

## Points from Master's Discussion Item, Guild Committee, 28<sup>th</sup> November 2015

**What could you offer to arrange for your own branch together with another branch?**

**What would you appreciate being invited to another branch to join in with?**

**You may also like to reflect on what you already do.**

Most are as submitted. Those in italics are from notes taken on the day.

### **W+W**

What could you offer to arrange for your own branch together with another branch?

Outings

8 bell practices - perhaps including some dedicated to a method/group of methods eg surprise, triples  
Anthony has effectively organised an outing for Abingdon tower, but has also invited others from neighbouring branches.

Many of our branch practices are joint with City Branch, which is a reciprocal arrangement, especially useful for 8 bell practices.

What would you appreciate being invited to another branch to join in with?

Outings

10 bell practices (since we have no 10 bell towers!)

Advanced practices (not necessarily advanced for the other branch, but advanced for us!)

QPAs

You may also like to reflect on what you already do.

Visiting practices/service ringing in neighbouring branches (ONB (Abingdon), VoWH (Shrivenham, Faringdon), Chipping Norton (Burford)) (NB - some of our towers also benefit from CB assistance with practices (Yarnton/Bletch/Kidlington) & service ringing (Cassington? Eynsham? May be on hold during roadworks though)

QPAs with neighbouring branches (members regularly ring QPAs with members of CB & South Oxon, and occasionally with members of ONB, VoWH)

Joint practices and outings as above

Arranging courses together (eg 1-2 ITTS courses/year with ONB and VoWH)

Most of the interaction is mutually beneficial.

### **VOWH**

The Vale Branch is surrounded by the

- ONB, Oxford City and Witney & Woodstock branches of the ODG and - Swindon and Cirencester branches of the Gloucester & Bristol Association.

We are presently working with all of these branches in various ways,

- Use of equipment e.g. my mini ring or another branch's portable dumb bell

- use of facilities e.g. Longcot is popular for courses with the G&B branches

- running courses and inviting other branches to join in

- joint outings e.g. young persons' outing with ONB

- sharing ideas such as the branch email lists and adding members or officers of adjoining branches

- assisting by advising nearby towers on minor improvements to their bells thus supplementing the existing work of the Towers & Belfries Committee

- spreading good practice

### **South Oxon**

This is a recap from casual discussions/emails with members and tower captains across the branch.

The general feedback was – additional “regular” events would be too much. People are too busy now. Odd occasions- or targeted events are manageable. What could you offer to arrange for your own branch together with another branch? Special practices (either advanced or beginner) What would you appreciate being invited to another branch to join in with? Again – a one off event like above You may also like to reflect on what you already do. Individual people attend across borders practices and events already. Young Ringers already participate in broad events Our advanced Surprise Major/Minor practices draw a few from outside the branch. Parting comment – someone asked how they could easily find out where they could go to a practice “at the drop of a hat”. This was from a visiting ringer from south of London (can’t remember where). He had a hard time finding any information on the internet about practices in and around Oxford. If there is something on the web – perhaps we could publicise it better. (I’ve not actually checked this out myself... but something akin to A Church Near You might help).

### **Sonning Deanery**

*On edge of W+P and Guildford.*  
*Share events calendar.*  
*Joint 8-bell striking competition with Reading branch.*  
*Training course – invite Reading.*  
*Officers attend each other’s AGMs to see what happens.*

### **Reading**

*Joint striking competition with Sonning D.*  
*Branch outing – invite neighbours.*  
*Individual ringers help at towers in other branches.*

### **Oxford City** *(this was emailed too late to read at the meeting)*

Two of our 8-bell towers (St Giles and St Andrew's) have monthly Surprise Major practices, which we wouldn't have a band for without ringers from other towers. Attendance has mostly been from the City Branch, Witney and Woodstock, and the Oxford Society, but all are welcome. Email reminders are sent out, so please contact Andrew Freer if you would like to be added to either mailing list. The tower captain of St Andrew's suggested she would be happy to host simulator practices on a Saturday morning or Sunday afternoon with another tower or branch who didn't have enough ringers to make it worthwhile for them alone, e.g. to ring a specific method.

### **Old North Berks**

Susan Read of Abingdon organises regular events for young ringers and invites other branches to join in these events. She also takes our young ringers to events organised by other branches. We have members of other branches local to us already attending our afternoon practices and surprise major practices. This happens usually by word of mouth, however all our practices are advertised in the diary on the Guild’s website and anyone is welcome. We are the second largest branch in the Guild, and already have several unattached members from four other branches. Our annual outing and barbecue, and our skittles and quiz evenings are usually very well supported by our own membership, so we are concerned that, by making these joint events, we could make them unmanageable.

Last year was the first time that we have ever had to cancel a barn dance because of lack of support. We hold barn dances every three years and we have decided that we should open future dances to other branches.

One branch on our border does not have a 10-bell tower, and so it might be helpful if we invite that branch to join us for a practice at one of our 10-bell towers.

There are five branches on our borders and we would be very happy for any of them to invite us to an event. However, as our branch is quite big, it is possible that many of our members might only be interested in attending events that are fairly local to them.

### **North Bucks**

*Combined practice with Towcester Branch.*

*ITTS module 1 course next year.*

*Tower census 0 number of members, level of ability, training requests.*

*Support ITTS module 2 required.*

### **Newbury**

As branch support for organised events is poor we could/should invite all members of adjoining branches to join us. At present only a few invited members join us for our annual outing, quarter peal week, annual dinner and training sessions.

On the whole we are very insular and invitations to join practices, ringing days, outings etc. of neighbouring branches hopefully would renew interest in, and enthusiasm for ringing and the Guild.

At present only individual members when requested, help other branches with ringing for weddings and bell maintenance.

### **EBSB**

*Email discussion group. Lot go informally to other branches.*

*ITTS at Amersham.*

*Google group to pass on info – some from other branches didn't want to be included.*

*Practices – often people come from outside the branch, on an individual basis.*

### **Chipping Norton**

Present practice

No joint events as such involving the CN Branch and neighbouring ODG Branches (Banbury & Witney & Woodstock Branches).

Some individual ringers in the north of the Branch attend a Banbury Branch tower occasionally. Another ringer in the S. of the Branch attends the monthly 12 bell practice at Cirencester (Glos. & Bristol Association).

A joint 8-bell practice was arranged in July at Burford for members of the CN Branch and the Cirencester Branch of the Glos. & Bristol Association at the instigation of the latter.

A few members occasionally attend the Saturday evening practices arranged by the Four Shires Guild and one member their monthly weekday outings

Looking to the future?

There was some discussion at our Autumn Business meeting about the possibility of future joint events and suggestions were invited by email but there has been little response.

As some tower bands work together as Benefices to enable ringing to take place they are already heavily committed.

Realistically, it may be appropriate to have an occasional joint open practice which would cater for a range of abilities (e.g. a triples practice).

Another thought was whether a joint session might be arranged to give would-be conductors an opportunity to develop basic conducting skills as there seem to be only a few ringers in the Branch who are capable of doing this.

### **Chiltern**

*Long thin branch. North- Herts; South – EBSB.*

### **Central Bucks**

*No submission*

### **Bicester**

We haven't come up with much for the discussion point apart from saying that we could invite others to our Branch outings, practices, and training sessions (Ringing Up and Down to date) and we could attend others!

### **Banbury**

ideas that included:

Inter branch cricket matches had been successful in the past.

Invitation to join in with branch social functions and branch outings

Supporting young ringers with weekend practices

Combining branch/surprise practices by ringing at alternate branch towers (Banbury branch is close to Bicester and Chipping Norton branches). Zoe Lee offered to organise some practices outside the branch if other branches would be interested.

It was noted that an increased travelling time and cost may deter some people from joining in.

### **Other speakers:**

*Susan Read*

*Young ringers outings in school holidays, including return visit to Ely DA*

*John Harrison*

*Comment received from out of Guild – difficult to get details to organise outings.*