Business Plan

MAY 2011

The Ringing Foundation Ltd., a company Limited by Guarantee.
c/o Abbot Creswell, 179 Upper Richmond Road West, East Sheen, London, SW14 8DU

Further copies are available to download from our website ringingfoundation.com

PART 1

Headline Summary

A plan to arrest the decline in the number of change ringers through exciting the interest of young people and engaging them in structured and stimulating training programmes that lead to the development of competent ringers eager to take forward and extol the art of change ringing. Furthermore, to align change ringing recruitment and training with similar and competing leisure pursuits.

- Community involvement in stimulating interest and attracting recruits.
- Using the model of Youth Groups as the focus for education and training.
- Adopting accredited training schemes for ringing instructors and a ringing curriculum for students.
- Getting better reward for the voluntary time and effort put into ringing training.
- Recognition of achievement and celebration of success.
- Establishing a paid staffed structure to organise, administer, monitor and deliver.
- Creating a pathway for young people to progress and retain involvement with change ringing.
- A national standard within ten years.

The objective is to train 500 young ringers each year from a budget of £100k per annum. This from a minimum of twenty youth groups, 200 ringing instructors and 300 experienced helpers.

Without bringing in more young people and backing this with financial resource then change ringing faces a very uncertain future as the activity base shrinks over the years ahead. 40% of ringers are over sixty and 60% over fifty. Just £3 per head each year from the 35,000 or so active ringers secures the future.

PART 2

Business Plan for the Creation of a Modern Teaching Structure for Change Ringing

INTRODUCTION

The Ringing Foundation (RF) was set up on the initiative of the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers for the purpose of raising and allocating funds in support of developing the skills, practice and art of change ringing.

An examination of the human resources involved in change ringing has concluded that the there is a serious issue manifest in an ageing and declining number of active ringers that threatens to significantly reduce the present activity base. Many factors are involved in this statement but principal among them is the need for change ringing to improve, most importantly for young people, the method and standard of recruitment, education and training and to establish and align these with similar and competing social leisure pursuits.

This plan sets out that case advocating a new structure and organisation for the teaching and training of change ringers bringing it into line with modern theory and practice. Overall the desire is to raise the quantity and quality of change ringing and by bringing financial resource into the equation the plan objective is to recruit and train 500 predominantly young people each year from a budget of £100k per annum. It is expected that funding external to the ringing community can be sought but the Foundation has concluded that money for initial implementation has to come from within so that an essential measure of success can be presented to potential donors. Beyond that it is likely that matching of external funding will generally be required.

At this stage then, the plan is directed at the ringing community for their consideration and support, not only in the financial implications but also to accept the challenge of the process of change to ensure that change ringing is maintained and enjoyed in the years and decades to come.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES - RINGING FOUNDATION

Principal objectives

- To raise the public awareness and understanding of change ringing.
- To aid the recruitment of ringers.
- To create a structured teaching and learning process
- To enhance the quality and quantity of training.

Our Vision

- Learning to ring should be a positive, professional experience.
- The learning process should include ready access to the broader aspects of ringing: heritage, social activity and special interest areas.
- Teachers of ringing should be able to engage and enthuse new recruits.
- New recruits should feel motivated to communicate their experiences and consequently encourage more people to take up ringing.

- Ringing should genuinely compete with the attractions of other hobbies and pastimes.
- Ringing should be regarded as a performing art and a team activity, akin to playing in an orchestra.
- Excellence and best practice in tuition, achievement and performance should be promoted in all areas.
- Ringing should be promoted as a key part of our heritage.
- Ringing should engage with communities and civic groups and not be regarded as only a religious activity.
- Ringing should not hide behind its amateur status.
- Many more people should be attracted to and stimulated by ringing.
- All ringers should be **proud** of their hobby

STATUS OF THE RINGING FOUNDATION

The RF is a charitable trust, established in late 2007, with a board of directors, all change ringers, from varying backgrounds. The Foundation is not a committee of the Central Council of Church Bellringers (CCCBR) and is established as an autonomous charitable company. This independent status leaves it free to act on its own initiative recognising the need to work closely both with the Central Council and all established ringing organisations, Guilds and Associations, individual towers and groups. It has registered as a charity No.(TBA) The RF remit is to bring significant funding to the human resource side of change ringing and in so doing the RF must have presented to it projects for ringing development that stand the scrutiny of potential donors: demonstration of benefits to be gained and good probability of outcome. Having canvassed for such projects, sadly, these have not been forthcoming from the ringing community and for the RF to have identity and purpose in pursuing its aims and objectives it must now initiate plans for action. The development of the this plan is therefore consequent upon research and deliberation in looking at where money can make the difference in ensuring that there are sufficient numbers to sustain change ringing into the future.

PRESENT SITUATION OF CHANGE RINGING ACTIVITY

Statement

The number of recruits, particularly of young people, are seen as insufficient to sustain the activities and abilities of change ringing to the extent that it may well decline and decay in the years ahead.

Justification

Evidence for this concern is presented in studies showing an ageing profile of ringers, a downward trend in the number of ringers, a general struggle to attract new recruits and a high dropout rate of those who do manage to master the basic skills of ringing a bell.

The Ringing Trends committee of the CCCBR has published data, datum year 2009, that reveals the following. For Great Britain and Ireland there are an estimated 35,000 ringers counted from the Guilds and Associations affiliated to the CCCBR and this number reflects a decline of 5% over seven years from 2002. Of greater concern is the age profile of active ringers stating that 62% are over 50

and 40% over 60 and just 10% under 20 years of age. Also, of learners coming to ringing in the three years prior, 49% were beyond their fortieth birthday. Countrywide anecdotal evidence confirms the difficulties of attracting and retaining young recruits as reflected in these figures.

Prognosis

The fact that 40% of ringers are over 60 and 10% under 20 means that the age profile will deteriorate further not aided by the otherwise positive influence of those taking up change ringing in later life. Present trends will see the over age 60 rise to above 60% within the next ten years along with the certain reduction in numbers as the current 14,000 ringers over 60 cease to be active over the next twenty years or so. Overall this is a serious situation that bodes ill for the future of change ringing.

Remedy

All activities need young blood if they are to be sustained and change ringing has over 300 years of history; so why is it failing to regenerate its base in the 21st century. This plan addresses the issue with the case that the need to attract young people to change ringing is both fundamental and critical. The focus of the plan is based on training 500 young ringers each year; this figure based on the statement of saying that of the replacement of the 14,000 over 60's, 75% should be of young people which equates to 10,000 over a twenty year period. To achieve this the plan proposes a radical and new approach to recruitment, training and education and one that results in higher standards of accomplishment and much improved retention rates. In doing this, change ringing will be following what is already standard practice for similar and competing leisure pursuits.

OVERVIEW OF RECRUITMENT & TRAINING

Present Practice - Recruitment

The traditional and largely existing approach to the recruitment and training of change ringers is at the tower level where each band endeavours to be self perpetuating and families of ringers, some going back many generations are fairly common. In previous times recruitment was not a problem and usually there was a ready pool of people wanting a church duty to perform, that came to bellringing giving life long commitment, often sixty years and more. The modern era of greater mobility, of more demands on leisure time and an array of pursuits to follow, particularly for young people, has seriously eroded the erstwhile natural base that could be tapped to sustain numbers. Bellringing as a hobby has poor public perception, often reduced to parody, and not something that young people would normally be aware of or attracted to.

Present Practice - Training

Being largely tower based the teaching and training of ringers is hugely fragmented and too often of poor quality inevitably leading to high drop out of recruits and waste of time and resources. Whilst the CCCBR has published over the years a large number of handbooks, guides and manuals the teaching process across ringing is not standard or consistent and more often than not the tutor is merely doing it the way in which he or she was taught. Similarly, although modern electronic aids are available, their use may be considered the exception in a tower teaching environment that is generally

not conducive to giving the new recruit the time or stimulation to excite progress. A number of Ringing Centres have been created in the last decade as a means of raising teaching standards but this approach, whilst having some success, has not gained the momentum for change in the methods of ringing education and training.

FUNDING OF CHANGE RINGING

Ringers have brought substantial money to the physical asset element of change ringing. The need to maintain and restore rings of bells has been well recognized and particularly over the last thirty years with ringers being at the forefront of raising currently, on average, over £2m per year for bell restoration. Whilst there is some way to go to say that all bell installations are in secure working order this effort has had enormous impact and demonstrates the generosity of ringers both of time and money in support of change ringing.

The investment of time in the training and education of new recruits is much greater but as the numbers above show the returns on this are poor and deserve to be much better. This plan presents the case for making all that effort much more productive through adopting a structured approach to training backed up by professional help and guidance and modern and effective teaching methods. This will cost money, budgeted at £100k per year, a large sum, but just 5% of the amount invested in bell projects and ultimately what is the point of all the bells if there are not enough change ringers to ring them. The issue of the lack of young ringers has been on the national agenda for many many years and the time has come to admit that a wholly voluntary solution will not remedy this. Asking for the equivalent of £3 per year from each active change ringer can surely not be too much.

THE PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED

Weaknesses

Examination of the weaknesses of present practices suggest

- Poor public perception of change ringing as an interesting and satisfying leisure pursuit.
- Lack of focus in recruiting.
- An inadequate structure for instruction and training.
- Generally poor teaching.

Resistance to Change

However much it were wished not to be the case, changing ringing has to compete with other activities if it is to gain recruits and once recruited the experience of learning has to be a progressive and rewarding one that stimulates long term interest.

Change ringing probably has no direct comparison with other leisure pursuits. But all sporting activity of national interest now has structured teaching and coaching methods and in music, and elsewhere, standards and grades have long been the measure of individual progress.

Other Activities & Organisations

Some extracts on training and education from the web sites of the following.

National Piping Centre – Scottish Pipes

"Our aim is to increase students pleasure and involvement in the art of piping, and to raise the overall standards of certified skill and musicianship."

British Canoe Union

Tests & Awards: "The result is a dynamic coaching pathway which benefits both recreational and competition coaches and their students, providing them with structure and support as they progress."

Royal School of Church Music

"All three core programmes embrace formal and informal learning through practice, experience and reflection, all related to the local situation. Education and training are undertaken formally through courses and programmes of learning, which can all lead to awards and qualifications. Informal and ongoing education and training are achieved through publications"

Modern Approach

Looking at competing activities, then clearly change has to be made and encouraged to embrace a modern approach. One based on the acceptance of moving to a structure that provides for a consistent and defined teaching and learning process that gives recruits a clear vision of what is to be achieved and the time needed to achieve it and stimulates and excites progress along the way.

THE SOLUTIONS

A program to counter the identified weaknesses and one that embraces significant funding as the means of making a step change in the number of change ringers and of their personal progress and development.

Education and Training

- Establish pathway for learning and progress in change ringing.
- Define best teaching practice.
- Create standards for performance measurement.
- Train teachers and develop coaching.
- Provide a framework for delivery and achievement.
- Engage towers and ringers in pursuit of excellence.

Publicity & Recruitment

- Raise the profile of change ringing as a leisure pursuit.
- A focus on the change ringing rather than just bell ringing.
- Appeal to target groups:
    - Schools and colleges.
    - Music.
    - Cultural and heritage.

Change Ringing – Special Issues

As mentioned above, other organisations provide a model to follow but recognition has to be taken of the particular issues presented with change ringing. As noted, the ringing community has successfully entrained funds for bell restoration but made little use of funds to develop ringers. With minimal track record of the latter, and habits attuned everything being 'free' and voluntary, there are barriers to overcome before large scale money can be applied successfully to develop human resource issues. The CCCBR cannot mandate change and whilst there is ready admission of the problems outlined above, failed prior initiatives at all levels would suggest some resistance to change. A heavy handed approach to stripping away existing training methods would only serve to alienate those that need to be encouraged so an incremental approach is called for to register initial success as the driver for a national programme.

Change Ringing – Focus Issues

On the basis of the data, the case for concentrating on the recruitment and training of young people is overwhelming. This is not to ignore the particular issue of late starters nor the creation of more opportunities for developing individual personal skills but if the gulf between young and older ringers gets much wider, then it may not be possible to bridge. In any event the Ringing Foundation cannot address all issues at this early stage.

Recruiting young people means creating the environment in which they are enthused and stimulated. This is likely to be one that involves a group activity and the creation of such groups, through school or college contacts and other social networking has to be a fundamental plank in recruiting strategy.

THE PLAN

From the foregoing it is apparent the best plan is one that allows for an incremental approach for the implementation of new education and training methods, and the admission of financial resources, whilst at the same time engaging for the process of change on a broader scale. Creating the modern teaching framework is the first priority and this can then benefit the new approaches to publicity and recruitment.

TEACHING & EDUCATION

The plan is to establish a new pathway to becoming a change ringer based on setting up a teaching and learning process to advance new recruits to a minimum standard of accomplishment. This will be focused on training teachers of change ringing to defined and accredited standards and embracing a formal curriculum for bell and change ringing instruction and learning.

To put this in place:

- Create the teacher training programme and curriculum for change ringing.
- Establish teacher accreditation, coaching and peer review.
- Work with guilds/associations/towers to initiate programmes.
- Use Ringing/Teaching Centres as the teaching classroom environment.

- Initiate teacher training.
- Implement project to attract recruits.
- Establish learner Groups for organising change ringing training.
- Integrate with towers/Guilds – pursuit of excellence for course graduates.

Implementation follows on rolling this process out to establish, progressively, a national scheme for recruitment and training, standards and qualifications.

Teacher Training Programme

The Integrated Teacher Training Scheme (ITTS) developed by Pip Penney is the programme adopted by the Ringing Foundation. ITTS has been introduced and improved through several courses run since October 2009 and is in its final stages of development. The programme is a modular one that offers basic training that is then advanced through direct pupil tuition to qualified teacher status as succeeding higher levels. The key features of the ITTS are:

- A structured and comprehensive training programme for teachers.
- Built on researched evidence based methods.
- Combining bell handling and change ringing as a single entity.
- Both theory and practical.
- Embraces peer review and mentoring at all stages.
- Involves existing experienced teachers in mentoring and peer review.
- Introduces coaching methodology.
- Supports Certification and accreditation through evidence of accomplishment and systematic monitoring.

Teacher Accreditation

Teacher accreditation will be set up under the auspices of the Ringing Foundation and a "Society of Ringing Instructors" established. Membership and certification, at the appropriate level, will be offered to those who have successfully completed the teacher training programme. Existing teachers and instructors will follow a fast track route for teacher accreditation and be sought as mentors and peers in operation of the ITTS programme. Organisation and administration of the "Association of Ringing Instructors" will include annual review and assessment of practising members.

Training New Recruits

The ITTS runs hand in hand with training change ringers through accredited teachers using a curriculum to provide a consistent and structured pathway to defined levels of accomplishment. A Ringing Curriculum (RC) is being created that sets out the step by step teaching and education process for the learner together with the time and resource inputs required to complete it. For example, a learner enrolling on a course would know that this involved a certain number of stages and periods of instruction to achieve say, Bob Doubles standard through bell handling, rounds and call changes, plain hunt and so on. Again, the RC will define certification and accreditation standards.

Involvement with Guilds & Associations

As stated previously an incremental approach is required for the proposed changes to the teaching and learning of change ringers to take root and there has to be the ready, constant and willing support of experienced ringers at all stages of teaching and learning beyond basic instruction. Inclusion of Guilds/Associations/Towers in ITTS is essential to create the framework for operation and progress. Plans for publicity and recruitment, see below, dovetail into this as do channels for funding of ITTS and ringing curriculum programmes.

Ringing/Teaching Centres

Consistent with the involvement of Guilds/Associations/Towers is the use of Ringing/Teaching Centres as a core part of the teaching environment. Not only is this essential to making best use by using the facilities and aids that these centres offer, but also to provide the focus and identity for the Learning Groups. In this context a Ringing/Teaching Centre is any location that has the facilities to support an ITTS programme.

PUBLICITY & RECRUITMENT

Recruitment

The objective here is to broaden the base of understanding about bells and change ringing within a community and from this to build recruitment programmes that are tailored to the audience being addressed. Initially this will be primarily concerned with young people consistent with the aim of improving the current age profile of change ringers. The underlying issues here are to promote an improved perception of what change ringing is about and to provide an audience of potential recruits with a firm knowledge of the context of change ringing as an activity to pursue. For example:

- Bells, origins and history.
- Bells as musical instruments.
- Bell founding and bell installations.
- Origins of change ringing.
- Evolution and development.
- Change ringing as a performing art.
- How change ringing is practised.

A project for this purpose is presently being initiated with the intention of creating a core presentation programme and modules for specific interest groups promoting active participation in change ringing. A key element of the project is for it to be based on the use of audio, visual, digital, and interactive media and to link to web site developments noted below..

As stated above, publicity and recruitment will require the involvement of Guilds/Associations/Towers for implementation and integration with the teaching programme.

Engagement with Change

Here the task is to manage the process of change that the introduction and adoption of ITTS will bring. The vision of the RF is for ITTS to become the national standard for teaching and training over the next ten to fifteen years and whilst the expectation is that initial success will smooth the path forward, at no stage does the Foundation wish to be critical of or disturb present practice. An inclusive approach is sought, and is in fact required within the RF consitution to offer help and support for projects that benefit the human resource side of change ringing. However, getting the message of change across is an important task and one in which the RF has to be proactive and allocate resources accordingly.

Underpinning the whole delivery of the plan is the requirement for a comprehensive electronic facility to operate systems, drive progress and provide contact and communication for all and everyone both passive and active. Examples of what is required can be found with the British Canoe Union (bcu.org.uk) and the Royal Yachting Association (rya.org.uk).

DELIVERY

Delivery of the plan will be under the banner of Creation of a Modern Teaching Structure (CMTS) and is based on setting up and fostering of Learner Groups firmly attached to Ringing/Teaching Centres. The full support of sponsoring Guilds, Associations and Towers is crucial to this endeavour. The following are the elements for young people.

- Training of Ringing Instructors through ITTS.
- Implementation of recruitment programme.
- Creation of close knit Young People Groups.
- Identification and attachment of group to a Ringing Centre.
- Application of the Ringing Curriculum to train new recruits.
- Firm teacher to pupil ratios.
- Performance monitoring and awards for accomplishment.
- Support of volunteer ringers to facilitate stages beyond bell handling.
- Creation of a National Youth Ringing Society.
- Support and funding for College & University Groups.

Teaching & Training

Young people groups will be set on the model that provides for stimulation and interaction within the group, promotes interest and motivation, and offers frequent distractions away from ringing, all to encourage friendships and loyalty to the group and its common purpose. This is a key element to achieving success and underlines the requirement of having a Ringing/Teaching Centre, not only as the classroom but also as the focus for the group.

As can be understood this description of learner groups allows for a good deal of flexibility in the way they come together and the concept has already been applied with a record of success. For example, recruits from neighbouring towers, school clubs and community groups all provide a platform on

which to build. The intention being that the group becomes self perpetuating and may then be organised by age bands as time goes by and numbers increase.

ITTS courses will provide the trained instructors to support the group. Every recruit will follow the Ringing Curriculum requiring the necessary periods of tuition to achieve, within an average time scale, competence in bell handling at six months, in ringing rounds and call changes at one year and plain hunting and a basic method at two years. Each stage will be monitored to evidence accomplishment to the required standard and be recognised by a performance award.

Operation and delivery of CMTS will be through an entity separate from the RF and will provide the framework for the creation and support of young peoples groups, particularly by arranging recruitment initiatives, training teachers and organising the help of volunteer ringers. Also to provide the overview for securing effective organisation and leadership of each group to avoid, as far as possible, conflicts of personality and policy. It is proposed to make modest expense payments to instructors and volunteer ringers, the latter to facilitate some measure of selection and ensure attendance.

Initially it is proposed to approach all existing young people groups and seek to encourage them to join in a unity of purpose for CMTS and ITTS.

Youth Ringing Society

The proposal is to create a new ringing organisation to which young people can relate within the description of a modern social network of young people with a common interest. The belonging to and identification with this youth society will provide the means by which young people can maintain contact with ringing on their own terms and at a time in their life when connections with local towers and associations become fragile. This Youth Ringing Society would progress to have national coverage within which events and activities will be organised and funded.

Obviously not all young people go on to further education but the thread of linking learner groups and the Youth Ringing Society with college and university ringing societies is one of natural progression. The RF will seek to encourage the creation of University and College societies where these do not exist and to support all through appropriate funding as it is believed that they can do much to further the involvement and interest of young people in change ringing.

Recruitment

Present work is on preparing a bid to Heritage Lottery (HLF) for funds to create a project for broadening the base of knowledge in the community about bells and change ringing, primarily for use in the school extra curricular environment. The objective being that of establishing a base for recruitment and dovetailing this with the ITTS and Ringing Curriculum programmes. The bid will have to be addressed to an HLF region for funds up to £50k with the thinking that this sum will be spent on employing resource for implementation over a two to three year life of the project. Being regional the project will need the support of the area ringing associations as well as Church/Diocesan and education authorities. The idea would be then to replicate the Heritage project across the country, maybe with more support from HLF.

OUTCOMES

The plan objective is to train 500 young people per year as the minimum required to arrest the forecast decline in change ringing numbers. It is envisaged that one or more young people groups be established in some twenty Ringing Centres and the build up to this level be over three years and have limited national coverage by this time.

RESOURCES

The plan envisages that some 200 ITTS accredited ringing instructors be in place of which 50% at stages above level one and 25% above level two. Not all of these instructors would necessarily be active at any given time. Each young people group will require volunteer support to aid progress, the number dependant upon the group size but reckoned to average around fifteen on the roll at any one time for each group, meaning around 300 in total.

For operation the CMTS body will comprise three full time staff, two "Field" officers and an office adminstrator.

Job Function – "Field" Officers

- Promote CMTS to ringing organisations – Guilds/Associations/Towers.
- Set up ITTS courses as required for ringing instructors.
- Initiate and direct recruitment activity.
- Set up young people groups.
- Oversee course enrolment to young people groups.
- Presence and introduction for young people groups.
- Contact every two weeks and visit at least once every three months.
- Presence at completion of training stages – awards and certificates.
- National Youth Ringing Society events and activities.
- Presence with College and University ringing groups.

Job Function – Office Administrator

- Database management of ITTS tutors, new recruit progress with ringing curriculum.
- Course enrolment and CRB protection routines.
- Young people group monitoring and progress.
- HQ of Society of Ringing Instructors.
- Social media network.
- National Youth Ringing Society events/activities organisation.
- Office admin including finances etc.

All of these operations and activities will be based and controlled by electronic means with a comprehensive and robust web interface accessed by all involved with CMTS , ringing instructors, students, ringing centres, volunteers, Guilds, Associations, Towers and the general public.

FINANCES & FUNDING

In summary form this states the costs and revenues of the plan.

	Outline Budget Only		
£000's	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3+**
Expenditure			
Recruitment Project (HLF)	20	20	10
Website Development	15	10	0
Staff Costs & Expenses CMTS	30	40	75
Ringing Centre etc Funding	10	25	25
ITTS & Curriculum Development	5	0	0
Other Expenses	5	10	15
	85	105	125
Income			
HLF Grant (Recruit Project)	25	20	5
Course Fees	5	10	20
	30	30	25
Project Funding	55	75	100
	85	105	125

Course fee income is that of the charge to be made to enrol for both ringing instructor and new recruit training. In terms of a fully funded educational programme the principle of asking for a modest contribution in respect of the new skills being acquired has to be accepted. This has positive influences in promoting a degree of commitment in new recruits and of fostering the thoughts that there is value in what is to be gained. Also, potential external donors will frown upon the proposition of providing benefit through training to individuals without evidence of personal contribution from them. The proposal is to recover 50% of local learner group/ringing centre costs and this would indicate an overall charge of around £40 for each entrant, but not all payable at the point of enrolment. Sponsoring Guilds/Associations/Towers may well wish to cover some or all of this charge.

PART 3

Summary

The Ringing Foundation (RF) was set up on the initiative of the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers for the purpose of raising and allocating funds in support of developing the skills, practice and art of change ringing. An examination of the human resources involved in change ringing has concluded that the there is a serious issue manifest in an aging and declining number of active ringers that threatens to significantly reduce the present activity base. Many factors are involved in this statement but principal among them is the need for change ringing to improve, most importantly for young people, the method and standard of recruitment, education and training and to establish and align these with similar and competing social leisure pursuits. Above all to get a much better outcome for the considerable voluntary time and effort presently being given in recruitment and training.

This plan sets out that case advocating a new professional structure and organisation for the teaching and training of change ringers bringing it into line with modern theory and practice. Overall the desire is to raise the quantity and quality of change ringing and by bringing financial resource into the equation the plan objective is to produce, to a basic change ringing standard, 500 predominantly young people each year from a budget of £100k per annum. It is expected that funding external to the ringing community can be sought but the Foundation has concluded that money for initial implementation has to come from within so that an essential measure of success can be presented to potential donors. Beyond that it is likely that matching of external funding will generally be required. At this stage then, the plan is directed at the ringing community for their consideration and support, not only in the financial implications but also to accept the challenge of the process of change to ensure that change ringing is maintained and enjoyed in the years and decades to come.

Principal Objectives

- To raise the public awareness and understanding of change ringing.
- To aid the recruitment of ringers.
- To create a structured teaching and learning process
- To enhance the quality and quantity of training.

Problems & Profile of Active Ringers

Ringing Trends data shows numbers declining by 5% over seven years, an aging profile and a failure to attract young people to change ringing; 40% are over sixty, numbering around 14,000, and will be lost to core competence over the next 20 years. To replace these with a mix of, say, 75% young people in this period means the delivery of 500 new ringers each year.

Examination of the weaknesses of present practices suggest

- Poor public perception of change ringing as an interesting and satisfying leisure pursuit.
- A muddled approach to recruitment that has little focus and appeal.
- A very fragmented teaching base that lacks consistency and is too often of poor quality.
- A failure to compete with other activities in the process of gaining new recruits.

Funded Solutions

A structure maintained by full time, i.e. paid people and resources ,that:-

- Assists with community involvement in stimulating interest and attracting recruits.
- Defines best teaching practice and create standards for performance measurement.
- Trains teachers, develops coaching and institutes generally accepted teaching methods.
- Provides a framework for delivery that monitors progress and secures results.
- Sees measurable success from the investment of voluntary time and effort.
- Engages towers and ringers in pursuit of excellence.

On the basis of the data, the case for concentrating on the recruitment of young people is overwhelming. On the issue of funding, the ringing community has successfully entrained funds for bell restoration but made little use of funds to develop ringers. With minimal track record of the latter, and habits attuned to everything being "free" and voluntary, there are barriers to be overcome before large scale money can be won successfully to develop human resources.

The Plan

At the heart of the plan is the premise that the present freely given time and resources devoted to training be supported in a way that can that can significantly enhance productivity and outcomes. This by providing defined teaching programmes, measuring and rewarding progress, and relief of burdens in course administration and record keeping. The proposal is to promote The Integrated Teacher Training Scheme (ITTS) as the modern consistent and defined teaching and learning process giving a clear vision of what is to be achieved and the time and effort needed to achieve it. Alongside this the implementation of a publicity project designed to broaden the base of understanding about bells and change ringing within a community and from this attract recruits from an audience already having firm knowledge of the context, history and culture of change ringing. ITTS embraces the following:

- A teacher training programme and curriculum for instruction and learning change ringing.
- Teacher accreditation, coaching and peer review – Creation of Association of Ringing Instructors.
- Use of Ringing/Teaching Centres as the teaching classroom environment.
- Certification and pursuit of excellence in training new ringers.
- Gaining maximum benefit from the volunteer effort in teaching and training.
- Working with Guilds/Associations/Towers to initiate and expedite.

Delivery

Delivery of the plan will be under the banner of Creation of a Modern Teaching Structure (CMTS) and is based on adopting the model already found in many existing young people ringing groups. Operating as an entity separate from the RF the CMTS will create and develop more groups across the country using and applying ITTS with the following key features.

- Young people groups - recruits from neighbouring towers, school clubs etc..
- Firm teacher to pupil ratios with performance monitoring and average accomplishment for recruits of rounds/call changes at one year and plain hunting at two years.
- An ethos that fosters group identity, loyalty and social interaction complete with the description of a modern social network of young people with a common interest.
- Full support and provision of volunteer experienced ringers by sponsoring Guilds/Associations/Towers.

To provide for the continuity of young people's involvement with change ringing two further initiatives will be developed. Firstly the setting up of a national youth society to which all recruits can belong, and secondly active promotion and support for ringing groups in colleges and university everywhere.

Resources & Outcomes

As stated the plan objective is to produce 500 young ringers per year as the minimum required to arrest the forecast decline in change ringing numbers and to build up to this number over a period of three years. It is envisaged that in excess of twenty young people groups are necessary to achieve this and that, in total, this will require 200 ITTS accredited ringing instructors and the committed support of 300 experienced helpers. . Initially it is proposed to approach all existing young people groups and seek to encourage them to join in a unity of purpose for CMTS and ITTS.
At year three the CMTS body will have two "Field Officers" and an office administrator building up to this as funds allow. Underpinning the whole delivery of operations and activities is a comprehensive electronic facility that operates systems, drives progress and provides a robust web interface with universal access.

Finances & Funding

Course fee income is that of the charge to be made to enroll for both ringing instructor and new recruit training. In terms of a fully funded educational programme the principle of asking for a modest contribution in respect of the new skills being acquired has to be accepted. The proposal is to recover 50% of local group/ringing centre costs and this would indicate an overall charge of around £40 for each entrant, not all payable at the point of enrolment. Sponsoring Guilds/Associations/Towers may well wish to cover some or all of this charge. ITTS cost include the principle of expense reimbursement to instructors and volunteers. The recruitment project is planned to be largely funded by a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The proposal is to find year one funding, amounting to £55k from within the ringing community with the expectation that the progress and results within this period provide the platform for a major external funding campaign.

WEBSITE

ringingfoundation.com

The Ringing Foundation Ltd., a company Limited by Guarantee.
c/o Abbot Creswell, 179 Upper Richmond Road West, East Sheen, London, SW14 8DU

Further copies are available to download from our website ringingfoundation.com

RJH: 25-05-11