

## **Youth Officer's Report. November Business Meeting.**

### **Activities this year**

Youth Practices have been planned for each month, but have not always taken place due to lack of numbers (one was cancelled due to the death of Queen Elizabeth). Successful practices have been held at Arborfield (twice) and others are planned for Hurst (27/11) and Easthampstead (11/12). A total of 6 young ringers have attended events. I think one reason for low numbers at the start was due to exams and then summer holidays. I would like to thank all the adult volunteers who help with the practices, in particular Steve Wells.

Links have been made with the Berkshire and Buckinghamshire Young Ringers band (BBYR). They also hold practices once a month and these are attended by a number of young ringers from the Sonning Deanery (at least 4 as far as I am aware). One of the young ringers was part of the BBYR band at the World Youth Championships this year and others are keen to take part next year.

Initial contact has also been made with the Reading Branch and this will be followed up to see if joint events could take place.

### **Questions for the business meeting**

#### **Low attendance**

I would like to ask Tower Captains whether they have young ringers who do not attend the youth practices and if so, is there a common reason for non-attendance? I'd be interested to see if it is time/date that is inconvenient (2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month, in the afternoon) or whether youth ringers do not want to ring outside of their home band? I struggle with the fact that the emails about practices mainly go to the parents of young ringers so I do appreciate Tower Captains advertising events to their bands.

I have noticed that we are tending to get ringers who are under 15 and I would like to know if there is a particular reason older ringers (16 – 23ish) do not attend – whether it is homework/job pressures or transport issues? I also wonder if there is a perception that the youth practices are for beginner ringers, which is very much not the case – everyone is welcome!

If practices continue to be cancelled due to lack of ringers (we will run with a minimum of 3 ringers), I wonder if it would be better to combine forces with BBYR? Or perhaps the youth band could run a 'tower takeover' for one evening every other month, attending regular practices?

#### **New members**

I would like to ask the Tower Captains if they have capacity in their towers for new, young ringers? The Duke of Edinburgh award scheme may be a good way to attract new recruits as individuals have to commit to either 3 months or 6 months of 1 hour a week skills-based activities. Please let me know if there is capacity at particular towers and I will be happy to contact the nearest secondary schools to talk about bell ringing and try and recruit new ringers.

#### **Future venues**

I'd like to make sure that practices are held across the branch so that the maximum number of ringers have the opportunity to attend and also so that our young ringers get experience of ringing in different towers. Please can Tower Captains let me know if a youth practice can be organised at their tower?

Thank you to all Tower Captains and others for their continued support.

Jennifer Moynihan 18/11/22