

## REINVIGORATING RINGING IN KENT

### Responding to the 2017 Survey

The Association Chairman has met on two occasions with the Chairmen, Ringing Masters and (where they exist) Training Officers of the six districts.

The first meeting was on June 10<sup>th</sup> in St Mary's Platt. We reviewed the key findings of the survey and then shared information and ideas about what is occurring in each of the Districts at present.

A number of common issues emerged.

- The importance of maintaining interest for more experienced ringers as well as those whose current ringing is at a more basic level. Three Districts gave examples where a narrow focus on the needs of less advanced ringers (and in some cases active hostility towards the better ringers, apparently on grounds of elitism) had had the effect of better ringers no longer supporting District events.
- Few Districts have a *structured* series of training events at present, more often waiting for requests for specific pieces of training.
- There are opportunities to create more opportunities at all levels by thinking outside District boundaries and we need to do more of this. – both as pairs or groups of Districts and Association-wide events.
- There is a need to improve basic ringing training and to provide some guidance on a standardised way that handling in particular can be taught.
- We should explore whether a group of teaching hubs might be effective in Kent (similar to the Birmingham School of Ringing)
- We should increase the central coordination of teaching and development within the Association and develop opportunities for trainers to discuss training at a Kent-wide level.
- Given the importance of good leadership at both tower captain / ringing master and Association officer level we should focus on developing this within the county.

There was then a follow up meeting following the 8-bell striking competition at Aylesford on June 30<sup>th</sup>. We explored some ideas for

- Raising awareness of ringing amongst non-ringers (some of whom we would like to become future ringers)
- Teaching bell handling as effectively as possible – to try to achieve the aim of at least one ringer per rope in the Association area by the AGM in 2021.
- A more proactive approach to training events
- Making more of the potential of the whole Association
  - Inter-District events
  - Association-wide events including more advanced practices (e.g. Surprise Major, Stedman Caters / S Royal)
  - Improving our communication with individual members

While all of this is very exciting it will need people to lead in specific areas and others to assist. I hope that all members of the committee will want to help the

Association flourish and will be willing to commit their own skills to helping us with all of this work.

I am sorry that a long-arranged prior engagement means that I cannot be with you to discuss this myself on July 28<sup>th</sup> but hope that those who were present at our two meetings are able to provide some more detail. Please drop me an email or give me a call to discuss anything or indeed to add your own thoughts and ideas.

**Phillip Barnes**  
**Chairman, KCACR**