers?** | |
| Organise some teacher training? |  |
| Ask for help? |  |

1. **Who to recruit**

Knowing what you want to achieve, think about who you’d like to recruit and how you might appeal to them. Think: why would they be interested in learning to ring with your band.

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| **Potential recruits** | **Yes/No** | **Best way of connecting to them** |
| Family and friends |  |  |
| The local community |  |
| Church groups |  |
| Church congregation |  |
| Families |  |
| School children |  |
| University students |  |
| Retirees |  |
| Established professionals |  |
| Scouts and guides |  |
| Duke of Edinburgh scheme |  |
| Other local groups |  |

1. **What are you going to do?**

What activities can you organise to reaching and convince your target recruits to learn to ring?

There is a tendency to organise tower open days, but there are many other ways of connecting with people. Have you considered offering an Experience Day or gift voucher, for someone to learn to ring? These could be given as auction prizes for local fundraisers, or sold as gifts for special occasions or Christmas.

Or a talk, as part of a Church Service or to a local interest group. Have a specific invitation to come and have a go at the end of the talk. Collect names straight away.

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| **Potential Activity** | **Yes/No** | **Your Plan** |
| **For a steady flow of new recruits** | | |
| **Personal contact** |  |  |
| **Posters** |  |
| Leaflets |  |
| Social Media |  |
| Website |  |
| On-line hobbies listing |  |
| Magazines |  |
| Church notices |  |
| Experience Day or gift voucher |  |
| **For an injection of new recruits or to build a band from scratch** | | |
| Church Service |  |  |
| Tower open day |  |  |
| Mini-ring at an event |  |  |

1. **Publicity**

**Be specific in your message**. You may have a tower open day just for public interest but if you also wish to recruit new ringers make sure you say so in your publicity literature.

**Use the right medium**. If you’re recruiting school children you need to talk to the parents. It is rarely any good approaching the children without their parents. The children are often keen to try anything on offer, but when they ask their parents if they can attend ringing lessons, the parents are suspicious of religion/expense/time commitments and say no.

**Have a clear call to action**. Giving a talk to the U3A? At the end of the talk, offer a taster session on a specific date. Give out leaflets and collect contact details of those coming. The invite is what turns interest into action.

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| **Communication channel** | **Your plan** |
| Personal contact / invitation |  |
| Websites |
| Social Media |
| Press - local newspapers & radio |
| Posters |
| Leaflets |
| Displays |
| Talks |

1. **The Event**

* Be professional and be welcoming.
* Use people to their best effect – some people will be more suited to meeting the public, some would prefer to stay in the background, making refreshments or demonstrating ringing.
* Check your plans out with a non-ringer, ask what they think.
* Ensure you have fulfilled all safeguarding and H&S requirements.
* Collect names, emails, Facebook names and phone numbers. Delegate this task to someone and make sure you can read their writing!

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| **Action** | **Yes/No** | **Your Plan** |
| Date agreed with Church and any helpers? |  |  |
| Venue cleaned and welcoming? |  |
| Safeguarding and H&S requirements |  |
| Display boards and information |  |
| Leaflets and booklets on bell ringing |  |
| Refreshments |  |
| Talks and demonstrations |  |
| Ringing props – history, ringing hardware (e.g. broken stays), photos |  |
| Post-event publicity including photos to share on social media and press |  |
| Collect names, emails, Facebook names and phone numbers |  |

1. **The follow-up**

The important thing is to keep the momentum going; contact anyone interested in learning to ring as soon as you can after they have expressed an interest and arrange something concrete – either a no-obligation taster session or their first lesson. People will lose interest if you contact them months later or think you’re not really interested in them.

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| **Action** | | **Your plan** |
| Contact everyone after event |  | |
| Arrange a taster session |
| Arrange date for first lesson |

1. **Intensive training**

Research clearly demonstrates that intensive training leads to faster learning. More of what has been learned is retained between sessions and ringers maintain enthusiasm as they feel they are progressing. These days new recruits expect ‘courses’ and a defined, structured way of learning to ring. This is comparable to other hobbies – such as music grades or karate belts. Intensive training is both frequent and concentrated.

Plan for 10 to 15 hours of one-on-one training.

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| **Action** | | **Your plan** |
| Silence bells or use sound control |  | |
| Decide whether to charge for training |
| Permission to ring forms and safeguarding for minors |
| Tour of bells at home tower or alternative |
| Decide with new ringer best times for bell handling training |
| Get helpers if more than one is being taught |
| Set date for first go of ringing rounds with others on open bells – a great motivator |

1. **Keeping your new ringers interested**

Throughout the phase of learning to handle the bell the ringer receives lots of individual attention. Once the ringer joins the normal weekly practice they will receive considerably less attention. The learning curve will plateau which may lead to a waning in interest and motivation. Think about how you can provide targeted sessions and give your new ringers in as much rope time as possible to keep them progressing.

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| **Action** | | **Your plan** |
| Carry on with tied-bell sessions otherwise handling will deteriorate |  | |
| Organise a separate early ringers’ practice, perhaps joint with other towers |
| Individual practice sessions using a simulator |
| Organise early ringer’s courses over 6 to 8 weeks |
| Provide plenty of activities (games, reading, quizzes, mobile phone apps) for your ringers to learn when they aren’t ringing at the practice |
| Integrate them into the ringing social scene |
| Group learning keeps ringers motivated |

1. **Making recruitment work for everyone in the band**

What can you do to keep the whole band happy and make recruitment work for the whole team?

* Some people gradually stop coming, or go elsewhere, or their method ringing ability declines.
* Practice nights becoming swamped by new ringers from other towers
* How can you ensure that your teachers and helpers don’t start to feel burned out?

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| **Issue** | **Your plan** |
| **Experienced members of band not getting enough advanced practice or enjoyable ringing** | |
| A monthly advanced practice by invitation only |  |
| Regular Quarter Peal attempts |
| Combine with another tower for special practices on a particular method or aspect of ringing |
| Split your practice so that the last half hour is always reserved for more advanced ringing |
| Sunday Service ringing by invitation only - giving opportunities to ring longer touches of methods |
| Ensure that everyone at the practice gets to ring at least one touch of something they’d like to ring … with a steady band |
| **Teacher burn-out or practice nights becoming swamped by new ringers from other towers** | |
| Have a ringing friend who you can confide in and help you solve problems |  |
| Teach in groups where the burden is shared |
| Collaborate with other towers running combined foundation practices or workshops |
| Don’t neglect your own ringing … make sure you get the balance right |