



# Branch Tower Recovery Ringing Review

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*The Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers*  
Sonning Deanery Branch



# Branch Tower Recovery Ringing Survey

- Survey carried out in August & September 2021
- Status of ringing in the branch:
  - 3 churches are not ringing for either practice or services
  - 4 churches have retained all their ringers, all others have either lost at least one person and/or ringers have yet to return
  - 8 churches (out of 17) do not have enough ringers to ring all their bells but some (2) benefit with visitors to make up numbers and 3 other churches need all their members to turn up to ring all the bells.





# Branch Tower Recovery Ringing Survey



- Branch Tower Covid 19 precautions
  - All towers are taking the standard Covid 19 precautions (hand sanitizer and ventilation where possible)
  - Some towers are asking that lateral flow tests are taken or encouraged on the day of ringing
  - Masks are used at a few churches
  - 2 towers have reduced their practice time
  - All except one tower are allowing visitors



# Branch Tower Recovery Ringing Survey



- Is help required within the branch to resume ringing?
  - 3 towers indicated they would welcome some form of help from the branch:
    - Support at practice night
    - Recruitment of new ringers and targeted training
    - Training of new ringers
- Return of branch practices?
  - Of the 14 towers that responded only 2 were not keen



# Branch Ringing skills improvement and training needs - summary



- Ringing has resumed in the branch, but most towers reported a loss of ringers and approximately half are unable to ring all their bells
- Bell handling training, support at practices and targeted training needed
- Most correspondents welcomed the prospect of the return of branch practices
  - need to take into consideration which churches would be best to minimise infection risk



# Survey Recommendations



- Consider sponsoring an ART handling training course to increase the number of people in the branch who can teach bell handling
- Develop a branch recruitment campaign for new or returning ringers
- Branch practices organised at 'Covid friendly' towers

**Resumption of branch practices, but what do we need them to be?**



# Discussion: What type of branch practices are required by our members?



## Proposal ideas

- Move away from our traditional branch practice where we ring whatever is capable of by the ringers at that particular practice and focus our practices on 4 distinct types for specific needs:
  - Elementary: taking a ringer who can just handle a bell to basic hunting
  - Intermediate: Plain and Treble Bob methods (Minor, Triples, Major)
  - Advanced: Stedman, Delight and Surprise (Minor, Triples, Major)
  - 10 bell ringing
- Practices may be replaced or supplemented by quarter peal attempts to support extended ringing practice
- Consider using existing tower mid-week practices to be replaced occasionally by one of the focused practice types?
- Encourage towers that are in close proximity to support each other, e.g. alternate practices