



Planning a Regional Handbell Ringing Event

If you are involved planning a Regional Rally, Concert or Regional Christmas Festival, you are hosting it on behalf of the Regional Committee so the Committee will want to ensure that National and Regional policies are followed.

The Committee will give you as much help as you need – some teams like to do as much as they can, others prefer to just concentrate on the ‘domestic’ aspects.

Issue - 2

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1. Location

The hall or church may already have been selected or pre-booked but let's check it out anyway:

Check list:

Is the hall big enough for the number of ringers you have in mind?

Remember to take a tape measure; don't rely on estimates, paces or information from the hirer!

Are the acoustics good?

Generally hard floors are better than carpet

Is there good access, preferably without steps, for loading and unloading tables and bells?

Is there enough parking – if not is there somewhere nearby?

Is there a kitchen or another area for making tea with a kettle or boiler, cups, spoons etc?

Are we permitted to use these?

Is food or drink allowed to be taken into the hall or church?

Are there one or more separate rooms available?

It would be ideal to have somewhere to eat and drink and/or to use as a 'creche' for youngsters in the meantime.

Are there enough toilets and are they nice and clean?

We like to hold a raffle or draw, does the hirer allow this?

(You will need to agree with the Committee before the invitations are printed what the draw is in aid of; each team is asked to bring a prize)

Are there tables and enough chairs available?

(Many teams will not want to bring their own tables and you'll need others – for food, Regional bells, raffle, sales table, etc)

Make a note of how many tables are available and their size (check that they are 'normal' height and not the very low ones)

Is there enough light and do the windows have curtains/blinds in case there is too much? How about after dark?

Does the hall have a PA system? Are we allowed to use it?

Is it warm enough?

Are fire extinguishers in evidence?

Is there somewhere for ringers to change into concert uniform?

How about a room where ringers' belongings can be locked away?

If HRGB sales is to be present, is there suitable space (2 or 3 tables)?

2. Booking the hall/church

Obtain a copy of the booking form and talk it through with the hirer covering the following points. Send it to the Regional Treasurer (alternatively the local team can hire the hall and the Treasurer will reimburse the team – useful if there is a special hiring rate for 'local' organisations.)

Next check list:

Is everything included in the price – no hidden extras such as tables and chairs, PA system? Do we have to pay VAT?

What about electricity – is there a meter?

Is there a maximum number of people allowed in the hall?

Do you think the charge is reasonable?

(The price will determine what ringers are charged; the higher the charge, the fewer ringers will attend)

Are there specific insurance requirements?

(As long as it is seen and advertised as an HRGB event, HRGB will usually cover insurance)

Is a deposit required and when is it payable?

Does the caretaker have to be paid?

Who supplies consumables such as toilet rolls?

Can you find out if the hall is covered by its own PRS (Performing Rights Society) licence?

If you identify a problem or potential risk bring it to the attention of the Committee – usually a Committee member will have been nominated as your main contact.

4. The event format

Think about the content of the event and who it is aimed at. Most Regional events are aimed at the more proficient teams and often provide a showcase for solo items of ringing by teams interspersed with massed ringing items.

With the Committee you need to plan an attractive event and decide:

What time will the event start?

(Remember to allow enough time between doors open and the start time to allow for setting up)

Who will open the proceedings?

(If a National or Regional Officer or Committee Member is present it is usual to invite them to do so or to speak at some time)

What time will it finish?

(Generally winter events should end earlier to allow travel)

Will there be breaks for tea or food? How often and for how long?

(Remember ringers have to concentrate so they will need a break – but they don't want to get bored)

Will you need a sound system? Is there one at the hall? If not, who will get it?

(Contact the Committee before hiring one)

Who will choose and produce the massed ringing music?

(The Committee will usually decide this – but if you have ideas or preferences, they'll be taken on board)

Who will conduct the massed ringing?

(The Committee will usually decide this too, perhaps bringing in a guest from another Region – but if you have ideas, they will be considered)

Are tower bells available for ringing? Is there an opportunity during the day's programme?

Who will play in the concert (if there is to be one - see para 5)?

(The Committee make this decision but the organising team would usually be included)

5. A Concert?

Discuss with the Committee whether a public concert should be laid on.

On the one hand it is a good 'showcase' opportunity for the teams - but only if the locality is likely to produce an audience. On the other hand it is important that only the best standards of ringing are displayed.

Consider the effect an audience will have on the capacity of the hall.

If there is to be an audience, is there an area where they can be accommodated with a good view of the ringers?

Especially check fire exits for both audience and ringers.

Consider inviting the local Mayor or other dignitaries to the concert.

Make sure local press, local radio and TV are aware of the concert and consider posters around the town.

You will need to decide on ticket cost, get tickets printed and, if possible get local shops to sell them in advance - consider making tickets bought in advance cheaper than those sold at the door.

The Committee will usually get programmes printed

6. The booking form

This is the key to success of any rally as it 'sells' the event to the teams who may come. It is usually produced by the Committee. To keep costs down we expect teams to register their interest in events through Newsletter advertisements but you may want to target closer teams directly. Please encourage any local non-HRGB teams and ringers to come along as well. (they may not be allowed to ring solo items, however). To help with design of the invitation you may be asked to obtain a picture of the venue or other local landmark for the front cover and a location map is necessary.

Proof read the invitation to ensure inclusion of the following:

- ✓ The date, time (start and finish if possible), location and post code.
- ✓ The time teams may arrive to set up.
- ✓ A description of the event so that teams can see whether it is what they want to attend.
- ✓ The price for HRGB members and non-members. (*It is HRGB policy that members should pay less than non-members for attending Regional events*)
- ✓ The price for Juniors and non-ringers
- ✓ Food costs and options (*It's a good idea to list the menu twice, one for sending back to you, one for the team to retain as a reminder of what they ordered!*)
- ✓ What massed ringing music will be used and where it can be obtained.
- ✓ Would the team like to be considered for ringing in the concert? (*Teams playing to a public audience may be asked to sign a certificate that they comply with copyright - it may be worth mentioning this in the invitation*)

- ✓ Add an admin fee per team (to cover postage, copying etc)
 - ✓ Ask for the team's table size for the floor plan
 - ✓ Photography notice: (eg *You are asked to note that photographs of this event may be published in the Regional Newsletter, the Society journal **Reverberations**, HRGB websites and other media publications as appropriate; those wishing to take photographs/videos must obtain permission from the organisers*)
 - ✓ Safeguarding notice: The Safeguarding officer for this event is (name); (email or telephone number); *if you are bringing young people to this event please advise the Safeguarding officer of who will be responsible for them on the day.*
 - ✓ Space for a list of all potential attendees (see appendix 1)
 - ✓ All cheques to be made payable to HRGB SW.
 - ✓ A return address for bookings. And a telephone number for enquiries.
- Because this is sent out on behalf of HRGB the booking form must be approved by either the Chairman, Secretary or Treasurer before issue.***

7. Teamwork

It's a good idea to spread the workload for the day between as many people as possible. Get your team together and parcel up the jobs. Some jobs are best done by the Committee (marked ** below) but it would be a good idea to have one of your team working with them:

- ✓ **Preparing and sending out invitations
- ✓ Local advertising, posters etc. (especially if there is to be a concert with a public audience)
- ✓ ** Receiving bookings, keeping track of payments, numbers of ringers, meals ordered etc.
- ✓ A liaison person for catering to arrange food, tea, coffee, whatever you decide (see section 8) - and washing up!
- ✓ **A 'floor manager' to work out how best to fit the teams in the hall and to help them on the day. Make sure all fire exits are clear. Leave enough room between tables for a chair and for someone to pass behind it.
- ✓ A quiz sheet to fill in those quiet moments is a good idea.
- ✓ Reception staff to welcome the ringers.
- ✓ Someone to run the raffle and sell tickets. (*Remember to say what it is in aid of - you will need to agree this with the Committee first*)

- ✓ An m/c (or perhaps more than one); to introduce the teams (and someone to find out a little about the teams). If a public audience is to be present it is a good idea to make sure the chosen m/c is very knowledgeable about handbells and ringing! *(Make sure he or she knows the importance of 'keeping things moving'. It's a good idea to announce teams in advance so they are ready to ring - and make sure they don't take more than their fair share of time!)*
- ✓ Who will steward the event - will they need badges or other means of identification?
- ✓ Do you also need someone in the car park?
- ✓ If there is to be an audience, who will take money or tickets?
- ✓ Can you put up direction signs to the event? Who will put them out? – and take them in again afterwards? *(The Committee can provide suitable signs if required)*
- ✓ At the end of the event make sure someone is responsible for cleaning up, disposing of rubbish (if this is called for in the terms of hire) and removing any property left behind for safe keeping.
- ✓ Who will do the write-up for the Regional magazine?
- ✓ For Christmas events, is an organist required? *(You'll need to find out if the organ is in standard pitch if it is to play with the bells. Playing with bells is not straightforward, check with the Committee before asking a local organist)*
- ✓ Do you need speakers or readers? Who will find and invite them? *(e.g. for lessons in Church at Christmas)*
- ✓ At Christmas we usually support a local charity, does the venue provider have a 'pet' charity? *(Can they supply someone to speak about it?)*
- ✓ And what about a member of the local clergy to lead opening and closing prayers? Who will invite him/her.
- ✓ ** Send details to the Committee who will produce programmes for the evening
- ✓ At the end of the event send receipts for all expenditure to the Regional Treasurer. *(Other than at the Christmas Festival, profits may be split between the host team and HRGB; the split will be decided by the Committee and will depend on the amount of involvement of the host team)*

8. Catering

The Treasurer can advance the organising team a sum of money to cover small costs, any larger bills should be sent to him for payment.

Remember that some of your ringers will have travelled long distances to the event and might appreciate something hot, especially on a cold day.

Don't forget vegetarians and special diets. Ask for details on the booking form and see what can be provided – if it becomes difficult it may be better to agree a reduction in cost and ask them to bring something of their own.

There are several ways of catering at a Rally. Which you decide on will depend on the start and end times of the event, cost, local facilities and any limitations placed on us by the hirer of the hall.

- a 'faith' or 'American' tea. (Ask the ringers to bring something along, sandwiches, quiches, cakes etc. Pool these and invite people to help themselves to the food at tea time) or
- especially in schools, ask the local authority to quote for providing a cooked meal (it can be expensive but may be the only option permitted in some schools) or
- get local fish and chips, pizza or burgers delivered, or
- ask the local team to make sandwiches, cakes etc. and sell these to the ringers.

You may need to produce meal tickets.

Try to find someone with a Food Hygiene Certificate to oversee the handling and storage of food.

9. On the day

- ✓ ***Stay calm.*** No matter how much planning you have put in, something will go wrong for somebody. Remember a complaint can easily be neutralised by a sympathetic ear and a smile!
- ✓ Put up any necessary internal signs, e.g. to toilets.
- ✓ Before the caretaker or hirer's representative departs, check that there are toilet rolls and soap; that lights and sound systems work.
- ✓ Try to have some 'movers and shifters' available to help people move tables and bells as they arrive.
- ✓ Save time when drawing the raffle by getting ringers to check if they have won by labelling the prizes with winning tickets.

10. Photography

Any member of HRGB or professional organisation wishing to take photographs or video images of the event should seek permission from the organisers and will be expected to provide evidence of their membership of HRGB, relationship to an HRGB member or professional organisation.

The rally invitation should include a warning that: *Photographs of this event may be published in Regional Newsletters, the Society Journal "Reverberations", HRGB websites and other local media publications as appropriate.*

Should objections be raised to the taking of photographs of a particular group or individual, the images must not be used under any circumstances.

If young people are attending, a permission form can be downloaded from the HRGB website: <https://handbells.org.uk/permission-form>

11. Safeguarding

Advice on is available from the Regional Safeguarding Officer (see <https://handbells.org.uk/regional-safeguarding-officers> for details)

At HRGB-organised events where children and young people are participating, a named **Event Safeguarding Lead** should be identified and published

The Event Safeguarding Lead should be present at the event they are responsible for (the Safeguarding Lead may be the Event Organiser, though this is not recommended). They should make themselves available to participants who have safeguarding and child protection concerns, though these are likely to be rare. They should make sure that their name and contact details are made available either before or during the event or both. They do not need to be "experts" in safeguarding and child protection matters, but should be approachable and able to listen with empathy to others' concerns.

The Event Organiser should have a record of who is responsible for each of the young people attending the event. This may be, for example, the Team Leader who has booked them into the event, or a teacher, parent or a Society member acting in *loco parentis*.

You will need to have a list of all participants' names and teams in case contact needs to be made with any participants after the event. This list should be kept for a year and then be destroyed. (*N.B. This is also be*

important in the case of fire or other emergency; Emergency Services attending a venue will ask for a complete list of occupants / participant.)

12. After the event

- ✓ Make sure the venue is left clean and tidy.
- ✓ Send out thank you letters to m/c's, conductors, helpers etc..
- ✓ Send all receipts, booking forms and a summary of expenditure to the Treasurer.
- ✓ Send report and any photographs to the Newsletter editor. Preferably on disc or by email.

Thank you for helping to put on this event - we hope you enjoy the day and don't find it too stressful!

Appendix 1

HRGB Safeguarding Policy

Please give the names of ringers who will probably attend; one of the organisers will check these off with you on the day, deleting anyone not present and/or adding any additional attendees. Ringing fees will be adjusted accordingly.

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