

Leeds Branch Bulletin

Ringling Resumes

May 2021



From Monday May 17th, ringing is able to head towards a more 'normal' feel as the latest restrictions of the governmental roadmap come into effect. This bulletin aims to help towers and ringers make the best possible decisions, and offers help and guidance into what can be done from the 17th May 2021.

The Rule of Six applies indoors - This means that only six people from different families can meet at one time. (However, if only two families are meeting together, the total can exceed 6 persons). In practice this means that ringing sessions should be pre-arranged for 6 people, rather than drop-in.

Hands - Face - Space rules apply. Hand sanitisation should take place before ringing and before changing ropes. Face coverings should be worn at all times inside. Social distancing in the tower should be 2 metres at all non-ringing times. But whilst ringing, "1 metre plus mitigations" will be acceptable.

Restrict ringing time to 45 minutes, whilst maintaining good tower ventilation. During these weeks, longer periods of ringing should be restricted to planned episodes undertaken by low risk individuals. Research into ventilation is ongoing and guidance on using CO₂ monitoring equipment to demonstrate the effectiveness of ventilation in a particular tower should become available soon.

Consider **Lateral Flow Tests**. If you have a band with a mixture of vaccinated and unvaccinated ringers and wish for additional information on whether you are carrying the virus, a lateral flow test performed during the previous 48 hours may be helpful.

In brief - what you can do again

Up to 6 pre-arranged people can ring for Sunday service or for practice for up to 45 minutes in a well-ventilated ringing room.

You can swap ropes between rings as long as you sanitise your hands each time.

Low risk individuals in a well-ventilated ringing room could ring a sub-45 minute quarter peal.

The same group of people could ring at several towers on the same day - for example to ring at more than one tower on a Sunday morning.

In brief - what you can't do

You can't ring for more than 45 minutes.

You can't have more than 6 people in the ringing room - so you can't hold open practices where anyone can turn up.

You can't teach anyone as you have to keep a distance of 1+ metre.

You should avoid mixing with too many different people, so one person shouldn't ring with two different bands on a Sunday morning.

Restricting the time of ringing during this period is not a statutory requirement, but a recommendation for this transition period based on an average well-ventilated ringing chamber. If your ringing room has less ventilation than average then you should keep your ringing to less than 45 minutes. You may decide it is not appropriate to ring at all.

If you decide not to ring in your own tower at the moment, then why not consider taking your whole band to ring somewhere else? There are lots of churches in the branch with no ringers who would love to hear their bells ringing again, and some of them will have better ventilated ringing rooms than your own tower.

Whether you decide to ring straight away or use the time to prepare your tower for when restrictions are fully relaxed, please ask the branch committee if you need any advice or help with anything.



Before you ring -

Make sure your vicar and PCC are happy for you to ring again & make sure your ringers are happy to ring again.

Make sure a Risk Assessment has been undertaken (the Health and Safety Officer of the PCC should do this with assistance from the tower captain).

Make sure the bells are safe to ring again – the branch can organise a maintenance check for you if necessary.

If more than six of your ringers are ready to come back to ringing, make up a rota so that everyone gets their turn to ring as part of a session of 6. Make sure each ringer has a chance to have a practice before their first time back at Sunday ringing.

Personal risk

Returning to ringing is not risk-free, even after receiving two doses of vaccine. So it is important for each individual to carefully consider, and personally decide, whether it is appropriate for them to do so – with respect to their own health, that of their fellow ringers, and of the community as a whole.

In addition, some people, although possibly at low personal risk if they were to contract the infection, may be at greater risk of catching it, and then passing it on to the rest of the band. Having a negative lateral flow test in the 48 hours prior to ringing may help the band feel more confident about ringing in these circumstances (data suggests that over 75% of those with COVID test positive with these tests and over 95% of those with high viral loads).

You should make your own decision about whether you start ringing again now or later. No one will pressure you or criticize you. It is up to you. Read the following link to help you decide - [Should I ring?](#)

Think about the neighbours

Consider putting notices in newsletters, church and local circulation groups highlighting that ringing is intended to resume in line with government restrictions, and that bells are likely to be heard at certain times again. Perhaps warn them that the bellringers are a bit rusty and might take some time to get back into practice. If you'd like a flyer that you can adapt to suit your tower to post through local letterboxes, get in touch with the branch secretary.

Some locals to the tower might have forgotten the bells are there and could object when ringing suddenly restarts.

Risk assessment

More Covid-related information is in the following CCCBR links.

[Reducing risk by how we behave](#)

[Think about the physical environment](#)

and you will find lots of information about Risk Assessments on the Stewardship and Management page of the CCCBR website under the Tower Operation tab:-

[CCCBR Stewardship and Management](#)

Maintenance

If your bells haven't been rung for more than a year, it is a good idea to check the condition of the bells to make sure that they are safe to ring again.

The branch can arrange a maintenance inspection for your tower (which will be paid for from branch funds). If you need help with any other maintenance issue, for example, rope splicing, please get in touch with someone on the committee, who will be happy to help.

Advice is also available on the CCCBR page [here](#) under the Tower Infrastructure tab.

Getting fit to ring

Ringing helps keep us fit, but we've all been out of practice for some time. The following link has plenty of good advice and exercises to get you match fit again. [Get fit to ring](#)

Review regularly

Regularly review whether it is still safe to ring and for how long, depending on local circumstances (infection rates in your area), the health and personal exposure of members of your band, as well as CCCBR guidance (which we will update you with). The most up to date information from CCCBR is usually found [here](#).

If you need any help or have any questions, please email - leedsbr.editor@gmail.com or contact a member of the committee.