

Survey results

This note summarises the results of a web based survey of members about their representation at the annual Branch 'Committee meeting'.

Response

During the three weeks following the invitation in September 2012 there were 9 responses, all but one from 'ordinary members' (not Branch officers). That is a smaller response than the earlier survey about Branch practices, possibly reflecting less interest in 'meetings' than 'practices'. 9 responses is ~7% of the 120+ members on the e-mail list. The table shows the spread between Branch towers.

Tower	Replies	Replies to previous survey
Arborfield	2	3
Barkham	0	0
Binfield	0	3
Easthampstead	2	3
Finchampstead	1	4
Hurst	0	2
Sandhurst St Michael	0	1
Sandhurst Immaculate Conception	0	0
Shottesbrooke	1	0
Sonning	1	8
Twyford	0	1
Waltham St Lawrence	0	3
Warfield	0	1
Wargrave	0	1
White Waltham	2	2
Wokingham All Saints	0	5
Wokingham St Paul	0	1
Unattached	0	0
Total	9	38

Awareness

About half of respondents were aware of the meeting and its purpose, and even fewer had ever seen a notice about it. Since notices are sent to all towers, that is disappointing

	Number	%
Aware of Committee meeting and purpose	5	55
Seen notices about the meeting	3	35
Knew meeting is on 3rd Saturday in November	5	55

Involvement

Only one respondent had ever been asked about topics to be discussed at the meeting, though over half had themselves attended a meeting, and two thirds were from towers where someone regularly attends. This suggests that people attending meetings do not represent their members, but merely themselves.

	Number	%
Been asked about topics to be discussed	1	10
Someone from tower normally attends	6	65
Has attended a meeting	5	55

Willingness and availability

Three quarters of those who responded (7) said they would attend the meeting if asked to represent band and the others (2) said they might attend if asked.

They were asked which of four possible times they would normally be available to attend a meeting: the possible times

Time	Available	%
Morning before 11	5	55
Morning after 11	7	75
Afternoon before 3	7	75
Afternoon after 3	7	75
Evening before 7	7	75
Evening after 7	4	45

The future of ringing

One item on the 2012 agenda is a response to questions about training, recruitment & retention from the Central Council group working on how to secure the future of ringing. Most respondents agreed that this was important.

What the Branch should be doing

Just over half of respondents suggested what the Branch could do to further training, recruitment & retention.

- Create a register of ringers who are available for ringing beyond their own towers, with contact details, and by ability in terms of their own skills and transferable skills. This would help towers to call on extra resources when needed. If made generally available, it could also help ringers to see where they could best use their abilities.
- Encourage co-operation between towers. Sharing ringers and best practice would allow less able ringers to learn by exposure to talent at various levels.
- Encourage cooperation and exchange across branch (or Guild) boundaries.
- Raise awareness of the ITTS (Integrated Teacher Training Scheme) and encourage more people to take part.
- Pass on recruitment ideas that have worked in other towers or branches. Provide electronic copy of leaflets etc that some towers have already produced.
- Ensure that ringing takes place when advertised, and that people know if it won't. Turning up at a practice that doesn't happen deters people from visiting other towers.

Other comments related to:

- Bands with too few experienced ringers to attract or train recruits effectively.
- Teaching people who all give up, and not knowing why.
- Lack of response to adverts in the parish magazine.

What the meeting should be discussing

Suggestions for the forthcoming Branch Committee meeting, to discuss were:

- The ideas for action above.
- Appointing a Ringing Master immediately, to serve until the AGM. (John Manley left shortly before the survey.)
- Discussing whether the Branch should mount a recruitment and training programme (for example along the lines of North Bucks 'Big Ring Pull').

Conclusion

The survey response was small, and might not be representative, but it suggests:

- Many members have no idea what the autumn meeting is for, and those who attend do not seem to involve or represent the views of the wider membership.
- There are many positive ideas for ways the Branch could do more to foster more effective recruitment & training.